

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

**A Report on the Quality of Education in**

**Ysgol St Elfod  
Ffordd Y Morfa  
Abergele  
Conwy  
LL22 7NU**

**School Number: 6622221**

**Date of Inspection: 15 June 2009**

**by**

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**Date of Publication: 17 August 2009**

**Under Estyn contract number: 1118908**

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Ysgol St Elfod 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 St Elfod took place between 15/06/09 and 18/06/09. An independent team of inspectors, led by Wil Williams 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.

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

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

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

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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## Context

### The nature of the provider

- 1 St Elfod is a community school, catering for children aged seven to eleven years. The school is situated in Abergele an economically mixed urban area and serves the town itself and the outlying areas of Pensarn and Belgrano.
- 2 The number of pupils on roll fluctuates during the year as many newcomers from outside the region are attracted to the area. Currently there are 308 pupils on roll who are taught by fifteen full-time and two part-time teachers. The school is organised into twelve single age classes; three in each year group. In addition, there is a twelve place specialist class provided by the Local Authority (LA) catering for pupils with moderate learning difficulties.
- 3 A significant number of pupils are from areas which are described as socially and economically disadvantaged. Twenty eight per cent of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals which is significantly higher than local and national averages. Two pupils were temporarily excluded from school during the last twelve months. There are two pupils who are 'looked after' by the LA.
- 4 Assessments on entry to year 3 from the neighbouring Infants School indicate that over a third of pupils have special educational needs (SEN). Presently, thirty four per cent of pupils have SEN which include seven pupils who have statutory statements of SEN.
- 5 English is the sole or predominant language in virtually all of the pupils' homes. One pupil receives support teaching in English as an additional language. Welsh Second Language programmes of study are taught.
- 6 There have been no significant changes to the nature of the school since the last inspection during the summer of 2003. The present head teacher has been in post for almost two years.

### The school's priorities and targets

- 7 The school aims to provide the highest standard of education possible so that pupils can realise their full potential.
- 8 According to the School Development Plan the school's main priorities for the current academic year include to further:
  - improve standards in literacy and numeracy;
  - develop assessment for learning strategies;
  - develop leadership and management roles of middle managers; and
  - improve provision for information and communication technology (ICT).

## Summary

- 9 This is a good school that has many outstanding features.
- 10 The outstanding leadership provided by the head teacher has been a key factor in bringing about high standards of pupils' achievement and school improvement.
- 11 Outstanding progress has been made in addressing all seven key issues identified in the previous inspection report. There have been considerable improvements in standards, planning and provision and a greater emphasis placed on developing pupils' learning.

### Table of grades awarded

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

- 12 The findings of the inspection team agree with the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report in six of the seven key questions.

### Standards and progress

- 13 In the areas of learning and the subjects inspected, standards of achievement are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
58%	38%	4%	0%	0%

- 14 These percentages are significantly higher than the national picture reported by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools (HMCI) in the latest annual report where nationally standards in 12 per cent of lessons are Grade 1, 72 per cent are Grade 2 and 15 per cent are Grade 3.
- 15 In 2009, the number of pupils attaining Level 4 in English and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 was slightly higher than the 2008 national performance whereas attainment in science was marginally lower. Results in 2008 were generally in the best performing 50 per cent of schools which have a similar percentage of pupils eligible to receive school meals.

- 16 Standards of achievement in the subjects inspected in key stage 2 are as follows:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Key stage 2</b>
Mathematics	Grade 1
Science	Grade 1
Information and communication technology	Grade 1
Geography	Grade 1
Music	Grade 2
Physical education	Grade 1

- 17 Pupils of all ages including those with SEN, achieve good or better standards in their knowledge, understanding and skills.
- 18 Throughout the key stage, most pupils make good progress in the key skills of language and communication, mathematics and problem-solving. Almost all make outstanding progress in information and communication technology (ICT).
- 19 Good features outweigh shortcomings in the progress pupils make in their bilingual competency. Although the majority of pupils have a good passive understanding of Welsh, their ability to speak, read and write in Welsh is limited.
- 20 Almost all pupils make good or better progress in their learning. Their ability to sustain good levels of concentration, to work independently and to evaluate their own performance, are all outstanding features.
- 21 Pupils' personal, social, moral and wider development is good with outstanding features. Throughout the school, they are well behaved, considerate and courteous.
- 22 The average level of attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection at 93.5 per cent is similar to the national average but a little below the LA average for all schools.

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

- 23 The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
47%	50%	3%	0%	0%

- 24 These figures are significantly better than the latest national picture where the quality of teaching is Grade 2 or better in 84 per cent of lessons, including 16 per cent of lessons judged to be Grade 1. The proportion of lessons where the quality of teaching had outstanding features is noteworthy.

- 25 Good and outstanding teaching is evident throughout the school. This has a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning and the good progress they make in their learning.
- 26 The positive working relationships that teachers establish with their pupils contribute to the effectiveness of lessons. The way in which teachers and teaching assistants co-operate in planning and supporting pupils' learning is a strength of the school.
- 27 The rigour of assessment and its use in planning and improving learning is good. A programme of formal assessments supports day-to-day informal assessments in ensuring that teachers are well informed about the performance of individuals and groups of pupils.
- 28 Annual written reports provide parents with detailed and relevant information about their child's achievements but do not indicate how pupils may improve or how parents may help.
- 29 The curriculum meets the needs and aspiration for the range of pupils and ensures stimulating and very interesting activities are provided in every class. The very effective way in which ICT skills are developed across a number of subjects is an outstanding feature.
- 30 The school has a very wide range of extra-curricular activities and many pupils participate in them. This outstanding provision provides stimulating and very interesting activities for all pupils contributing effectively to their personal and social development.
- 31 Learners are provided with a wealth of opportunities to develop personally, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. Collective worship sessions comply with statutory requirements and they are successful events where moral messages and spiritual feelings are shared with pupils.
- 32 The quality of the school's partnerships with parents and the community is an outstanding feature of its provision. This was confirmed by the mainly positive responses of parents in the pre-inspection questionnaires and in their meeting with the inspection team.
- 33 The *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is an integral part of the learning experience in many subjects. However, both planning and practice for the development of pupils' bilingual skills are inconsistent across the school.
- 34 Provision for work-related education and developing pupils' entrepreneurial skills are good. Sustainable development and the development of pupils' understanding of global citizenship are well promoted throughout the school.
- 35 The school provides a happy, safe, secure, welcoming and caring learning environment for its pupils. They are well cared for, guided and supported.

- 36 The school has a well structured approach to health education and related topics which are contained in its comprehensive personal and social education programme. There are clear arrangements for ensuring pupils' well being and safety.
- 37 The quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs and those pupils for whom English is an additional language is good with outstanding features. Provision in the Local Authority Resource Base within the school is good overall.
- 38 There are appropriate support arrangements for the very few pupils whose behaviour may impede their own or other pupils' progress.
- 39 Promoting diversity is a significant strength and an outstanding feature of the school.

### **Leadership and management**

- 40 The head teacher, governors, senior managers, teachers and support staff work very effectively as a team giving the school's development a clear sense of direction. Members of the Governing Body are fully involved and knowledgeable about the work of the school.
- 41 The School Development Plan is closely linked to self-evaluation and is generally of good quality.
- 42 The school has an adequate number of appropriately qualified teachers and resources to teach all areas of learning effectively. Provision for ICT equipment is outstanding.
- 43 The school accommodation is good although some classes have limited space. The quality of displays of pupils' work which are seen throughout the school are outstanding.
- 44 Arrangements for updating teachers' and support staff's professional skills together with the highly effective team work that is evidenced throughout the school ensure that all personnel are used effectively and efficiently. This is an outstanding feature.
- 45 Finances are well-managed, budgetary control is stringent and the governing body monitors spending rigorously to ensure cost effectiveness.
- 46 The school provides good value for money.

## Recommendations

47 In order to move the school forward, the governing body and staff need to:

R1 \* improve standards and provision for developing pupils' bilingual competency.

\* Priority in the current school development plan.

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 the 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 1: Good with outstanding features

- 48 The inspection team's judgements match the school's findings in its self-evaluation report.
- 49 In the areas of learning and the subjects inspected, standards of achievement are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
58%	38%	4%	0%	0%

- 50 These percentages are significantly higher than the latest national picture where standards in 12 per cent of lessons are Grade 1, 72 per cent are Grade 2 and 15 per cent are Grade 3.
- 51 In 2009, the number of pupils attaining Level 4 in English and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 was slightly higher than the 2008 national performance. Attainment in science was marginally lower. On average, approximately a third of the pupils achieved Level 5 in the three subjects. Most pupils progressed by two National Curriculum levels during the four years between the end key stages 1 and 2.
- 52 End of key stage 2 attainment has steadily improved during the period 2006 – 2008. Results in 2008 were generally in the best performing 50 per cent of schools which have a similar percentage of pupils eligible to receive school meals.
- 53 There have been no significant differences between the performance of girls and boys during the last three years.
- 54 Standards of achievement in the subjects inspected in key stage 2 are as follows:

Subject	Key stage 2
Mathematics	Grade 1
Science	Grade 1
Information and communication technology	Grade 1
Geography	Grade 1
Music	Grade 2
Physical education	Grade 1

- 55 Pupils of all ages including those with SEN, achieve good or better standards in their knowledge, understanding and skills.

- 56 Throughout the key stage, most pupils make good progress in the key skills of language and communication and mathematics. They make outstanding progress in ICT.
- 57 Pupils discuss their work knowledgeably and make informed contributions to class discussions using appropriate subject vocabulary. They use their reading and writing skills effectively to gather and collate information and record their work.
- 58 In all classes, pupils use and apply their mathematical skills confidently, especially when undertaking practical and investigational tasks.
- 59 Throughout the school, pupils use their ICT skills purposefully and skilfully for gathering and presenting information and data. They use a range of ICT software and equipment effectively and confidently.
- 60 In all classes, particular focus is put on developing thinking skills. This enables pupils of all ages to tackle problem-solving activities in a confident and systematic manner.
- 61 Good features outweigh shortcomings in the progress pupils make in their bilingual competency. Although the majority have a good passive understanding of Welsh, their ability to speak, read and write in Welsh in different curriculum contexts is limited. This has been identified in the school's self-evaluation report as an area for further development.
- 62 Almost all pupils make good progress in their learning. They acquire new knowledge and skills effectively which they then confidently apply to new and unfamiliar situations.
- 63 Pupils come to realistic judgements about their performance identifying what they need to do to improve. They discuss intelligently the skills being developed during lessons and evaluate their performance against the lesson objectives. This is an outstanding feature.
- 64 All pupils make good progress towards fulfilling their potential and moving onto the next stage of learning. No instances of underachievement were seen by the inspection team.
- 65 Pupils in all classes are interested in their work, sustain good levels of concentration and are well motivated. They show great enthusiasm for their work and school life and work hard in lessons making effective use of their time. This is an outstanding feature.
- 66 Throughout the school, pupils are well behaved, considerate and courteous. Nearly all pupils demonstrate respect for each other, all adults and the schools' buildings and resources. They enter and move around the school in a quiet, orderly and purposeful manner, quickly settling into their classroom areas. Their progressively developing self-confidence helps them take an increasing degree of responsibility for their own behaviour and attitudes.

- 67 In discussion, pupils indicate they understand the high standard of behaviour expected of them and agree that good behaviour is promoted, recognised and celebrated. There are extremely few reports of recent incidents of bullying or inappropriate behaviour with two pupil fixed-term exclusion during the last twelve months.
- 68 Pupils' ability to work independently and to take more responsibility for their own learning is good with outstanding features. During problem-solving activities, they work together in pairs and groups with confidence, organise activities very effectively and ensure everyone contributes. Individuals undertake various management responsibilities during these activities and fulfil their duties very diligently.
- 69 Pupils' personal, social, moral and wider development is good with outstanding features. They have acquired a secure set of moral values which provides them with a clear understanding of how they can contribute to their school, their community and to the wider world. The quality of relationships is such that pupils express and explore their views openly and honestly and are willing to listen to the opinions of others. This is very evident when they are involved in co-operative tasks.
- 70 As they mature, pupils demonstrate a secure awareness of equal opportunities issues and feel strongly that everyone should be treated fairly and without discrimination. They have an appropriate appreciation of the diverse nature of society and of the need to be tolerant and respectful of others.
- 71 The school is successful in preparing pupils to take an active role in the life and work of the local community.
- 72 The average level of attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection at 93.5 per cent is slightly better than the national average for similar schools; the same as the national average for all schools but a little below the LA average for all schools.
- 73 Overall, punctuality is good at the start of, and throughout, the school day allowing sessions to start promptly without delay or disruption. However, a significant minority of pupils regularly arrive late for registration in the mornings.

## The quality of education and training

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

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

74 The inspection team's judgements match the school's findings in its self-evaluation report.

75 The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
47%	50%	3%	0%	0%

76 These figures are significantly better than the latest national picture where the quality of teaching is Grade 2 or better in 84 per cent of lessons, including 16 per cent of lessons judged to be Grade 1. The proportion of lessons where the quality of teaching had outstanding features is noteworthy.

77 Good and outstanding teaching is evident throughout the school. This has a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning and the good progress they make in their learning.

78 Where teaching was judged to be outstanding, lessons were characterised by:

- stimulating activities which build on pupils' previous knowledge and understanding;
- clear desired outcomes which pupils understand;
- highly effective use of the interactive whiteboard and electronic visualiser;
- brisk, purposeful delivery;
- high expectations and level of challenge;
- questioning strategies which encourage pupils to consider and answer at length; and
- effective plenary sessions which permit teachers and pupils to accurately evaluate progress.

79 In those lessons judged to be grade 2, good features included:

- clear and concise presentations;
- effective strategies to engage pupils of all abilities;
- tasks which have specific, practical purpose and clear success criteria;
- timely interventions to support and extend pupils; and
- appropriately challenging time constraints.

80 The positive working relationships that teachers establish with their pupils contribute to the effectiveness of lessons. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and lessons are planned carefully to meet the needs of all pupils in their classes.

- 81 The way in which teachers and teaching assistants co-operate in planning and supporting pupils' learning is a strength of the school.
- 82 Although a minority of teachers use Welsh regularly throughout their lessons, very rarely do they require pupils to respond similarly in Welsh.
- 83 The rigour of assessment and its use in planning and improving learning is good and meets statutory requirements.
- 84 Teachers make good use of assessment to guide their planning. A programme of formal assessments supports day-to-day informal assessments in ensuring that teachers are well informed about the performance of individuals and groups of pupils.
- 85 Portfolios of levelled work provide teachers with useful guidance in assessing pupils' achievements, ensuring consistency across the school. The portfolios have been moderated with other local schools and the main receiving secondary school to ensure their reliability.
- 86 The quality of teachers' marking is good. Comments are matched to pupils' learning objectives and, in the best cases teachers' marking suggests targets for improvement and indicates next steps.
- 87 The school very successfully implement a good number of 'assessment for learning' strategies. Staff share success criteria with pupils and promote self and peer assessment very effectively. In all classes, innovative use of visualisers allows for pupils and staff to provide effective oral feedback on pupils' work based on shared success criteria. This is an outstanding feature which has a positive impact on standards.
- 88 The overall quality of annual written reports to parents has good features that outweigh shortcomings. Reports provide parents with detailed and relevant information about their child's achievements but do not indicate how pupils may improve or how parents may help.

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

**Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

- 89 The inspection team's judgements match the school's findings in its self-evaluation report.
- 90 The quality of the learning experiences that pupils receive is one of the school's outstanding features. It succeeds in meeting the needs of the range of pupils including those with SEN, those who are gifted and talented and for those for whom English is an additional language. It fully complies with the statutory requirements.

- 91 The curriculum is extensive, broad, balanced, relevant and equally accessible to all. Through careful planning and good liaison between classes, the curriculum builds systematically on existing knowledge, understanding and skills. The *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is an integral part of the learning experience in many subjects. Schemes of work have been revised in accordance with the new National Curriculum orders September 2008. This careful planning ensures stimulating and very interesting activities in every class.
- 92 The planning for basic and key skills gives careful attention to the provision of literacy, numeracy and ICT. The very effective way in which ICT skills are developed across a number of subjects combining text, graphics and word processing using a variety of ICT equipment and software packages, is an outstanding feature. As part of the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark accreditation for the second time, appropriate attention is given to under achieving pupils.
- 93 The school has a very wide range of extra-curricular activities and many pupils participate in them. These activities are wide ranging and associated with sports, the arts, ICT, literacy, science, craft and many more. Very good emphasis is placed on developing an understanding of the heritage of Wales and on giving pupils direct opportunities to contribute to the Welsh culture. The many visitors to the school also enrich the lives of pupils. This outstanding provision provides stimulating and very interesting activities for all pupils contributing effectively to the good standards that are achieved and to pupils' personal and social development.
- 94 Learners are provided with a wealth of opportunities to develop personally, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. The caring, close-knit community, and the quality of relationships at all levels, helped by clear, consistent, behaviour and anti-bullying policies, supports learners in this and is another strong feature of provision at the school. Collective worship sessions comply with statutory requirements and they are successful events where moral messages and spiritual feelings are shared with pupils.
- 95 Personal and Social Education is given careful consideration and taught successfully in all classes.
- 96 The quality of the school's partnerships with parents and the community is an outstanding feature of the school provision. Parents are well informed via the schools' weekly newsletters. These inform parents about the dates for school events and activities and pupil achievements. The school has established a good home-school agreement. In their responses, nearly all parents consider they are well informed about events in the school and their child's achievements.
- 97 The school's inclusive ethos is very successful in gaining help and support from a wide range of local groups in the community. These links enrich the educational experiences and personal development of pupils, and prepare them well to become responsible members of their community.

- 98 There are very good links and partnerships with the neighbouring primary schools on the same campus. The school works very successfully with the secondary school on a number of projects which greatly benefits pupils when they move.
- 99 When bilingualism is promoted it has a positive impact on pupils' skills and confidence to respond in Welsh but this is inconsistent across the school. At present bilingualism is not being developed progressively across the school.
- 100 Visits to and visitors from local businesses provide good opportunities to broaden and enrich pupils' work related education. The links with local industry and businesses are generally effective. Several teachers have undertaken industrial experiences.
- 101 Pupils' entrepreneurial skills are gradually developing with pupils involved with raising funds for the school and charities. The eco committee has been very active in this aspect where pupils sell products they have sourced and priced.
- 102 Sustainable development is well promoted throughout the school. There are several practical examples of initiatives such as recycling and energy conservation that are visible in and around the school. The school has become part of the Eco schools' initiative and is working towards the green flag award. These initiatives, together with the schools' personal and social education scheme and geography help develop pupils' awareness and understanding of this area.
- 103 Pupils' understanding of global citizenship develops very well mainly through topics covered in classroom sessions and in whole school assemblies acts of worship. The schools 'Europe week' provides pupils with a wider global perspective looking at different countries. Links with different countries across the world, such as Botswana, provides pupils with opportunities to explore the diversity of lifestyles and cultures.
- 104 The wide range and variety of learning experiences provided by the school lays firm foundations for enabling its pupils to acquire the appropriate knowledge, understanding, skill and attitudes that are necessary for lifelong learning.

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

##### **Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

- 105 The inspection team's judgements match the school's findings in its self-evaluation report.
- 106 The school provides a happy, safe, secure, welcoming and caring learning environment for pupils. Pupils are well cared for, guided and supported. Arrangements for pupil support are well planned and managed. Almost all

parents consider their children are happy in school and they are satisfied with the help and guidance provided for their children.

- 107 The school works in full and productive partnership with a range of agencies and support services to ensure pupils' needs are carefully assessed and provided for. Staff work in close partnership with parents in all matters relating to their child's care and welfare.
- 108 There is an active school council which ensures that pupils have a clear voice in decision-making processes. Its members are democratically elected and are guided in their work by a member of staff.
- 109 The positive ethos, the family atmosphere and the outstanding induction arrangements for pupils joining from the adjacent Infants school helps them settle into school life and routines quickly and happily. The 'buddy's' help the shy and reserved pupils integrate effectively.
- 110 Teachers and support assistants work very effectively to identify and meet pupil's particular needs and requirements. The very positive relationships between staff, specialist support services and pupils and the good level of mutual trust enable the provision of outstanding quality support and guidance.
- 111 There are thorough, well-understood procedures for supporting looked after pupils. The Personal and Social Education co-ordinator is the named person for contact with the local education authority and social services. This is an outstanding feature.
- 112 The school has a well structured approach to health education and related topics are contained in the schools' comprehensive Personal and Social Education programme, which is consistently followed across the school. The school is part of the 'healthy schools' initiative and has achieved the second leaf standard.
- 113 At break times and lunchtimes the playground supervisors and 'playground pals' operate effectively to ensure the safety and security of pupils.
- 114 Attendance registers are completed appropriately and quickly at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. Parents are frequently advised that all pupils are expected to attend regularly and arrive punctually. The system for monitoring attendance and punctuality is effective.
- 115 The recognition of positive behaviour is firmly embedded in the school's procedures, ethos and culture. Staff consistently implements the assertive discipline, behaviour and anti-bullying policies and procedures.
- 116 A number of the school staff are appropriately trained in first aid. The schools Personal and Social Education programme contains 'health and safety' related topics, and as a result pupils develop an appropriate awareness of health and safety.

- 117 The school has clearly documented arrangements which appropriately contribute to pupils' well being when in its care. Risk assessments and fire drills are appropriately undertaken and well documented.
- 118 Child protection arrangements meet local guidelines and recommended good practice with designated named persons and a nominated governor. All staff are aware of the signs of possible child abuse and the specific procedures they must closely follow.
- 119 The quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs and those pupils for whom English is an additional language is good with outstanding features. There are very clear policies and procedures in place which conform to statutory guidelines.
- 120 Pupils with additional learning or complex needs are assessed using a range of highly relevant procedures and additional support or guidance is quickly and effectively identified. Individual Education Plans cover learning, social, emotional, sensory and physical development and are written collaboratively and involve parents and pupils at every stage. These are outstanding features.
- 121 The highly co-ordinated approach by relevant staff from outside agencies impacts significantly on the outstanding quality short and long term support provided. The quality of the individual support for all SEN pupils is extremely specific and effective. All pupils are fully included in every aspect of school life.
- 122 Those pupils who require additional support and guidance for their behaviour are managed very consistent and positively. All pupils are included in school activities and co-operation and respect between staff and learners is tangible.
- 123 Provision in the Local Authority Resource Base within the school is good overall. Pupils experience a range of motivating and challenging activities and lessons are very well structured to cater for the wide range of individual needs. Learning support is precise and appropriate and relationships in the class between pupils and staff are very good. Consequently, all pupils in the resource are making good progress and are fully included in whole school activities.
- 124 All pupils regardless of their social, linguistic or ethnic backgrounds are given the same rights and opportunities. Equality is often used as an assembly topic and is incorporated in the personal, social and health sessions. The school actively encourages pupils to participate in all activities.
- 125 The school has an effective race equality policy and pupils' multi-cultural education is developing well. Through Personal and Social Education lessons, pupils are encouraged to examine their own values and attitudes.

- 126 Outstanding support is provided for the very few pupils whose behaviour may impede their own or other pupils' progress with pupils being managed sensitively and effectively.
- 127 There are appropriate arrangements to integrate pupils with disabilities into the school. A disability accessibility plan is in place and the disability equality scheme and action plan recognises the need to review procedures regularly.
- 128 Promoting diversity is a significant strength and an outstanding feature of the school. It is very well illustrated and reinforced by the wide range of relevant colourful and stimulating displays.

## Leadership and management

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

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

- 129 The inspection team's judgements match the school's findings in its self-evaluation report.
- 130 The outstanding leadership and strategic management provided by the head teacher have been key factors in bringing about high standards of pupils' achievement and school improvement. Within a relatively short period of time, he has succeeded in harnessing the energy and commitment of staff and governors thus providing a clear direction to the school's development.
- 131 A team approach is adopted to school development so that leadership is devolved at every level. The Senior Management Team meets regularly with its members playing a key role in monitoring standards and ensuring that the school's vision is put into practice. They are supported by skilled year and subject leaders who work effectively with their colleagues to ensure that policies and expectations are consistently implemented across the school. This is an outstanding feature.
- 132 Weekly bulletins provided by the head teacher and administrative staff ensure that all members of staff are kept fully informed of all the school's activities.
- 133 The school's day-to-day procedures are based on explicit principles and values. Equal opportunities are provided for all and the contributions of pupils, parents, governors and staff are appreciated. Staff are actively involved in the formulation of policies and their views are highly valued by the Senior Management Team. This ensures the establishment of common practices across all classes.
- 134 National and local priorities feature highly in the everyday work of the school. The school has received nationally accredited awards such as Investors in People, the Basic Skills' Quality Mark and is on the verge of completing the final stage of the Healthy Schools Project. It has recently achieved the Foundation Level International School Award and the Eco Schools Silver Award. This is an outstanding feature.
- 135 The school sets challenging targets for itself and for groups and cohorts of pupils. End of key stage targets are based upon a wealth of evidence which includes standardised tests, and there is good correlation between teacher assessment and pupils performance.
- 136 Effective performance management arrangements have been established for identifying the professional needs of teachers and for improving their teaching competence and skills. Through evaluating standards of teaching and

learning good attention is paid to setting and achieving individual objectives. Each member of staff has a job description which is reviewed regularly.

- 137 The practice of enabling staff to observe examples of good practice in other schools contributes significantly to their professional development. This is an outstanding feature.
- 138 Members of the Governing Body are fully involved and knowledgeable about the work of the school. The detailed and relevant information which they receive in the head teacher's reports gives them a clear and comprehensive picture of the school's work. Individual governors have link roles with specific teaching staff and act very effectively as critical friends. They are fully aware of their roles in school improvement initiatives and contribute constructively to discussions.
- 139 Very strong links have been established between individual governors and curriculum post-holders. Governors regularly visit the school and fulfil their monitoring and evaluation role very thoroughly.
- 140 There is a policy and clear procedures that any person should follow if they wish to make a complaint about the school. The guidelines include detail of the course of action to be followed, and sets specific time limits for resolving any complaint.
- 141 Governors discharge their legal responsibilities fully.

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

**Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

- 142 The findings of the inspection team do not agree with the Grade 1 judged by the school in its self-evaluation report. There were insufficient examples of outstanding practice to award a higher grade than Grade 2.
- 143 Leaders and managers are well informed about their areas of responsibility. All teachers have responsibility for at least one subject or area and their monitoring duties are clearly defined. Staff contribute to the evaluation of a range of performance indicators which informs the Senior Management Team plans for school improvement.
- 144 The findings of the inspection team agree with the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report in six of the seven key questions. In key question 6, a grade lower was awarded.
- 145 The self-evaluation arrangements are good with outstanding features. They are comprehensive and systematic and based on first hand evidence. Subject leaders regularly scrutinise pupils' books, speaking with pupils about their work and compile annual subject reviews which contribute to the self-evaluation report. The reports are subsequently considered by the senior

management team; strengths are celebrated and areas for improvement are prioritised for inclusion in the School Development Plan.

- 146 Leaders and managers regularly and carefully analyse a range of complex attainment data. The school's performance is measured against that of similar schools, and challenging targets for future attainment are set.
- 147 All staff and governors contribute to the self-evaluation process. In addition the views of pupils and parents are sought.
- 148 Overall the self-evaluation report is good, although it often describes provision rather than evaluating its impact, and it lacks focus in a number of aspects.
- 149 Planning for improvement has good features and no important shortcomings. The School Development Plan is closely linked to self-evaluation. It is subdivided into sections dealing with several aspects of the school's life and work. Tasks are assigned, detailing timescales, costs and success criteria. However, the School Development Plan lacks precision and contains insufficient quantitative targets.
- 150 The way in which leaders and managers ensure that priorities are supported through adequate allocation of resources is good. The improvement in the stock of ICT equipment, and the extent to which staff have been trained in its use, has had an outstanding impact on standards across the curriculum.
- 151 Outstanding progress has been made in addressing all seven key issues identified in the previous inspection report. Under the leadership of the current head teacher, there have been considerable improvements in standards, planning and provision and a greater emphasis has been placed on developing pupils' learning.

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

##### **Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

- 152 The inspection team's judgements match the school's findings in its self-evaluation report.
- 153 The school has an adequate number of appropriately qualified teachers who work very well together as a team, and have the necessary knowledge to teach the full requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education effectively. Good use is made of staff expertise in subject specialist teaching sessions.
- 154 Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the quality of learning. They have a wide range of experience and work closely with the teaching staff to support the needs of the pupils. Their additional input has a positive impact on standards.

- 155 All teaching areas are equipped with resources necessary to fulfil the teaching of the curriculum and the key skills. All staff are involved in reviewing resources. These are prioritised in line with objectives set out in the School Development Plan.
- 156 Provision for ICT equipment is outstanding. The interactive whiteboards and visualisers that are placed in every class room contribute substantially towards enhancing the effectiveness of teaching and learning.
- 157 The school accommodation is good. Over the past two years, much work has been undertaken to improve the internal accommodation and the school grounds. The open plan nature of the school that was criticised in the previous inspection report has been addressed although some classes are now limited in space. Standards of maintenance and cleanliness are high.
- 158 The school building is easily accessible to all pupils and parents regardless of disability.
- 159 The quality of displays of pupils' work which are seen throughout the school are outstanding. They contribute substantially towards creating a conducive learning environment and are used very effectively by teachers and pupils as valuable learning resources.
- 160 The school has outstanding procedures for ensuring that teaching and support staff are deployed effectively. Teachers update their skills and knowledge by attending training sessions which are matched to the needs and interests of individual teachers and to school priorities. Teaching assistants also benefit from attending a wide range of courses. These arrangements together with highly effective team work, have a very positive impact on the quality of teaching and pupils' standards of achievement.
- 161 The school uses competent administrative staff to good effect, and the caretaker, cleaner, and lunch-time staff contribute well to pupils' development.
- 162 Teachers' preparation, planning and assessment time is used effectively. The cover provided during these sessions is of high quality, ensuring progression and continuity in pupils' learning.
- 163 All school staff have clear roles and responsibilities. In response to the requirements of workforce remodelling, a comprehensive staffing structure has been prepared, consulted upon and adopted by the Governing Body. The school has also responded positively to the requirements of the teachers' workload agreement.
- 164 Finances are well-managed and resources, including staffing, are under constant review. Budgetary control is stringent and the governing body monitors spending rigorously to ensure cost effectiveness. Spending decisions are well-matched to the school's priorities, as identified in the School Development Plan.
- 165 The school provides good value for money.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

### Mathematics

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

##### Outstanding features

- 166 Most pupils in Years 5 and 6 devise and use a range of methods and strategies to calculate the answers to mathematical problems. Their ability to estimate and use alternative calculations to check their answers is an outstanding feature of their mathematical skills.
- 167 The ability of many Year 6 pupils to understand and explain in their own words the relationships between the number of faces, edges and vertices of prisms, is outstanding.
- 168 The investigating skills of many pupils throughout the school in exploring patterns in numbers and shapes is an outstanding feature.

##### Good features

- 169 Most pupils have a secure understanding of place value. In the lower key stage most can add and subtract decimal fractions. The majority know the most appropriate units to use when measuring distance, weight and capacity.
- 170 Most pupils know the number of sides and angles in common polygons. The majority of younger pupils can accurately calculate the perimeters and areas of regular quadrilaterals, while most older pupils can extend this ability to include compound shapes.
- 171 The majority of pupils can describe correctly a plane shape by reference to right angles, parallel sides and lines of symmetry.
- 172 Nearly all pupils in the upper key stage can use a spreadsheet to draw bar and pie charts. Most can interpret examples correctly.

##### Shortcomings

- 173 There are no important shortcomings.

### Science

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

##### Outstanding features

- 174 Lower key stage 2 pupils' ability to put forward their own ideas and to carry out their investigations fairly and logically is an outstanding feature. They have a thorough understanding of the purpose of the task, make predictions, and identify the variable and constant factors.

175 All upper key stage 2 pupils have well-established understanding of scientific enquiry including the concept of fair testing. Most make sensible predictions and test their hypotheses. Their conclusions are consistent with their investigatory outcomes and are well illustrated in tabular form and graphs. Pupils use their ICT skills successfully when necessary in drawing together their reports.

### **Good features**

176 In lower key stage 2, most pupils have a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating, keeping fit and dental care. They realise that an adequate and varied diet is needed to keep healthy. Most pupils accurately describe and classify a range of common materials and know about some of their properties.

177 Almost all upper key stage 2 pupils make good progress in their scientific knowledge and understanding. They know about a range of life processes and living things and describe in detail the different habitats of plant and animals. Most have a good knowledge of physical phenomena and understand the relative position of the Sun, Earth and other planets in the solar system. Their understanding of forces and their effects also develops well.

### **Shortcomings**

178 There are no important shortcomings.

## **Information technology**

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

#### **Outstanding features**

179 Nearly all pupils in the lower key stage can quickly log on, locate and open and save files to the correct location. Most have good mouse control and click, double click and drag and drop confidently.

180 In their work on spreadsheets, the majority of pupils in the upper key stage can plan, create and adapt simple formulae. They can decide on the most appropriate type of graph for their purpose.

181 Many older pupils demonstrate outstanding ability when creating a short advertising video. Using storyboards to plan their productions, they work quickly and confidently to combine digital video with text, still images and their own music.

182 By the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils use sensors to log temperatures over time. They use remote sensors to compare sound levels around the school. They competently download the data and print out appropriate graphs to illustrate their findings.

#### **Good features**

183 Most pupils use word processing software to organise text, using different fonts and colours very confidently. They independently use a scanner and

digital camera to create and incorporate images and know how to use the spell-check and thesaurus tools correctly.

- 184 Most older pupils collect accurate data which they enter into a database, making corrections where necessary. By sorting and searching the data they can correctly identify specific groups of pupils.

### **Shortcomings**

- 185 There are no important shortcomings.

## **Geography**

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

#### **Outstanding features**

- 186 When discussing the deforestation of the rainforests, Year 3 pupils' demonstrate an outstanding awareness of the human and economic issues related to sustainable development. Whilst they develop their own opinions, they are also aware that other people such as the native tribes and commercial farmers may have different values and concerns.
- 187 Year 6 pupils' knowledge of the geographical, social, economic and linguistic features of Botswana is outstanding. They are very perceptive when gleaning information from photographs and information sheets and formulate intelligent geographical questions. They present information very succinctly in flow charts.

#### **Good features**

- 188 Across the key stage, most pupils make good progress in their ability to locate places using globes, atlases and a variety of maps and plans which include street maps and Ordnance Survey maps. By Year 5 they use four-figure grid references correctly to denote the position of various geographical features in Wales and have an appropriate awareness of scale.
- 189 Pupils of all ages make good progress in their understanding of places, environments and processes. During their study of the Snowdonia National Park, Year 4 pupils describe the geographical features of the locality in some detail and discuss intelligently the complex relationships between people and their environment. They differentiate appropriately between physical and human features in the environment.
- 190 Good progress is made in all classes in developing pupils' investigational skills. Pupils very regularly study aspects of their own locality and through surveys, questionnaires and fieldwork collect and interpret a range of data. They analyse and evaluate their evidence carefully and draw their own conclusions.

### **Shortcomings**

- 191 There are no important shortcomings.

## Music

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

#### Outstanding features

192 Pupils in one Year 5 class demonstrate an outstanding understanding of the musical elements of pitch, duration, texture, structure and silence which they apply very effectively when composing a whole-class presentation.

#### Good features

193 Almost all pupils are very enthusiastic about their singing and enjoy performing in front of an audience. A noteworthy feature is the willingness of individual pupils to perform in front of the whole school. The standard of singing across the school is generally good. Pupils perform an increasing repertoire of songs which includes folk and popular music, the music of Wales and music from other traditions and cultures. They sing with increasing control of breathing, diction, dynamics, pitch and duration and with practise, gradually improve the standard of their performance.

194 Pupils in all classes play a wide range of musical instruments which include untuned instruments as well as keyboards and glockenspiels. Most perform very confidently using appropriate playing techniques and with increasing control. They successfully maintain an individual instrumental part in a group piece and through practise and evaluation, improve their performance.

195 Throughout the key stage, most pupils make good progress in their composing skills. They very confidently explore and use a wide range of sound sources which include body sounds, singing and instruments when improvising and composing their own music. In Year 3, pupils use picture cards very effectively to improve the structure of their compositions and subsequently amend their composition to produce a better standard. Across the school, pupils use a five-note scale in their compositions with increasing effectiveness. Year 6 pupils use their ICT skills very skilfully to compose a piece of World war 2 music to create a feeling of a night in the Blitz.

196 Most pupils throughout the key stage use their appraising skills very effectively in order to refine their own performance.

#### Shortcomings

197 There are no important shortcomings.

## Physical education

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

#### Outstanding features

- 198 Throughout the school, in gymnastic activities, many pupils show good posture, body tension, controlled movements and smooth transitions. In paired activities, almost half of upper key stage 2 pupils show outstanding control and synchronicity.
- 199 Most pupils explore creatively a repertoire of gymnastic positions, which they link in sequences involving steady balances and changes of pace and direction. When working on large-scale apparatus, most work well at different levels.
- 200 Pupils in the lower key stage investigate how changes in gait and posture can affect the speed at which they can run, carefully analysing the times of their runs.

#### Good features

- 201 All pupils know why it is important to warm up before exercise and can correctly describe the effects of exercise on the body. They change their clothes before and after exercise; indoors, all pupils work in bare feet.
- 202 When playing a range of competitive games, all pupils learn about fair play and good sporting behaviour as individuals and members of a team.

#### Shortcomings

- 203 There are no important shortcomings.

## School's response to the inspection

All at the school are very proud of the findings of the inspection team and welcome their judgement that Ysgol St Elfod is a very good school with many outstanding features. We are particularly pleased that the inspection team found the quality of teaching compares well with standards nationally, having a significantly higher percentage of outstanding lessons. It was also pleasing to note that the school was judged to have made excellent progress since its last inspection.

We are proud of our pupils and agree with the inspection team that they are well behaved, considerate and courteous and that they all make good progress towards fulfilling their potential.

We intend to address the recommendation for improvement made by the inspectors by creating an action plan, to be integrated into our school development plan. As soon as the action plan has been agreed, a copy will be sent to all parents and be made available to any other interested parties.

As a school, we will endeavour to maintain and improve on the high standards and quality of provision that inspectors identified.



## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol St Elfod
School type	Junior
Age-range of pupils	7 – 11
Address of school	Ffordd-y-Morfa, Abergele, Conwy
Postcode	LL22 7NU
Telephone number	01745 832007

Head teacher	Mr Gwynne Erfyl Vaughan
Date of appointment	September 2007
Chair of governors	Mrs Gwyneth Davies
Registered inspector	Wil Williams
Dates of inspection	15/06 – 18/06/09

## Appendix 2

### School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils					70	72	83	83	308

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	15	2	16:1

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	20:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	n/a
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	6:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	26
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.2:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Summer 2008	Not relevant		93.6%
Autumn 2008			94.7%
Spring 2009			93.7

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	28%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	2 (temporary)

## Appendix 3

### National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2009			Number of pupils in Y6:		83				
Percentage of pupils at each level									
			D	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	1.2	14.3	50.0	34.5
		National	0.2	0.5	0.6	3.1	15.6	51.3	28.5
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	15.5	60.7	23.8
		National	0.2	0.5	0.6	2.7	14.7	51.4	29.9
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	16.7	42.9	40.5
		National	0.2	0.5	0.5	1.8	11.4	53.9	31.7

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	78.6%	In Wales (2008)	75.5%

- D Pupils who are disapplied under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum (0.1 per cent of pupils were also not awarded a level for other reasons)
- W Pupils who are working towards level 1

## Appendix 4

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

Five inspectors spent the equivalent of twelve inspector days in the school and met as a team before the inspection.

These inspectors visited:

- thirty lessons or part lessons; and
- registrations, assemblies and acts of collective worship.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

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

The team also considered:

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- fifty one responses to parents' questionnaire;
- documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection;
- a wide range of pupils' past and current work; and
- samples of pupils' reports.

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

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Aspects</b>
Wil Williams	Registered Inspector	Context; Summary; Recommendations; Annexes; Key questions 1, 5 and 7 Geography and music
Chris Dolby	Team Inspector	Key questions 2 and 6 Mathematics, ICT and physical education
Colette Gribble	Team Inspector	Contributions to Key Question 4 Additional learning needs
Merfyn Lloyd Jones	Team Inspector	Key Question 3 Science
J Kerry Jones	Lay Inspector	Contributions to key questions 1, 3, 4a, and 4c
Gwynne Vaughan	Nominee	Provision of information

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### **Acknowledgement**

The visiting inspectors wish to thank the governors, the head teacher and all the staff for the co-operation and courtesy they received during the inspection.