

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

A report on the quality of education in

**Ysgol John Bright
Maesdu Road
Llandudno
Conwy
LL30 1LF**

School number: 6624022

Date of inspection: 30 March 2009

by

**Edward Aneurin Peter Harris
78673**

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

The inspection of Ysgol John Bright took place between 30/03/09 and 02/04/09. An independent team of inspectors, led by Edward Aneurin Peter Harris undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **standard** inspection.

Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

Contents	Page
Context	1
Summary	2
Recommendations	7
Standards	7
Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?	7
The quality of education and training	11
Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	11
Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	14
Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	16
Leadership and management	18
Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?	18
Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	19
Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	21
Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning	23
Mathematics	23
Science	25
Information and communication technology	27
History	28
Art and Design	30
Religious education (including religious studies)	31
School's response to the inspection	32
Appendices	33
1 Basic information about the school	33
2 School data and indicators	33
3 National Curriculum assessments results	34
4 Evidence base of the inspection	38
5 Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team	39

Context

The nature of the provider

1. Ysgol John Bright is an 11-18, mixed, community school in Llandudno, Conwy. There are 1238 pupils on roll, of whom 210 are in the sixth form. In 2003, when the school was last inspected, there were 1186 pupils on roll, 138 of whom were in the sixth form.
2. Pupils and students come from the town of Llandudno but also from Penrhyn Bay and Deganwy. There are both prosperous and economically deprived wards within the school's catchment area. The school's intake is fully comprehensive.
3. Eighteen percent of pupils are in receipt of free school meals. This figure is approximately 3% above the average for the Unitary Authority (UA) and broadly in line with the national average. Approximately 15% of pupils are identified on the school's register of special educational needs (SEN) and almost 4% of pupils have a statement of special educational need.
4. The attainment of pupils on entry reflects the full range of ability. The school has a unit to cater for pupils with Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD). A very small minority of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The vast majority of pupils comes from homes where English is the first language.
5. In 2004, the school was provided with new accommodation, built as part of the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) project.
6. The current headteacher has been in post since January 2009. His predecessor was in post at the time of the last inspection, in 2003. The senior leadership team (SLT) is comprised of one deputy headteacher, three assistant headteachers and the school's business manager. Only the deputy headteacher and one assistant headteacher were in post at the time the school was last inspected.

The school's priorities and targets

7. The school's main aims are to:
 - provide a stimulating and well-managed learning environment;
 - maximise the potential of every individual; and
 - equip pupils and students of all abilities to meet the challenges of education, work and life.
8. The school's self-evaluation report is based on the seven key questions of the Common Inspection Framework.
9. Numerical targets are set, that in 2010:
 - 67% of pupils should reach at least level 5 in all three subjects combined in national curriculum (NC) assessments at the end of key stage (KS) 3; and
 - 62% of pupils should achieve at least five grades A*-C, and 95% at least five grades A*-G in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examination, or equivalent.

Summary

10. Ysgol John Bright is a good school with some outstanding features. Through the inspirational leadership provided by the former and present headteachers the school continues to improve.
11. The governing body, the SLT and staff have worked together well over several years to improve the standards of accommodation and provision at the school. The school benefits from a common sense of purpose that pervades the whole school community.
12. Since 2003 there have been improvements in the following areas:
 - examination results;
 - the quality of teaching;
 - the support and guidance for learners; and
 - accommodation and resources.
13. However, there are inconsistencies in the way in which teachers assess pupils' work and shortcomings in the curriculum that need attention.

Table of grades awarded

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

14. The grades for key questions 1, 2, 5 and 6 match those of the school in its self-evaluation report. Inspectors judged outstanding practice in key questions 4 and 7 and awarded grade 1 accordingly. However, inspectors awarded one grade lower than the school for key question 3 because of a shortcoming in meeting statutory requirements.

Standards achieved

15. The team inspected the standards that pupils and students achieve in six subjects. The following table shows the grades awarded at KS3, KS4 and in the sixth form.

Subject	KS3	KS4	Sixth Form
Mathematics	2	2	2
Science	3	2	2
Information technology	2	2	2
History	2	1	2
Art	2	2	1
Religious education (including religious studies)	1	2	2

16. In comparison with the time that the school was last inspected, these figures indicate the overall maintenance of standards in science and mathematics and an improvement in standards in information technology, history, religious education and art.
17. The following table shows the percentages of grades awarded at each stage in the six subjects inspected.

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3	13%	62%	23%	2%	0%
KS4	10%	76%	14%	0%	0%
Sixth form	12%	80%	8%	0%	0%
Whole school	12%	71%	16%	1%	0%
These grades are based on observations of 93 lessons					

18. In over eight out of ten lessons observed, learners achieved standards which had good features and no important shortcomings. In over one lesson in ten, standards achieved had outstanding features. In all other lessons, standards had good features which outweighed shortcomings, except for a very small number of lessons in science.
19. At KS3, in the NC teachers' assessments in 2008, results were broadly in line with local and national averages. When compared to schools with a similar intake, results were above average in 2008. In 2007, they were in the top 25% for passes in each of English, mathematics and science, and the core subject indicator (CSI). Achievement in English, mathematics and science was in line with what was expected, based on prior attainment.
20. At KS3, girls outperform boys.
21. At KS4, the percentage of pupils the school enters for GCSE or equivalent exceeds the average for Wales as a whole. Pass rates at five or more grades A*-C exceed local and national averages. Pass rates at five or more grades A*-G are in line with local and national figures.
22. When compared with similar schools, GCSE pass rates at the higher grades are above average. Passes at grades A*-G are below average.
23. In 2008, girls outperformed boys at five or more grades A*-C, in English, mathematics and in all three core subjects combined.
24. Results at Advanced (A) level are broadly in line with local and national averages.
25. Pupils and students acquire new knowledge and skills as they progress through the school. They have good levels of skill in communication, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT).
26. On the whole, learners have a good understanding of how well they are progressing and what they have to do in order to make good progress. It is only with a small minority that this understanding is not secure.
27. While bilingual skills are developed through Welsh lessons, there is limited use made of incidental Welsh throughout the school.
28. Standards among pupils with SEN are very good.

29. Pupils and students adopt very positive attitudes towards learning. They work hard in lessons, engage in asking and answering questions and maintain appropriate levels of concentration.
30. Learners enjoy very good relationships with staff. Pupils and students are well behaved and courteous.
31. Levels of attendance have improved since 2003. They meet UA averages and are in line with the average for Wales.
32. Learners make very good progress in their personal, moral, social and cultural development. The way in which they progress personally and show respect for peers, adults and diversity in society is exemplary.
33. Pupils and students respond well to the opportunities the school provides to work with other partners and to individual opportunities for involvement in the school's life. The way in which they are prepared for higher education and employment is good.

The quality of education and training

34. Teaching has good features and no important shortcomings.
35. The following grades were awarded for teaching in the lessons observed:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
16%	68%	14%	2%	0%
These grades are based on observations of 136 lessons				

36. Eighty-four percent of lessons were graded 1 and 2 compared to 75% in all inspections in Wales during 2007-2008. This figure exceeds the Welsh Assembly government (WAG) target for 2010, that 80% of lessons be judged to be grade 2 or better.
37. Ninety-eight percent of lessons were graded 3 and above which is 1% higher than the all-Wales figure for 2007-2008. The proportion of lessons judged to have outstanding features falls just short of the all-Wales figure of 17% for the same period.
38. Although the size and nature of the sample are different from those of the last inspection, these grades show that teaching has improved even further from that time. Six years ago, 97% of lessons were graded 3 and above, and 71% graded 1 and 2.
39. Teachers plan their lessons well and have high expectations of what pupils and students will achieve. Lessons are stimulating and offer opportunities for learning in different ways. The teaching provides well for pupils from all language backgrounds. Learning assistants make a very positive contribution to the classroom experience of many pupils who have learning or behavioural difficulties.
40. On the whole, the quality of assessment, recording and reporting has good features and no important shortcomings. Teachers mark learners' work regularly and make comments on how their work can be improved. However, there are inconsistencies within and between departments in the way in which teachers give subject-specific targets for improvement.
41. The school meets statutory requirements for assessment.

42. There are shortcomings in teachers' plans to provide appropriate opportunities for learners to develop and apply bilingual skills.
43. The curriculum provided is broadly based and balanced and meets the needs of pupils and students. It has coherence and progression and enables learners to develop their basic and key skills.
44. The ways in which the school works in partnership with other schools and provides work-related education are good. There is a growing number of vocational courses provided to meet learners' needs.
45. The curriculum effectively promotes pupils' and students' moral, social and cultural development. Pupils regularly explore issues relating to global citizenship and, increasingly, sustainable development.
46. Work-related education and the extra-curricular provision are good. The opportunities for extra-curricular music are outstanding. However, at KS4, the school does not provide sufficient time for a minority of pupils to receive their full entitlement to religious education.
47. The quality of guidance and support is outstanding. Teachers and support staff encourage pupils to give of their best and give very good pastoral support. The provision for pupils with special needs, and for all pupils at KS4 when preparing for external examinations, is extensive. They are well supported at this time and their progress against their targets is closely monitored.
48. The inclusion of all in a safe and happy environment is a central concern of governors and all who work at the school. They are successful in the way in which they plan and organise all aspects of the school's life to enhance learners' well-being.

Leadership and management

49. A strong vision based on clear aims and values directly influenced the work of the previous headteacher. Her successor has a similarly comprehensive vision for excellence in education which is shared by governors, senior and middle managers and all members of staff.
50. There is a consistent sense of purpose that has promoted, and continues to promote improvement at the school. There are shared expectations of behaviour, standards and care that leaders and managers throughout the school demonstrate in their day-to-day work.
51. The school has drawn up a suitable range of policies which reflect these aims and in the majority of cases, these policies are implemented effectively. The school operates well on a day-to-day basis and is a stable environment for learning.
52. Good account is taken of UA and national priorities. Working relationships with local providers at primary, secondary and further education levels are very good. The arrangements for setting whole-school targets are effective.
53. In the majority of cases, teams and departments are well managed and led. However, there are inconsistencies in the way in which whole-school policy and targets are monitored.

54. The contribution of governors to strategic development is exemplary. They are aware of the main challenges the school faces and its priorities in addressing them. The governing body is committed to the WAG priorities and meets all regulatory and legal requirements, apart from the provision of religious education for all pupils at KS4.
55. The arrangements to monitor and evaluate the school's performance are good. Leaders and managers gain first-hand knowledge of standards of provision and of pupils' work. The views of pupils, parents, staff and governors are actively sought.
56. Governors receive regular reports from leaders and managers in the school. They have a clear understanding of their role and work very efficiently through a range of appropriate committees.
57. The school is suitably staffed to ensure that the demands of the curriculum and the needs of learners are met. The way in which support staff work with teachers to plan, teach and record pupils' progress is outstanding.
58. The school enjoys exceptional resources. The provision of resources ensures that all pupils and students have excellent opportunities to benefit from experience of specialist equipment in subjects such as science, design and technology, art and music. The learning resource area, ICT and sporting facilities are also of high quality.
59. The purpose-built accommodation provides an exemplary setting for learning in all parts of the curriculum. Learners benefit from a stimulating and well-maintained environment.
60. The school makes very efficient use of its resources. Senior managers and the governing body carefully consider financial decisions and the school manages its budget effectively. The way in which the school trains and develops staff is very good.
61. With regard to the key issues of the previous inspection, the school has made very good progress in raising standards in general and, in particular, in information technology, history, religious education and art.
62. The school continues to make progress in developing target-setting.
63. However, the school has not made sufficient progress in providing adequate arrangements for religious education for a minority of pupils at KS4.
64. The school now complies with statutory requirements to provide a daily act of collective worship.

Recommendations

In order to build on current achievement, the school should focus on the following priorities.

- R1. Continue to raise standards throughout the school
- R2. Raise standards of bilingualism.
- R3. Ensure greater consistency within and between departments, in target-setting, assessment policy and practice.
- R4. Review the curriculum to ensure that all pupils at KS4 receive their entitlement to religious education.

Aspects of all these recommendations are addressed in the school's current planning.

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

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

65. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.

KS3 and KS4

Pupils' success in attaining agreed learning goals

66. The following table shows the standards that pupils achieved at KS3 and KS4 in the six subjects inspected.

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3	13%	62%	23%	2%	0%
KS4	10%	76%	14%	0%	0%
KS3 & KS4	12%	68%	19%	1%	0%
These grades are based on observations of 68 lessons					

67. These figures are in line with the 2010 national target of 98% of standards of achievement to be judged grade 3 or above. They exceed by 15 percentage points the target that 65% of lessons be awarded grade two or above.

68. The proportion of good and very good lessons exceeds the averages for Wales as reported by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) in his 2007-2008 report.

69. The proportion of lessons judged to be good and very good has improved since the last time the school was inspected. The improvement in the proportion of lessons judged to be grade 2 is significant.

70. On the whole, results at KS3 exceed national averages for Wales. Results in English, mathematics and science, were above national figures, though the proportion of pupils who reached at least level 5 in all three core subjects combined equalled the national average.

71. When compared to schools of a similar intake these results are above average.
72. Pupils' achievement at KS3 indicates good progress when compared to what was expected, based on prior attainment.
73. At KS4, the percentage the school enters for GCSE or equivalent exceeds the average for Wales as a whole. In 2008, 60% of pupils achieved five or more passes at grade C or above, 85% at grade G or above. Passes at the higher grades exceeded local and national averages while passes at the lower grades were in line with them.
74. The percentage of pupils gaining grade C or above each in English, mathematics, science and in the three core subjects combined, was above the average for similar schools.
75. In 2008, at KS4, the school met its targets for passes at the higher grades. It fell slightly short of its target for passes at grade G or above.
76. Pupils with SEN make thorough progress and achieve very good results relative to their ability.
77. At KS3 and KS4, girls outperform boys.
78. Standards in the key skills of communication, use of number and ICT have good features and no important shortcomings.
79. The majority of pupils are confident speakers and use an appropriate range of subject vocabulary. They are ready to offer ideas in class and develop their understanding through discussion. They listen well to one another and to their teachers.
80. Pupils read fluently and with expression. The more able have good note-taking skills. Pupils write well in a variety of forms and style. The more able re-draft their work confidently so as to produce good levels of extended writing.
81. Pupils use their numeracy skills effectively across a comprehensive range of subjects.
82. Pupils' ICT skills have improved since the last inspection. There are examples of consistently good practice, for example in science and art, where a good variety of programs is used successfully.
83. Pupils work well together in pairs and in groups, in creative and problem-solving opportunities.
84. While all pupils at KS4 follow courses leading to recognised qualifications in Welsh second language, their bilingual skills are not well developed outside Welsh lessons.

Their progress in learning

85. The vast majority of pupils is able to recall previous work successfully and relate it to their current study in a relevant way. They work well together to clarify and solve problems.
86. In comparison with attainment on entry to the school, pupils make good progress. They respond well to the encouragement provided and are effectively prepared for the next stage of education and training.

87. While there is some variation within and between subjects in terms of the benefits pupils get from peer and self-assessment, on the whole, pupils have a good understanding of how well they are progressing and what they have to do in order to improve their work.
88. Pupils with SEN respond well to in-class support and make good progress over both key stages. They respond to challenge and the encouragement to work hard. They are aware of the key skills and exercise them at a level appropriate to their ability.

The development of their personal, social and learning skills

89. The vast majority of pupils behaves well and adopts very positive attitudes to learning. There is an orderly atmosphere in the school and pupils understand the high expectations the school has of them.
90. They join in the activities provided and work hard in lessons. The praise and support, which the school offers, motivate them to give of their best.
91. Pupils display exemplary standards of courtesy and tolerance, both with one another and with adults and visitors. There are very few incidents of bullying and aggressive behaviour.
92. The overall attendance rate for the three terms prior to the inspection was 91.6%. While this figure is above the UA and national average, it falls below the WAG target of 93%. Punctuality at the start of the school day and at the start of lessons is good.
93. Pupils' moral, social, cultural and wider development is exceptionally good. Their spiritual development is good. Most pupils take part in sport and in a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular activities. The benefit pupils receive from extra-curricular music is extensive.
94. Relationships with adults in the school enable pupils to express their views openly and honestly. Pupils have a valuable understanding of diversity in society. The knowledge and skills they acquire through assemblies, personal and social education (PSE) and religious education help them to approach social and personal issues rationally.
95. Careers guidance and work-related education of good quality prepare pupils extremely well for the world of work. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards life-long learning.
96. On the whole, at KS3 and KS4, girls outperform boys.

Sixth form

Students' success in attaining agreed learning goals

97. Standards in the sixth form have good features and no important shortcomings.
98. The following table shows the standards achieved by students in the subjects inspected.

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Sixth form	12%	80%	8%	0%	0%
These grades are based on observations of 25 lessons					

99. Results at A level have improved since the last inspection. While they are broadly in line with local and national figures, students' average points exceed local and national levels.
100. Girls outperform boys at A level.
101. As at KS3 and KS4, standards in the key skills of communication, use of number and ICT have good features and no important shortcomings. Increasing numbers of students gain qualifications.
102. Students speak and listen well to the teacher and to one another. The questions they pose are probing. They express their views with confidence and clarity. The more able students engage in extended discussion with their teachers and one another.
103. Students write at length, using subject-specific vocabulary fluently and accurately. They write critically and justify their opinions with relevant argument.
104. Students engage in problem-solving activity and use ICT well to support their research and present their work. They handle files and folders confidently. Many use data-bases, PowerPoint and spreadsheets to good effect.
105. As at KS3 and KS4, students' bilingual skills are not well developed.

Their progress in learning

106. Participation in the local 14-19 partnership has enabled students to benefit from a broad range of Advanced Supplementary (AS) and A2 courses including an increasing range of vocationally-based courses.
107. The school provides very good support to all sixth formers, particularly to those who wish to proceed to higher education.
108. Students have a good understanding of how well they are doing. Their work is marked and commented upon in detail and targets for improvement are clearly set.

The development of their personal, social and learning skills

109. Students enjoy very good relationships with staff and develop a sense of maturity and independence as they respond to the many opportunities they have to take a leading role in the school. They take seriously their responsibility for supporting younger pupils.
110. Sixth-form students develop very good personal, social and learning skills. They are confident and articulate young adults who relate well to pupils, their peers, teachers and other adults in the school.
111. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Sixth-form students have an appropriate programme of work-related education that enables them to become mature young people who are aware of, and respond to, the needs of others.
112. They have good levels of attendance and punctuality.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

113. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.

KS3 and KS4

How well teaching and training meet learners' needs and the curricular or course requirements

114. The following table shows the quality of teaching and assessment in the 68 lessons observed in the six subjects inspected and the 37 other lessons observed at KS3 and KS4.

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3	15%	64%	18%	3%	0%
KS4	13%	71%	16%	0%	0%
KS3 & KS4	14%	67%	17%	2%	0%
These grades are based on observations of 105 lessons					

115. In 14% of lessons observed at both key stages there were outstanding features in the quality of teaching. Teaching was observed to be consistently good with no important shortcomings in 67% of lessons.
116. Good features outweighed shortcomings in 98% of lessons at both key stages. In only 2% of lessons were there shortcomings in important areas.
117. These grades compare favourably with those for all inspections in Wales in 2007-2008. With over 80% of lessons judged to be grades 1 and 2, the school already meets the WAG 2010 target for lessons that have good and very good features.
118. An outstanding feature of the teaching is the excellent relationship between pupils and their teachers. Pupils comment positively on, and appreciate, the secure and supportive learning environment provided for them. This makes a significant contribution to the positive attitudes to learning demonstrated by almost all pupils.
119. As a result of the effective sharing of good practice, the school is making good progress towards developing pupils' independent learning skills and reducing over-reliance on their teachers, which had been identified as a shortcoming in the previous report.
120. Most teachers use their specialist knowledge and expertise well to provide a range of interesting, challenging lessons. The work teachers provide is carefully adapted to meet the needs of individual learners. This enables pupils to learn in a variety of ways, and encourages active participation in enquiry and problem-solving.
121. Pair and group work are used effectively in the best lessons, and pupils are required to work together to investigate and present their findings.
122. Many teachers use ICT successfully in their teaching to engage and stimulate pupils' interest. In a growing number of cases, the full potential of the whiteboard technology is utilised to actively involve pupils and enhance their ICT skills.

123. The planning for learning is good in almost all lessons. Most lessons link effectively to previous work. Lesson objectives are shared with pupils and, in the best cases, form the basis for pupils' self-assessment.
124. In the majority of lessons, close monitoring and intervention are effective and enable feedback to pupils to be an important element in the process of learning. Rigorous questioning which probes pupils' understanding and extends contributions is well used in most lessons.
125. Plenary sessions are used frequently to check understanding. However, in a small minority of lessons observed, teachers made insufficient time available for review.
126. Learning support and teaching assistants collaborate very effectively with teachers. As a result, pupils with SEN make good progress.
127. Opportunities for pupils to progress in the use of their bilingual skills across the curriculum are limited.
128. In the minority of lessons where shortcomings were observed, lessons lacked pace and challenge. There was an imbalance between teachers' input and activity for pupils, and a limited range of learning approaches which failed to sustain pupils' interest.

The rigour of assessment and its use in planning and improving learning

129. Though a detailed school policy on assessment provides good guidance to teachers, there are inconsistencies in the ways in which they implement it both between and within departments.
130. The school collects an extensive range of information to provide a comprehensive data base of pupils' progress. This is used very effectively to track pupils' achievement and to initiate additional support when required. Each department provides information for the database from assessments on three separate occasions during the year. This enables senior, subject and pastoral staff to monitor pupils' progress effectively in relation to their predicted targets.
131. Teachers help pupils to review their progress. However, the value of the review is limited when targets lack subject-specific guidance. For example, at KS3, pupils have a good knowledge of how they are progressing, but most are unclear about what they have to do to improve. At KS4, external examination and course requirements inform practice more and many targets address more accurately the needs of the individual pupils.
132. Pupils' work is assessed regularly, and teachers keep careful records of pupils' achievements. At KS3, the accuracy of the levelling of pupils' work and the quality of assessment tasks are improving as a result of subject involvement in external moderation and accreditation. At KS4, teachers use their good knowledge of examination board requirements to prepare pupils for assessment at this level.
133. In a good number of departments, teachers give valuable attention to self-assessment and peer-assessment in order to improve pupils' understanding of their work and to improve target setting. However, this practice is not fully embedded across the school.

134. The quality of marking varies. In a large minority of subjects, marking is thorough and provides good diagnostic feedback to pupils. In other subjects, while a range of grades, levels and marks are used, little information is provided for pupils on how to improve.
135. The school meets statutory requirements for assessment and fulfils the regulations of examination boards.
136. The arrangements for the reporting of pupils' progress to parents and carers are good. The interim and full reports present a clear indication of progress, effort and end-of-key-stage and course targets. Most pupils carry out useful analysis of their progress on a self-review sheet. Parents are also given the opportunity to make observations.
137. Teachers' comments are often comprehensive and provide a very useful summary of strengths and weaknesses. In many cases, however, targets for improvement do not sufficiently describe how the identified weaknesses can be addressed by the individual pupils.

Sixth form

How well teaching and training meet learners' needs and the curricular or course requirements

138. The following table shows the quality of teaching and assessment in the 25 lessons observed in the six subjects inspected and the six other lessons observed in the sixth form:

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Sixth form	23%	74%	3%	0%	0%
These grades are based on observations of 31 lessons					

139. In 23% of lessons observed, teaching was good with outstanding features. In a further 74% of lessons, teaching was good with no important shortcomings. These figures exceed national averages for good and outstanding teaching as reported by HMCI in 2007-2008.
140. The positive features identified at KS3 and KS4 are present in the sixth form. In almost all lessons, students benefit from:
- a productive learning environment provided by helpful and approachable staff;
 - the additional time readily given by staff to receive individual support, and to discuss their work and progress;
 - teachers' very good subject knowledge and high expectations;
 - teachers' effective use of resources of good quality;
 - well-planned teaching and learning activities that foster independent learning and higher-order problem solving skills; and
 - effective questions challenge which stretch their thinking.
141. In a very small minority of cases, over-long exposition by teachers, low expectation and a restricted range of learning tasks limited opportunities for students to develop their knowledge, understanding and learning.

The rigour of assessment and its use in planning and improving learning

142. In most cases teachers' assessment is of good quality. Good oral and written feedback helps students to improve as they progress towards their external examinations.
143. Assessment criteria are effectively used to involve students actively in peer and self-assessment.
144. Students' progress is closely scrutinised. All students are provided with regular mentoring of good quality. Those at risk of underachievement receive additional advice and guidance.
145. Students are well informed of their predicted target grades for their courses, and what they have to do to achieve them.
146. Reports of good quality provide relevant and useful information for students and parents and carers on achievement and progress.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

147. The grade awarded is one grade lower than that proposed by the school. While the team acknowledged the good features of the learning experiences in many areas, there is also an important shortcoming. For a minority of pupils at KS4, the school's provision for religious education does not meet the requirements as set out in the local agreed syllabus.

The extent to which learning experiences meet learners' needs and experiences

148. At KS3, the curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Pupils study all NC subjects and religious education. Information technology is taught within PSE in Y7 and Y8 and as a discrete lesson in Y9. Across the key stage, the curriculum is well planned.
149. At KS4, the school offers a good range of Entry-level, GCSE and vocational qualifications. The curriculum is successfully organised through learning pathways, where a good range of optional courses supplements the core provision of English, mathematics, Welsh second language, science and physical education.
150. Pupils in two learning pathways have access to a well-planned PSE programme. Here the provision for religious education via a discrete lesson is appropriate. Pupils in the third learning pathway have to cover all elements of the PSE and religious education programmes of study in four 25 minute tutor periods each week. The time allowed is insufficient to cover the requirements of the agreed syllabus for religious education. This is an important shortcoming.
151. Sixth form students have access to a good range of AS and A level courses including a number of vocational options. The provision is enriched through collaboration with six secondary schools and Coleg Llandrillo as part of the Conway Learning Federation

152. The school has gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark. Most subjects and PSE have clearly identified the delivery of key skills in their schemes of work. However, its impact in a minority of lessons at KS3 and KS4 is underdeveloped.
153. Students in the sixth form are provided with good opportunities to gain accreditation in key skills.
154. The quality of extra-curricular provision has good features and no important shortcomings. The opportunities for pupils to be involved in musical activities, such as choirs, bands, musicals, concerts and events in the community are outstanding.
155. Pupils also take part in a number of subject clubs, theatre visits and field trips. A large number of pupils take part successfully in a range of sporting activities.
156. The school promotes effectively learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their spiritual development is promoted effectively in assemblies, the religious education lessons and in many subjects across the curriculum. The school complies with statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship.
157. The development of pupils' awareness of the culture of Wales and the world is promoted effectively across many areas of the curriculum.
158. There is a comprehensive and very well-planned PSE programme which includes health education, sex education, substance misuse education, careers education and the world of work. The time to deliver the programme at KS3 is suitable. For a minority of pupils at KS4, it is insufficient.
159. The school maintains a good partnership with parents. There is effective communication through newsletters, option booklets, the prospectus and consultation evenings. The Friends of the School provide good support at school events. There are good links with the local community, and the school premises are extensively used as a community resource.
160. Curricular links with partner schools are good. Links with primary schools help develop programmes of study that ensure progression and continuity between Y6 and Y7. The links with six secondary schools and Coleg Llandrillo have been successful in enriching the sixth-form curricular provision.
161. The school has good links with Bangor University through curricular initiatives, conferences and revision days.

The extent to which learning experiences respond to the needs of employers and the wider community

162. The school provides an effective programme of careers education and work-related education. There is good coverage of all elements in the PSE programme of study. There are good links with Careers Wales.
163. The school takes good account of employers' needs. Work experience in Y10 and Y12 is well planned and evaluated.
164. Aspects of *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* feature well in several subjects across the curriculum. Activities such as the School Eisteddfod and visits to Glan Llyn promote successfully the Welsh language and culture. However, there are few opportunities for pupils across the curriculum to further develop and practise their bilingual skills.

165. Aspects of sustainable development and global citizenship are promoted well in assemblies and in PSE, geography and science. While the school has some recycling initiatives, there is no eco-committee to give this area of the curriculum a wider focus across the school. The school does not have eco-school status.
166. Pupils at KS3 and KS4 have some opportunities to develop their understanding of enterprise in modules in the PSE programme. There are further opportunities for learners studying business courses to experience enterprise-related activities. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to take part in enterprise competitions and experience the skill of setting up a business.
167. The school has made some progress in offering learning experiences that reflect national priorities. However, there are shortcomings in the extent of the development of bilingual skills and sustainable development and global citizenship.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

168. While the school awarded itself grade 2 for this key question, the inspection team disagreed. Inspectors awarded grade 1 because aspects of the good practice were judged to be outstanding.

The quality of care, support and guidance to learners

169. The quality of care, support and guidance which pupils and students receive is a significant strength of the school. Relationships between pupils and staff are exemplary. Pupils consider the staff to be supportive and approachable. The way in which the pastoral team plans and manages its arrangements and works with outside agencies is outstanding.
170. The school works closely with parents and carers. The views of pupils and students are taken into account via a school council, which involves them in decision-making and gives them a sense of responsibility.
171. Pupils are given impartial advice when choosing subject and career options. Parents are welcomed to discuss their child either informally or at specially arranged evenings such as the Y9 options evening held in the spring term. Option booklets are of a high quality.
172. There is a well-planned programme of PSE in place at KS3, KS4 and in the sixth form. Access is limited at KS4, for a minority of pupils, because of timetabling constraints. Pupils interviewed spoke highly of the course and of its usefulness in helping them make informed decisions. An imaginative programme targeted at pupils at KS4 provides highly-effective mentoring to help pupils throughout their examination preparation.
173. Transition arrangements with partner primary schools are outstanding. They ensure that pupils, including those with identified learning needs are well known to the school before their arrival. The use of the school website to provide a specific forum to discuss transition questions is particularly imaginative.

174. Pupils receive careers education and guidance of good quality, which takes account of the national framework. Good links with outside agencies enhance this provision.
175. The monitoring of attendance, punctuality and behaviour is good and very thorough. Daily procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality are well established and effective. There are weekly meetings with the on-site educational welfare officer (EWO) and directors of studies to identify low attendance and strategies for addressing issues are discussed and implemented where appropriate.
176. Behaviour monitoring is strong and consistent and is reflected in the good behaviour of pupils. The reward systems in place play an effective role in re-enforcing the attitudes and values expected by the school in these areas.
177. The school's provision for the healthy development, safety and well-being of all pupils is good. They are in the third phase of the Healthy Schools' initiative, with many of the principles an everyday part of school life. Chilled water is available throughout the day and healthy lunches are available. Members of the School Nutrition Action Group (SNAG) have all received food safety awareness training and are currently working with the catering staff to provide an additional healthy dish to the school menu.
178. Effective measures are in place to support child protection. There is a designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection and staff are familiar with the school's referral procedure. Pupils feel safe and secure. Appropriate security measures are in place to protect pupils.

The quality of provision for additional learning needs

179. The quality of support for pupils with additional learning needs is outstanding.
180. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and her team ensure that all pupils on the SEN register are given every opportunity to fulfil their potential. All pupils are fully integrated into all aspects of school life, including those attending the designated resource for MLD pupils.
181. The manner in which the school has responded to the SEN Code of Practice is outstanding. It prepares individual education plans (IEPs) for the pupils, which include very good targets that relate well to the educational, behavioural or pastoral needs of the pupils. The targets are set and agreed with pupils and nearly all parents are involved. These plans are adapted by subject teachers and are helping to raise standards.
182. Extra support is provided for pupils with SEN in small groups, by in-class support and by short-term withdrawal from some lessons. This provision allows pupils to make good progress. A pilot scheme involving provision for a small number of autistic pupils is proving effective.
183. Teachers provide a good range of innovative lessons and adapt the curriculum to enable pupils of all abilities to succeed. At KS4, GCSE and Entry-level examinations are available to all pupils on the SEN register.
184. The pupil advisory link officer provides a high level of effective and readily accessible support to pupils with emotional and social difficulties. Pupils and parents value this flexible and innovative provision highly.

185. A team of skilled learning support assistants (LSAs) offers very effective support for individuals and small groups of pupils. They work closely with subject teachers and provide pupils with continuity, security and support. They are often involved in the planning of lessons and are seen as a valued part of the teaching team.

The quality of provision for equal opportunities

186. The school is committed to providing equal opportunities for boys and girls and has put in place an appropriate range of policies and procedures that are effective in promoting gender equality.

187. The few pupils belonging to ethnic groups integrate naturally. The school recognises and respects diversity and racial equality within society and works successfully to widen pupils' understanding and knowledge of other cultures and religions through the PSE curriculum and assemblies.

188. There are effective strategies to discourage any form of bullying, discrimination or harassment within the school. Pupils are aware of the procedures to deal with bullying. Those interviewed were confident that incidents would be dealt with quickly and effectively, and that bullying was not a significant issue in the school.

189. The school has an appropriate disability equality scheme and an accessibility plan. The relatively new accommodation and the actions of staff, ensure that disabled pupils do not suffer from less favourable treatment. Wheel-chair access into and through the building is good.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

190. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.

How well leaders and managers provide clear direction and promote high standards

191. The headteacher provides clear vision and effective leadership. His commitment to the success of every pupil and student lies at the heart of the school's aims. He has an extensive vision for excellence and his aims and values are known and shared by all members of the school community.

192. Leaders and managers have drawn up a comprehensive range of policies which reflect the school's aims. School policy promotes equality for all successfully and data are used to good effect to produce realistic and challenging targets. In the majority of cases, these are well understood and implemented to good effect. The school functions smoothly in its day-to-day routines.

193. The school pays close attention to the WAG priorities and initiatives, particularly the 14-19 learning pathways where it works enthusiastically with other educational providers and with local businesses. The school is working towards Eco-schools status; it is developing the promotion of bilingualism.

194. Heads of department and heads of year have clear roles and responsibilities. There is a strong focus on raising standards and a culture of affirming good

practice and outcomes. Communication at all levels is good and members of staff at all levels feel valued and supported.

195. The school has put in place effective procedures to monitor the quality of its work. A rolling programme of reviews is well planned and executed. The outcomes of these reviews are used effectively to set priorities and targets for whole-school and departmental improvement plans.

196. Performance management is well established for staff at all levels. There are good systems for the induction of newly qualified teachers and staff new to the school. The school has secured the Investors in People award.

How well governors or other supervisory bodies meet their responsibilities

197. The contribution of governors to strategic development is exemplary. They are aware of the main challenges the school faces and its priorities in addressing them. The governing body is committed to the WAG priorities and meets all regulatory and legal requirements, apart from the provision of religious education for all pupils at KS4.

198. Governors meet all other regulatory and legal requirements.

199. Governors monitor the quality of education provided by the school and the standards achieved. They work through a suitable range of committees and receive regular reports from the headteacher. They know the school well and hold it to account for many aspects of its performance.

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

Grade 2 Good features and no important shortcomings
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200. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.

How effectively the school's performance is monitored and evaluated

201. The findings of the inspection team agree with the school in the grading of four of the seven key questions. The team awarded one grade lower for key question 3, since the school does not comply with the statutory requirement to provide religious education for all pupils at KS4. The team awarded one grade higher for key questions 4 and 7, because of the outstanding nature of some of its strengths.

202. Leaders and managers at all levels are well-informed about the areas for which they are responsible. In consequence, the school's self-evaluation report was well focused and comprehensive, noting clearly major strengths and areas for development. It was based on first-hand evidence, taking account of contributions from all stakeholders.

203. A regular, well-structured self-evaluation cycle begins at Easter in each year. A member of the SLT takes responsibility for each aspect, co-ordinating the gathering and evaluation of evidence. The pastoral and departmental self-evaluation is of good quality, though, in a small minority of cases, reports do not have clearly defined priorities.

204. Each department has a link SLT member who takes an active role in monitoring standards. They observe lessons, sample pupils' books and provide written feedback to each department. Heads of department observe members of their departments teaching at least one lesson annually, outside the demands of performance management. In many cases, subject teachers also observe each other, enabling them better to identify and share good practice.
205. The school takes good account of the views of all staff, parents and pupils through the use of annual surveys of their perceptions of the school. The UA conducts an annual review where the link adviser discusses evidence of existing performance and future plans with the headteacher. The school council brings the voice of pupils effectively to the attention of the SLT. Strong community links ensure the views of local businesses and employers are readily heard.
206. Senior managers provide teachers with relevant data to enable them to set targets for learners and track their progress. Heads of departments prepare a thorough analysis of examination data, which includes comparisons between the performance of boys and girls, with schools nationally, and which identifies trends over time. Most departments set appropriate targets for examination classes at KS4 and the sixth form.

The effectiveness of planning for improvement

207. On the whole, the school has made good progress in addressing the key issues for development identified in the previous inspection report. In particular, standards in most of the subjects judged at that time to have important shortcomings have now improved. Teaching, monitoring of pupils' progress and target-setting have all improved.
208. Accommodation has been transformed to an outstanding degree by the new premises. While minor shortcomings in statutory documentation have now been addressed, for a minority of pupils, the school still does not comply with the statutory requirement to provide religious education at KS4.
209. The school improvement plan (SIP) clearly sets out the strategic priorities for future development. It is firmly based on the pastoral and departmental improvement plans. These, however, vary a little in quality. The best documents contain measurable success criteria, are clearly costed and are supported by action plans. In others, plans are too general and success criteria are not always specific.
210. Support and ancillary members of staff as well as teaching staff plan well for improvements, and set out targets with appropriate time-scales. Current challenging targets for improvement throughout the school are having a positive effect on staff and learners alike.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

211. The inspection team awarded this question one grade higher than the school awarded itself in its self-evaluation report because of the outstanding way in which it manages its resources.

212. The outstanding features include:

- the accommodation;
- ICT investment and provision;
- deployment and development of staff; and
- the prudent management of the school budget.

The adequacy, suitability and use made of staffing, learning resources and accommodation

213. The school has sufficient teachers to deliver the curriculum. They are appropriately qualified and have a high quality of subject expertise. A significant number holds additional qualifications. There is a good range of experienced and recently qualified teachers.

214. The school successfully implemented workforce remodelling and the introduction of teaching and learning responsibilities.

215. Nearly all departments have a teaching assistant assigned to them. Their work is highly valued by the school and enables teachers to focus on planning and teaching. Four have trained as learning coaches and support pupils at KS3 and KS4.

216. Nine teaching assistants employed by the UA support pupils with SEN. A qualified higher-level teaching assistant has responsibility for staff cover and has contributed to a much reduced dependence on teachers for this work.

217. The school employs a business manager who oversees effectively the work of a large team of administrative staff and makes a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school. There are very good levels of technical support in science, design technology and information technology.

218. The provision for ICT is outstanding. The arrangements made to maintain this investment are very effective. The library is efficiently managed by two library assistants. It is well supported by pupils who use it at lunchtime and after school.

219. Classrooms, laboratories and workshops are well equipped and are resourced to meet the needs of learners. While resources in design and technology are exemplary, there are shortcomings in the resources for art and religious education.

220. The quality of the accommodation is exceptional. Subject areas are clustered in blocks within faculties. Disabled access is excellent.

221. Under the PFI scheme, repair and maintenance, catering, caretaking and ground maintenance are the responsibility of Sodexo. This is financed by the school, and is overseen carefully by the business manager. The accommodation provides a clean, attractive learning environment, respected by all within the school community.

How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money

222. Careful planning by governors and SLT ensures a sufficient number of well-qualified teachers and a substantial number of support assistants to deliver the school curriculum. The timetable deploys staff skills efficiently. With only minor exceptions, subjects are taught by a specialist teacher and there are very few split classes.
223. The school has met the requirements for re-modelling the workforce. Teachers have adequate planning, preparation and assessment time and it is well-used. Staff absence is monitored by a member of the administrative staff and return-to-work interviews are carried out by the headteacher. Criminal Record Bureau checks are carried out.
224. The management of resources is closely linked to the school's priorities for development. The SIP is based on departmental improvement plans. These are costed to determine the annual development budget and associated professional development needs.
225. The school manages its budget exceptionally well. Financial planning is detailed and thorough. Monthly balances are produced to ensure spending is efficiently monitored. Effective links with outside providers enable the school to gain very good value for money from its sixth-form provision.
226. While capitation allowances are lower than average, the majority of subject areas, however, receive sufficient capitation to meet their needs. A contingency fund has enabled the school to maintain a good staffing level of both teaching and non-teaching staff. Staffing costs, as a percentage of the total budget, are low.
227. Performance management arrangements for teachers are in line with statutory requirements. All non-teaching staff have appraisal interviews with their line managers. The school has been awarded Investors in People status for the fourth time.
228. The school provides a wide range of opportunities to support the professional development of staff. Arrangements effectively link priorities based on individual and departmental needs. The ways in which student-teachers, newly-qualified teachers, and teachers in their early professional development are supported, are outstanding.
229. The school provides very good value for money. This is evidenced by the improving standards achieved by pupils, the quality of teaching, the management and deployment of staff, and the quality of care, support and guidance provided for pupils.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Mathematics

Key Stage 3: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Key Stage 4: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Sixth Form: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

KS3

Good features

230. Pupils deal effectively with all aspects of numbers and apply these in any given circumstances depending on the work they are set. They change decimals to fractions without any difficulty.
231. Pupils understand relevant facts about angles and can calculate the angles required in a given shape. They are able to use a protractor correctly with an acceptable error margin to measure or draw angles as required. They name geometrical shapes in two and three dimensions and understand their properties.
232. Pupils have a good understanding of algebra and are able to calculate numerical values for a given expression and are able to solve equations according to their ability. They can simplify algebraic expressions and are able to give the correct numerical answer.
233. They use computers well to determine a translation and have a clear understanding of the types of translation that they meet. They are able to find the centre of rotation and to give the co-ordinates of the translated shape.
234. As they move through the key stage, pupils determine accurately areas and volumes for given shapes according to their ability and express the answers in the correct form, including the correct units.
235. The pupils give their answers to the required degree of accuracy and even when calculators are used give the answer in a sensible manner as is appropriate to the required number of decimal places.
236. As they move through the key stage their understanding of the subject is strengthened and by the end they are able to deal with complex topics.
237. Pupils can estimate answers with a satisfactory degree of accuracy within the context they are studying and are able to explain the method used.
238. They have the required understanding of statistics and can deal with data such as generating frequency charts or finding simple probabilities and are able to work out the answer in any given problem set.
239. Pupils deal with graphs effectively and include the correct axis and can use these to determine further answers as necessary.
240. Pupils with SEN perform well in line with their ability.

Shortcomings

241. A minority of pupils does not complete the work set in class or for homework. The exercise books of a minority of pupils are untidy.
242. A small minority of pupils is unable to recall the work done previously. This hinders their progress.

KS4

243. In the last two years examination results compare well with those of the UA and Wales at grades A*-C and A*-G. Results in the last two years show a considerable improvement on those previously.

Good features

244. Pupils are able to deal with timetables and to measure time in both methods. They can determine the time taken to complete a journey and are able to change times from the 12 to 24-hour system.

245. Pupils have a clear understanding of probability and realise that the values must lie between zero and one. They use appropriate methods including tree diagrams to determine the answers.

246. They have a clear understanding of trigonometry and can use the correct ratio to calculate angles or sides from the information given and can apply their understanding to solve quite complex questions.

247. They are able to solve equations including simultaneous and quadratic equations and they can apply these to solve further problems as required.

248. They can draw graphs with an acceptable degree of accuracy and are able to use these correctly to determine other answers.

249. According to the level of work studied they deal with difficult expressions with good understanding and use this knowledge to determine answers for more challenging questions that are set.

250. Pupils can apply circle theorems and apply them correctly in given questions to determine more difficult answers.

251. As at KS3, pupils with SEN perform well in line with their ability.

Shortcomings

252. A few pupils are not always able to recall work completed previously.

253. In a small minority of cases, not all the work set is completed.

254. A minority of pupils have poorly-drawn graphs. These lead to errors in the answers they work out.

Sixth form

255. During the last two years, results at AS and A2 levels compare very favourably with those of the UA and Wales. There a good numbers of students studying the subject every year.

Good features

256. Students study pure mathematics, statistics and mechanics during their course and gain qualifications at appropriate levels.

257. Students acquire new skills quickly and can use their prior knowledge to understand any new concepts they meet. This enables them to deal effectively with questions they are given and ensures strong development in their understanding of the subject.

258. In statistics, they are able to apply the formulae to determine information about probabilities and are able to suggest hypotheses which they use correctly.
259. They use calculus as required and can integrate and differentiate correctly. They can use these techniques to find other information such as gradient, areas under curves and to determine more complex answers.
260. They have a clear understanding of all formulae and laws that apply in the areas studied and this generates competence in dealing with the required aspects of the subject.
261. In the courses studied the students transfer the knowledge gained in any topic studied to other aspects of the course without undue difficulties.
262. In any investigational work they carry out they are able to determine the required facts quickly and can explain clearly any decisions made and the relevance of all the answers gained.

Shortcomings

263. In a small minority of cases, the layout of students' work is untidy.

Science

Key Stage 3: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings
Key Stage 4: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
Sixth Form: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

KS3

Good features

264. In most classes, pupils have a good recall and understanding of scientific principles. They can apply different scientific concepts to solve scientific problems in familiar situations.
265. A majority of pupils can apply a range of skills successfully in practical tasks and problem-solving exercises. They develop good practical skills as they progress through the key stage. A small majority records results with appropriate precision and calculates correct averages from repeated measurements.
266. Most draw appropriate graphs and are able to draw conclusions which confirm patterns in scientific behaviour.
267. The majority of pupils is able to apply their scientific knowledge to explain some scientific phenomena such as the impact of gravity on motion and exothermic and endothermic reactions.
268. Pupils with SEN make good progress relative to their ability.

Shortcomings

269. A small minority of pupils does not have a secure recall of previous work covered and has difficulty applying certain concepts when solving scientific problems.
270. A minority of pupils does not record measurements accurately or calculate averages correctly. Pupils do not draw appropriate graphs and explain outcomes correctly.

KS4

271. The percentage of pupils who gained GCSE grades A*-C was above UA figures in 2007 and 2008. When compared with the figures for schools in Wales, they were slightly below in 2007 and above in 2008. Overall, this represents good achievement for these pupils.

Good features

272. Many pupils across the ability range have a good recall of previous work and apply their knowledge to a range of tasks and applications of science.

273. A majority of pupils has a secure understanding of a range of scientific principles across a range of topics.

274. Many pupils undertake practical work to a good standard, work well together and carry out procedures safely. A majority of pupils measures results with precision, plots appropriate graphs and can identify ways to improve the investigation.

275. Many pupils complete portfolios to a good standard in applied science.

276. A majority of pupils develops a good understanding of the application of science in topics related to global warming, chemical reactivity and chemical processes and issues which affect world population.

277. The majority of pupils with SEN makes good progress in the course they are following.

Shortcomings

278. A small minority of pupils has a less secure recall of previous work.

279. A minority of pupils has difficulty applying some principles to solve scientific problems.

Sixth form

280. As the number of students entered for A2 examinations in 2007 and 2008 has been small, comparison with schools across Wales is not meaningful.

Good features

281. The majority of students makes good progress in their respective programmes of study.

282. Many students have a secure recall and understanding of key concepts and principles.

283. The majority of students is able to apply their theoretical understanding to a range of tasks involving the analysis of data and the application of scientific principles in a range of problem-solving activities.

284. Many develop good practical and investigational skills. They use prior knowledge well to plan their work, measure with precision and complete in-depth evaluations.

285. In some elements of the courses studied, students carry out independent research to inform presentations and explain scientific behaviour.

Shortcomings

286. A minority of students has a less secure knowledge and understanding of some of the topics covered.

287. A small minority has some difficulty applying some of the more complex principles to tasks and practical applications.

Information and communication technology

Key Stage 3: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Key Stage 4: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Sixth Form: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

288. In KS4, results have shown a steady improvement over the last three years. In 2008 results were comparable with local averages and below national averages.

289. The A level course was introduced in 2007 and no results are available.

KS3

Good features

290. Pupils demonstrate good skills in communicating information. They are able to use word-processing, desk-top publishing, presentation and graphics software to good effect and usually with a good sense of audience.

291. Pupils make good use of the internet to research a variety of topics.

292. Pupils are comfortable using the virtual learning environment and are confident in navigating their way around this. As a result they are able to utilise the good quality software available to raise the standard of their work.

293. Pupils with SEN make good progress in line with their abilities.

Shortcomings

294. In a small minority of cases, pupils' skills in data handling and modelling are insufficiently developed.

295. A minority of more able pupils do not develop higher-level skills.

KS4

Good features

296. Pupils' choice of course content allows them to produce course work in an area of interest to them and as a result many produce impressive projects of a high standard.

297. Pupils successfully enhance and apply their knowledge, understanding and skills in a variety of challenging contexts.

298. Pupils use the virtual learning environment successfully and are confident in navigating their way around it.

299. Pupils have a good level of awareness of the social, economic and ethical issues raised by the use of ICT.

300. As at KS3, pupils with SEN make good progress.

Shortcomings

301. There are no significant shortcomings.

Sixth form

Good features

302. Students display a methodical and analytical approach to problem solving. They can use a range of software packages and are able to design and produce solutions to problems, clearly communicate these solutions and as a result produce project work of a good standard.

303. Most students are able to work independently. They exercise a good degree of autonomy and choice in their use of ICT. They produce project-work of a good standard.
304. Students are able to process, share and present information and solve problems and make creative use of the virtual learning environment both at home and at school.
305. Students benefit from regular feedback. They have clear ideas of how they can use ICT to improve the quality of their work.

Shortcomings

306. There are no significant shortcomings.

History

Key Stage 3: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Key Stage 4: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Sixth Form: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

KS3

Good features

307. Pupils of widely differing ability in Y8 can assess the relative importance of the causes of the end of the slave trade and explain their reasoning.
308. Able pupils in Y9, studying the First World War, produce good work of considerable historical insight. For example, they can relate propaganda and censorship to its political and military context, distinguish between levels of propaganda and express well-informed views about its purpose. In written work, they can assess the relative importance of the causes of the war.
309. The least able pupils in Y9 make particularly good progress. They show good knowledge of trench warfare and conditions. They speak with confidence about what they know and ask questions vigorously about artefacts that they do not immediately recognise. They take considerable pride in the presentation of their work.
310. Pupils with SEN make good progress.

Shortcomings

311. While the standard of written work observed in Y7 exercise books is satisfactory, the work of a minority of pupils is incomplete.
312. Pupils of average ability in Y8 studying the slave trade make less progress than the most and least able
313. The progress and achievement of all pupils at KS3 is impeded by inconsistency in the quality of teachers' comments on their work.

KS4

314. In 2008, 80% pupils gained grades A*-C, an improvement of 20 percentage points over the previous year and well above both UA and national averages. Significantly, over half of these pupils achieved grades A* or A.

Good and outstanding features

315. The ablest pupils in Y11 demonstrate an exceptionally high standard of knowledge of the events leading up to the Montgomery Bus Boycott of December 1955.
316. The ways in which they consciously deploy their knowledge of the action taken by Rosa Parks, and assess its longer-term significance are outstandingly good.
317. Pupils in Y10 make very good progress in their critical use of source material, for example, to generate competing interpretations of the abilities of Field Marshall Haig and to assess the actual value and significance of women's war work.
318. Pupils in both year groups show very good organisation and presentation of work. They have a very good knowledge of examination requirements and understanding of historical processes.
319. Pupils with SEN make good progress.

Shortcomings

320. A very small minority of pupils has a limited view of the usefulness of sources as evidence, seeing this only in terms of the content of each source as opposed to its typicality, relevance or significance.

Sixth form

321. At A level, results are in line with both local and national averages.

Good features

322. Students can use sources critically as a set to assess the significance of Hitler's decision to invade the Rhineland in 1936.
323. Students can write well-organised essays containing well-structured arguments, for example about the extent of resistance offered by the Catholic Church to the Nazi regime.
324. Students in Y13 can produce well-rounded PowerPoint presentations examining critically J E Neale's famous proposal of a 'Puritan Choir' opposed to Elizabeth the First's religious policy.
325. They also demonstrate a mature capacity to analyse the problems faced by German propagandists between 1939 and 1945. They have a comprehensive understanding of the extent to which state propaganda controlled, or responded to, its social and cultural environment.

Shortcomings

326. A minority of students does not deploy their contextual knowledge sufficiently, in order to identify more sophisticated, sardonic references in political cartoons.
327. A minority of students makes simplistic assertions about the reliability of secondary sources.

Art and Design

Key Stage 3: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Key Stage 4: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Sixth Form: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

KS3

Good features

328. Pupils make appropriate progress in the acquisition and use of the essential elements of line, tone, colour, texture and pattern. They improve their observational drawing skills to a sound level.
329. They learn about art relating to Wales and have a good awareness and appreciation of the art of other cultures through imaginative two and three-dimensional craft exercises.
330. They are able to evaluate their own work and develop judgement about art. When writing about art, they express their personal opinions clearly.
331. Pupils with SEN make progress in understanding and skill because their individual needs are known and addressed. Ethnic minority pupils achieve at a comparable rate to their peers. More able and talented pupils make good progress.
332. Overall, pupils make progress to the expected national level in developing skills in understanding, investigating and making.

Shortcomings

333. Pupils' knowledge of art and artists relies too much on secondary sources.

KS4

334. In the most recent GCSE examination, results at grades A*-C were below the national average for boys and above the national average for girls.

Good features

335. Pupils take a good level of responsibility for their independent learning.
336. They demonstrate that they know how to exploit with improved skills the available media in both two and three-dimensional craft.
337. Their research skills are well established. They improve their knowledge of a range of artists' and designers' work and have an effective grasp of a design process.
338. They know how to use computers creatively and to support their research.
339. Their sketchbook work, with its supportive annotation, regularly demonstrates good creative work.
340. They are well informed of examination requirements and understand how to use their assessment process to improve the standard of their work.

Shortcomings

341. A minority of boys rely too often on published photographic images and do not base their work sufficiently on first-hand research.
342. Pupils' knowledge, understanding and appreciation of art are limited.

Sixth form

343. At A level, results at grades A-B in both fine art and textiles were above the national average. These results represent good achievement.

Good and outstanding features

344. Students develop to a very high standard as independent creative artists.

345. The quality of their creative textiles is outstandingly good. They exploit the qualities of different textile materials consistently and with great verve.

346. The quality of fine art creative sketchbook work and painting in response to the environment is often outstandingly good. Students know how to use their art skills to express their social and moral views.

347. They improve their knowledge of the human form through life drawing.

348. When writing about art they demonstrate mature personal responses. They clearly understand the examination requirements. They know how to work to deadlines and how to use their assessment process to improve their work.

Shortcomings

349. Their knowledge of both contemporary and historical art is limited by their lack of visits to major art galleries.

350. Their knowledge of contemporary textile design relies too much on secondary computer research.

Religious education (including religious studies)
--

Key Stage 3: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Key Stage 4: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Sixth Form: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

KS3

Good and outstanding features

351. Across the key stage, there is exemplary independent research, particularly in relation to the archaeological dig (Y7), charity work (Y8) and the Ten Commandments (Y9).

352. Throughout the key stage pupils' empathy skills are excellent, especially in relation to the Holocaust.

353. The majority of pupils in year 7 has a good knowledge of the beliefs and values conveyed by religious artefacts.

354. Good creative skills are shown by many pupils in Y7 to portray the parables of Jesus.

355. By studying the lives of people such as Martin Luther King and Mother Teresa, most pupils in Y9 understand the way religious beliefs can influence the lifestyles of believers.

356. Pupils have a very good religious vocabulary that they use accurately and with understanding in written and oral work.

357. The majority of pupils with SEN makes very good progress.

Shortcomings

358. There are no significant shortcomings.

KS4

359. In the last two years, examination results at GCSE have been well above national averages for passes at the higher grades. This represents very good achievement for these pupils.

Good features

360. Many pupils can demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Christian and Muslim teachings as to why there is suffering and evil in the world.

361. Most pupils can explain in detail religious teachings about freewill.

362. The majority of pupils can evaluate the influence of religious teachings regarding abortion.

363. Many pupils can identify and explain the issues raised by organ removal and transplant debate.

364. Almost all pupils know, understand and can evaluate religious laws and teachings about capital punishment. A few are able to articulate the strengths and weaknesses of both sides of the debate.

365. The majority of pupils contributes to lessons, a minority shows confidence when expressing opinions and a few give thoughtful answers, drawing on their personal experiences.

Shortcomings

366. There is a lack of detail and analysis in a minority of files.

Sixth form

367. In the last two years, examination results at A level have been well above national averages for passes at the higher grades. This represents very good achievement for these students.

Good features

368. Almost all students in Y12 can explain in detail the role of the monastic sangha in Buddhism.

369. The majority of students in Y12 can explain Freud's understanding of religious belief.

370. Most students in Y13 can explain the beliefs and lifestyles of the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order. A minority of them can identify the reasons for the growth of Buddhism in Britain.

371. The written work of the majority of students, particularly in Y12, is of a high order.

Shortcomings

372. A few students have insufficient knowledge of many technical terms.

School's response to the inspection

We would like to thank Mr Harris and his team for their professionalism and for their contribution to the future development of the school.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol John Bright
School type	Secondary
Age range of pupils	11-18
Address of school	Maesdu Road Llandudno Conwy
Postcode	LL30 1LF
Telephone number	01492 864200

Headteacher	Mr W G Davies
Date of appointment	1 January 2009
Chair of governors	Mr David Rowley
Reporting inspector	Mr Peter Harris
Dates of inspection	30 March 2009 - 2 April 2009

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

Year group	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Total
Number of pupils	218	176	192	224	218	108	102	1238

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	73	5	76

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	16.3:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	9:2
Average teaching group size	20.9
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	77.7%

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole school
Term 1	93.6	92.1	92.7	90.7	91.7	89	87.9	91.4
Term 2	92.6	90.7	88.6	88.5	92.1	96	93.9	91.4
Term 3	95	94.1	91.4	90.9	89.9	92.3	89.7	92

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	17.6%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	82 temporary 0 permanent

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 3:

National Curriculum Assessment KS3 results 2008															
Total number of pupils in Y9: 225															
Percentage of pupils at each level															
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	EP
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	1	0	0	1	4	18	52	18	5	0	0
		National	1	0	0	0	0	1	7	21	36	24	9	0	0
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	1	0	0	1	5	17	29	32	14	0	0
		National	1	0	0	0	0	1	8	20	28	27	14	1	0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	1	0	0	1	6	14	48	24	4	0	0
		National	1	0	0	0	0	1	6	21	35	26	10	0	0

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

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 5 in mathematics, science and either English or Welsh (first language) by teacher assessment				
In the school	60		In Wales	60

**Public Examination Results:
Summary of Secondary School Performance (1)**

Pupils aged 15

Number of pupils aged 15 who were on roll in January 2008: 213

Percentage of pupils aged 15 who :

	entered at least one qualification	achieved the Level 1 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE pass in English or Welsh first language and mathematics	Core Subject Indicator (2)	Average wider points score per pupil
School 2007/08	100	85	62	48	48	348
LEA Area 2007/08	100	86	60	45	44	351
Wales 2007/08	98	87	58	46	44	356
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	38	337
School 05/06/07	..	..	..	..	32	325

Number of boys aged 15 who were on roll in January 2008: 113

Percentage of boys aged 15 who :

	entered at least one qualification	achieved the Level 1 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE pass in English or Welsh first language and mathematics	Core Subject Indicator (2)	Average wider points score per pupil
School 2007/08	100	78	53	41	40	320
LEA Area 2007/08	99	81	55	43	42	328
Wales 2007/08	98	84	53	42	41	334
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	37	330
School 05/06/07	..	..	..	..	30	318

Number of girls aged 15 who were on roll in January 2008: 100

Percentage of girls aged 15 who :

	entered at least one qualification	achieved the Level 1 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE pass in English or Welsh first language and mathematics	Core Subject Indicator (2)	Average wider points score per pupil
School 2007/08	99	93	71	57	57	380
LEA Area 2007/08	100	90	66	47	46	373
Wales 2007/08	99	90	63	50	48	379
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	39	345
School 05/06/07	..	..	..	..	33	333

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

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

.. Data not available

Summary of Secondary School Performance (1)

Pupils aged 15

	Percentage of pupils aged 15 who :		Percentage of boys aged 15 who :		Percentage of girls aged 15 who :	
	achieved one or more ELQ (2) only	Left full time education without a qualification (3)	achieved one or more ELQ (2) only	Left full time education without a qualification (3)	achieved one or more ELQ (2) only	Left full time education without a qualification (3)
School 2007/08	0.5	0.9	0.9	0.9	0	1
LEA Area 2007/08	4	1.2	5.3	1.3	2.6	1
Wales 2007/08	2.6	1.5	3.4	1.9	1.7	1.2
School 06/07/08	0.3	..	0.3	..	0.3	..
School 05/06/07	0.9	..	0.9	..	0.9	..

Pupils aged 17

	Number of pupils aged 17 who were on roll in January 2008: 67		Number of boys aged 17 who were on roll in January 2008: 32		Number of girls aged 17 who were on roll in January 2008: 35	
	Percentage of 17 year old pupils entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17	Percentage of 17 year old pupils entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17	Percentage of 17 year old pupils entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17
School 2007/08	97	809	97	772	97	844
LEA Area 2007/08	94	640	92	608	96	664
Wales 2007/08	94	631	93	596	95	659
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	..	..
School 05/06/07	..	..	..	..	..	..

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

(2) Entry Level Qualification

(3) As defined under the National Performance Indicator EDU/002.

.. Data not available

SECONDARY EXAMINATION DATA, 2006 - 2008

Free School Meals, 2006 - 2008	2006	2007	2008
% of pupils entitled to Free School Meals	16.0	17.6	17.8
Free School Meal band	15%<FSM<=20%	15%<FSM<=20%	15%<FSM<=20%
Key Stage 4, 2006 - 2008	2006	2007	2008
% achieving the Level 1 threshold	..	87.0	85.0
Benchmark Quartile	..	2	3
% achieving the Level 2 threshold	..	61.1	61.5
Benchmark Quartile	..	1	2
% achieving the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE at grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and Maths	..	..	48.4
Benchmark Quartile	..	..	1
% achieving the Level 2 threshold in the core subjects	..	..	47.9
Benchmark Quartile	..	..	1
Average wider points score	306.4	358.4	348.1
Benchmark Quartile	3	2	2

For 2004 onwards, the FSM percentage was based on pupils of compulsory school age only.
.. the data item is not available

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Inspectors spent a total of 54 days in the school and were joined by a member of the school's senior leadership team as nominee. They held a meeting before the inspection.

During the inspection, inspectors visited:

- 136 lessons;
- registrations and assemblies; and
- some extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team met with:

- staff, parents and governors before the inspection;
- senior managers, middle managers, teachers, support assistants and administrative staff;
- groups of pupils representing each year group;
- representatives of the school council; and
- business and other school partners.

The team also considered:

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

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

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Peter Harris	Registered Inspector Context, Summary, Recommendations Key Questions 1 and 5
Justine Barlow	Lay inspector
Andrew Herdman	Key Question 2
Glyn Davies	Key Question 3 and science
Neil Gibbons	Key Question 4
Martyn S Williams	Key Question 6
Keith Davies	Key Question 7 and science (lead)
Peredur Francis	Mathematics
David Charles	Information technology
Alan Kelly	History
Eric Forster	Art
Martyn L Williams	Religious education
Matthew Vickery	Nominee
Heather Lewis	Peer assessor

Acknowledgement

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

Contractor:

EPPC/Severn Crossing Ltd
Suite H
Britannic House
Britannic Way
Llandarcy
Neath
SA10 6JQ