

## **Inspection under Section 163 of the Education Act 2002**

**A report on the quality of education in**

**Howell's School  
Cardiff Road, Llandaff  
Cardiff  
CF5 2YD**

**School number: 6816024**

**Date of inspection: 10 to 14 November 2008**

**by Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for  
Education and Training in Wales**

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE**



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- ▲ pupil referral units;
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- ▲ youth support services;
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- ▲ LAs;
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## Introduction

Howell's School, Llandaff was inspected as part of a national programme for the inspection of independent schools under section 163 of the Education Act 2002. The main purpose of inspection under this section is to report on compliance with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003. In schools that provide non-maintained nursery education, this report also satisfies the requirements of Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

In addition, inspection reports identify good features and shortcomings, so that a school may improve the quality of education it offers and raise the standards its pupils achieve. The inspection of all independent schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents information about the performance of their child's school.

The inspection of Howell's School, Llandaff took place between 10 November 2008 and 14 November 2008. A team of inspectors from Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales, undertook the inspection. Estyn is a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales.

The team made its judgements having considered 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. The report is written in accordance with Estyn's Common Inspection Framework (which is available at [www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk)).

Estyn's reports follow its guidance for the writing and editing of reports, which is available on the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk)). The table below shows the terms Estyn uses and a broad idea of their meaning. The table is for guidance only.

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

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

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

## Year groups and key stages

Independent schools use a variety of systems for numbering year groups. This report, however, uses 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 and parents.

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	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
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

Although independent schools are not required to follow the National Curriculum, we use these terms for convenience.

Howell's School, Llandaff includes children in the reception class in key stage 1. In this report, the reception class is included in the sections for children under five.

The sixth form at Howell's School, Llandaff is known as Howell's College. This report refers to it as the college. We refer to learners at Howell's School as pupils and those in the sixth form as students.

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## Context

### The nature of the provider

- 1 Howell's School, Llandaff is an independent day school for girls from the age of three to 18 years and boys from 16 to 18 years. The sixth form is known as Howell's College and has been coeducational since September 2005.
- 2 The school was founded in 1860 by the Drapers' Company. In 1980, Howell's School joined the Girls' Day School Trust (GDST), a charitable organisation that provides independent education in 29 schools across the United Kingdom. Howell's School is the only Welsh school in GDST membership. The GDST is the school's proprietor and most functions of governance are carried out centrally by the GDST Council and chief executive at their headquarters in London. The school also has a board of local governors who provide additional support and advice.
- 3 The school occupies a large site north of Cardiff city centre. The accommodation for the junior and senior schools is on one site that offers a range of specialist facilities and sports grounds. The college shares these facilities and has additional accommodation opposite the school.
- 4 In the last four years, the number of pupils on roll has increased significantly. New premises for the junior school have enabled the department to double the size of its intake and the college expanded with the inclusion of boys. There are currently 22 girls in the nursery, 262 girls in the junior school, 345 girls in the senior school and 236 students in the college, including 82 boys. There are no publicly-funded pupils in the school.
- 5 Pupils travel to the school from a wide area of south Wales that includes Newport, Aberdare and Swansea. Parents organise a range of private bus services to transport pupils to and from the school.
- 6 The school has no religious affiliation. It welcomes pupils from all faiths and none.
- 7 Lessons are taught through the medium of English. One per cent of pupils speak Welsh as their home language. The school does not aim to make pupils bilingual in English and Welsh. A very few pupils speak languages other than English at home, and these include Arabic, Cantonese, Greek, Italian, Korean, Mandarin, Swedish, Indian and Pakistani languages. Almost all of these pupils speak English fluently when they first join the school and very few require additional language support. Fewer than 1% of pupils in the school receive support in learning English as an additional language. About 20% of pupils are from minority ethnic groups.
- 8 Entry to the school is selective. Young children undergo informal assessment to join the nursery or key stage 1. For entry to key stages 2 and 3, children sit entrance tests that include mathematics and English. Entry to the college is dependent upon interview, an entrance examination, GCSE grades and a student's previous school report.

- 9 The school has identified 69 pupils (12%) in the senior school and college, and 44 pupils (15%) in the junior school who need additional learning support.
- 10 Howell's School, Llandaff was last inspected by the Independent Schools Council in March 2000.
- 11 This is the first full inspection by Estyn.

<b>The school's priorities and targets</b>
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- 12 The school's aims are to:
- provide a rich educational experience in both curricular and extra-curricular activities;
  - enable pupils to acquire a range of learning skills and use them effectively;
  - provide and develop a sound knowledge base and competences in a range of subject areas;
  - develop problem-solving and team-working skills;
  - encourage pupils to think and write clearly and constructively; and
  - help them to develop into active and informed citizens.
- 13 In line with the GDST requirements, the school plans its development over a three-year cycle and has recently made its plan for the period from 2008 to 2011. In this development plan the school identifies its main priorities as:
- maintaining and improving pupil numbers;
  - developing effective marketing procedures;
  - creating a playgroup;
  - considering changes to the senior school curriculum; and
  - developing the role of the special needs co-ordinator.

## Summary

- 14 Howell's School, Llandaff meets all of the regulatory requirements to comply with the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

### Tables of grades awarded

- 15 The inspection team judged the school's work as follows:

Key Question	Inspection grade
1 How well do learners achieve?	1
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?	1
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	1

### Standards of achievement

- 16 Overall, pupils' standards of achievement in the lessons inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
44%	53%	3%	0%	0%

- 17 The percentage of lessons in which standards are grade 2 or better is well above the proportion of lessons at grade 2 or better in independent schools inspected by Estyn last year, as reported in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales Annual Report for 2006-2007.

### The standards for the under-fives are as follows:

Area of learning	Grade
Language, literacy and communication	1
Personal and social development	1
Mathematical development	1
Knowledge and understanding of the world	1
Creative development	1
Physical development	1

**The grades awarded in the subjects inspected are as follows:**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Key stage 1</b>	<b>Key stage 2</b>	<b>Key stage 3</b>	<b>Key stage 4</b>	<b>Sixth form</b>
English	1	1	1	1	1
Welsh second language	2	2	1	1	1
Mathematics	2	2	1	1	1
Science	2	2	1	n/a	n/a
Biology	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1
Chemistry	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1
Physics	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	2
Information technology	2	2	1	1	2
Design technology	2	2	1	1	1
Modern foreign languages	n/a	n/a <sup>1</sup>	1	1	1
History	2	2	1	1	1
Geography	2	2	1	1	1
Art	2	1	1	1	1
Music	2	1	2	1	1
Physical education	2	2	2	1	n/a
Religious education	2	2	1	1	1
Business studies	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1
Classics	n/a	n/a	2	1	1
Drama	n/a	n/a	2	2	1
Government and politics	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2

- 18 Overall, pupils in all sections of the school make at least good progress across the areas of learning and subjects they study. Children under five, pupils in key stage 4 and students in the college make outstanding progress in almost all areas of the curriculum.
- 19 Children under five achieve very good standards in each of the six areas of learning.
- 20 In key stage 4 and the college, pupils attain GCSE and A level examination results that are in line with results gained in the highest attaining schools in Wales.
- 21 Throughout the school, pupils display outstanding features in their work including:
- extensive understanding, recall and application of techniques and skills in the subjects they study;
  - ability to take the knowledge and skills they have learned in one topic and apply it in new contexts, for example to solve problems; and
  - high levels of informed and perceptive questioning to develop their understanding further.
- 22 Most pupils succeed regardless of their backgrounds. Throughout the school, pupils with additional learning needs make good and often very good progress.

<sup>1</sup> There were no observations of lessons in modern foreign languages in key stage 2.

- 23 By the end of each key stage, almost all pupils have made very good progress in acquiring the skills necessary to move to the next stage of learning.
- 24 Throughout the school, standards of speaking, listening, reading and numeracy are very good. Most pupils write very well, producing work of high quality.
- 25 Children under five have very well-developed information and communications technology (ICT) skills. Most older learners use ICT confidently and undertake effective research using the internet.
- 26 In all key stages, the personal, social and learning skills of most pupils are particularly well-developed. Pupils of all ages are highly motivated, apply themselves conscientiously to their work and work together effectively. Most of them behave extremely well.
- 27 Levels of attendance are good throughout the school. In most cases, pupils' punctuality is exemplary although, in a few isolated cases, a very small number of college students arrive late for lessons without good reason.

### **The quality of education and training**

- 28 The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was judged as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
38%	56%	6%	0%	0%

- 29 The percentage of lessons in which the quality of teaching is grade 2 or better is well above the proportion of lessons at grade 2 or better in independent schools as reported in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales Annual Report 2006-2007.
- 30 Lessons with outstanding features occurred throughout the school and college, and in subjects across the curriculum. In key stage 4 and the college, 97% of lessons were judged grade 2 or better, with over 44% of lessons at grade 1. In key stage 3, 89% of lessons were grade 2 or better, with a third of these awarded grade 1. In the junior school, 92% of lessons were grade 2 or better, with a quarter awarded grade 1. All the lessons observed during the inspection in the under-fives' classes had outstanding features.
- 31 Working relationships between staff and pupils are outstanding and provide a vibrant climate for effective learning. Other outstanding features in teaching include:
- very effective questioning that encourages pupils to think carefully and deeply about their work;
  - a wide range of teaching methods that match pupils' individual needs very well and set high expectations and challenging, yet achievable, targets;

- encouraging active involvement and participation in discussion and practical work with excellent use of information and communications technology to support and develop learning; and
  - excellent knowledge, understanding and application of course and examination requirements.
- 32 The school makes very good use of assessment information to adapt teaching to ensure that pupils can achieve their best. In most departments, staff mark work carefully and make constructive comments to improve standards to ensure that pupils understand how they can improve.
- 33 The school provides annual reports to parents of very good quality. These provide clear judgements about pupils' achievements and progress. The individual targets set for pupils across the school and college are based securely on teachers' considered assessments. Interim reports are less detailed and occasionally do not provide a clear enough picture of what steps a learner needs to take to ensure good progress.
- 34 The school offers a rich and broadly balanced curriculum, particularly in key stage 4 and in the college. Pupils have a wide range of subject choices at GCSE and A level. The outstanding programme of extra-curricular clubs and activities significantly enhances learning opportunities and experiences for all pupils. Provision to raise pupils' awareness of Welsh culture and heritage is outstanding. The excellent provision in the nursery encourages children to become independent learners.
- 35 The school provides outstanding opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and also their personal and social development through assemblies, well-planned lessons and charity events.
- 36 The provision of information and events to inform pupils about higher education opportunities and careers are outstanding. A notable feature is the involvement of pupils from key stage 2 in careers events, which raises their awareness and expectations.
- 37 There are many outstanding features in the quality of care, guidance and support for pupils. Among these are the systems for academic and pastoral support for pupils of all abilities across the school.
- 38 Induction and transition procedures in the primary and senior sections of the school and in the college are outstanding. Pupils of all ages confirm that they are made to feel a valued part of the school community very quickly, regardless of when they join the school.
- 39 The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme is well embedded throughout the school. It is comprehensive and very well planned. There are appropriate child protection procedures that are clearly understood by staff.

- 40 There are many outstanding features in the quality of the provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). These pupils have full access to the curriculum and support for them is effective and appropriately managed.
- 41 Pupils for whom English is not their first language make very good progress towards becoming confident and fluent English speakers.
- 42 The quality of the provision for equal opportunities has outstanding features. The school has very high expectations for pupils of all abilities and everyone is encouraged to become fully integrated into the life of the school. The school is very successful in promoting tolerance, mutual respect and understanding between pupils from diverse backgrounds.
- 43 Although the school has many outstanding features in the quality of education and training it provides, there are a very small number of shortcomings. These include:
- too much emphasis on provision for literacy and numeracy in the junior school and not enough time for other subjects; and
  - in key stage 3, the short length of single lessons can restrict topic development, particularly in creative subjects.

### **Leadership and management**

- 44 The school has very clear aims and objectives that are well understood and shared by everyone. The principal and her deputy provide outstanding leadership. They work well together and give the school a strong sense of purpose and direction. They are highly respected by the school community. It is clear that all staff are highly valued and this is an outstanding feature.
- 45 The school's management systems are outstanding. Senior leaders in each section of the school and college understand their roles and responsibilities very well. There is excellent communication between all sections of the school.
- 46 The school arranges regular, purposeful meetings for a range of staff across all departments and at all levels. These provide significant opportunities for staff to communicate and review their practice together.
- 47 The school receives very good support from a large team of administrative and premises staff who fulfil their duties efficiently and effectively. The school's maintenance and improvement programme is very well managed.
- 48 The school has well-documented, appropriate policies and procedures for relevant aspects of school life and these are well known by all staff.
- 49 The GDST provides outstanding support for the school that includes advice about health and safety, legal matters, employment and premises. The GDST monitors all aspects of the school carefully and has close knowledge of its strengths and areas for development. The local school governors are well informed about the school on local and national levels and provide very good support for the school.

- 50 The school makes appropriate arrangements for staff appraisal that include regular lesson observations by senior staff. The school gives staff very good opportunities to attend training courses either arranged by the GDST or by local providers.
- 51 The school carries out systematic and rigorous self-evaluation. The process is well established across the school and is an outstanding feature. The school's self-evaluation report accurately identifies the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The inspection team agrees with the school's own judgements about its performance.
- 52 The school's strategic development plan is a well thought out document that identifies clear priorities and ensures that there are appropriate resources to support its plans. The junior school has gathered useful and detailed information but there are too many targets and the plan needs refining to identify clear priorities for improvement in the department.
- 53 The school has made very good progress in implementing the recommendations from the previous inspection.
- 54 The teaching staff are well qualified and a large number have higher degree qualifications. There are enough leadership, teaching and support staff for the school to function effectively. There is an appropriate level of technical, learning-support and administrative staff who provide an excellent service to the school.
- 55 The school has extensive resources and facilities of high quality. In particular, library resources are outstanding. The school has made a significant investment in ICT resources since the last inspection. Nearly all teaching rooms have projectors and whiteboards, many of which are interactive. These are used very well by teachers and pupils alike.
- 56 There are good resources to support independent learning, including the school's virtual learning portal. Although its potential is not yet fully realised, the portal is developing at a good rate.
- 57 Overall, there is very good accommodation in the school. The school is housed in buildings that are attractive, well maintained and in good decorative order throughout. Displays in all areas of the school are lively and stimulating and they support pupils' learning extremely well.
- 58 The school, in liaison with the GDST, manages its financial resources very well. There is a clear link between financial planning and the priorities identified in the strategic development plan. The school's budget is subject to regular internal and external audit.
- 59 The school makes appropriate use of its resources to achieve very good outcomes for its pupils and provides value for money.

**Compliance with the regulations for registration**

**The quality of education provided by the school**

60 The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

**The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

61 The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

**Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

62 The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

**The suitability of proprietors and staff**

63 The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

**Premises of and boarding accommodation at schools**

64 The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

**The provision of information**

65 The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

**The manner in which complaints are to be handled**

66 The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

## Recommendations

- 67 In order to improve the school further, the staff and proprietors should:
- R1 consider reviewing the time allocation for foundation subjects in key stages 1, 2 and 3; and
  - R2 evaluate the information gathered through monitoring in the junior school so as to prioritise key areas for improvement and raise good standards to an even higher level.
- 68 Estyn advises the proprietor to amend its current development plan to show what action the school intends to take in response to the recommendations. It is also advisable to circulate this plan, or a summary of it, to all parents at the school.

## Standards

### Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

- 69 In its self-evaluation report, the school awarded this key question a grade 1. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school.
- 70 Overall, pupils' standards of achievement in the lessons inspected throughout the school are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
44%	53%	3%	0%	0%

- 71 The percentage of lessons in which standards are grade 2 or better is well above the proportion of lessons at grade 2 or better in independent schools inspected by Estyn last year, as reported in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales Annual Report for 2006-2007.
- 72 Children under five achieve very good standards in the six areas of learning. These children speak clearly and confidently and have secure understanding of number processes that is outstanding for their age. They have very well-developed knowledge of the world around them. They listen attentively, are polite and behave well.
- 73 In key stages 1 and 2, there are outstanding features in the standards pupils achieve in about one-quarter of lessons. There are outstanding features in the standards pupils achieve in about one-third of lessons at key stage 3 and in slightly more than half of lessons in key stage 4 and in the college.
- 74 The grades awarded for standards in the subjects inspected appear in the earlier summary section of the report. Standards are at least good with no important shortcomings in all subjects in key stages 1 and 2. There are outstanding features in English in both key stages 1 and 2 and in art and music in key stage 2.
- 75 In the senior school and college, there are outstanding features in nearly all subjects in key stage 4, and in many subjects, including English and mathematics, in key stage 3 and the college.
- 76 By the end of each key stage, almost all pupils have made very good progress in acquiring the skills necessary to move to the next stage of learning. In the junior school, pupils improve their performance significantly in standardised tests in English, mathematics and science during their time at the school.
- 77 In key stage 4 and the college, pupils make particularly good progress in acquiring the knowledge and skills needed for external examinations. There are no significant differences in achievement between girls and boys in the college. Results at both

GCSE and A level in recent years are very good and are in line with those of the highest attaining schools in Wales.

- 78 At GCSE, the percentage of pupils gaining five or more A\* to C grades has been above 95% for the last three years. This is well above the average of around 54% for all schools in Wales. High numbers of pupils attain A\* or A grades at GCSE in many subjects. In each of the last three years, more than 66% of passes have been at A\*/A grades. These results represent very good achievement for these pupils. In many subjects, pupils make very good progress relative to their prior attainment when compared with all pupils of the same age.
- 79 At A level over the last three years, the percentage of students attaining two or more A-C grades has been between 93% and 97%. This compares with the Wales average of between 67% and 73%. The percentage of passes at grades A and B has been consistently above 77%. This is well above the average for Wales of 50%. These results represent very good achievement for these students.
- 80 At the end of Year 11, almost all pupils go on to post-16 studies at Howell's College or appropriate courses elsewhere. After completing their A levels, most college students go to university.
- 81 Throughout the school, and particularly in key stage 4 and the college, pupils display outstanding features in their work including:
- extensive understanding, recall and application of relevant concepts, techniques and skills in the subjects they study;
  - ability to take the knowledge and skills they have learned in one topic and apply it in new contexts, for example to solve problems and understand new concepts; and
  - high levels of informed and perceptive questioning to further develop their understanding.
- 82 Most pupils succeed regardless of their backgrounds. Throughout the school, pupils with additional learning needs make good and often very good progress.
- 83 Pupils of all ages have excellent communication skills. At all key stages and in the college, they listen intently, concentrate well to absorb instructions and the advice and opinions of others, and acquire a very well-developed understanding of topics introduced. Most pupils speak with considerable assurance. Many are very articulate and use an extensive range of vocabulary, for example when making presentations to the class. They use technical terminology well in many subjects.
- 84 Most pupils read fluently, and with very good expression and understanding. Most of them write very well. In many subjects, they produce extended work of high quality and often use language imaginatively. In their GCSE coursework in subjects such as English and history, the most able pupils produce well-structured and balanced analyses. Most pupils generally spell accurately and use punctuation and grammar well.

- 85 Most pupils have well-developed numeracy skills that they apply effectively and accurately in charts, graphs and tables, or to analyse statistical data in subjects such as science, business studies, geography and history to record their findings. However, they do not develop these skills consistently across all areas of the curriculum.
- 86 Pupils use information and communications technology (ICT) very well to enhance their work. Children under five have very well-developed ICT skills. In key stages 3 and 4 and in the college, most pupils develop these skills in a sustained way across the curriculum. These pupils use ICT confidently for example, to create spreadsheets, produce audio-visual presentations and undertake effective research using the internet. Many pupils use word-processing confidently to complete homework, and to improve the quality of coursework. Pupils with special educational needs use ICT well to support their learning.
- 87 The personal, social and learning skills of most pupils throughout the school and college are particularly well developed. Pupils of all ages work together very well, for example in pairs or small groups, to discuss issues and tackle problems, to carry out scientific experiments, to participate in role play activities or debates and to produce presentations.
- 88 In all key stages and the college, most pupils behave extremely well. They are courteous and well mannered, and they relate well to other pupils and their teachers. Most pupils are very highly motivated, apply themselves conscientiously to their work, take considerable care over presentation and show great persistence in completing tasks. Most key stage 4 pupils and college students organise their files well and produce comprehensive and generally well-structured notes. In the senior school and college, most pupils develop particularly good independent learning skills. In subjects such as history and geography, these learners undertake extensive research that greatly enhances their knowledge and understanding of the topics they study.
- 89 In subjects such as history and religious education, many pupils' ability to reflect and evaluate the quality of their own work and that of others is particularly effective in helping them develop the capacity to construct excellent responses to examination questions.
- 90 Most pupils have particularly well-developed thinking, analytical and problem-solving skills.
- 91 Many pupils show good awareness and respect for diversity.
- 92 Pupils take leadership responsibility conscientiously and effectively. For example, they regularly organise school events, assist with drafting school policies, support their peers through a well-designed buddy system and participate in extensive community service activities.
- 93 Levels of attendance are good throughout the school. In most cases, pupils' punctuality is exemplary although, in a few isolated cases, a very few college students arrive late for lessons without good reason.

## The quality of education and training

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

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

94 In its self-evaluation report, the school awarded this key question a grade 1. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school.

95 The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
38%	56%	6%	0%	0%

96 The percentage of lessons in which the quality of teaching is grade 2 or better is significantly above the proportion of lessons at grade 2 or better in independent schools as reported in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales Annual Report 2006-2007.

97 Lessons with outstanding features occur throughout the school and college and in subjects across the curriculum. In key stage 4 and the college, 97% of lessons were judged grade 2 or better with over 44% of lessons at grade 1. In key stage 3, 89% of lessons were grade 2 or better, with a third of these awarded grade 1. In the junior school, 92% of lessons were grade 2 or better, with a quarter awarded grade 1. All the lessons the team observed in the under-fives' classes had outstanding features.

98 The excellent relationships between staff, pupils and students, founded on mutual trust and respect, provide a vibrant climate for learning. Excellent subject knowledge and first-class teaching skills inspire learners to succeed. Other outstanding features in teaching include:

- very effective questioning that encourages pupils to think carefully and deeply about their work, consider different viewpoints and offer extended answers;
- first-rate application of a wide range of teaching methods that are well tailored to pupils' and students' individual needs, and set high expectations and challenging, yet achievable, targets;
- active involvement and participation in discussion and practical work, and excellent use of information and communications technology to support and develop learning; and
- excellent knowledge, understanding and application of course and examination requirements.

- 99 The consistently good features in teaching include:
- well-planned and well-prepared lessons with clear and relevant learning objectives;
  - use of a wide range of interesting resources;
  - lessons conducted at a lively and brisk pace, with time managed well and good opportunities for pupils to work individually, in pairs and in groups;
  - appropriate use of praise and encouragement to build pupils' and students' confidence; and
  - well-planned homework that builds on learning in lessons.
- 100 Learning support staff provide valuable support for learners.
- 101 In a very few lessons, there are minor shortcomings in teaching, albeit outweighed by good features. These are where:
- more able pupils are not fully challenged by the work set because they all have the same targets;
  - pupils do not have enough opportunity to think through solutions to problems or develop their investigative skills independently; and
  - the pace of lessons is uneven and planned work is not always completed.
- 102 The overall quality of assessment is good with outstanding features. Throughout the senior school and college, pupils' and students' achievements and progress are regularly assessed through tests and marking of their work. The school makes excellent use of the information gained to adapt teaching to ensure that pupils can achieve their best. Staff are consistent in carrying out rigorous moderation within their departments and are careful to ensure that examination board requirements are fully met.
- 103 In classes for children under five, staff assess children in all six areas of learning thoroughly. In the junior school, pupils are regularly tested and assessed in reading, writing, mathematics and science, and teachers use the results to identify and support those who may be falling behind. Although useful, this is not always refined enough to meet the needs of all pupils, especially those with specific learning difficulties or the more able.
- 104 In most departments, staff mark work carefully and make constructive comments to ensure that pupils are very well informed about their next steps in learning. Departments share effective strategies well to encourage the use of the very best practice across the school.
- 105 In the senior school and college, most learners are very well aware of their personal targets. They regularly take part in self-assessment and peer assessment exercises, often demonstrating commendable frankness and realism in identifying the way forward.

106 The school provides annual reports to parents of very good quality. These provide clear judgements about pupils' and students' achievements and progress. The individual targets set for pupils across the school and college are securely based on teachers' considered assessments. Interim reports are less detailed and occasionally do not provide a clear enough picture of what steps a learner needs to take to ensure good progress.

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

**Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

- 107 In its self-evaluation report, the school awarded this key question a grade 1. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school.
- 108 Overall the school offers a rich and broadly balanced curriculum. The curriculum contributes very effectively to the achievement of the school's aims and prepares pupils well for the next stages of their education and the world of work. The school works hard to ensure that all its pupils have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum.
- 109 In the nursery, younger pupils are encouraged to become independent learners through the provision of a good range of interesting and challenging experiences. This provides a strong foundation for future learning.
- 110 Pupils in the junior school study a wide range of subjects. All pupils benefit from specialist teaching in Welsh, music, swimming and art. There are additional opportunities for all pupils in Year 6 to study French, German and Spanish.
- 111 In the senior school, pupils have appropriate opportunities to study all National Curriculum subjects to GCSE. In Year 7, pupils study French and either German, Spanish or Welsh until Year 9. In addition, all pupils study Latin in Year 8. At key stage 4, there is a high degree of flexibility in the GCSE option blocks, and all pupils have the opportunity to study at least one language. The school makes good provision for a very few pupils who speak Welsh as a home language to take GCSE, AS and A level courses.
- 112 In the college, students have a wide range of subject choices and may continue to study options from all GCSE subjects to AS and A level as well as opt for additional courses, for example government and politics. These students are also encouraged to take physical education (PE) in line with the school's aim to support healthy life styles. The college provides very good opportunities for students to progress to a wide range of higher education courses.
- 113 Careful curriculum planning ensures that pupils develop their knowledge and understanding progressively as they move through the school. Provision for the effective development of pupils' key skills is a particularly strong feature in the senior school and the college.

- 114 Provision to raise pupils' awareness of Welsh culture and heritage is outstanding. There is an annual whole school Eisteddfod and the school has also achieved notable success in the National Urdd Eisteddfod. Visits, visitors, residential experiences and links with schools in Brittany and Patagonia are well planned and ensure that pupils at all levels have excellent opportunities to develop their understanding of other places in the world.
- 115 The school provides an outstanding programme of extra-curricular clubs and activities that significantly enhances learning opportunities and experiences for all pupils. Provision covers a wide range of sporting, academic and musical activities. Pupils across the school have many opportunities to perform in productions and concerts of high quality. There are also excellent opportunities for pupils to participate in competitions and awards including a varied range of activities the GDST organises for its member schools. Pupils also benefit from taking part in national events, such as the UK Mathematics Challenge and National Literacy Quiz.
- 116 Extra-curricular opportunities and standards in physical education and sport are outstanding. Standards in competitive fixtures are very high, and a large number of pupils go on to gain county, regional and national representative honours in a wide range of sports.
- 117 The school provides outstanding opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and also their personal and social development. Assemblies and areas of the curriculum, such as English, geography, history, Welsh, art and music, make a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Throughout the school, pupils are involved in organising charitable events and fund raising, often through their own initiative, that enable them to appreciate the importance of caring for others. Provision ensures that they can develop an excellent awareness of the responsibilities and challenges that they will increasingly face as they mature.
- 118 Provision to promote pupils' understanding of education for sustainable development and global citizenship is outstanding, particularly in geography and personal, social and health education (PSHE). The work of the Envision<sup>2</sup> and Interact<sup>3</sup> groups has raised the awareness of all pupils and has enabled the school to achieve fair trade status. The school has also achieved the bronze Eco Award through its provision for recycling and energy saving schemes.
- 119 The curriculum takes very good account of employers' needs with the school having achieved the Careers Wales Quality Award and the Work-Related Education Award for excellent provision. The school uses the expertise of parents and former students effectively to provide careers support through the Parents' Development Committee and the GDST's Minerva<sup>4</sup> network.

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<sup>2</sup> The Envision group of older pupils develops social and environmental projects identified by its members and aims to achieve positive change and inspire those around them, with their collective capacity, to make a real difference.

<sup>3</sup> The Interact group has members from Years 11-13, and arranges events to support charitable projects such as Rotary initiatives.

<sup>4</sup> An interactive website for members of the Minerva Network, the club for all former pupils of GDST schools

- 120 Parents make contributions of high quality to annual careers conventions. More able and talented pupils from key stage 2 also attend such events, which raises their awareness of their potential and expectations for future careers. The school also takes part in the Young Enterprise business scheme and a group of Year 10 pupils recently won the scheme's Best Company Administration award.
- 121 Although the school has many outstanding features in the quality of education and training it provides, there are a very small number of shortcomings. These include:
- too much emphasis on provision for literacy and numeracy in the junior school and not enough time for other subjects, for example history, geography and creative subjects; and
  - in key stage 3, the short length of single lessons can restrict topic development, particularly in creative subjects.

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

<b>Grade 1: Good with outstanding features</b>
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- 122 In its self-evaluation report, the school awarded this key question a grade 1. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school.
- 123 There are many outstanding features in the quality of care, guidance and support for pupils. Among these are the comprehensive and firmly embedded systems for academic and pastoral support for pupils of all abilities across the school. These include a buddy system in the junior school and peer support teams and mentoring in the senior school and college.
- 124 There is mutual respect between teachers, pupils and students. Form tutors play an active and effective role in supporting pupils. Heads of year, school and college take prompt and sensitive action on any matter referred to them by pupils, teachers or parents. Subject teachers are very supportive and approachable. Pupils in all key stages and in the college speak highly of the care they receive.
- 125 There is very good communication with parents. This is through daily, informal contact, regular formal contact and through the large number of regular newsletters for parents in all sections of the school. Pupils have high regard for the long-established school council. It is an effective and thoughtful body of young people, which makes a positive contribution to the life of the school. Senior managers and pupils confirm that the council has influenced school practice positively on a number of occasions. For example, maps are now displayed around the school to help new pupils find their way around, and the school has made changes to school meals and uniform.
- 126 Form tutors, and heads of year and heads of school give valuable, unbiased advice about the courses pupils can follow in key stage 4 and in the college. This guidance benefits from the outstanding work of the careers department. The school provides excellent guidance and support for students' university entrance applications.

- 127 Induction and transition procedures in the primary and senior sections of the school and in the college are outstanding. Pupils of all ages confirm that they feel a valued part of the school community very quickly, regardless of when they join the school. A significant number of pupils join key stage 3 and the college from other schools. Although the school does not have frequent, formal contact with the large number of schools from which these pupils come, it makes every effort to prepare pupils well for the transition through a range of taster days and visits.
- 128 The PSHE programme is well embedded throughout the school. It is comprehensive and well planned. There are appropriate policies and procedures that contribute very well to the personal development, health and well-being of all pupils. These include detailed policies for the promotion of good behaviour and the prevention of bullying. There is an excellent range of healthy food options for pupils at lunch time, and most pupils make predominantly healthy choices. The school monitors pupils' attendance and punctuality well and maintains attendance and admissions registers correctly.
- 129 The school has appropriate child protection procedures that all staff know and understand. The designated officers and all staff receive annual training to reinforce awareness and good practice. Procedures for conducting, monitoring and updating risk assessments are very robust. The GDST oversees the arrangements and the school business manager ensures the smooth operation of systems effectively, for example to notify staff about any safety alerts, administer annual reviews and prepare action plans.
- 130 The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). The expertise, vision and drive of the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) ensures that support for the small number of identified pupils is effective and is appropriately managed.
- 131 Communication between staff to support pupils with additional learning needs is an outstanding feature of the school's provision. Information about individual pupils is up-to-date and easily accessible. All subject teachers know which pupils need additional support as well as the specific support they require. Teachers monitor and track pupils' progress systematically and effectively.
- 132 There are very successful partnerships with external agencies that provide helpful specialist support for individuals as required. The Dyslexia Satellite Unit in the school is used very well in an advisory and specialist capacity throughout the school.
- 133 Pupils for whom English is not their first language make very good, quick progress towards becoming confident and fluent English speakers. They are actively involved in evaluating their own progress and setting their own learning targets. All subject teachers are aware of the individuals' needs. These teachers plan and adapt the nature and variety of activities within subjects very well to suit these learners' needs.
- 134 The quality of the provision for equal opportunities is good with outstanding features. The school has very high expectations for pupils of all abilities. All pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school. Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress in physical education in all key stages.

- 135 The school considers gender equality to be important in empowering pupils to raise their expectations of their potential. It provides good opportunities through its careers programme for them to be aware of possibilities that they might not otherwise consider. For example, girls have recently taken up work placements in the construction industry.
- 136 The school promotes race equality appropriately. Issues of racial and social equality are explored and discussed through the PSHE programme, lessons in several subjects and in assemblies. The many pupils from the wide range of ethnic backgrounds are well integrated in all areas and activities in the school and value each other's cultures, values and traditions. The school is successful in promoting mutual respect and celebrating the diversity of pupils' backgrounds. Pupils are enthusiastic and committed to supporting local, national and international charities. This reinforces the school's vision of promoting diversity and respect for all members of its community.
- 137 Pupils report that incidents of oppressive behaviour are rare and are confident that staff deal with any issues quickly and effectively.
- 138 In 2003, the school carried out a detailed audit of its provision for disabled pupils and prepared a detailed development plan, which has appropriate targets to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.
- 139 The school meets all of the Welfare, Health and Safety Standards as required by the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003 and implements its stated procedures appropriately.

## Leadership and management

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

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

- 140 In its self-evaluation report, the school awarded this key question a grade 1. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school.
- 141 There are outstanding features in many aspects of the school's leadership and management. As a result, the school achieves very high standards in almost all aspects of its work.
- 142 The school has very clear aims and objectives that are well understood and shared by everyone. The principal and her deputy provide outstanding leadership. They work well together, give the school a strong sense of purpose and direction and are very highly respected by the school community. They have a close working knowledge of the school and know its staff and pupils very well as individuals. The positive atmosphere encourages new staff and pupils to settle into routines quickly.
- 143 The school's management systems are outstanding. Senior leaders in each section of the school and college understand their roles and responsibilities very well. They delegate responsibility to senior and middle managers to run their departments effectively and there is confidence and consistency across the school in the use of the school's appraisal, monitoring and evaluation procedures. There is excellent communication between all sections of the school. Carefully planned day-to-day arrangements allow middle managers to develop their teams appropriately.
- 144 The school arranges regular, purposeful meetings for a range of staff across all departments and at all levels. These provide significant opportunities for staff to communicate and review their practice together. The school makes appropriate records of meetings, has extremely well-developed systems for sharing information and makes particularly good use of electronic communication. As a result, staff are very well informed about individual pupils' needs, day-to-day matters and all aspects of school life.
- 145 Staff are highly valued and the arrangements for promoting opportunities for them to share their views is an outstanding feature of the school. For example, the 'Well-Being' committee, with representatives of support, teaching and administrative staff, ensures that even the smallest matters raised by staff are brought to senior managers' attention and there are many examples of positive action taken.
- 146 The school receives very good support from a large team of administrative and premises staff who fulfil their duties efficiently and effectively. The school's maintenance and improvement programme is very well-managed. The school business manager and middle managers build a positive culture where members of their teams are highly valued and there is a strong emphasis on their staff's importance to the school and the GDST. This is an outstanding feature that reinforces the school's overall sense of purpose.

- 147 The school has highly-developed, well-documented, appropriate policies and procedures for relevant aspects of school life and these are well known by all staff. They are reviewed regularly. The school's website provides detailed and up-to-date information for parents.
- 148 The school works effectively with a range of partners, for example to extend the provision of its range of extra-curricular activities and to give pupils a variety of off-site opportunities. It provides teacher training opportunities for students from the University of Wales Institute Cardiff.
- 149 The GDST provides outstanding support for the school that includes advice about health and safety, legal matters, employment and premises. The GDST monitors all aspects of the school carefully and has close knowledge of its strengths and areas for development. It provides a range of conferences and professional development courses of good quality for managers, teachers and ancillary staff. These opportunities enable staff at all levels to meet regularly with colleagues from other GDST schools to discuss and share good practice.
- 150 The school local governors are well-informed about the school and provide very good support. The chair of governors works closely with the principal and the GDST to provide effective communication with the organisation and its other schools. The GDST provides a good range of training courses for governors.
- 151 The school makes appropriate arrangements for staff appraisal, including regular lesson observations by senior staff. Teachers complete an annual self review, discuss the review with their heads of department and set appropriate targets for development. The principal monitors the appraisal process carefully and is well informed about the personal and developmental targets for individual teachers. The school gives staff very good opportunities to attend training courses either arranged by the GDST or by local providers.
- 152 The school has effective induction procedures for all new staff, particularly newly-qualified teachers (NQTs). The school makes appropriate arrangements for NQTs to complete their training to gain full qualified teacher status. They meet formally with the deputy principal on a regular basis to discuss school procedures. These meetings are well documented and topics discussed are relevant to new teachers' needs.
- 153 The school meets all the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

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

**Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

- 154 In its self-evaluation report, the school awarded this key question a grade 1. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in all of the seven key questions.

- 155 The systematic and rigorous self-evaluation process, well established across the school, is an outstanding feature. The school has involved all stakeholders in the development of an evaluative and comprehensive self-evaluation report. This report accurately identifies the schools' strengths and areas for improvement.
- 156 The principal and the senior leadership team have an excellent overview of the performance of all areas of the school. The school uses the information gained from the self-evaluation process very effectively to set targets for improvement.
- 157 The self-evaluation report uses a wide range of evidence to support its judgements. This evidence includes the annual departmental reviews, stakeholder consultation outcomes, examination attainment data, analyses of trends and comparisons with a group of similar GDST schools.
- 158 All departments have produced a self-evaluation report. Most are evaluative, concise and based on appropriate evidence reports. However, a few do not focus enough on standards.
- 159 The well-embedded and rigorous monitoring of departments by senior managers is an outstanding feature. The school uses a wide range of data very effectively to review performance critically and identify priorities and targets for improvement. This includes using examination attainment data, first-hand evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of work and pupil trails. Information from department reviews contributes to the whole school self-evaluation and the strategic development plan.
- 160 The partnership with governors and the GDST in self-evaluation is an outstanding feature. Both parties perform a critical role in challenging and supporting the school to secure its continual improvement. The school consults pupils, parents and staff about its work and takes these views into account when planning improvements. The open dialogue with parents has resulted in a very low incidence of parental complaints. Staff, parent and pupil forums are well established. Senior managers consider all recommendations carefully and take appropriate action.
- 161 All staff are involved in the self-evaluation process and fully understand their contribution to school improvement. The school's virtual learning portal provides good support for the strong communication that has contributed to effective whole-school self-evaluation and development planning.
- 162 Self-evaluation is firmly embedded within the strategic planning process of the school. The strategic development plan is a well thought out document which successfully contextualises the school's five main priorities. This document includes key milestones and measureable success criteria, which enable the school to review progress and establish whether improvements have been achieved.
- 163 The school has clear priorities for development and ensures that there are appropriate resources to support these. However, the method of allocating resources to departments annually does not allow departments to communicate longer-term requirements except for significant capital projects.

- 164 The school has made very good progress in implementing the recommendations from the previous inspection. This progress includes:
- the inclusion of an additional report for all parents followed by a target-setting discussion at parents' evenings;
  - an annual review and monitoring of the homework policy;
  - the introduction of drama and design technology in the Year 9 curriculum; and
  - the widening of strategies to promote independent learning skills.
- 165 The school has made good progress in developing the role of middle managers. All departments have consistently implemented the school policy for self-evaluation.
- 166 The junior school has gathered detailed information about subjects through self-evaluation but has identified too many targets for improvement and these are not prioritised clearly enough.

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

<b>Grade 1: Good with outstanding features</b>
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- 167 In its self-evaluation report, the school awarded this key question a grade 1. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school.
- 168 The teaching staff are well qualified and a large number have higher degree qualifications. Many members of staff are examiners or moderators for various examination boards. There are enough leadership, teaching and support staff for the school to function extremely effectively.
- 169 The school deploys its staff appropriately. The planning of the timetable and the provision of extensive extra-curricular activities take good account of the strengths and interests of staff and departmental teams. There is enough leadership and non-contact time built in across all key stages of the school to ensure that staff can attend to all of their responsibilities well.
- 170 There is an appropriate level of technical, learning support and administrative staff who provide an excellent service to the school. There is a dedicated support teacher in the Welsh department who provides additional oral work to help pupils to improve their speaking skills.
- 171 The school has extensive resources and facilities of high-quality. In particular, the library resources in each section of the school are outstanding.
- 172 The funding of departments in the senior school and college are generous and are well-aligned with departmental priorities via a bid-based system. Nearly all departments have enough resources of good quality, to engage and stimulate learning and to meet course requirements fully.

- 173 The school has made a significant investment in ICT resources since the last inspection. This includes wireless laptop computers which are used extensively in lessons. Nearly all teaching rooms have projectors and whiteboards, many of which are interactive. These are used very well by teachers and pupils alike.
- 174 There are good resources to support independent learning, including the school's virtual learning portal. Although its potential is not yet fully realised, the portal is developing at a good rate.
- 175 Overall, the quality of accommodation in the school is very good. The school is housed in buildings that are attractive, well maintained and in good decorative order throughout. The relatively new junior school building provides outstanding accommodation. The school benefits from specialist on-site facilities such as the swimming pool and dedicated music block. Displays in all areas of the school are lively and stimulating, and support pupils' learning extremely well.
- 176 The school, in liaison with the GDST, manages its financial resources very well. There is a clear link between financial planning and the priorities identified in the strategic development plan. The school's budget is subject to regular internal and external audit.
- 177 Despite this very positive picture, there are a very small number of shortcomings in resources. These include:
- a shortage of outdoor play equipment in the junior school; and
  - a lack of additional technical facilities, such as a sound system for drama, in the senior school and college.
- 178 The school makes appropriate use of its resources to achieve very good outcome for its pupils and provides value for money.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

### Under-fives

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

179 The overall quality of provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

#### Outstanding features

180 In nursery and reception, most children:

- listen intently and respond carefully to questions and instructions;
- speak clearly and confidently, using extensive vocabulary and complex sentences to express opinions;
- have a secure knowledge of sounds associated with letters and use their knowledge very effectively when reading and writing;
- demonstrate very good pencil control and form letters correctly when writing their names and sentences;
- have an understanding of number processes that is outstanding for their age, for example when ordering numbers from highest to lowest in a game;
- sing a range of songs energetically and in tune, play rhythmic patterns on a range of untuned instruments, and dance expressively in response to different styles of music;
- are polite and well behaved, are very caring of each other and are respectful of adults; and
- are highly motivated and concentrate very well for extended periods.

181 In nursery, almost all children demonstrate a high level of independence as they participate in a wide range of activities.

182 Many children demonstrate an extensive knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Many children in reception have extensive knowledge of other parts of the world, such as India and the Antarctic. Almost all children develop their knowledge and understanding very well through investigative activities.

183 Most children in nursery handle small equipment, such as scissors and mark-making tools, with increasing confidence, dexterity and accuracy. Both year groups demonstrate a very good awareness of their bodies and of the ability to control their movements when stretching, curling, hopping and jumping.

184 In nursery, many children:

- know the parts of the body and can explain why bones are important, correctly naming the small bones in the foot; and
- name different light sources and use the light box independently to view x-rays.

### **Good features**

185 Children in nursery settle well when they arrive in the morning and quickly engage in the varied activities. In both year groups, almost all children:

- socialise well, engage in conversation with their friends, listen to each other and demonstrate good manners at snack time;
- share equipment sensibly, experiment confidently, take turns well and take responsibility for tidying up; and
- enjoy listening to stories and handle books correctly, and use computers with confidence.

186 Children in nursery understand that all living things should be treated with care, for example when looking at worms. When using the outdoor equipment, most children successfully ride and manoeuvre a range of wheeled vehicles, displaying good co-ordination and control.

<b>English</b>
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**Key stage 1: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Key stage 2: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Key stage 3: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Key stage 4: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Sixth-form college: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

187 Examination results at GCSE in English and English literature in the last three years have been well above national averages for passes at A\*-C and A\*/A. These results represent very good achievement for these pupils in English. In English literature, these results represent good achievement last year and achievement below pupils' ability for the preceding two years<sup>5</sup>.

188 Examination results in this subject at A level in the last three years have been well above national averages for passes at A/B. These results represent good achievement for these pupils.

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<sup>5</sup> The school identified the lower performance in English literature in 2005 and 2006 and took appropriate action to improve attainment.

### **Outstanding features**

189 In all key stages, most pupils:

- have an excellent range of vocabulary and use this effectively across a wide range of written and oral tasks;
- produce accurate independent writing, showing outstanding control of sentence structure, punctuation and grammar;
- speak clearly, confidently and at length in individual, paired and group work; and
- show very highly-developed reading skills.

190 In key stage 4 and the college, most pupils express themselves with exceptional clarity and critical sensitivity when discussing and writing about a range of difficult texts. They combine precise analysis of language with a wider awareness of themes across a text.

191 In the college, most students:

- make highly sophisticated and insightful comparisons between texts linked by theme and author; and
- demonstrate a clear understanding of the literary and historical context in which texts were originally written.

192 In key stages 3 and 4, the quality of extended writing in a range of styles is outstanding. Most pupils develop a very good understanding and appreciation of the work of Shakespeare and many other important writers from the English literary tradition.

193 In key stages 1 and 2, most pupils use a range of strategies, including letter sounds, word recognition and picture and context clues, to make outstanding progress in reading.

### **Good features**

194 In key stages 3 and 4, and the college, many pupils:

- use drafting and revision effectively to improve their work;
- can evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in their own writing; and
- have very good recall of previous work.

195 In key stages 1 and 2, most pupils can:

- explain clearly how to find information from a text;

- write neatly, developing an individual handwriting style; and
- discuss their preferences confidently when choosing books.

196 In key stage 1, pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills.

197 In key stage 2, most pupils develop a good understanding of the feeling and emotion of the characters in the books they read.

### **English as an additional language**

#### **Good features**

198 Almost all pupils make good and rapid progress, they:

- apply themselves extremely well in lessons, speak well and develop a wide vocabulary that includes appropriate subject terminology;
- listen well and read a range of texts with good understanding; and
- write independently with confidence and clarity.

<b>Welsh second language</b>
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**Key stage 1: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 2: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 3: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Key stage 4: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Sixth-form college: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

199 Examination results in Welsh second language at GCSE for the last three years have been well above national averages for passes at grades A\*-C and also for A\*/A. Examination results in Welsh second language at A level in the last three years have been above national averages for passes at grades A/B. These results are above those to be expected for pupils of similar ability.

#### **Outstanding features**

200 In key stages 3 and 4, and the college, pupils make outstanding progress in all language skills.

201 In Year 9, key stage 4 and the college, pupils with the most competent linguistic skills write with style and sophistication to achieve very impressive results.

202 Year 11 pupils sustain a discussion on a range of moral issues well. These pupils' ability to use Welsh naturally throughout the lesson has an impact on their fluency.

- 203 In key stages 3 and 4, and the college, pupils regularly give audio-visual presentations of outstanding quality. In key stage 4 and the college, the presentations deal with complex subjects and show extensive research, selection of relevant information and effective use of language to engage the audience and to convey powerful messages.
- 204 In the college, students' commitment to use Welsh at every opportunity and to attend Welsh cultural events has a very positive impact on their outstanding attainment. The most proficient linguists are indistinguishable from first language speakers.

### **Good features**

- 205 In key stage 1, most pupils are beginning to recognise a range of simple words and phrases to name objects correctly, for example different types of food and colours. These pupils are beginning to respond appropriately to simple questions and instructions, copy familiar words and to match these to picture clues correctly.
- 206 Most pupils in key stage 2:
- develop a good vocabulary and use the patterns they have learned to respond confidently to a range of questions with good pronunciation, for example about their likes and dislikes;
  - read aloud with confidence and show good levels of understanding when they speak about what they have read; and
  - are beginning to write independently and at length about themselves, spelling words, phrases and sentences with increasing accuracy.
- 207 In key stages 3 and 4, and the college, almost all pupils improve standards in their writing by redrafting work.
- 208 In key stage 3, most pupils:
- respond confidently and accurately in oral work and listen intently so they can move a discussion forward without hesitation;
  - read with good intonation and expression, and for pleasure, and scan and skim texts promptly to extract relevant information; and
  - write extensively in a range of formats with a wide vocabulary and effective variety of sentence patterns.
- 209 In key stage 4, most pupils:
- converse confidently with teachers, peers and visitors and listen carefully so that discussions are meaningful and spontaneous;
  - research a wide range of materials to analyse style and content accurately; and

- produce imaginative and accurate extended writing showing a keen awareness of audience and purpose.

210 Almost all students in the college:

- demonstrate confidence in textual analysis and evaluation, and research set texts discerningly using both electronic and printed sources enabling them to understand the historic and social context of the work fully; and
- produce extended writing that contains perceptive comment and coherent argument.

### **Shortcomings**

211 Many pupils in key stage 1 lack confidence when asking and answering simple questions. Younger pupils in key stage 2 do not have secure recall of previously learned questions and their appropriate responses.

<b>Mathematics</b>
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**Key stage 1: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 2: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 3: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Key stage 4: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Sixth-form college: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

212 Examination results in mathematics at GCSE for the last 3 years have been well above national averages for passes at grades A\*-C and also for A\*/A. Examination results in mathematics at A level in the last three years have been well above national averages for passes at grades A/B. These results represent very good achievement on the part of the pupils.

### **Outstanding features**

213 In key stages 3, 4 and the college, most pupils:

- very readily recall the knowledge and skills they have learned previously and use these well to understand new concepts quickly;
- use a range of effective and flexible mental calculation strategies and recall basic number facts very well;
- demonstrate very good skills in manipulating algebraic expressions and apply these successfully in various contexts; and

- understand well the characteristics of the graphs of a range of functions and use these effectively to solve problems.

214 Many of these pupils demonstrate a very good understanding of the key mathematical ideas which underpin their work.

215 In key stage 4 and the college, pupils make very good progress in acquiring the knowledge and skills needed in public examinations.

216 In the college, many students:

- demonstrate an excellent understanding of the techniques of calculus and use these effectively in other contexts; and
- have a very good understanding of the principles of mechanics and statistics, and can apply techniques and skills learned in other parts of the course to these subjects.

### **Good features**

217 At appropriate stages, throughout the school and the college, most pupils:

- develop a good understanding of place value;
- use suitable methods for calculating with an extended range of numbers confidently, including integers, fractions, decimals and percentages;
- make good progress in their knowledge of shape and space, including the names and properties of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes;
- measure and calculate lengths, areas and angles effectively; and
- organise and analyse data accurately and use statistical diagrams to communicate findings to others.

218 In the junior school, pupils generally learn to count confidently, can recall basic number facts and recognise and explain patterns.

219 In key stages 2, 3, 4 and the college, most pupils display good knowledge of appropriate mathematical vocabulary and use it well to describe and explain their work. Many use the correct conventions of mathematics with understanding.

220 In the senior school and the college, many pupils:

- ask thoughtful questions in order to improve their understanding of their work in mathematics; and
- have effective strategies to review and improve their work and to reflect thoughtfully when they make mistakes.

- 221 Most pupils in key stages 3 and 4 calculate the probabilities of increasingly complex events well.
- 222 Many pupils in key stage 3 have developed effective strategies to use their skills in mathematics systematically to investigate new contexts.

### **Shortcomings**

- 223 In key stage 2, pupils' progress in developing their own strategies to investigate mathematical problems is slower than in other aspects of mathematics.

## **Science**

### **Key stage 1: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

### **Key stage 2: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

### **Key stage 3: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

### **Outstanding features**

- 224 In key stage 3, most pupils:

- develop an understanding of scientific concepts beyond the level expected of pupils of similar age and ability, such as balanced forces, thermal energy transfer and genetics, and they are able to apply their learning to a variety of contexts;
- communicate their understanding very effectively in their written and oral responses;
- improve their own learning by completing all tasks to a very high standard, responding well to teachers' feedback and pursuing further understanding by regularly asking searching questions; and
- make very good progress in lessons, gaining significant knowledge and understanding often over short periods of time.

### **Good features:**

- 225 In key stage 1, most pupils:

- are developing a good awareness of simple scientific vocabulary and use this accurately to describe, for example a range of man-made and natural materials;
- have an awareness of sustainability and know that some materials will rot away and others can be re-cycled;
- begin to understand the need for a fair test when experimenting and are able to make simple predictions before experimenting, for example when they test different fabrics for absorbency; and

- know that a complete circuit is needed for electricity to flow and they apply their knowledge to construct simple electrical circuits to light a bulb successfully.

### **Good features**

226 Most pupils in key stage 2:

- have a good understanding of how to plan a scientific investigation, make informed predictions and demonstrate good knowledge of a fair test;
- understand that friction is a force that slows down moving objects and are able to test their predictions, for example when they experiment to find the effects of different surfaces on the speed of a toy car;
- observe carefully at first hand and record their findings in an appropriate range of tables and graphs;
- know that light travels in straight lines and explain how shadows are formed;
- understand the function of identification keys and design their own keys, for example to identify a range of mini-beasts they observe in the school grounds; and
- show a good understanding of food chains and describe the relationships in an ecosystem accurately.

227 In key stage 3, almost all pupils:

- show a good understanding of variables to plan and carry out practical investigations and to handle apparatus accurately to collect valid and reliable results which they interpret well to demonstrate their scientific knowledge; and
- make good links across the sciences, such as using the concept of energy transfer in food chains to explain energy transfer in devices such as battery torches and solar cells.

### **Shortcomings**

228 In key stage 2, many pupils fail to collect enough results to enable them to draw accurate conclusions from their investigational work.

229 In key stage 3, a few pupils construct graphs poorly, for example labelling axes without units or not separating bars on graphs.

## Biology

### Key stage 4: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features

#### Sixth-form college: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features

- 230 Examination results for biology in 2008 and in science double award<sup>6</sup> at GCSE in the previous two years have been well above the national averages for passes at A\*-C and A\*/A. These results are better than would be expected for pupils of similar ability and represent very good achievement.
- 231 A level results in biology in the last three years have been well above national averages for passes at grades A/B. These results represent good achievement for these students.

#### Outstanding features

- 232 In key stage 4 and the college, pupils make outstanding progress in the development of their knowledge and understanding of biological concepts. This, coupled with an excellent understanding and application of course assessment requirements, enables them to achieve outstandingly high marks in external module examinations.
- 233 Pupils' and students' extended writing, research and project work in science is outstanding. Almost all pupils show an excellent attitude to improving their own learning by regularly and effectively annotating and supplementing their own notes and pursuing a deeper understanding of the biological topics they study.
- 234 In lessons, pupils complete a great deal of work of high quality.

#### Good features

- 235 In key stage 4 and in the college, nearly all pupils use scientific terminology accurately and effectively in their oral and written responses. They develop good practical skills, showing good use of apparatus to collect reliable and accurate results.
- 236 In key stage 4, most pupils:
- show a good understanding of the concept of homeostasis and relate this to various mechanisms in the human body such as the control of blood sugar; and
  - respond well to questions, often justifying their answers fully.
- 237 In the college, most students:
- produce detailed work on a variety of topics, such as cell structure and gene technology; and
  - show an active interest in the topics studied and contribute well to class discussions.

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<sup>6</sup> Biology, chemistry and physics were first examined as separate GCSE subjects in 2008. Prior to 2008, they each contributed to GCSE Science and GCSE Additional Science.

## Shortcomings

- 238 In key stage 4, a few pupils show poor recall of previously learned work, such as plant cell structure and function.
- 239 In the college, a few students' microscope drawings lack clarity and accuracy.

## Chemistry

### Key stage 4: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features

### Sixth-form college: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features

- 240 Examination results for chemistry in 2008 and in science double award at GCSE in the previous two years have been well above the national averages for passes at A\*-C and A\*/A. These results represent very good achievement for these pupils.
- 241 A level results in chemistry in the last three years have been well above national averages for passes at grades A/B. These results represent good achievement for these students.

### Outstanding features

- 242 In key stage 4 and the college, most pupils:
- make remarkable progress in gaining new knowledge and understanding during lessons and over longer periods of time; and
  - demonstrate very good recall and are able to draw information from a wide variety of sources to answer questions in the school's summary tests and external examinations.
- 243 Many of these pupils describe accurately a wide variety of chemical processes and then apply general principles to specific examples. They show detailed understanding of basic concepts of chemistry, such as structure and bonding, to explain the properties of elements and compounds.
- 244 Almost all students in the college have a thorough understanding of complex mechanisms in organic chemistry, for example electrophilic substitution.
- 245 In key stage 4 and the college, nearly all pupils demonstrate highly responsible attitudes towards safety.

### Good features

- 246 In both key stages, many pupils carry out methodical practical work and investigations. They can:
- identify variables;

- use a range of apparatus to make accurate measurements;
- record results carefully in an appropriate manner; and
- draw suitable conclusions.

247 In both key stages, pupils use chemical terminology accurately and in relevant contexts.

248 In key stage 4, most pupils understand the effects of chemistry on society. They can explore the practical applications of the subject and their influence on people's lives.

249 Many students in the college show clear understanding of the relationships between basic chemical quantities, such as relative atomic mass, molar mass and concentration, in carrying out calculations accurately and consistently.

### **Shortcomings**

250 In both key stages, a minority of pupils produce extended written answers that lack detail and rigour.

251 In the college, a minority of students do not have a clear enough view of the purpose and outcomes of their practical investigations.

<b>Physics</b>
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### **Key stage 4: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

#### **Sixth-form college: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

252 Examination results for physics in 2008 and in science double award at GCSE in the previous two years have been well above the national averages for passes at A\*-C and A\*/A. These results are better than would be expected for pupils of similar ability and represent very good achievement.

253 A level results in physics in the last three years have been above national averages for passes at grades A/B. These results are in line with pupils' ability.

### **Outstanding features**

254 In key stage 4, almost all pupils:

- show outstanding subject knowledge in most aspects of the GCSE course, have very good understanding of course assessment requirements and make excellent progress during lessons by quickly learning new concepts;
- make appropriate links between the different sciences, such as relating their learning of atomic structure in chemistry to nuclear fusion and fission in physics; and

- develop excellent research skills, often using ICT to carry out refined internet searches to extract appropriate and effective information to extend their understanding further.

### **Good features**

255 In key stage 4 and the college, most pupils make good use of physical quantities and units. They apply their mathematical skills effectively to carry out a wide range of multi-step calculations correctly on topics such as electrical power in GCSE work and Young's modulus in A level work.

256 In the college, most students:

- develop a good understanding of the topics that they study, such as energy transfer and capacitance;
- use good subject knowledge to plan detailed, methodical investigations and take appropriate steps to ensure that the results they collect are valid, accurate and reliable; and
- develop a good understanding of course assessment criteria to answer examination questions and undertake practical assessments successfully.

### **Shortcomings**

257 In key stage 4 and the college, the extended written responses of a few pupils lack detail and precision.

258 In the college, a few students do not draw out well enough the patterns and relationships between variables from the results they have plotted on graphs.

<b>Information technology</b>
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**Key stage 1: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 2: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 3: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Key stage 4: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Sixth-form college: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

259 Examination results in this subject at GCSE level in the last three years show that almost all pupils have achieved A\* and A grades.

260 Examination entries in this subject at A level in the last three years have been too small for valid national comparisons.

### **Outstanding features**

- 261 In key stages 3 and 4, all pupils use computers with a high degree of confidence and competence. Their presentation skills are very well developed.
- 262 In key stage 4, the design and detailed preparation of pupils' coursework is of very high quality. The GCSE results over the last three years have been outstanding.

### **Good features**

- 263 In key stage 1, most pupils use computer programs independently and they control the mouse confidently to produce attractive images and pictures using different colours, shapes and patterns. These pupils successfully change the colour, font, style and text size when using a word-processing program.
- 264 Most pupils in key stage 2:
- copy, paste, move and rotate objects, and are developing touch-typing skills to support their effective use of word-processing applications;
  - use multimedia tools effectively to create a story book, a video camera to record an animation sequence and selected websites to locate and gather information from the internet; and
  - produce spreadsheets and interpret information from them.
- 265 In key stage 3, most pupils:
- use a range of fonts and layouts to word-process creatively and a desk top publishing package capably to combine text, graphics and images;
  - prepare interesting audio-visual presentations; and
  - use spreadsheets appropriately and illustrate their data successfully with graphs.
- 266 The majority of these pupils are able to identify the appropriate software for an assignment and can plan it appropriately.
- 267 In key stage 4, most pupils:
- have a good knowledge and understanding of computer systems and appropriate hardware; and
  - are aware of the social effects of ICT at home and in society in general.
- 268 Most students in Year 12 are developing a sound knowledge and understanding of the hardware and software needed in the design of ICT systems, and for the design of publishing documents. Almost all students in Year 13 are applying their overall skills of ICT effectively and using databases for their coursework.

## Design technology

**Key stage 1: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 2: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 3: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Key stage 4: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Sixth-form college: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

269 Examination results in design technology at GCSE for the last three years have been well above national averages for passes at A\*-C and A\*/A. These results are better than expected for pupils of similar ability and represent very good achievement.

270 A level results in design and technology in the last three years have been well above national averages for passes at grades A/B. These results represent good achievement when compared with pupils of similar ability.

### Outstanding features

271 In key stages 3, 4 and the college, almost all pupils:

- have an excellent understanding of the design process and plan their work carefully to ensure that their end product meets the initial specification;
- convey their design ideas using very good freehand graphical communication skills with quick developmental sketches featuring strongly in their design development;
- use two-dimensional and three-dimensional software and computer-aided manufacturing equipment to design and make their products in a range of materials to a very high standard;
- produce practical work of high-quality which often has a great deal of creative flair, imagination and accuracy; and
- produce clear and logical design folios that are very thorough and demanding.

### Good features

272 In key stage 1, most pupils use simple tools well, assemble and join materials in different ways successfully, and comment about their finished product design appropriately, for example when they make puppets and kebabs. Pupils use construction kits effectively to investigate structures.

273 In key stage 2, most pupils know how to draw up a thoughtful design brief and make informed choices about materials, appearance and joining techniques. These pupils

include measurements and, where appropriate, costings in their designs, use decorative techniques effectively and evaluate their completed work thoughtfully.

274 In key stages 3 and 4, almost all pupils:

- make good use of a variety of sources including ICT to present information and data, investigate and gather information from the internet and to generate interesting initial design ideas;
- demonstrate good understanding of different materials and their properties and can discuss their work using the correct terminology consistently and accurately, for example when describing the designing, assembling and joining of different parts when making a decorative mirror; and
- consider the requirements of sustainability when choosing materials for their final product.

275 Almost all students in the college:

- use sketchbooks well for informal drawing to explore and investigate ideas;
- identify design modifications and use these well to improve their products; and
- use on-going evaluation to inform the design process and use summative evaluation reports that refer back to the original product specifications to suggest possible improvements.

### **Modern foreign languages**

**Key stage 3: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Key stage 4: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Sixth-form college: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

276 Examination results in French and German at GCSE have been consistently very good over the past three years. They have been well above the national averages for passes at grades A\*-C and A\*/A. These results represent very good achievement for these pupils in both French and German<sup>7</sup>.

277 Examination results at A level in French and German over the last three years have also been well above national averages for passes at grades A/B. Pupils perform very well in both French and German and the results are better than would be expected for pupils of similar ability.

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<sup>7</sup> The school introduced Spanish in Year 7 this year so there are no GCSE results available for comparison.

### **Outstanding features**

- 278 In key stage 3, pupils of all abilities are able to produce extended writing that is of a very high standard. Their work shows a good understanding of the grammar of the target language and, by the end of the key stage, they improve their writing by beginning to include a good range of expression.
- 279 In key stage 4, most pupils' written work is outstanding for their age. It is very accurate and many students include a wide range of expression. Many pupils' written work shows a very good level of language awareness.
- 280 In the college, almost all students:
- show outstanding skills when they listen and respond to authentic speech containing complex language and ideas; and
  - produce written work of very high quality that is very well structured, accurate and includes clearly developed ideas.
- 281 Many students include a very wide range of idioms. Most students have an excellent command of many more difficult aspects of the grammar of the target language.

### **Good features**

- 282 In key stage 3, all pupils have good listening skills. They are confident in listening for gist and detail and by the end of the key stage they are confident in dealing with unpredictable language. Most of these pupils speak very clearly in their responses in the target language and have good pronunciation. Many of them are confident to re-use language in different contexts.
- 283 In key stage 4, almost all pupils:
- speak clearly and confidently with good accents and make accurate oral responses;
  - build well on the listening and reading skills developed in key stage 3 and show significant progression in both skills during the key stage; and
  - use problem-solving skills effectively to understand both the gist and detail of longer more complex texts.
- 284 In the college, almost all students have good reading skills and are able to understand authentic texts including the literature of the target language. These students:
- apply problem-solving skills successfully and use their knowledge of other languages and reference materials to identify key ideas from texts; and
  - are able to use themes from these texts as a basis for their oral and written work.

## History

**Key stage 1: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 2: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key Stage 3: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Key Stage 4: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Sixth-form college: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

285 Examination results at GCSE in the last three years have been well above national averages for passes at A\*/A and A\*-C. Examination results at A level in the last three years have been well above national averages for passes at A/B.

286 These results are above those to be expected for pupils of similar ability.

### **Outstanding features**

287 Most pupils in key stage 4 and the college, and older key stage 3 pupils:

- have a detailed, extensive knowledge and understanding of key events, personalities and issues, which they apply very well to answer questions, solve problems and carry out investigations; and
- ask thoughtful and informed questions to extend their knowledge and understanding.

288 In key stage 4 and the college, many pupils:

- produce perceptive and comprehensive evaluations of interpretations from a range of sources; and
- use their extensive knowledge and understanding of a period and draw effectively on a wide range of evidence to construct extremely well-organised and balanced arguments and reach thoughtful and well-justified conclusions.

289 In key stage 3, most pupils:

- extract information increasingly effectively from a range of written and visual sources and use this information particularly well to reach considered conclusions;
- recognise that sources need to be tested for reliability and explain very clearly and increasingly accurately the limitations and usefulness of specific sources; and
- carry out effective independent research to produce coursework of a very high quality.

- 290 In key stage 4, many pupils draw clear links across a period of time to explain the short and long term consequences of historical events, for example when considering the impact of the Treaty of Versailles or when comparing and contrasting the Weimar constitution with that of the Federal Republic of Germany.
- 291 More able key stage 4 pupils distinguish clearly between particular political philosophies and actual historical events, for example when contrasting the role of German women during World War II with the overarching principles of the Nazi party.
- 292 Many college students:
- apply their earlier learning well to analyse sources, interpret data and synthesise information across a range of themes to make considered and accurate judgements about historical events; and
  - in role-play activities, confidently and articulately advocate the relative influence and political impact of historical figures, such as Martin Luther king and Malcolm X.

### **Good features**

- 293 Most pupils in key stages 1, 2 and 3 have an increasingly secure chronological awareness and appreciation of the nature of change over time.
- 294 In key stage 1, most pupils make good use of pictures, photographs, visits and artefacts to develop their understanding of similarities and differences between given periods, for example when comparing school days in the 1940s with today.
- 295 Most key stage 2 pupils:
- identify key events and characters from different periods and explain why these were important;
  - consider evidence carefully and draw appropriate conclusions, for example about life for the Celts through visiting St Fagan's; and
  - select, interpret and organise information well, for example in finding out about the use of propaganda during World War II.

## Geography

**Key stage 1: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 2: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 3: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Key stage 4: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Sixth-form college: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

296 Examination results in geography at GCSE over the last three years have been well above national averages for passes at A\*-C and A\*/A. These results represent very good achievement for most pupils.

297 Examination results in this subject at A level over the last three years have been well above national averages for passes at A/B. These results represent good achievement for most pupils.

### **Outstanding features.**

298 Most pupils in key stages 3, 4 and in the college demonstrate:

- in-depth knowledge and understanding of a broad range of geographical patterns and processes;
- well-developed skills of investigation, research and analysis which they use to produce fieldwork and coursework assignments of high quality;
- the ability and confidence to present reasoned arguments in support of their geographical concepts and ideas to both peers and teachers; and
- the ability to discuss environmental and global issues which affect our world, highlighting the main benefits and difficulties in their examples.

### **Good features**

299 Most pupils in key stage 1 produce simple plans accurately, plot basic routes and are aware of place and direction. These pupils are familiar with the features of their home locality and a contrasting one, and they are developing a good awareness of the differences between places, climates, buildings and daily life in the world.

300 In key stage 2, most pupils can identify and name continents, regions and some individual countries correctly on a world map and produce their own accurate maps. They recognise the impact of the destruction of the rainforest in global terms and make appropriate comparisons between the physical and human features of Wales and a locality in a developing country.

301 Most pupils in key stages 3, 4 and in the college, at the appropriate level:

- have a secure knowledge of location and place in Wales, Britain, Europe and the wider world;
- have a good range of geographical vocabulary, which they use to explain physical and human processes and to show the relationships between them;
- use maps, atlases, photographs and statistical data well to build hypotheses; and
- can recall and use previous knowledge to aid their understanding, for example in Year 8 where pupils use fieldwork experience to explain features of erosion and deposition in meander bends.

302 All pupils use ICT effectively to research, illustrate and inform their geographical thinking.

### **Shortcomings**

303 A few pupils in key stages 1 and 2, and students in the college, do not develop their investigative and enquiry skills enough.

<b>Art</b>
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**Key stage 1: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 2: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Key stage 3: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Key stage 4: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Sixth-form college: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

304 Examination results in art at GCSE in the last three years have been well above national averages for pupils at grades A\*-C and A\*/A. These results represent very good achievement for these pupils.

305 Examination results at A level show good attainment. Over the last three years, most pupils were awarded grades A–C. The results represent good achievement for these pupils.

### **Outstanding features**

306 In key stage 2, most pupils demonstrate a high level of creativity and imagination.

307 In key stage 3, almost all pupils:

- have the necessary craft skills to work with a wide range of three-dimensional materials;

- make very good preliminary studies in work books as part of their research; and
- are very knowledgeable about colour theory and its application in design work.

308 In key stage 4, most pupils make excellent use of their drawing books to make preliminary studies, and these often include references to other artists.

309 Students in the college have an excellent understanding of conceptual art.

### **Good features**

310 In key stage 1, most pupils:

- experiment with colour, line, pattern and tone confidently to produce drawings, paintings and models; and
- have a good knowledge and understanding of the work of famous artists, for example they produce good portraits in the style of Picasso and Miro.

311 Most key stage 2 pupils:

- are becoming increasingly skilful in using different techniques to express themselves imaginatively and creatively;
- make appropriate connections between their own work and that of other artists; and
- demonstrate good observation and sketching skills.

312 In key stage 3, most pupils are familiar with the work of other artists, including Welsh artists, and produce expressive portrait and self-portrait studies. These pupils make good visual studies of the local built environment.

313 In key stage 4, almost all pupils have good observational drawing skills and demonstrate effective design and making skills when producing three-dimensional work.

314 In the college, students experiment effectively with a wide range of mark-making materials.

## Music

**Key stage 1: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 2: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Key stage 3: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 4: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Sixth-form college: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

315 Examination results in music for the last three years have been well above national averages, both for GCSE passes at grades A\*-C and A\*/A, and for A level passes at grades A/B. These results are at least in line with pupils' ability and often above those to be expected for pupils of similar ability.

### **Outstanding features**

316 In key stage 2, almost all pupils:

- understand how musical compositions can use timbre, texture and silence to create different moods and effects;
- are confident in improvising and developing musical ideas using 'junk' materials; and
- listen intently to recorded music, and identify sections of the orchestra and individual orchestral instruments easily.

317 Many Year 11 pupils show very good technical control of their chosen instrument or voice. In addition, they show particularly sensitive awareness of and response to other performers in a small group.

### **Good features**

318 In key stage 1, pupils perform well in groups. In key stages 1 and 2, almost all pupils perform in good time to a steady beat and create musical patterns confidently using untuned percussion instruments. Many pupils throughout key stage 3 perform with technical accuracy, confidence and musicianship. Almost all Year 7 pupils sing in tune, with clear diction and good tone quality. Many Year 8 pupils play tuned percussion or orchestral instruments to good standards and a few perform to very good standards as a classroom orchestra. All pupils in Years 7 and 8 keep good time when playing together. Almost all Year 9 pupils have a ready familiarity with the electronic keyboard and make good progress in learning the notes of a whole-tone scale. All Year 11 pupils perform to satisfactory or better standards on their chosen instrument or voice. All Year 13 students have very well-developed performing skills.

319 In key stage 2, almost all pupils understand how to record their compositions using invented notation. Year 9 pupils make good use of music technology to develop

compositions that exploit timbre and texture. The resulting sound-collages are both atmospheric and musically interesting. The completed GCSE compositions of Year 11 pupils are of adequate or better quality. Many of these compositions make imaginative use of limited musical material, such as a few simple chords. Many A level students make good use of music technology to develop compositions that are authentic models of their style or genre.

- 320 In key stages 1 and 2, almost all pupils listen attentively to recorded music and the performances of other pupils. They express clearly their views about the performances they have heard. Most pupils in key stage 3 listen carefully and effectively in order to perform in time together, to evaluate and improve their performances, and to choose and combine suitable sounds to create musical compositions. All pupils in Year 11 have well-developed listening skills, which they apply well to evaluate the standards their peers attain when performing in small groups. Year 13 students make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of music from various periods of history.

### **Shortcomings**

- 321 In key stage 4 and in the college, the compositions of a few pupils have limited melodic interest.

<b>Physical education</b>
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**Key stage 1: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 2: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 3: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 4: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

- 322 Almost all pupils sustain their effort and motivation throughout lessons.

- 323 In all key stages, many pupils:

- show very positive attitudes to physical education;
- know the importance of safety rules and procedures in all activities; and
- make good progress during lessons.

### **Outstanding features**

- 324 Pupils in key stage 4 who gain the Duke of Edinburgh's Award through the general studies course develop very good teamwork and problem-solving skills. They acquire personal and leadership skills that will stand them in good stead in their future lives.

325 In a fitness lesson, almost all key stage 4 pupils carry out the circuit exercises very correctly in technical terms and sustain effort and technique at increased speed very well.

### **Good features**

326 In key stage 1:

- a minority of younger pupils are developing their skill levels well when throwing, catching and bouncing large balls;
- many older pupils show good control and awareness of space, vary directions and levels well and show clear body shapes when travelling;
- almost all pupils are developing into confident swimmers using an appropriate front crawl action; and
- most pupils use their imagination well to create dance sequences, of high quality, for example when portraying the movements characteristic of a cat.

327 In key stage 2:

- younger pupils are developing awareness and understanding of attack and defence skills in small team games; and
- a few younger pupils are able to devise their own simple games successfully and follow the rules they have agreed.

328 In key stage 2, almost all pupils swim confidently, with the most able reaching a high standard for their age.

329 Most older pupils in the junior school:

- understand how exercise affects the body and know the importance of warm-up activities;
- demonstrate good levels of agility when they work together to produce interesting gymnastics sequences involving balancing and transfer of weight;
- show good observation and evaluation skills when considering the performance of others in their class; and
- benefit from taking part in physical and problem-solving outdoor activities that challenge them to develop their skills on the annual residential visit for Year 6.

330 In dance lessons in key stage 3, many pupils are confident to improvise and show a good sense of rhythm and timing. These pupils show good spatial awareness, changing directions and varying levels effectively in their work.

- 331 In key stage 3 in gymnastics, many pupils:
- show clear shapes in the air and resilience on landing when jumping;
  - show good tension and extension and can sustain the quality of their work when upside-down; and
  - carry, place and replace apparatus sensibly and safely.
- 332 In swimming in key stage 3, most pupils clearly understand the logic behind survival skills with almost all able to tread water in several ways.
- 333 In hockey, many key stage 3 pupils understand basic rules and control the ball well, using a reversed stick and can receive and stop a ball correctly and accurately. They can sustain the skill level even when the speed increases and they are under pressure from an opponent.
- 334 In badminton in key stages 3, almost all pupils can:
- move backwards to get into a good position to play a shot, maintaining good balance and controlled footwork; and
  - sustain a rally of at least six shots and a few most able can vary the length, height and direction of the shot.
- 335 In key stage 4 fitness and wellbeing, almost all pupils:
- understand which exercises are appropriate for developing strength, stamina, flexibility and endurance;
  - can conduct their own warm-up and appropriate stretches for specific muscle groups and understand the effects of exercise on heart rate and respiration;
  - are beginning to take responsibility for their own learning; and
  - can undertake a coaching role with a partner confidently and sensitively.

### **Sixth-form college**

- 336 Almost all students who attend the optional lessons offered in fitness and sporting activities take part very enthusiastically. They clearly enjoy the activities and make very good progress. In addition, many take advantage of the wide range of opportunities offered to them before school, at lunch times and after school to complement the timetabled lesson. A very large number of students opt to work towards the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and gain the silver and gold awards.

## Shortcomings

- 337 In games lessons in key stages 1 and 2, a significant number of younger pupils find it difficult to follow instructions and stay on task. They do not apply themselves well and do not persevere to improve their performance.
- 338 In key stage 3, the work of a significant minority of pupils lacks quality and control, particularly in gymnastics and dance.

## Religious education

**Key stage 1: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 2: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 3: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Key stage 4: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Sixth-form college: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

- 339 Examination results in Religious Studies at GCSE over the last three years have been well above national averages for passes at A\*-C and A\*/A. These results are above those to be expected for pupils of similar ability.
- 340 Examination results in Religious Studies at A level in 2006 were below national averages for passes at A/B and below what was expected for pupils of similar ability. In 2005 and 2007, results were well above the national average for passes at A/B and above those to be expected for pupils of similar ability.

## Outstanding features

- 341 In key stages 3, 4 and the college, almost all pupils have the ability to empathise very well. They are able to consider the thoughts, feelings, experience, beliefs and values of different faith worshippers with maturity.
- 342 In key stage 3, most pupils:
- have very good awareness of the ways in which the lifestyles of people, such as Martin Luther King, are influenced by their religious beliefs; and
  - express their views on Muslim fasting and can support their views particularly well with appropriate evidence.
- 343 In key stage 4, pupils make rapid progress and by the end of the units of work almost all pupils demonstrate very high levels of knowledge and understanding of the concepts underlying the topics studied. Most of these pupils' ability to evaluate and reflect is highly developed so they can express their own views intelligently and at length. Many pupils in key stage 4 have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the main features of Christian places of worship and how they assist Christians in worship.

344 In Year 12, all students have a thorough understanding of what certain religions have in common, how and why they differ, and the diversity of belief and practice within Judaism. Most of these students:

- articulate their views with great confidence and justify them by using evidence and reasoning effectively; and
- demonstrate a detailed knowledge of Jewish kosher laws.

### **Good features**

345 Most pupils in key stage 1 demonstrate a good understanding of caring and sharing. They understand the significance of food and dress in a variety of religious traditions. They can also reflect on creation and religious views about the beauty of the world.

346 In key stage 2, most pupils develop good knowledge and understanding of the Islamic faith and the significance of Islamic practices and lifestyle. These pupils show an awareness and understanding of how religious beliefs influence action and lifestyle.

347 Many older pupils in key stage 2 demonstrate an ability to compare and contrast aspects of belief and practice, for example finding links between their own beliefs and the Buddhist faith.

348 Most pupils in key stages 3 and 4 understand that religions raise moral and social questions within different communities. In responding to these, the majority of pupils show respect for beliefs that often differ from their own.

349 In key stages 3 and 4, and the college, the majority of pupils can recognise technical terms in religion and explain their meaning orally and in their written work.

350 In Year 13, the majority of students can analyse and evaluate information about human rights, which they have collected from a range of different sources.

### **Shortcomings**

351 In Year 13, a few students are reluctant to offer personal views or to use independent thought to evaluate the topic studied.

## **Business studies**

### **Sixth-form college: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

352 Examination results in business studies at A level in the last 3 years have been well above national averages for passes at grades A/B. These results represent very good achievement on the part of the pupils.

### **Outstanding features**

353 Most college students:

- demonstrate very good knowledge and understanding of final accounts;
- apply appropriate financial analysis techniques very well to evaluate business performance with a high degree of accuracy;
- display an excellent understanding of marketing research techniques;
- conduct systematic primary and secondary research to analyse the feasibility of their business idea successfully as part of their coursework; and
- demonstrate very good ICT skills.

### **Good features**

354 Most college students develop a secure knowledge of a full range of business topics. These students present concepts confidently using appropriate business terminology. Almost all students recall key terms from previous topics accurately and make good progress in their learning.

355 Many students apply their knowledge successfully to solve business problems. The majority of students use business analysis tools confidently and present well-considered evaluations.

356 The majority of students develop a good level of knowledge and understanding of a wide range of businesses, including of those based in Wales.

<b>Classics</b>
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**Key stage 3: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 4: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

**Sixth-form college: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

357 Examination results in Latin at GCSE in the last three years are well above national averages for passes at A\*/A and A\*-C. Examination results in Latin at A level for the past three years have been well above national averages for passes at grades A/B. These results are better than would be expected for pupils of similar ability and represent very good achievement.

358 Examination results for classical civilisation at A level are in line with national averages for grades A/B for the past three years despite a dip in performance in 2008. These results represent good achievement for these students.

### **Outstanding features**

359 In Latin lessons in key stage 4 and the college, most pupils:

- have an in-depth knowledge of Latin vocabulary which fully supports and develops their understanding of new grammar;
- confidently translate increasingly complex Latin sentences into fluent English;
- evaluate and analyse accurately both new and familiar structures in Latin giving clear grammatical explanations for their translations; and
- have a very detailed knowledge and understanding of their set texts.

360 In classical civilisation lessons in the college, students:

- empathise with key figures from classical literature and speak very knowledgeably about their character and role;
- analyse extracts from the text very accurately and feed back formally and confidently to their peers;
- use key words very well in their analysis of texts; and
- draw insightful links between authors and characters, for example the differences between Aeneas and Odysseus as heroes

### **Good features**

361 In Latin in key stage 3, most pupils:

- understand the importance of word order in a Latin sentence;
- develop a good grasp of vocabulary through frequent revision and application;
- recognise different noun and verb endings and translate these accurately in short sentences;
- understand the influence of Latin on other languages, including English; and
- display a good understanding of and interest in a range of Roman life topics.

<b>Drama</b>
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**Key stage 3: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key stage 4: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Sixth-form college: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features**

362 Examination results in drama at GCSE in the last three years have been well above national averages for passes at A\*-C and at A/A\*. This represents very good achievement for these pupils. Examination results at A level in the last three years have been well above national averages for passes at A/B. These results represent very good achievement for these students.

**Outstanding features**

363 In the college:

- students of all abilities work exceptionally well together to develop convincing performances of extracts from texts;
- many students have excellent analytical skills and have an outstanding appreciation of how a drama text can be turned into a performance; and
- most students make very effective connections between a wide range of plays they have seen or read.

**Good features**

364 In key stages 3 and 4, and the college, almost all pupils:

- work together co-operatively and show confidence and enthusiasm in a range of drama activities; and
- read plays clearly and with feeling, showing good control of voice.

365 In key stage 4 and the college, most pupils:

- show a good understanding of the merits of different types of staging;
- develop a good awareness of different dramatic conventions;
- evaluate their own performance and that of others very effectively; and
- produce highly evaluative reviews of live performances.

## Shortcomings

- 366 A few pupils in key stages 3 and 4 are hesitant in expressing themselves through movement and gesture.

<b>Government and politics</b>
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### **Sixth-form college: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

- 367 Government and politics was introduced as an A level subject in 2005. Examination results are above national averages for passes at grades A/B. These results represent good achievement for these students.

#### **Good features**

- 368 Most students show a good level of knowledge and understanding; for example, a majority of Year 12 students develop well-considered arguments about reform of the House of Lords. Students in Year 13 have a good understanding of legal and constitutional topics, for example the separation of powers or a Bill of Rights.
- 369 Most students have a secure grasp of subject terminology in work on democracy or issues of citizenship. These students develop clear understanding of issues, such as referenda, proportional representation, pressure groups and pluralism. Many develop a clear insight into the different levels and types of democracy and apply these well. They also show, through work on totalitarianism, a firm understanding of anti-democratic principles.
- 370 Most students produce a good range of thoughtful and perceptive work on aspects of citizenship, with examples of very good reflection on possible reasons for the decline in voting and other developments in the electoral process.
- 371 All students make good progress, for example in the increasingly confident way they apply subject knowledge and understanding in group and class discussions, in written summaries and in more extended writing.

#### **Shortcomings**

- 372 A minority of students tend to confine extended writing to description, with little analysis and in-depth explanation. They do not know enough about up-to-date developments or use current examples to illustrate their responses.

## **School's response to the inspection**

Howell's School is delighted with the findings of its first full Estyn report. The school is exceptionally pleased that we have been identified as having outstanding features in very many aspects of teaching, learning and school life. We are particularly proud that the inspectors have recognised the outstanding quality of care we offer, creating a family atmosphere where everyone is valued: staff, students and parents.

We are pleased that the inspectors acknowledged that we provide a vibrant climate for learning with first-class teaching, inspiring learners to succeed. The inspectors commented that the percentage of lessons in which the quality of teaching is "good with outstanding features" and "good with no important shortcomings" is significantly above other independent schools in Wales that received a full inspection in 2006-2007.

The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is described as "an outstanding feature which enhances the learning opportunity and experience for all pupils". This is due to the dedication, imagination and enthusiasm of our highly committed teaching and support staff.

The report also recognised the outstanding contribution made by the school's leadership teams. The inspectors have acknowledged the positive impact this has had on the very high standards achieved in all aspects of school life. The report particularly commented on our systematic and rigorous self evaluation.

As a dynamic and forward-thinking community, we acknowledge the very small number of recommendations offered for future development and these are already included in our School Development Plan (SDP). An excerpt from the SDP outlining these can be obtained on request from the school.

Overall, we feel that the inspection has given us the opportunity to demonstrate our school's excellent strengths and achievements. We are proud that these have been recognised by the inspection team's decision to award Grade 1 in all of the seven key questions.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Howell's School, Llandaff
School type	Independent
Age-range of pupils	3 -18 years
Address of school	Cardiff Road, Cardiff
Postcode	CF5 2YD
Telephone number	02920 562019

Headteacher	Mrs Sally Davis
Date of appointment	April 2007
Proprietor	Girls' Day School Trust
Chair of governors	Mrs Anne Campbell
Lead inspector	Mrs Rosemary Lait HMI
Dates of inspection	10 – 14 November 2008

## Appendix 2

### Primary school data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	22	33	33	38	40	40	37	41	284

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	16	4	17.8

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	18:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	7:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	N/A
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	18

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Y1-Y6
Autumn 2007	98.2	96.4	96.4
Spring 2008	95.1	93	94.1
Summer 2008	94.3	94.7	96.2

Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0
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### Secondary school data and indicators

Year group	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Total
Number of pupils	74	66	69	69	67	127	109	581

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	45	18	46.35

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	12.49:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	N/A
Average teaching group size	17.6
Overall contact ratio (percentage) in Years 7 -11	71%

## Secondary school data and indicators

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole school
Autumn 2007	94.1	97	92.1	94.8	93.2	91	94	93.7
Spring 2008	96.4	95.5	95.1	96.3	93.6	93.1	92.3	94.6
Summer 2008	89.7	88.9	88.1	87.6	97.2	91	90	90.3

  

Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0
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## Appendix 3

### Public examination results:

#### For pupils aged 15, results in GCSE, Entry Level Qualification, GNVQ and NVQ

Number of pupils aged 15 on the school roll in January 2007	62*
Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil	60

\* There were 62 pupils aged 15 in the Year 11 cohort. Three other pupils in the Year 11 cohort were not aged 15.

The percentage of 15 year old pupils in Year 11 who in 2007:	School	Cardiff Unitary Authority	Wales
entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent	100%	87%	87%
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	100%	50%	54%
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	100%	85%	86%
attained GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator)	92%	37%	40%
entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or GCSE	100%	99%	97%
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification equivalent	100%	75%	77%
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G or the vocational qualification equivalent	100%	94%	93%
attained no graded GCSE or the vocational qualification equivalent	0%	6%	7%
attained one or more Entry level qualification only	n/a	3%	3%

#### For pupils aged 17, results in A/AS, GNVQs and NVQs

Number of pupils aged 17 in January 2007	117
Number of pupils entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations or equivalent in 2007	113
Number of pupils entered for fewer than 2 GCE A levels or equivalent in 2007	4

	<b>School</b>	<b>Cardiff Unitary Authority</b>	<b>Wales</b>
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-C	93%	68%	67%
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-E	99%	93%	94%
Average points score per candidate entering 2 or more subjects	29	21	20

## Appendix 4

### **Evidence base of the inspection**

Twenty-three inspectors, including a peer assessor and the school's nominee, spent 69 inspector days in the school.

These inspectors visited:

- 197 lessons or part lessons;
- a cross-section of assemblies, registration periods, extra-curricular activities; and
- various school meetings.

Members of the team held meetings with:

- the proprietor, governors, principal, parents and staff before the week of the inspection;
- teachers, technical, medical and support staff; and
- groups of pupils representing each key stage.

The team also considered:

- documents provided by the school, including the school's self-evaluation report;
- a selection of pupils' work from across the age and ability range; and
- 256 responses to a parents' questionnaire.

The inspection team held post-inspection meetings with the governors and staff.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Rosemary Lait HMI Lead Inspector	Primary phase co-ordinator Key Question 5 Music (p)
John Thomas HMI	Secondary phase co-ordinator Key Question 1 History (s)
Michael Best Additional Inspector	Key Question 2 English (p), information technology (p), design technology (p), geography (p), history (p)
Rhona Edwards HMI	Key Question 3 Welsh second language (p), mathematics (p), science (p), physical education (p)
Pru Davis-James Additional Inspector	Key Question 4 Physical education (s)
Claire Morgan HMI	Key Question 6 Business studies (s)
Barry Rees HMI	Key Question 7 Biology, physics and science (s)
Gareth Adams Additional Inspector	Music (s)
David Bush Additional Inspector	English (s), drama (s)
Mary Crandon Additional Inspector	Welsh second language (s)
Angus Dunphy Additional Inspector	Geography (s)
Alan Edwards Additional Inspector	Information technology (s)
Martin Holmes Additional Inspector	Chemistry (s), physics (s)
Lynne Meiring Additional Inspector	Modern foreign languages (s)
Alun Morgan HMI	Government and politics (s)
Ray Owen HMI	Art (s)
Paul Scudamore AI	Regulations – Standard 5
Mererid Stone HMI	Mathematics (s)

Margaret Griffith Williams Additional Inspector	Design technology (s)
Martin Lloyd Williams Additional Inspector	Religious education (with religious studies) (s)
Linda Vittle Additional Inspector	Under-fives, art (p), religious education (p)
Deborah Wring Additional Inspector	Classics (s)
Andrea Cashell Head of learning support Rydal Penrhos School	Peer assessor Contribution to Key Question 4 including special educational needs and English as an additional language (p and s)
Michelle Gosney Deputy Principal	School nominee

### **Acknowledgement**

The inspection team would like to thank the Girls' Day School Trust, governors, principal, staff and pupils of Howell's School, Llandaff for their co-operation at all stages of the inspection.