

**Inspection under Section 28 of the
Education Act 2005**

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Blackwood Comprehensive School
Ty Isha Terrace
Blackwood
NP12 1ER**

School Number: 6764046

Date of Inspection: 27/04/09

by

**Peter Guy Carter
16926**

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Blackwood Comprehensive School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents information about the performance of their child's school.

The inspection of Blackwood Comprehensive School took place between 27/04/09 and 30/04/09. An independent team of inspectors, led by Peter Guy Carter undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the quality of leadership and management and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Estyn's reports follow its guidance for the writing and editing of reports, which is available on the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk). The table below explains the terms that Estyn uses to indicate quantities. The table is for guidance only.

Nearly all	with very few exceptions
Most	90% or more
Many	70% or more
A majority	over 60%
Half/around half	close to 50%
A minority	below 40%
Few	below 20%
Very few	less than 10%

The five-point scale used to represent all inspection judgements in this report is as follows:

Grade 1	good with outstanding features
Grade 2	good features and no important shortcomings
Grade 3	good features outweigh shortcomings
Grade 4	some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
Grade 5	many important shortcomings

There are three types of inspection.

For **all** inspections, there is a written report on seven key questions.

For **short** inspections, there are no subject reports.

For **standard** inspections, there are also reports on six subjects.

For **full** inspections, there are also reports on all subjects.

Estyn decides the kind of inspection that a school receives, mainly on the basis of its past performance. Most schools receive a standard inspection. All nursery schools, special schools, pupil referral units and any new or amalgamated schools receive a full inspection.

This school received a **short** inspection.

Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y 1	Y 2	Y 3	Y 4	Y 5	Y 6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y 13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. Blackwood Comprehensive School is an 11-16, mixed community school maintained by the Local Education Authority (LEA), Caerphilly County Borough. It has 965 pupils on roll compared to 973 at the last inspection in October 2003.
2. Pupils represent the full range of ability. The school admits an increasing number of pupils with significant additional needs and little previous experience of mainstream education. There are 32 pupils with statements of special educational needs (SEN) and a further 85 on the SEN register. Around 40% of pupils enter the school with reading ages lower than their actual ages. Nearly all of the rest have reading ages which are close to their actual age.
3. Pupils come mainly from the immediate locality. This contains pockets of significant social disadvantage. About half come from residential areas which are neither particularly prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. The other half is divided between prosperous and disadvantaged areas. Just over 18% of pupils are entitled to free school meals (FSM). This is a little higher than the national average. The FSM index varies considerably between year groups from just over 25% to just below 15%.
4. Nearly all pupils speak English as their first language and there are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. There are some significant variations in the proportions of boys and girls in different year groups. For example, less than 40% of pupils in Year (Y)10 are boys and only 43% of Y8 are girls.

The school's priorities and targets

5. The school's bilingual motto is '*Ymdrech i Drechu*', 'Strive to Succeed'. The prospectus lists six aims. These are to:
 - provide a knowledge and understanding of the self as an individual;
 - develop skills through appropriate teaching and learning strategies;
 - develop pupils' moral and emotional natures and spiritual awareness;
 - provide pastoral support to help pupils form good interpersonal relationships;
 - equip pupils to meet the demands of society in work and leisure; and
 - prepare pupils to fulfil a responsible role in society.
6. The six strategic aims in the School Development Plan (SDP) 2008-2009 are to:
 - be recognised as a centre of excellence in learning as an 11-16 school;
 - recruit and retain a high quality, motivated, flexible staff;
 - extend learning opportunities beyond the academic curriculum;
 - encourage learners to be responsible, caring citizens who understand sustainable development;
 - ensure inclusion is consolidated and awareness of equality of opportunity and diversity are embedded; and
 - raise the profile of the school in the community.

Summary

- Blackwood Comprehensive School is a very good school with many outstanding features. There are particular strengths in the quality of education it provides, the effectiveness of its leadership and the efficiency with which it manages its resources. The inspection team agrees with all of the grades awarded by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- The following table shows the grades awarded in the seven key questions.

Key Question	Grade
1. How well do learners achieve?	2
2. How effective are teaching training and assessment?	1
3. How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community	1
4. How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1
5. How effective are leadership and strategic management?	1
6. How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	2
7. How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	1

Standards

- Results in tests, statutory assessments and examinations in the last three years have been variable at both key stages. In the majority of cases they have been close to local and national averages and generally in line with attainment in schools with a similar intake. In 2007, Key Stage (KS) 4 results were particularly good, largely as a result of strong performance by boys of average ability and above. By comparison, the KS4 results in 2008 were disappointing.
- The standards which pupils achieve at present are closer to attainment in 2007 than 2008. Evidence from recent external assessments of General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) coursework and from internal, mock GCSE examinations indicates that these pupils are achieving good standards.
- Standards are good, with no important shortcomings in all key skills. Pupils' listening skills and their ability to work collaboratively with others have outstanding features. Pupils demonstrate good bilingual competence in the Welsh lessons but rarely practise or develop their Welsh language communication skills on other occasions in school.
- Pupils of all abilities, including those with SEN, make good progress. Evidence from value-added analyses of attainment indicates that pupils make significant progress between the end of KS2 and the end of KS4. It also shows that, in most subjects, results are in line with expectations based on pupils' abilities and prior attainment. In a few subjects, particularly in chemistry, physics and religious studies, pupils make very good progress which exceeds expectations.

13. Almost all pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They use their time in lessons productively and sustain good levels of concentration. They take an active interest in their work and are motivated to succeed. Pupils' moral and social skills are developed particularly well and almost all show good cultural and spiritual development.
14. Attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils' behaviour is exceptionally good, both in lessons and around the school. They have very good personal and social skills. These contribute to the very good relationships between all members of the school community. This helps generate a pleasant and civilised atmosphere which is conducive to learning.

Quality of education and training

15. Teaching and assessment have outstanding features in just under a third of lessons overall. These are evident at each key stage but there is a significantly larger proportion of them at KS4 than at KS3. There are no important shortcomings at either key stage in most lessons. The figures illustrate teaching and assessment of exceptionally high quality across the school.
16. Teachers have very good subject knowledge. Many apply this purposefully to stimulate and challenge pupils. Nearly all foster excellent working relationships with pupils and provide considerable support and encouragement. In most lessons, teachers ensure resources and activities are matched well to pupils' needs and stimulate active involvement in learning. Lessons are nearly always planned and structured well with very good attention to promoting the development of key skills.
17. Assessment is used purposefully to support learning. In most cases, teachers mark work regularly and provide constructive feedback. Pupils are involved productively in assessing their own achievement and that of others. This is used successfully in many subjects. It helps pupils to know how well they are doing and how to improve. Reports are of consistently good quality. Most subjects provide detailed comments that help pupils make progress.
18. The curriculum has several outstanding features. A large number of pupils participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The diverse range of activities and clubs promotes pupils' learning and develops their personal and social skills. Staff support is very evident in all activities.
19. The learning and teaching framework, which has been developed by teachers in the primary-secondary cluster group, strengthens curricular links at the transition stage. This is an outstanding feature. Option menus within the provision for Learning Pathways (14-19) for KS4 pupils provide a good range of vocational and traditional subjects well suited to individual needs.
20. The school ensures that all pupils have equality of access to the curriculum. No pupil is disadvantaged. The school tackles social disadvantage and stereotyping in a highly effective manner. The different pathways, including the alternative curriculum at KS4, support successfully pupils at risk of disaffection.

21. The way the school promotes education for sustainable development and extends pupils' entrepreneurial skills has outstanding features. Many pupils are very involved in a wide variety of relevant learning experiences.
22. Overall the quality of care, support and guidance is good with outstanding features. Arrangements for planning and managing care and support services are good. Partnerships with parents and carers are outstanding and the school has gained the Investors in Families Award in recognition of this. Transition between Y6 and Y7 is good and arrangements to enable pupils in Y7 to settle in quickly are outstanding.
23. The quality of personal support is outstanding. Emotionally-vulnerable pupils are supported very well. Whilst monitoring of pupils' attendance and behaviour are good, monitoring of performance is at an earlier stage of development. The organisation of careers education has outstanding features. The school takes very good account of pupils' well-being, healthy living and child protection.
24. Provision for pupils with SEN is very good and, in some instances, outstanding. Learning Support Assistants (LSA) provide highly effective support for pupils in separate SEN classes and other classes. All statutory requirements are met and the school has very good regard for the SEN Code of Practice and the Framework for Inclusion. The recording of subject-specific interventions is an outstanding feature. These are evaluated and updated regularly.
25. Behaviour management and support are outstanding. They have resulted in relatively few temporary, and no permanent exclusions of pupils in the last year.
26. Overall the quality of provision for equal opportunities is good with outstanding features. The school is highly effective at promoting gender equality and challenging stereotypes. It works actively to promote racial equality and has been commended by the Gwent Ethnic Minority Service. All forms of bullying are dealt with effectively. Disabled pupils are fully integrated into school life.

Leadership and management

27. The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding, dedicated and inspirational. He leads by example and provides clear direction. He sets very high standards and is highly regarded by staff, governors and pupils. The Leadership Team provides very strong support and forms a cohesive and effective unit. Its members support middle managers and empower them to take responsibility for teaching and learning.
28. Leadership and management at all levels are based upon clear aims and principles. Core values are based upon positive attitudes to caring and achieving. Every individual is valued within ideals of equality for all. The school is fully inclusive with shared, clearly understood, corporate values. Teamwork and commitment within the school are outstanding.

29. Governors are committed to the school and play an active role in promoting it within the community. They fulfil their role as critical friends of the school and help set its strategic direction. They help leaders and managers to enhance standards and the quality of provision. They monitor outcomes effectively, mainly through presentations from teachers and pupils and close scrutiny of detailed reports.
30. There is a very strong, reflective culture in the school. Most senior and middle managers understand the strengths and weaknesses within their clearly defined areas of responsibility. The monitoring of departments is thorough and based upon a range of first-hand evidence. It is done both formally and informally. Nearly all evaluations focus upon improving standards, teaching and learning and on enabling pupils of all abilities to fulfil their potential.
31. The self-evaluation process seeks rigorously, through a range of methods, the views of all stakeholders with increasing use being made of pupils' views. The school has managed the development of self-evaluation well. The process has been supported through good training. Staff members understand the value of teamwork in collecting evidence and in setting targets for improvement.
32. The SDP is a very detailed document. It identifies clear, measurable success criteria, realistic time scales and allocates sufficient, appropriately costed resources. However, the intended outcomes in a minority of departmental development plans are not so easily measured or effectively costed.
33. The school has made good progress in addressing nearly all of the key issues from the last inspection, particularly in continuing to develop key skills across subjects and in improving the quality of assessment, recording and reporting.
34. Teachers are well qualified and there is a good balance between experience and those relatively new to the profession. The way teachers and associate staff work together successfully to enhance pupils' learning is outstanding. This has an exceptionally positive impact on pupils' experiences in the school. The continuous professional development of managers, teachers and associate staff is particularly strong.
35. Overall, the refurbishment of the accommodation and addition of new facilities has improved the learning environment significantly. The extensive information and communications technology (ICT) provision, the outstanding Learning Resource Centre, impressive dance studio and all-weather sports pitch contribute very positively to pupils' learning.
36. Following extensive consultation and by involving all stakeholders, staff restructuring and workforce remodelling have been implemented very successfully. This has been achieved through sensitive handling of situations.
37. Budget preparation and monitoring are rigorous, meticulous and transparent. Procedures for monitoring and reviewing expenditure and for securing additional funds are outstanding. Overall the school manages its resources efficiently and effectively and provides very good value for money.

Recommendations

In order to make further progress, the school should implement the following recommendations.

- R1 Further develop and implement strategies to improve results and reduce the variability in pupils' attainment*.
- R2 Further develop opportunities to promote pupils' bilingual competence*.
- R3 Further develop procedures for monitoring pupils' progress at both key stages*.
- R4 Improve the consistency of departmental development planning so that intended outcomes are more measurable.

*These recommendations are addressed in full or in part in the SDP 2008-2009.

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving this report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

38. This grade matches the grade in the school's self-evaluation report.
39. At KS3 in the last three years, attainment in National Curriculum (NC), core subjects, English, mathematics and science, was variable overall. The best results were gained in 2007 when results in mathematics and science were in the top 25% of schools where a similar proportion of pupils are entitled to FSM. In 2006, results were close to those gained in 2007 but a little lower overall. Results in 2008 were generally lower than in previous years and below the averages in similar schools.
40. Results in science at KS3 have been consistently good and in the top 25% of those in similar schools in each of the last three years. In mathematics, results have been mainly good except in 2008. Results in English have been below the averages in similar schools during the last three years. The proportion of pupils who achieved level five or higher in all three core subjects was in the top 25% of those in similar schools in 2007 but below average in 2006 and 2008.
41. At KS4 in 2007, overall attainment in GCSE examinations was good and, in some cases, very good by comparison with local and national averages. Results gained in 2008 were lower than those from 2007. They compared less favourably to local and national averages, particularly in respect of pupils who gained the two highest grades and pupils who gained a C grade or above. The proportion gaining grade G or higher was above local and national averages in most subjects in both years.
42. In most cases in the last three years, KS4 results were in line with performance in similar schools. In many cases, for example the proportion gaining five or more grades A* to C and the average GCSE/GNVQ points score, performance was above average. In science, results were consistently high and in the top 25% of results in similar schools in each year. In 2008, however, the percentage of pupils who achieved the Level 2 threshold (a volume of qualifications at level 2 equivalent to five GCSE grades A* to C) was below the average in similar schools.
43. In 2007, many boys of average and above average ability gained good results. In most subjects, their performance exceeded local and national averages. The difference between their performance and girls' was smaller than locally or nationally. In 2008, boys of similar ability performed significantly less well. Girls' results were much more consistent over the two years.
44. Value-added analyses of attainment from the last two years indicate that in the great majority of cases, pupils gained results that were close to expectations. In a few subjects, for example chemistry, physics and religious studies, pupils'

results exceeded expectations by a significant margin. In a few cases, pupils achieved significantly less well than predicted.

45. The standards that pupils achieve at present are closer to performance in 2007 than 2008. Evidence from external assessments of GCSE modules and from internal mock GCSE examinations suggests that pupils achieve good standards and are meeting their attainment targets. There is little evidence of any significant difference between the performance of boys and girls at present. Currently, achievement is good across the ability range. Pupils with SEN generally achieve good standards.
46. Pupils of all abilities, including those with SEN, make significant progress. There is considerable variation in the range of abilities and backgrounds in different year groups. This is reflected in their relative performance. However, the progress that pupils make generally relates well to their ability. Value-added analyses indicate that pupils' success at KS4 is very close to estimates based on prior attainment at KS2 and their contextual background in most key indicators of performance.
47. Standards are good, with no important shortcomings, in all key skills. Most pupils make good progress in developing communication skills in English. Many pupils, particularly boys, enter the school with relatively weak literacy skills. However, they develop listening skills particularly well. They listen attentively, to teachers and each other, and show good levels of understanding of what they have heard. Most pupils speak clearly and confidently and make good use of subject-specific terms.
48. Many pupils are proficient in reading and writing. They read competently and with understanding from a variety of different texts. Although the written work of a small minority of pupils, mainly of lower ability, contains errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation, most pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills. By KS4, most pupils write effectively in different styles for different purposes and audiences.
49. Most pupils demonstrate good oracy and literacy skills in the Welsh language during their lessons in Welsh second language. However, they rarely practise or develop these skills on other occasions in school. As a consequence, their bilingual competence is at a relatively early stage of development.
50. Many pupils have good numeracy skills and apply them productively when given the opportunity in lessons in particular subjects such as science and design and technology. For example, they measure and weigh accurately and make well-informed estimates. Most pupils use ICT appropriately for a range of purposes. They conduct research using the internet and produce computerised visual presentations. Many pupils use word-processing software well to draft their written work and enhance its presentation.
51. Nearly all pupils make particularly good progress in the development of their personal, social and learning skills. They show positive attitudes to learning using their time in lessons productively and sustaining good levels of

concentration. They take interest in their work and progress in lessons and display good levels of motivation.

52. Pupils' social and interpersonal skills are evident in the quality of their relationships with other members of the school community. Their moral and social skills are developed particularly well. They know and demonstrate the importance of fairness and honesty and show respect for diversity. Almost all pupils show good spiritual and cultural development. They share in and celebrate the achievements of others. They also show care and compassion for others who are less fortunate, for example by raising funds for charities.
53. Pupils' social skills are evident in their exceptionally good behaviour, both in lessons and around the school. They work very well with each other. Working in groups, they co-operate and collaborate in learning activities in many subjects very successfully. They are polite and welcoming to visitors. As a consequence of the very good behaviour, there have been relatively few temporary exclusions of pupils and no permanent exclusions in the last year.
54. Attendance is good. Average attendance in the last three terms was 90.5%. This is a little higher than in the last inspection, just above the local average of 90.3% and just below the average in similar schools of 90.7%. It is a little below the national average of 91%. Unauthorised absence in the last three terms averaged at 1.3%. This is below local and national averages and the average in similar schools. Average attendance in this year to date is 91.9%. This is in line with the target for the current school year. Punctuality is good. Pupils are rarely late at the start of the school day. Most pupils arrive promptly to lessons.

The quality of education and training

Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

55. This grade matches the grade in the school's self-evaluation report.
56. The following table shows the overall grades awarded for the quality of teaching and assessment from observations of 60 lessons across the school.

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3	23%	71%	6%	0%	0%
KS4	41%	52%	7%	0%	0%
Whole school	32%	62%	6%	0%	0%

57. Teaching and assessment are good with outstanding features in nearly a third of lessons overall. This is nearly double the comparative figure from all secondary schools inspected in Wales in 2007-2008, as reported in the Annual Report of the Chief Inspector. There are also very few lessons that have any important shortcomings. This is significantly less than the comparative national figure. They illustrate teaching and assessment of exceptionally high quality.
58. The proportion of lessons where teaching and assessment were awarded graded one or two is virtually identical at both key stages. A significantly larger proportion of lessons, however, were awarded grade one at KS4.
59. The school sets very high expectations of pupils' conduct and behaviour. Teachers provide considerable support and encouragement for pupils and nearly all establish excellent working relationships with them. This nurtures an outstanding atmosphere for learning which is evident in nearly all lessons and also across all aspects of school life. It is highly successful in ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils.
60. Teachers have very good knowledge and awareness of current developments in their respective subjects. The well-established Teaching and Learning Group provides a helpful forum to enable them to share their knowledge and ideas constructively with colleagues from other subjects. Pupils also attend these meetings and their comments are valued and welcomed. Overall this contributes significantly to promoting an outstanding culture of learning that benefits staff and pupils greatly.
61. In most lessons teachers apply their subject knowledge exceptionally well to capture pupils' interests and to stimulate and challenge them in their learning. Often they make constructive use of ICT to present information and activities to pupils in meaningful and interesting contexts. Interactive whiteboards feature prominently in many lessons but on only a few occasions do pupils play an active part in using them alongside their teachers.

62. Nearly all lessons are planned thoroughly. Objectives are usually shared with pupils to ensure that they are aware of the purpose of the lesson and what is expected of them. Teachers pay particular attention in their planning to ensure that lessons focus purposefully on promoting the development of pupils' key skills. An appropriate amount of time is devoted at the end of most lessons to consolidate pupils' knowledge and understanding of subject content and to help them reflect on the development of their key skills.
63. Where appropriate, LSAs work very well alongside teachers to provide excellent levels of support to pupils with SEN. This teamwork is very successful in ensuring that teaching meets the needs of these pupils well and ensures equality of opportunity for them.
64. Teachers usually make purposeful use of questions to assist pupils' learning. In the best lessons they use questions particularly well to challenge and extend pupils' reasoning. On a few occasions, however, their questions only require short answers from pupils and opportunities to enable pupils to explain their reasoning are not exploited enough.
65. In many lessons teachers make exceptionally good use of resources and activities to facilitate pupils' learning. They provide very good opportunities to enable pupils to work productively together by making thoughtful and imaginative use of tasks that require pupils to work in pairs or groups. Many pupils speak positively about these opportunities and find them particularly helpful. Homework is used constructively in most subjects to consolidate and extend work covered in lessons.
66. Lessons are usually structured well and progress at a good pace. On a very few occasions, however, teachers do not give sufficient attention in their planning to the time allocated for pupils' tasks or the suitability of the level of challenge in them.
67. Teaching provides some opportunities to enrich pupils' bilingual skills. At KS4, many pupils gain a qualification in Welsh. Incidental Welsh is used in a few lessons and in assemblies. In many lessons, however, teachers provide little opportunity for pupils to extend their bilingual competence into other contexts.
68. The overall quality of marking is good across all subjects. Marking is usually accurate and up-to-date with good attention paid to correcting errors in pupils' written work in a very supportive way. In many instances teachers provide helpful written comments that indicate targets for improvement clearly to pupils. Occasionally, however, their comments focus too much on general aspects such as presentation of work and not enough on subject-specific content.
69. Assessment is used well to monitor pupils' progress across subjects. Records of pupils' achievements and effort in all subjects are collated and recorded systematically at intervals in the school year. These records are used constructively by progress managers to identify and take appropriate action to support any pupils in their year group who are underachieving.

70. Most pupils have a good awareness of how well they are doing and their targets for improvement. In many subjects they are involved purposefully in assessing their own achievements and that of their peers. This features strongly in a minority of subjects and enhances pupils' learning greatly.
71. Teaching meets all statutory requirements for assessment and reporting on NC subjects and also fulfils the regulations of examining boards.
72. The school has worked productively with partner primary schools over many years to monitor and improve aspects of teaching and learning. These arrangements are used constructively to improve the consistency and accuracy of teacher assessments at the end of KS2. This is particularly strong in core subjects and is developing well in others. Moderation procedures for teacher assessments at the end of KS3 are well established in many subjects.
73. Reporting arrangements are good. Annual reports have a common format across all subjects and are of consistently high quality. Comments from subject teachers are detailed and, in nearly all instances, are highly informative. They provide parents and carers with clear indications of their child's achievements in subjects and indicate how improvements could be made. In a few cases, targets for improvement are too general and not subject-specific enough.

Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?

Grade1: Good with outstanding features

74. This grade matches the grade in the school's self-evaluation report.
75. The curriculum has several outstanding features. It meets learners' needs and interests at both key stages and gives pupils of all abilities the opportunity to gain qualifications. The curriculum is balanced, broad and flexible and ensures progression between key stages.
76. Option menus within the provision for Learning Pathways 14-19 provide a good range of vocational and traditional subjects well suited to individual needs. The development of a number of vocational courses at levels one and two is a good feature. Pupils are consulted before completing option choices and options are matched effectively to pupils' interests and abilities.
77. The key elements of Learning Pathways, 14-19 have been addressed well. The school already meets the stage 2 requirements for the Learning and Skills Measure. The successful introduction of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ) at the Foundation level enhances further the curriculum. The school has developed successful and productive curricular provision and support for pupils who are educated outside school.

78. The learning and teaching framework which has been developed by teachers in the primary-secondary cluster group strengthens curricular links at the transition stage. This has been commended and is an outstanding feature.
79. The school has retained the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The varied learning experiences develop effectively pupils' basic and key skills. Key skills are highlighted in a wide range of learning contexts. Pupils in Y 9 are enabled to gain qualifications in communication and ICT. This year, all pupils in Y9 gained the ICT qualification.
80. A large number of pupils participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The diverse range of activities promotes pupils' learning and develops their personal and social skills. These are outstanding features. Pupils in Y10 have been very successful in gaining the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award. Staff support is very evident in all activities.
81. Extra-curricular activities in sport are outstanding. There is opportunity for the large numbers involved to excel in many sports. Many pupils compete successfully at national and international level. Associate and teaching staff members from outside the physical education department contribute to this provision and help to make it an outstanding feature. Pupils are able to gain additional qualifications. Opportunities for learners to teach in primary schools as part of the Dragon Sport programme are outstanding.
82. The Physical Education and School Sport (PESS) programme supports successfully the development of the subject across the primary and secondary sectors.
83. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has outstanding features. Assemblies and form tutorials are used successfully to promote learners' spiritual and moral development. Pupils respect one another and their teachers. A comprehensive Personal and Social Education (PSE) programme develops effectively pupils' personal and social development. Pupils are very involved in raising funds for others less fortunate at home and abroad. The school has very strong links with a school in Uganda.
84. Partnerships with members of the community and other providers of education are outstanding. Parents are kept fully informed of pupils' progress. School facilities are used well as a community resource and the local community supports a number of events in school. Outside speakers from a number of local agencies visit the school regularly to promote aspects of the curriculum. The school has very close links with neighbouring colleges. This helps provide a well co-ordinated curricular programme.
85. Learning experiences at all key stages meet statutory requirements fully including the requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship.
86. Work-related education is good. All pupils in Y10 undertake a two-week work placement which is monitored effectively. The school organises a highly successful careers evening attended by all Y11 pupils along with many of their

parents. The school has developed very effective links with Careers Wales. A notable feature of preparing pupils for the world of work is the mock interview all Y11 pupils have with representatives of the local Rotary Club.

87. Aspects of *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* feature in schemes of work and the successful annual eisteddfod is a notable feature. All pupils study the Welsh language and make good progress. However, planned provision for developing pupils' bilingual skills across the curriculum is limited.
88. The school ensures that all pupils have equality of access to the curriculum with no pupil being disadvantaged. It tackles stereotyping and social disadvantage in an outstanding manner and has been commended for its work in this area. The varied courses and pathways including the alternative curriculum at KS4, support successfully pupils at risk of disaffection.
89. The school has productive links with local businesses and employers. A number of successful vocational courses have been introduced to the curriculum to take account of both pupils' and employers' needs.
90. The way the school promotes education for sustainable development and develops pupils' entrepreneurial skills has outstanding features. Pupils are very involved in a wide variety of relevant learning experiences.
91. The school has a very active Eco-club. It has been very successful in raising substantial funds and is planning several initiatives. An outstanding feature is the development of an allotment within the school ground. The school holds the Eco-schools' Silver award and is currently working towards achieving the Green Flag. The school has close links with Groundwork Trust. Aspects of global citizenship are promoted very well and include links with schools abroad. Learners are very aware of the importance of healthy eating.
92. Several initiatives develop pupils' entrepreneurial skills including 'Enterprise Week' for pupils in Y9. Pupils in Y10 are actively involved in the Young Enterprise scheme. The school is very successful in a number of competitions and its good practice in the Dynamo Project has been recognised.
93. Overall, the curriculum reflects the Welsh Assembly Government priorities and develops successfully learners' skills for lifelong learning.

Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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94. This grade matches the grade in the school's self-evaluation report.
95. The school provides pupils with care, support and guidance of good quality. It plans and manages care arrangements effectively and works well with external support services.

96. The school's partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. It seeks and takes account of their views through systematic surveys and questionnaires. It has gained the award of Investors in Families in recognition of its work with parents. The school also works well with local employers and has forged close links with the Education Business Partnership.
97. There is a very successful elected school council which meets monthly under the guidance of the deputy headteacher. The school takes good account of pupils' views and has implemented several of their suggestions. These include changing the building plans for the covered way, provision for seating in the grounds and refurbishing the pupils' toilets.
98. Pupils are given impartial advice when choosing subject options. When pupils move into Y10, parents are invited in to meet teachers to discuss whether the correct option choices have been made. Pupils are allowed to reconsider option choices in the light of these interviews. The school is developing successfully a Learning Pathways options menu in conjunction with other 11–16 schools and local colleges in the LEA.
99. All pupils are interviewed about their option choices and an options evening is held for both pupils and their parents. There are additional parents' evenings held for those pupils choosing the 'Active Pathways' and WBQ options.
100. Very effective procedures are used well to support pupils during transition from primary school into Y7. The Y7 progress manager, together with the special educational needs co-ordinator and learning support manager visit all partner primary schools. The school and its cluster of partner primary schools are extremely effective in developing a common teaching and learning framework.
101. On admission, the school provides pupils with outstanding support. The Y7 progress manager and assistant headteacher responsible for pupil welfare meet all Y7 pupils each afternoon, for at least a week, to explain the school's systems and procedures, answer questions, allay any fears and help the pupils settle in as quickly as possible. A Peer Mentor system operates where trained older pupils support those in Y7.
102. Personal support of very high quality is available to all learners. Members of associate staff have undertaken training and run a group in the 'Student Assisted Programme' (SAP). This is a very powerful tool in counselling emotionally vulnerable pupils. Pupils also have access to the 'Nurture Room' co-ordinated by an associate member of staff trained in 'grief counselling'. The school's Learning Coach supports referred or self-referred pupils at KS4.
103. There is a highly effective PSE programme which is in line with the new national framework for PSE. The programme is delivered effectively and pupils report that they like the lessons and benefit from them. A range of visiting speakers complements the work of the school.
104. Tutorial programmes are organised well and form tutors make very good use of pupils' time during morning registration periods. As well as providing support

and guidance there is an emphasis on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and a literacy programme of high quality is delivered during this time.

105. The school has developed strong and effective links with specialist services such as the LEA's Behaviour Service, Social Services and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.
106. There are very good systems in place to monitor both attendance and behaviour. However, the role of progress managers working with form tutors in monitoring pupils' progress in learning is at an early stage of development.
107. There are outstanding features in the provision of careers education. Every year, the school arranges for up to 45 companies and trades to attend a careers symposium to talk to pupils. The close working relationship with the local Rotary Club results in the school using their expertise to conduct mock interviews with pupils.
108. There are outstanding features in the way the school assures pupils' healthy development and well-being. A large number of pupils access the very wide range of physical activities at the school. The school holds whole-school 'Theme Days' which deal with topics such as personal safety, drug and alcohol misuse and water aid. Trained counsellors support individual pupils and pupils are trained in peer mentoring in order to support other pupils.
109. The school's involvement with the 'Healthy Eating' initiative has had a very positive impact on pupils, especially girls who choose healthy-eating options at lunchtime. A 'Healthy-Eating' canteen is available and it is very popular. All vending machines have been removed from the school and sweet carbonated drinks are no longer available.
110. The school has a designated, trained Child Protection Officer and all members of staff are aware of child protection procedures. All members of staff, including associate staff, have enhanced disclosures from the Criminal Records Bureau. All new staff members are trained in child protection issues and whole-school training is updated every three years.
111. The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is good with outstanding features. The school diagnoses pupils' special needs effectively through liaison with partner primary schools and screening tests on admission. Subject teachers may also refer pupils.
112. The school has very good regard for the SEN Code of Practice and the statutory Framework for Inclusion. All statutory requirements relating to statements of SEN, their annual review and transition plans are complied with fully.
113. All pupils on the school's SEN register have individual education plans. These are complemented by very good subject-specific targets. An outstanding feature is that every subject department keeps detailed records of intervention which are evaluated and updated regularly. Each subject department sends a

representative to the monthly SEN meetings, the main focus of which is individual pupils, their difficulties and the progress being made.

114. Support is organised in small discrete classes in each year group with additional support in the form of computerised literacy and numeracy programmes provided by LSAs. Pupils in the discrete classes are integrated fully into the life of the school and are taught by mainstream subject specialists.
115. There is teamwork of high quality between teachers and LSAs. Planning and liaison are good and the LSAs provide highly effective support for pupils. An outstanding feature of this support is that when a pupil is absent the LSA attends the lesson and makes notes so that the pupil will not fall behind. The co-ordinated support from teachers and LSAs is outstanding.
116. The school has identified a number of more able and talented pupils and very good strategies are in place to support these pupils.
117. The support for pupils with behavioural difficulties is outstanding. The school has a very successful, highly-graduated support system for pupils whose behaviour impedes their own progress and that of others. The outcomes of this support system are a relatively low number of temporary exclusions and no permanent exclusions over the past year. There has been only one permanent exclusion in the past eight years.
118. The quality of provision for equal opportunities is good with outstanding features. The school has an effective equal opportunities policy which is updated regularly and ratified by the governing body. All pupils are treated equally and the school is keen to support pupils who may be perceived as different by using the Peer-Mentor scheme.
119. The school promotes gender equality and challenges stereotypes very effectively. All literature used by the school is screened for bias. In Y10 a significant number of girls have opted to take the resistant materials option whilst boys have opted to take the catering course. The school is very active in promoting racial equality and its outstanding work in this field has been commended by the Gwent Ethnic Minority Service.
120. There are effective strategies to discourage bullying, racial discrimination and other forms of harassment. Pupils are very supportive of these strategies and acknowledge the school's effectiveness in dealing with oppressive behaviour.
121. The inclusive ethos of the school is very evident and it makes outstanding provision for the full integration of disabled pupils. These pupils participate fully in the academic, social, sporting and cultural life of the school. The school has an exemplary disability equality scheme and a useful accessibility plan that meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.
122. The school's emphasis on celebrating differences and diversity is outstanding and a notable strength of the school. A group of Y9 pupils worked with an outside agency to produce an animated computerised presentation on diversity

of very high quality. They presented their work to each year group in their assembly in a carefully crafted production. They were successful in getting their message over and it was received extremely well by each year group.

Leadership and management

Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

123. This grade matches the grade in the school's self-evaluation report. It is one grade higher than the grade awarded for key question one. This is because the outstanding features in leadership and management have resulted in significant improvements in teaching and values that promote equality for all.
124. The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding, dedicated and inspirational. He leads by example and provides clear direction for the school. He sets very high standards and is highly regarded by staff, governors and pupils. He values each member of the school community and actively encourages each one to reach his or her potential. He works well with the deputy headteacher who shares his vision and value-systems for the school.
125. The Leadership Team provides very strong support and is a cohesive and effective unit. Its members are a model of effective teamwork that underpins practice throughout all school activities. They support middle managers well and empower them to take responsibility for teaching and learning. The teamwork and commitment of all members of teaching and associate staff are outstanding. The work of the school is often recognised externally as good practice.
126. Leadership and management at all levels are based upon positive attitudes to caring and achieving. The school is fully inclusive with shared and clearly understood corporate aims and values. Equality of opportunity is central to these shared values. It is reflected in all aspects of the school's work and the behaviour of the pupils. The headteacher provides training in leadership and management for middle managers and other volunteers. He has considerable experience nationally in this field.
127. Leaders and managers take appropriate account of national priorities. Very good progress has been made in a number of areas. These include standards of teaching, behaviour and attendance of pupils, as well as healthy living and education for sustainable development. Transition arrangements and 14-19 learning pathways are well developed. Progress is ongoing in the development of bilingual competence.
128. Regular formal reviews of staff teams are in place enabling clear targets for improvement to be set. These reviews are planned systematically and provide detailed information on the performance of departments. Staff members at all levels understand the value of continuous review and reflection.

129. Governors are committed to the school and play an active role in promoting it in the local community. They are fully involved in the strategic management of the school. They make regular contributions to many aspects of school life. They show tremendous drive, enthusiasm and commitment and are very proud of their school.
130. Governors fulfil their role as critical friends of the school. They help leaders and managers to enhance standards and the quality of provision. They monitor outcomes effectively, mainly by receiving presentations from teachers and pupils and through close scrutiny of detailed reports.
131. Governors meet their regulatory and legal requirements in all important respects.

Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

132. This grade matches the grade in the school's self-evaluation report.
133. There is a very strong reflective culture within the school. The quality of the school's self-evaluation report is good. It is detailed and provides a clear analysis of the school's performance. It identifies accurately the many strengths of the school and the areas for development. The grades awarded by the inspection team for all seven key questions, match those of the school.
134. Most senior and middle managers have very good knowledge of their areas of responsibility. They use a wide range of first-hand evidence and analyse the information carefully. Monitoring of departments is thorough. It is done both formally and informally. This includes examination performance data, lesson observations, work scrutiny and in-depth evaluations by the LEA advisory team.
135. An outstanding feature of the self-evaluation process is the way that the school consults effectively with pupils regarding pastoral issues and the teaching and learning process. This is done through the school's 'Teaching and Learning Group' of which pupils are active members, the school and year councils, questionnaires and through senior pupils who are associate pupil governors.
136. Governors and teachers are involved significantly in the wide-ranging consultation process that underpins the school's self-evaluation. The school has achieved the 'Investors in Families Award' and the consideration of parents' views is a further strength of the process.
137. The school has managed the development of self-evaluation well. The process has been supported through good training. Members of staff understand the value of teamwork in collecting evidence and setting targets for improvement.
138. The SDP is a very detailed document and an effective instrument for development. It identifies priorities which have clear, measurable success

criteria with realistic time-scales and specifies sufficient, appropriately costed resources. However, the intended outcomes in a minority of departmental development plans are not so easily measured or effectively costed.

139. Longer-term, strategic planning, exists in many aspects of the school but lacks cohesion.
140. The school is successful in providing resources to ensure that objectives are met. For example, it has increased the number of associate staff members and appointed a School Business Manager, established a 'Nurture Room' and a purpose-built dance-studio and has increased the provision of ICT resources significantly.
141. The school has made good progress since the last inspection in increasing the proportion of lessons observed where the teaching was awarded grade one or grade two. In addition, although this inspection did not look at standards in subjects, evidence from attainment data and the inspection of key skills indicates that there are no significant differences at present between the performance of boys and girls.
142. Good progress has also been made in addressing nearly all of the other key issues from the last inspection. In particular:
 - the quality of assessment, recording and reporting has improved greatly;
 - the procedures for senior and middle managers to observe lessons as part of the Performance Management arrangements, to track pupils' progress and to share best practice, have been developed;
 - the school meets the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship; and
 - there is appropriate coverage of the Religious Studies syllabus at KS4.

Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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143. This grade matches the grade in the school's self-evaluation report. It is one grade higher than the grade awarded for key question one. This is because outstanding features in the efficiency of resource management have impacted significantly on pupils' achievements.
144. Teachers are very well qualified and there is a good balance between experienced teachers and those who are relatively new to the profession. Many teachers are external examiners, have additional academic qualifications and prior experience of working in industry. They use these experiences well to enhance their teaching and pupils' learning.
145. Overall, there are enough leadership, teaching and associate staff for the school to function very effectively. Leaders, teachers and associate staff are deployed efficiently and effectively. The school is exceptionally good at

identifying and utilising the skills of all staff members. The way in which teachers and associate staff work together successfully to enhance the learning experiences for pupils is outstanding. This team ethos has a very positive impact on pupils' curricular and extra-curricular experiences in the school.

146. The level and deployment of technical, learning support and administrative staff, known as associate staff within the school, are exceptional. Associate staff members provide an excellent service to the school. They contribute effectively to pupils' learning. Outstanding features include the extent to which associate staff:
- provide support for pupils as part of the 'Nurture' facility in the school;
 - gain additional qualifications in, for example in ICT and numeracy which enables them to deliver classes for parents and write modules for basic skills;
 - continuously learn new skills that enable them to provide, for example, sign language classes;
 - shadow a form tutor and contribute to the management and support of the class as pupils move through the school; and
 - provide extra-curricular activities, especially in sport.
147. Learning support staff members are managed very well and have very clear and complementary roles. They work very effectively as a team to provide very positive learning experiences for pupils with SEN.
148. Overall, the refurbishment of accommodation and addition of new facilities have improved the learning environment significantly. The outstanding Learning Resource Centre and the impressive all-weather pitch and dance studio contribute very positively to pupils' learning. However the quality of some of the toilets in the main block remains an area for improvement.
149. The school has made significant investment in ICT resources since the last inspection. The extensive provision impacts positively on pupils' learning across the key stages. Networked computer rooms are managed effectively and used well.
150. Nearly all classrooms have computers, interactive white boards and projectors. Overall, they are used well by most teachers. Almost all staff members have their own laptop computers.
151. The school Learning Resource Centre is very well managed. It is used extensively by teachers and pupils and offers a good range of fiction and non-fiction books and a wide range of magazines and other resources. In addition, pupils have access to an exceptionally wide range of experiences in writing, presenting and competing that enhance their learning and achievement in the classroom.
152. The school site is managed very well by the site manager. Health and safety issues are addressed quickly and collaboratively with the headteacher and LEA. Overall the site is free of litter and is kept in a good state of repair. A programme for energy conservation has been started successfully.

153. The continuous professional development of managers, teachers and associate staff is outstanding. It is a very high priority in the school and is equally accessible to all staff members. The headteacher delivers a successful middle management course for interested staff. Teachers and associate staff provide regular school-based training of high quality. They also have the opportunity to shadow other members of staff. These are particularly strong features of training in the school. The provision of whole-school training and external courses complement this provision exceptionally well.
154. An increasing number of teachers are applying for grants from the General Teaching Council for Wales to improve and update their skills. Training programmes for newly qualified teachers and those in their early years of teaching are very effective. The school has achieved Investors in People status.
155. Following extensive consultation and by involving all stakeholders, staff restructuring and workforce remodelling have been implemented very successfully. This has been achieved through sensitive handling of a very few minor problems and has raised staff morale overall. The school meets its statutory requirement to provide planning, preparation and assessment time for teachers and ensures that this time is used effectively. It also provides sufficient time for managers at all levels to carry out their roles effectively.
156. Budget preparation and monitoring are rigorous, meticulous and transparent. The School Business Manager in collaboration with the school finance officer Leadership Team, governors and the LEA, oversees all aspects of the budget. Procedures for monitoring and reviewing expenditure and for securing additional funds are outstanding.
157. There are strong links between spending and development plans. The funding of departments is fair, open and transparent and is linked very effectively to priorities for development. Currently, the school has a small budget surplus.
158. The school makes appropriate use of its resources to achieve very good outcomes for its pupils and provides very good value for money.

School's response to the inspection

159. The headteacher, staff, governors and pupils of Blackwood Comprehensive School are delighted that the inspection team found our school to be a "very good school with many outstanding features". We believe that the school has moved forward significantly in many areas since the last inspection in 2003.
160. We are particularly proud of the fact that the percentage of lessons observed which were judged to be grade one lessons (good with outstanding features) was nearly double the comparative figure from all secondary schools inspected in Wales in 2007-2008. The conclusion in the report that "teaching and assessment is of exceptionally high quality" is particularly pleasing.
161. The care of our pupils is very important to us. We are especially pleased to see the comments in the report which relate to the quality of care, support and guidance, the quality of personal support and the provision for pupils with SEN and disabled pupils. It is also very pleasing for us to see the school's values and culture reflected in the report in such a positive way.
162. The report makes reference to a very strong reflective culture in the school. We are extremely pleased that the inspection team agreed with our own grading for all seven key questions, awarding five grade ones and two grade twos.
163. The way in which the staff work as a team was well-documented, in particular the way teachers and associate staff were felt to work so well together for the benefit of our pupils. Our staff and pupils are proud of their school and we are pleased that the report also acknowledges the important contribution made by the governors who, it was felt, show such tremendous drive, enthusiasm and commitment.
164. We agree with the recommendations in the report and, in implementing them, we believe that we will continue to move forward under the leadership of the newly-appointed headteacher from September 2009. The report acknowledges that our current School Development Plan already incorporates many of these recommendations.
165. We would all wish to thank the inspection team, led so capably by Mr Peter Carter, for their highly skilled, rigorous and professional approach throughout the whole inspection process.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Blackwood Comprehensive School
School type	Secondary
Age range of pupils	11-16
Address of school	Ty Isha Terrace, Blackwood
Postcode	NP12 1ER
Telephone number	01495 225566

Headteacher	Mr Michael D Pickard
Date of appointment	September 1999
Chair of governors / Appropriate authority	Mrs Jill Noel
Reporting inspector	Mr Peter Carter
Dates of inspection	27 th – 30 th April 2009

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

Year group	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Total
Number of pupils	199	192	187	189	198	-	-	965

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	49	5	52.4

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	18.4 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	-
Average teaching group size	23.6
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	76.2%

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole school
Term 1	92.6	93.5	91.7	90.5	94.5	-	-	92.6
Term 2	91.9	90.9	88.7	91.0	73.2	-	-	87.6
Term 3	93.2	91.1	90.9	89.0	92.8	-	-	91.4

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	18%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	32 (temporary) 0 (permanent)

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 3:

National Curriculum Assessment KS3 results 2008															
Total number of pupils in Y9: 185															
Percentage of pupils at each level															
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	EP
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	1	0	0	0	1	16	29	30	22	2	0	0
		National	0	1	0.6	1	0.4	2	6	21	37	24	8	0.3	-
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	25	25	22	23	0	0
		National	0	0	0.5	0.5	0.4	1.3	6.7	18.1	28.9	27.5	14.8	1.2	0.1
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	14	32	41	11	0	0
		National	0	0	0.6	0.5	0.2	0.7	5.1	19	35.6	27.2	10.8	0.1	-

- D Pupils excepted under statutory arrangements from part of the National Curriculum
 A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence
 F Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence
 W Pupils who are working towards level 1
 EP Exceptional Performance, where pupils at key stage 3 perform above level 8

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 5 in mathematics, science and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by teacher assessment		by test	
In the school	47.6%	In Wales	59.6%

Pupils aged 15

Number of pupils aged 15 who were on roll in January 2008: 201

Percentage of pupils aged 15 who :

	entered at least one qualification	achieved the Level 1 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE pass in English or Welsh first language and mathematics	Core Subject Indicator (2)	Average wider points score per pupil
School 2007/08	98	87	51	35	35	324
LEA Area 2007/08	98	86	52	41	39	332
Wales 2007/08	98	87	58	46	44	356
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	12	329
School 05/06/07	..	..	..	..	38	328

Number of boys aged 15 who were on roll in January 2008: 103

Percentage of boys aged 15 who :

	entered at least one qualification	achieved the Level 1 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE pass in English or Welsh first language and mathematics	Core Subject Indicator (2)	Average wider points score per pupil
School 2007/08	98	85	46	31	31	309
LEA Area 2007/08	98	82	46	37	35	304
Wales 2007/08	98	84	53	42	41	334
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	11	309
School 05/06/07	..	..	..	..	31	306

Number of girls aged 15 who were on roll in January 2008: 98

Percentage of girls aged 15 who :

	entered at least one qualification	achieved the Level 1 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE pass in English or Welsh first language and mathematics	Core Subject Indicator (2)	Average wider points score per pupil
School 2007/08	97	88	57	40	40	339
LEA Area 2007/08	99	90	58	45	43	359
Wales 2007/08	99	90	63	50	48	379
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	13	348
School 05/06/07	..	..	..	..	44	351

(1) For details on qualifications, point scores and contribution to thresholds, please see guidance at [SSSP guidance](#).

(2) For information about which syllabuses are included in each subject area see Notes for Guidance. For the provisional SSSP this will be the traditional GCSE definition. In the final SSSP, this definition will include a wider range of qualifications.

.. Data not available

Blackwood Comprehensive School

SSSP

Summary of Secondary School Performance (1)

LEA/School No. 676/4046

Pupils aged 15

	Percentage of pupils aged 15 who :		Percentage of boys aged 15 who :		Percentage of girls aged 15 who :	
	achieved one or more ELQ (2) only	Left full time education without a qualification (3)	achieved one or more ELQ (2) only	Left full time education without a qualification (3)	achieved one or more ELQ (2) only	Left full time education without a qualification (3)
School 2007/08	0.5	1.5	0	1.9	1	1
LEA Area 2007/08	2	1.6	2.4	2.2	1.5	1
Wales 2007/08	2.6	1.5	3.4	1.9	1.7	1.2
School 06/07/08	0.7	..	0.3	..	1	..
School 05/06/07	2.3	..	3.1	..	1.4	..

Pupils aged 17

	Number of pupils aged 17 who were on roll in January 2008: 0		Number of boys aged 17 who were on roll in January 2008: 0		Number of girls aged 17 who were on roll in January 2008: 0	
	Percentage of 17 year old pupils entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17	Percentage of 17 year old pupils entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17	Percentage of 17 year old pupils entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17
School 2007/08	0	0	0	0	0	0
LEA Area 2007/08	96	620	94	606	98	629
Wales 2007/08	94	631	93	596	95	659
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	..	..
School 05/06/07	..	..	..	..	..	..

- (1) For details on qualifications, point scores and contribution to thresholds, please see guidance at [SSSP guidance](#).
 (2) Entry Level Qualification
 (3) As defined under the National Performance Indicator EDU/002.
 .. Data not available

Blackwood Comprehensive School
School Type: Secondary
Linguistic Delivery: Bilingual or English
Number of SEN Unit/Special Classes: 0

LEA/School No. 676/4046

Number of Pupils on Roll in NCY 11: 200

Percentage of compulsory school age pupils eligible for FSM 2007/08: 17.0

Percentage of compulsory school age pupils eligible for FSM 06/07/08: 17.4

Percentage of compulsory school age pupils on SEN register: 12.1

Percentage of 15 year old pupils on SEN register: 10

Level of Welsh Bacallaureate Offered:

	Post-16 Pupils			Pre-16 Pupils	
	Advanced	Intermediate	Pilot Foundation	Pilot Intermediate	Pilot Foundation
Welsh Bacallaureate Offered: Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes

. Data not applicable
.. Data not available

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Ten inspectors including a peer assessor and the school's nominee, spent the equivalent of 38 days in the school. They held a meeting before the inspection.

During the inspection, inspectors visited:

- 60 lessons or part lessons;
- registrations, assemblies and form tutor periods in each year group; and
- some extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team met with:

- staff, parents and carers, governors and representatives of the LEA before and during the inspection;
- senior leaders, middle managers, teachers and associate members of staff;
- groups of pupils and students representing each year group; and
- representatives of the school council.

The inspection team also considered:

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- 164 responses to the parents' and carers' questionnaire;
- comprehensive documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection;
- samples of pupils' reports; and
- a range of pupils' work.

After the inspection, inspectors held meetings with senior leaders and governors.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Peter Carter (Registered Inspector)	Context, Summary, Recommendations, KQ1, Appendix
David Williams	KQ2
Clive Rowlands	KQ3
Paul Donovan	KQ4
Ronald Graham	KQ5
Tony Sparks	KQ6
Julia Longville	KQ7
Rhiannon Boardman (Lay Inspector)	Attendance and behaviour
Clifford Smith	Peer Assessor
Sue James	School's nominee

Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the governors, the headteacher, staff and pupils for their co-operation and courtesy during the inspection.

Contractor:

E.L.L.I.S. (Cymru) Ltd.
Unit 1,
Jasmine Enterprise Centre
Treseder Way
Cardiff
CF5 5BQ