

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

A report on the quality of education in

**Llantwit Major School
Ham Lane East
Llantwit Major
Vale of Glamorgan
CF61 1TQ**

School number: 6734060

Date of inspection: 9 November 2009

by

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Introduction

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

The inspection of Llantwit Major School took place between 09/11/09 and 12/11/09. 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 **full** inspection.

Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. Llantwit Major School is an 11-18 mixed, comprehensive school situated in the Vale of Glamorgan. The school serves the town itself as well as a large rural surrounding area. There are 1184 pupils on roll, of whom 205 are in the sixth form. In 2003, when the school was last inspected, there were 1316 pupils on roll, 192 of whom were in the sixth form.
2. The school occupies a large site which includes a leisure centre.
3. The school's catchment is comprehensive in nature. Just over 10% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This figure is below the averages for the Unitary Authority (UA) and for Wales as a whole. While employment opportunities in the town are generally good, there is, nevertheless, a significant minority of pupils which comes from homes of relative economic and social disadvantage.
4. Pupils at the school represent the full range of ability. One hundred and sixty-five pupils have been identified with special educational needs (SEN), of which 10 carry statements.
5. A very small minority of pupils comes from different ethnic backgrounds. The vast majority of pupils comes from homes where English is the first language.
6. Since the time that the school was last inspected, there have been several changes to the composition and roles of members of the senior leadership team (SLT). The present headteacher has been in post since April 2005. All other members of the SLT have been appointed to their present posts since the last inspection.

The school's priorities and targets

7. The school's improvement plan (SIP) identifies key priorities for development in the following areas:
 - teaching and learning;
 - the school's ethos and environment;
 - new technologies; and
 - links with the community.
8. The school's self-evaluation report (SER) is based on the seven key questions of the Common Inspection Framework (CIF).
9. Numerical targets are set, that in 2010:
 - 66% 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
 - 99% of pupils should achieve at least the level 1 threshold (five or more General Certificate of Secondary Education [GCSE] passes at grades D to G, or their equivalent), and 62% at least the level 2 threshold (five or more GCSE passes at grades A*-C, or their equivalent) in external examinations.

Summary

10. Llantwit Major School has made considerable improvement since the time the school was last inspected.
11. The main areas in which improvement is most noticeable are seen in the:
 - trend in standards;
 - effectiveness of teaching in meeting the needs of learners; and
 - strategic management.
12. This improvement has come about because of consistently good leadership and management, school self-evaluation, and professional development.

Table of grades awarded

Key Question	Inspection grade
1. How well do learners achieve?	3
2. How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	2
3. How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	3
4. How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2
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?	3

13. In its SER, the school offered grade 3 for key question 1 and grade 2 for key questions 2–7. The grades awarded by inspectors for key questions 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 matched those of the school. However, inspectors identified sufficient shortcomings in key questions 3 and 7 to award grade 3.

Standards achieved

14. Good features outweigh shortcomings in the standards achieved.

15. The following table shows the grades awarded at KS3, KS4 and in the sixth form in standards in the following subjects:

Subject	KS3	KS4	Sixth Form
English	2	3	2
Welsh second language	3	3	3
Mathematics	2	3	2
Science	2	2	3
Design technology	2	2	1
Home economics	2	2	2
Child development & Health and social Care	-	2	2
Information technology	3	2	2
Modern foreign languages	2	2	2
History	3	2	2
Geography	2	2	2
Art	2	2	2
Music	2	2	2
Drama	1	1	1
Physical education	2	2	2
Religious education	3	2	3
Business studies	-	2	2
Psychology	-	-	2
Sociology	-	2	3

16. This table shows that standards are broadly in line with those when the school was last inspected.

17. The following table shows the percentages of grades awarded at each stage:

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3	1%	63%	30%	6%	0%
KS4	2%	81%	14%	3%	0%
Sixth form	4%	74%	22%	0%	0%
Whole school	2%	72%	23%	3%	0%
These grades are based on observations of 176 lessons					

18. The proportion of lessons judged to have good and outstanding features is slightly greater than the average for Wales in 2007-2008, as recorded by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI).
19. While the size and nature of the sample are different from the time when the school was last inspected, these figures indicate an improvement in standards from that time.
20. Over seven out of ten lessons had good features with no important shortcomings, and, in a small minority of cases, there were outstanding features. Over one in five lessons had good features that outweighed shortcomings. In only a very small minority of lessons were there important shortcomings.
21. At KS3, in the NC teachers' assessments in 2008 and 2009, results were above local and national averages, apart from mathematics in 2008. When compared with those of similar schools, these results are above average.
22. In 2009, achievement at KS3 was above what was expected, based on prior attainment, in the three core subjects combined, and in each of them individually.

23. These results represent an increase in standards since 2007 when results were significantly below average when compared to those of similar schools.
24. At KS4, while pass rates at five or more grades A*-C or their equivalent in 2007 were below local and national averages, by 2008, they almost met the national average. Provisional data for 2009 show pass rates that exceed both local and national averages. Averages for five or more grades A*-G or their equivalent show a similar trend.
25. In two out of the past three years, results were below average when compared with those of similar schools. Between 2006 and 2008, pass rates in English, mathematics and science, and the three core subjects fell below local and national averages.
26. However, provisional data for 2009 show pass rates in English and science to be broadly in line with local averages and above those of Wales as a whole, though pass rates in mathematics and the core subject indicator remain below both local and national averages.
27. Results at KS4 were slightly higher than expected based on prior attainment.
28. On the whole, at both KS3 and KS4, girls outperform boys.
29. Results at Advanced (A) level remain below national and local averages. In 2008, 63% of the cohort passed at grades A-C and 93% with grades A-E. Provisional data for 2009 show a similar picture.
30. Results at A level were in line with what was expected based on prior attainment.
31. Good features outweigh shortcomings in learners' key skills of numeracy, communication and information and communication technology (ICT).
32. Pupils with SEN make good progress towards the targets set for them.
33. Pupils and students have an adequate understanding of how well they are progressing and what they have to do in order to improve their work.
34. Learners' bilingual skills have good features that outweigh shortcomings.
35. Overall, pupils and students make good progress in their social, moral, and cultural development. Most pupils are well behaved. The way they work with one another in creative and problem-solving tasks is good.
36. However, in a minority of classes pupils underachieve because they pay poor attention and fail to focus on the task in hand. The lack of a daily act of collective worship limits learners' spiritual development.
37. Levels of attendance are slightly below UA and national averages.
38. Pupils get on well with each other and with their teachers. They show good levels of respect for other cultures and beliefs.
39. Work-related education and careers education and guidance prepare pupils well for opportunities in education, training and the world of work.

The quality of education and training

40. Teaching and assessment have good features and no important shortcomings.

41. The following grades were awarded for teaching and assessment in the lessons observed:

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3	9%	63%	22%	6%	0%
KS4	2%	76%	19%	3%	0%
6th form	8%	78%	14%	0%	0%
Whole school	6%	72%	19%	3%	0%
These grades are based on observations of 176 lessons					

42. The quality of teaching is above the current average for Wales as reported by HMCI. Seventy-eight percent of lessons were graded 1 and 2 compared to 75% in all inspections in Wales 2007-2008.
43. Although the size and nature of the sample are different from those of the last inspection, these grades represent an increase in the quality of teaching since that time.
44. In the many lessons where good features and no important shortcomings were observed, inspectors noted a good degree of consistency within and between departments. Good lessons were characterised by teachers' high expectation of work and behaviour. In these classes, teachers set a good variety of methods to engage pupils and students. There were high levels of challenge and pace together with a very good match of work to pupils' ability.
45. In the small minority of lessons where teaching was outstanding, teachers' questions enabled pupils and students to explore their understanding in depth.
46. However, where shortcomings were observed there was an imbalance between teachers' presentation and activity aimed at engaging learners' attention. In a minority of these lessons there was poor planning and poor classroom management.
47. The school meets statutory requirements for the assessment of pupils' work. Where practice is good, work is marked in detail and assessment criteria are used consistently. Leaders and managers make effective use of data on pupils' progress to set and monitor learners' targets and teachers exploit opportunities to involve pupils in assessing their own progress.
48. Where shortcomings were observed, in a small minority of cases, books were either irregularly or superficially marked and teachers' comments gave only limited help to learners to plan their own improvement.
49. The curriculum has good features which outweigh shortcomings.
50. The curriculum meets the requirements of the NC together with religious education. The wide range of options at KS4, the vocational provision at KS4 and the overall extra-curricular provision are consistently good features. The extra-curricular provision in music and drama is outstanding.
51. Links with primary schools are good and make for a smooth transition and continuity in the curriculum. Partnerships with parents, employers, local schools and colleges and the community are good. Work-related education is effective and worthwhile, though there are limited opportunities for the development of enterprise education at KS3 and KS4.

52. There is a growing awareness of sustainable development and the culture of Wales is promoted well through lessons and by eisteddfodau. However, there are shortcomings in the ways in which the school promotes and co-ordinates key skills, including bilingualism.
53. The school does not comply with the statutory requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship.
54. There are good features and no important shortcomings in the support and guidance of learners.
55. The way in which the school plans and manages the care and support services is highly effective.
56. Features of the provision which are consistently good are the way in which the school:
 - uses induction programmes to help pupils and students settle in quickly;
 - monitors learners' progress;
 - supports pupils whose behaviour impedes their progress; and
 - has put in place effective measures to deal with bullying.
57. Guidance and advice on vocational and academic choices are effective and are impartial. The school takes appropriate steps to safe-guard pupils' welfare and to promote gender equality. Pupils from ethnic minority groups receive good support. Attendance is monitored effectively and child protection procedures are robust.
58. There is a good provision for personal and social education (PSE) which takes account of health education and careers education and guidance. It is well co-ordinated and makes effective use of outside providers.
59. Comprehensive strategies are in place to identify pupils with additional learning needs and the provision to meet their needs is carefully managed.
60. The school makes good provision for equal opportunities and learners' well-being. It has taken reasonable action to avoid putting disabled pupils at a disadvantage.

Leadership and management

61. Leadership and management at the school have good features and no important shortcomings.
62. The headteacher communicates a vision clearly focussed on school improvement. The aims and values of the school are shared by the vast majority of members of the school community and are reflected in their work.
63. Since his appointment to the school, the headteacher has drawn up a suitable range of policies which reflect these aims. These policies have had a significant impact on practice and have been major contributory factors to the improvement of standards at the school.
64. At a senior level, the leadership team is very effective in setting the strategic direction of the school and in implementing, monitoring and evaluating school policy. The areas of responsibility of senior leaders are clearly defined and their

beneficial links with curricular areas have played a major part in establishing a sense of common purpose.

65. The SIP is clearly focussed on improving standards of provision and achievement and supports the school's capacity for critical self-review. Members of the SLT have established successful links with middle managers to set targets, and evaluate improvement.
66. As with senior leaders and managers, so with middle managers, areas of responsibility are clearly defined. This has led to consistency of practice within and between most departments.
67. Good account is taken of local and national priorities. Working relationships with local providers at primary, secondary and further education levels are very good.
68. Governors play a valuable part in contributing to the school's strategic direction. They have a clear understanding of their role. They are committed to developing local partnerships and to national priorities. Arrangements for governors to monitor and evaluate the school's performance are good.
69. Apart from the requirement for a daily act of collective worship, governors meet all regulatory and legal requirements.
70. The majority of staff is appropriately qualified and experienced, though there are shortcomings in their deployment. Performance management arrangements meet national requirements and are effective ways of identifying professional development needs of teaching and non-teaching staff.
71. The training of both teaching and support staff is very worthwhile. All training needs are closely linked to planning priorities. Training is monitored for its impact on standards and good practice is shared.
72. Pupils and students have access to an appropriate range of learning resources, and the way in which they are used and reviewed are good.
73. The quality of display in the classrooms and around the school is good and makes for a stimulating working environment for pupils and staff.
74. However, there are significant shortcomings in accommodation. Much of it is sub-standard and unfit for purpose.
75. The school monitors its budget very well and provides good value for money.
76. Good features outweigh shortcomings in the progress made by the school in addressing the key issues arising from the previous inspection. In particular it has:
 - improved standards of achievement;
 - complied with statutory requirements for religious education in the sixth form and individual education plans (IEPs);
 - improved the provision and effectiveness of behaviour support; and
 - taken appropriate action to address the various health and safety issues identified at that time.
77. However, the school still does not meet the requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship and, notwithstanding the school's comprehensive programme of repair and maintenance, the overall accommodation remains unsatisfactory.

Recommendations

In order to sustain current achievement and develop it further, the school should focus on the following priorities:

- R1 Continue to improve overall standards of attainment.
- R2 Eliminate the off-task behaviour observed by inspectors in a minority of classes.
- R3 Consolidate recent developments in the quality of teaching.
- R4 Improve the co-ordination of key skills across the curriculum.
- R5 Develop bilingualism further across all areas of the curriculum.
- R6 Provide a daily act of collective worship.
- R7 Continue to work with the UA to improve the quality of accommodation.

All these recommendations are identified in the school's current 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 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 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

KS3 and KS4

Pupils' success in attaining agreed learning goals

79. There is evidence of a considerable improvement at KS3 and KS4 since the last inspection. The school is narrowing the gap in performance relative to local and national averages and in comparison with similar schools.

80. The following table shows the grades awarded for standards at KS3 and KS4.

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3	1%	63%	30%	6%	0%
KS4	2%	81%	14%	3%	0%
KS3 & KS4	2%	71%	22%	5%	0%

These grades are based on observations of 126 lessons

- 81. The proportion of lessons which had good and outstanding features is two percent greater than the average for Wales in 2007-2008, as recorded by HMCI.
- 82. While the size and nature of the sample are different from those at the time when the school was last inspected, these figures indicate an increase in standards from that time.
- 83. In 2007 and 2008, results at KS3 fell above national but below local averages. In 2009, 72% per cent of pupils reached at least level five in the core subjects combined, compared to 61% nationally.

84. When compared to similar schools, results in English, mathematics, science, and in the three subjects combined were below average in 2007. Provisional data for 2009 show results to be above average.
85. In 2009, achievement at KS3 was above what was expected, based on prior attainment, in the three core subjects combined, and in each of them individually.
86. In 2008, at KS4, 57% of pupils gained five or more passes at grades A*-C or their equivalent, compared with 69% locally and 58% nationally. Eighty-eight percent of pupils gained five or more passes at grades A*-G or their equivalent, compared to 91% locally and 87% nationally.
87. In 2007 and 2008, in comparison with similar schools, passes at KS4 were below average. Provisional data for 2009 show a considerable improvement both when compared with local and national averages as well as with those of similar schools.
88. Results at KS4 were slightly higher than expected based on prior attainment.
89. At both KS3 and KS4, girls outperform boys.
90. The listening skills of the vast majority of pupils are good. They listen well to one another and to their teachers. Their speaking is good. Pupils willingly respond to questions and make good contributions to discussion. They use technical vocabulary well and are confident when making presentations.
91. Reading skills are good at both key stages. Pupils read aloud with accuracy and fluency. The most able read with good levels of expression.
92. Pupils write well. They are able to use a variety of forms of expression and write for a variety of audiences. They are able to organise their work well and improve their work through re-drafting.
93. At KS4, pupils' numeracy skills and ICT skills have good features with no important shortcomings. Pupils present data in numerical format across a good range of subjects. At KS3, however, pupils' ICT skills are less well developed.
94. Pupils work well in creative and problem-solving opportunities. The way in which they work with others, in pairs and in small groups, is good. They have a good knowledge of how to improve the standards of their work.
95. While all pupils at KS4 follow courses leading to recognised qualifications in Welsh second language, there are shortcomings in the ways in which pupils develop bilingual skills outside Welsh lessons.

Their progress in learning

96. The increase in standards since the previous inspection is evidence of good progress in pupils' learning. Where the quality of teaching has improved, pupils have responded well accordingly. In the vast majority of lessons, where they are encouraged to take active parts in lessons, pupils are productive, make good use of their time, and are prepared well to move on to the next stage of learning.
97. Most pupils are clear about what is expected of them in terms of their work and behaviour. They are aware of their teachers' expectations of them and value the way in which targets are clearly set so as to help them make good progress.

98. Pupils with SEN make good progress. They 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

99. The majority of pupils behaves well and adopts positive attitudes to school. They are well motivated. They respond well to the good teaching that they receive and make good use of their time.
100. However, where shortcomings in teaching were in evidence, a small minority of pupils responded with off-task chatter. They underachieved because they paid poor attention and failed to focus on the task in hand.
101. Pupils progress well in their personal, social, cultural and moral development. Relationships with other pupils and with teachers are good. Many pupils take part in sport and in a good range of extra-curricular activities. However, the lack of a daily act of collective worship limits learners' spiritual development.
102. The overall attendance rate for the three terms prior to the inspection was just over 90%. This figure falls below local and national averages.
103. Pupils show good levels of sensitivity to equal opportunities. They have a good understanding of diversity within society, appropriate to their age. They understand the needs of people with disabilities.
104. Careers guidance and work-related education of good quality prepare pupils well for the world of work.

Sixth form

Students' success in attaining agreed learning goals

105. Standards in the sixth form have good features that outweigh shortcomings.
106. The following table shows the standards achieved by students in the inspection.

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Sixth form	4%	74%	22%	0%	0%
These grades are based on observations of 50 lessons					

107. These figures are higher than the averages for Wales for grades 2 and above in 2007-2008, as recorded by HMCI.
108. While the size and nature of the sample are different from those of the last inspection, these figures denote a slight decrease in standards since that time.
109. On the whole, results at A level are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Passes at grades A-C and at grades A-E remain below local and national averages.
110. As at KS3 and KS4, girls outperform boys at A level.
111. As at KS3 and KS4, standards in the key skills of communication, numeracy and ICT have good features and no important shortcomings.
112. Students speak and listen well to the teacher and to one another. Many students pose questions that are probing and express their views clearly. They read fluently and write at length, using subject-specific vocabulary accurately.

113. Students collaborate well with one another in lessons and in extra-curricular activities. They show mature attitudes and good analytical, creative and problem-solving skills.
114. Students who follow A level courses in Welsh second language have appropriate bilingual skills. However, as at KS3 and KS4, there are shortcomings in students' bilingual skills across the whole curriculum.

Their progress in learning

115. Students make good progress in their personal, moral, social and wider development. Where students receive helpful feedback on their progress they respond well and are keen to improve the quality of their work.
116. Good features outweigh shortcomings in the progress made by students in the sixth form. Most subject areas indicate positive value added based on average GCSE scores. A good proportion of students progress to Higher Education.
117. Most students make good progress in lessons. They acquire new knowledge and skills and make good progress over time.
118. Most students have a good understanding of how well they are doing. Where their work is marked and commented upon and targets for improvement are set students respond consistently well.

The development of their personal, social and learning skills

119. Students enjoy good relationships with staff and develop a sense of maturity and independence. Students adopt good attitudes and work well individually and in groups. The way in which they show respect for one another and for teachers and visitors is good.
120. Many sixth-form students support younger pupils in their work and in their wider social development. They help organise charitable work and take a leading role in the school council and extra-curricular activities. They are very good role models to younger pupils.
121. Students progress well in their personal, social, cultural and moral development. Relationships with other pupils and with teachers are good. Many take part in sport and in a good range of extra-curricular activities. However, the lack of a daily act of collective worship limits their spiritual development.
122. Levels of attendance in the sixth form are satisfactory.
123. 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.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

125. In the 176 lessons observed, the following grades were awarded:

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3 and KS4	6%	69%	21%	4%	0%
Sixth form.	8%	78%	14%	0%	0%
Whole school	6%	72%	19%	3%	0%
These grades are based on observations of 176 lessons					

126. The quality of teaching is above the current average for Wales as reported by HMCI. Seventy-eight percent of lessons were graded 1 and 2 compared to 75% in all inspections in Wales 2007-2008.

127. Well organised and informed provision of staff development has contributed significantly to the improvements in teaching since the time the school was last inspected.

KS3 and KS4

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

128. At KS3 and KS4, the quality of teaching is good with no important shortcomings.

129. The grades awarded for teaching at KS3 and KS4 were:

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3	9%	63%	22%	6%	0%
KS4	2%	76%	19%	3%	0%
KS3 and KS4	6%	69%	21%	4%	0%
These grades are based on observations of 126 lessons					

130. Many teachers have high expectations of pupils in most lessons. They ensure they are involved in a range of relevant, challenging and well-paced activities adapted to their individual learning needs. They create a purposeful learning atmosphere which engages pupils' interest and motivation and secures a high level of independent and collaborative working. Teachers frequently intervene at individual and group level to provide support, check understanding and maintain momentum. As a result most pupils make good progress within their lessons.

131. Good working relationships exist between pupils and teachers which contribute significantly to pupils' self-confidence and positive attitudes to learning. Many teachers have good classroom management skills which they deploy fairly and equitably. They use praise appropriately to encourage and celebrate success, and ensure pupils know clearly what they have to do to succeed. Many teachers modify their strategies to meet individual requirements, and willingly provide extra support to pupils outside of normal lessons.

132. Most teachers have good subject expertise which they deploy enthusiastically within a wide range of lively teaching approaches. Many engage pupils in their work and develop progressively their key and independent learning skills. Pertinent questioning and task setting of good quality ensure pupils reflect critically on their reasoning, contribute to discussion and become more confident learners. In the majority of cases, teachers make good use of ICT and a variety of activity and resources to promote successfully active learning.

133. All pupils are treated fairly and provided with equal opportunities. Pupils with SEN benefit from the very effective support provided by learning support assistants (LSAs) within the student support centre and within a number of mainstream lessons. Teachers receive information of good quality on the learning needs of pupils with SEN and most adapt their approaches appropriately.
134. Regular pupil progress reviews carried out by subject leaders and heads of school monitor systematically pupils' progress. Intervention strategies are provided promptly and effectively for pupils who require additional support.
135. The language needs of the very small number of pupils whose first language is not English are met successfully. Whilst pupils receive lessons in Welsh second language, opportunities for them to practise and apply their bilingual communication skills within other lessons and across the school are limited.
136. Where inspectors observed shortcomings in teaching, there was insufficient challenge, pace and variety of activity, particularly for groups of average ability. The quality of teaching was also limited in a few cases by non-specialist teaching and split classes.
137. These lessons lacked continuity and a suitable range of opportunities for pupils to develop actively their learning and understanding. Pupils lost interest, become disengaged from the learning and made inconsistent progress. Poor planning, low expectations of pupils' behaviour and insecure classroom management slowed the pace of learning.

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

138. While assessment practice has many good features, the inconsistent application of agreed procedures is a shortcoming.
139. Teachers assess pupils' work regularly and, in the main, provide accurate assessments on progress and achievement. Involvement in internal moderation and external standardisation is improving the accuracy of assessment at both key stages. Pupils are well informed of external examination success criteria.
140. Most teachers identify underachievement and learning difficulties promptly. There is good collaboration with pastoral staff who provide additional support and effective action, including mentoring.
141. The school makes good use of prior attainment and predictive analysis to establish end-of-key-stage targets levels and grades which are shared with pupils and parents. Teachers have begun to review pupils' progress towards meeting their targets on specified occasions during the year to establish specific developmental targets. However, the full potential of this programme to track and analyse pupils' progress has yet to be realised.
142. Many departments have modified their approaches in light of the information provided to meet more accurately the needs of individual pupils. However, there are inconsistencies in the standardisation of the assessment information entered and in the use made of this information to impact on pupils' achievement.
143. Many departments use assessment effectively to improve learning. In the best cases pupils evaluate their own work and learn from assessing the work of their peers. In these departments pupils have a good understanding of their

achievement and receive feedback of high quality which helps establish useful subject-specific improvement targets. In other departments, pupils' use of peer and self-assessment is less well developed.

144. The quality of marking is inconsistent. In many departments, pupils' work is marked thoroughly and precise targets for improvement are identified. A minority of teachers does not mark regularly and does not inform pupils of what they have done well and how they can improve their work. There is insufficient feedback on progress towards targets.
145. Whilst key skills' development is identified within schemes of work and incorporated effectively in many lessons, the systematic assessment and analysis of pupils' progress in key skills lacks co-ordination.
146. The school's procedures meet NC, examination board and SEN Code of Practice requirements. The procedures for the standardisation and moderation of work at KS3 are good.
147. The quality of the arrangements for reporting pupils' progress to parents and carers is good. Interim and annual reports are useful in many cases, more especially at KS4. Many reports provide helpful comments and pointers for improvement and give a comprehensive indication of pupils' achievements, progress in their subjects and personal, social and learning skills. The quality of subject-specific targets is less consistent and varies across and within departments.
148. Good opportunities for parental involvement are provided at the progress review meetings and within the reports. A good proportion of parents attend these timetabled consultations.

Sixth form

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

149. In the sixth form, the quality of teaching is good with no important shortcomings.
150. The table below shows the grades awarded to the quality of teaching in the sixth form:

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
All lessons	8%	78%	14%	0%	0%
These grades are based on observations of 50 lessons					

151. The 86% of lessons judged to be grade 1 or 2 is above the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) target for 2010 that the quality of teaching should be grade 2 or better in 80% of lessons.
152. In the sixth form many of the positive features of the teaching are similar to those identified elsewhere in the school.
153. Many teachers have high expectations of students' application and potential for success. They constantly encourage and challenge students to think and take increasing responsibility for the progress and organisation of their learning.
154. Questioning of high quality frequently elicits fruitful, well-informed discussion and consolidates understanding. The pace of learning within and between lessons is brisk and purposeful.

155. Almost all lessons display good working relationships between students and teachers. Teachers interact very effectively with students when responding to their individual learning needs and provide appropriate intervention and guidance.
156. Most teachers use their strong command of subject and examination board requirements to bring depth, relevance and precision to students' learning. They ensure that students are fully conversant with the demands of their courses.
157. Many lessons are well planned and contain a range of engaging learning strategies and resources. They actively involve students in extending and demonstrating their knowledge, understanding and skills in a variety of relevant situations.
158. In a minority of lessons there is an imbalance between teachers' exposition and students' activity and low expectations. Over-direction by teachers and the limited range of learning experiences restricts the opportunities for students to develop their reasoning and critical reflection. The pace of learning is slow and students are too dependent on their teachers.
159. Bilingualism is under-developed within the sixth form.

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

160. The quality of assessment, recording and reporting of students' work is good. Many teachers assess and mark carefully and systematically. In the best cases they provide clear guidance to students on how they can improve their work within comprehensive, subject-specific comments.
161. The majority of teachers use examination success criteria within peer and self-assessment approaches to improve students' understanding of course and examination requirements and to develop their independent learning skills.
162. The programme of regular personal review interviews organised by the head of sixth form provides a very effective vehicle for the monitoring and mentoring of students' progress and welfare. Subject and pastoral staff track the progress of individual students against target grades and provide very good support. Most students are aware of their target grades, have a good understanding of their progress and what they need to do to improve.
163. Most teachers provide parents and carers with a comprehensive overview of progress through interim and annual reports and a consultation meeting, though the quality of subject-specific improvement targets is inconsistent.
164. A minority of teachers does not mark students' work thoroughly enough. They provide limited feedback on progress and on how students can improve the quality and organisation of their work. They do not involve students sufficiently in the assessment process.

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

165. 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, in close to half of the registration sessions observed, the school did not meet the statutory requirements of a daily act of collective worship.

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

166. Overall, the curriculum meets learners' needs and allows them to gain accreditation through a number of learning pathways. The school strives to give all pupils and students equal access to all learning experiences.
167. At KS3, the curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Pupils study all NC subjects and religious education. Information technology is taught as a discrete subject across the key stage. Learning experiences are generally well planned to ensure that pupils develop the skills to move to the next key stage.
168. At KS4, a good range of optional courses supplement well the core provision of English, mathematics, Welsh second language, science, physical education and religious education.
169. The option menu of courses at KS4 includes subjects from all domains of learning with a good range of vocational courses. A number of level 1 courses provided at Barry College extend the choices available for pupils.
170. In the sixth form, there is good provision for Advanced Supplementary (AS), A level and vocational courses at both level 2 and 3. In addition, all students studying A level and level 3 courses follow the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ). Discussions to share and extend the option menu with one local secondary school are at early stages.
171. The school has been successful in gaining the Basic Skills Quality Mark. Most subjects and PSE have identified the delivery of key skills in their schemes of work. However, their impact in many lessons in KS3 and KS4 is varied. Overall, at both key stages there is insufficient co-ordination and monitoring of the delivery of key skills. In the sixth form, students have time-tabled key skills' lessons, with students in year (Y)13 completing portfolios for accreditation as part of the WBQ.
172. The annual school productions are an outstanding feature in the extra-curricular programme. A large number of pupils contributes to the success of this major event which attracts large community support and considerable praise from eminent organisations in this field.
173. A good range of sporting activities, lunchtime clubs, field work and visits both in this country and abroad enrich the overall programme.
174. The personal development of pupils and students is developed effectively. There is a structured PSE programme which complies with all requirements.
175. Religious education lessons make a good contribution to the development of spiritual values. However, the quality of provision in assemblies and tutor groups varies too much, and, overall, collective worship and other subjects across the curriculum do not contribute enough to pupils' spiritual development. The school does not comply with the requirements for an act of collective worship.
176. Overall, the school promotes pupils' moral and social development well. The quality of relationships, respect for peers, adults and visitors and the wide support given to a range of charities by the sixth form and school council are

good. Money raised from events has also helped to support an orphanage in India.

177. The development of learners' awareness of the Welsh culture and other cultures is good across many areas of the curriculum.
178. Pupils' and students' learning experiences are enhanced by well-developed partnerships with the community and other providers.
179. Partnerships with partner primary schools are very effective and have been acknowledged by a Welsh Secondary Schools' Award in 2009. This recent development includes regular dialogue, curricular projects of high quality, drama, engineering and music events and induction days for both Y5 and Y6 pupils.
180. The partnership with Barry College has been productive in extending the provision at KS4. However, at present there is little sharing of resources and provision with other secondary schools.
181. Community links are good. Pupils benefit from the input of agencies, for example the police, local businesses, the Education Business Partnership (EBP), Careers Service and health agencies in PSE and work-related activities.
182. The school has good links with a number of universities. It receives students on a regular basis and learners benefit from the new ideas and experiences delivered in lessons.
183. The school maintains a good relationship with parents. Termly newsletters help to keep parents informed about activities, achievements and events at the school. Option booklets of good quality at KS4 and in the sixth form inform learners and parents of the range of opportunities available. While appropriate opportunities are available for consultation at parents' evenings and review days, one-to-one meetings with subject teachers are not presently available in Y7 and Y8.

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

184. The school provides an effective programme of work-related education. It aims to equip pupils to take their place in a rapidly changing world of work and is delivered through the PSE programme and some dedicated careers lessons. The programme is supplemented well by regular input by the school's careers adviser, and speakers and activities such as the Industry Day in Y10 organised by the EBP. The work-experience programme for pupils in Y10 and Y12 is planned and monitored well.
185. Aspects of *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* feature well in a number of subjects across the curriculum. Pupils study Welsh as a second language at KS3 and KS4 and the school holds an annual eisteddfod. However, there are very few further opportunities for pupils either in lessons or in day-to-day activities to develop and practice their bilingual skills.
186. The school is successful in ensuring that no pupil is disadvantaged. The school challenges stereotyping, both in its aims and objectives and values, and in its practise in enabling pupils to choose subjects with equality of access.
187. The school has made good progress in raising the awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship. A comprehensive audit has identified

extensive coverage in most subjects across the curriculum, particularly at KS3. Through the work of an enthusiastic eco-committee, the school has been successful in gaining the eco-schools silver award with key points focused on litter management, recycling strategies and global links.

188. Overall, the school has a good awareness of employers' needs. This is successfully promoted through the Dynamo Project, EBP, Careers Wales, work experience and vocational learning pathways.
189. The opportunities for students to develop enterprise skills are good in the sixth form through the WBQ. Students are engaged in a range of mini enterprises with products being sold at the Christmas Fete.
190. In KS3 and KS4, pupils' experiences are limited to some input from entrepreneurs as part of the Dynamo Project.
191. The school has made some progress in offering learning experiences that reflect national priorities. Good progress has been made with 14-19 Learning Pathways, KS2 to KS3 transition and work-related education; however, there are shortcomings in the impact of key skills at KS3 and KS4 and particularly in the development of learners' bilingual skills.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

The quality of care, support and guidance of learners

193. Procedures to manage care and support arrangements and services to learners are very good.
194. The school has a Student Support Centre where support for learners is centralised and co-ordinated effectively by the Student Support Centre Manager. He oversees the roles of the pastoral support team. The team delivers a diverse range of support mechanisms and strategies very effectively. They are supported by effective links with external agencies.
195. Effective policies and records are used to monitor pupil care and these are known to all staff. The school's pastoral system ensures that each pupil is well supported by their form teacher and other members of staff. Leaders of school are aware of each pupil's development, performance, effort and behaviour. They lead their teams of form tutors very effectively and offer pupils high levels of support.
196. Pupil parent support officers give outstanding support to learners, teachers and parents and their contribution to the school's pastoral care provision is recognised and highly valued by all those involved with the school. Learners speak in very complimentary terms of the care afforded to them.
197. Parents are encouraged to participate fully through the transition evening in Y6, home-school agreements, their involvement in report evenings, annual reviews and option evenings. They are well informed about school events. Pupil parent support officers are the first point of contact for parents on individual issues and have good working relationships with them.

198. The school council makes a positive contribution to the life of the school. The council organises many charity events, which leads to donations and this effectively promotes pupils' moral values.
199. Option evenings are held in Y9 and Y11 to help learners with their choice of subjects. The school provides learners with option booklets and comprehensive information through PSE lessons. Individual consultations enhance the guidance for making choices. Assistant headteachers and leaders of learning along with specialist Careers Wales staff, provide valuable guidance and information especially when learners make career choices during Y11 and Y13.
200. The induction programme for new pupils is very good as is the relationship with partner primary schools. Transition arrangements include bridging units, visits by the pupil parent support officer and the Support Centre manager, transition days in Y5 and Y6 and an annual residential visit to Llangrannog Urdd Centre in Y6. Curricular links have been strengthened and developed well, particularly in the core subjects, drama and music.
201. The PSE programme is good. It has a detailed structure, is comprehensive and complies with national guidelines.
202. Arrangements to monitor and address any concerns related to learners' behaviour, attendance, punctuality and performance have good features.
203. Learners receive effective careers education and guidance. The school has a dedicated Careers Advisor and the school has been given a national award for its work in this area.
204. The school has clear policies and strategies to assure the healthy development, safety and well-being of learners are promoted well. The school has, achieved phase one, two and three of 'Healthy Schools' Award'. Relevant risk assessments appertaining to the school's site and external visits are held. Support staff are trained in First Aid and the patrol officer manages the Medical Room based at the Student Support Centre very effectively and maintains a very good record of events.
205. Child protection arrangements are well known to all who work in the school. The child protection policy reflects current guidelines. The designated child protection officer is an assistant head and all child protection personnel have received suitable training.

The quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs

206. The provision for pupils with SEN has many good features. The school's commitment to the inclusive education of these learners is a high priority.
207. The school knows its pupils well and there are good systems for enabling staff to register concerns about pupils in their care and to develop strategies for addressing them. In addition the school issues a good range of screening tests to ensure that any specific learning difficulties are identified early.
208. The school has effective procedures for transition into Y7 and for the transfer of pupils with SEN. Early links with primary schools give ample opportunities to liaise with parents.
209. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) provides good support and guidance to both learners and staff. He has a clear vision on how to develop

provision and is well supported by all staff working at the Centre and the designated governor for SEN.

210. Statutory requirements for SEN are met and the school's response to the Code of Practice Wales is good. Statements of SEN are reviewed appropriately each year with a very high parental attendance at the reviews. All learners who require IEPs have them and they are regularly monitored and reviewed. Parents are informed of any concerns and are encouraged to be fully involved in supporting their children.
211. The withdrawal support for pupils with SEN is extremely well organised. It is targeted towards learners who require specific help and is very effective in taking into account the different ways that pupils and students learn. Very good support is at hand for pupils and students with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties.
212. The school achieves a good level of success in enabling pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties to remain in school. Recently introduced strategies are beginning to have a positive impact on managing pupils with challenging behaviour. The Inclusion Officer works with individual and small groups of pupils to improve emotional and behaviour management by way of emotional literacy and anger management.
213. Learning support assistants offer effective support for individuals and small groups of learners in the Student Resource Centre. They work closely with some subject teachers in mainstream classes and provide pupils with continuity, sensitivity and support. They plan and record the support to pupils well.
214. However, in a minority of classes the LSAs are not directed effectively by the class teacher. There are also a small number of teachers who fail to apply the school's behaviour management policy consistently. This leads to low-level disruption on occasions.

The quality of provision for equal opportunities

215. The school is an inclusive school. It recognises diversity of learners' backgrounds and all pupils have access to the curriculum and are encouraged to take part in all appropriate school activities.
216. In the PSE programme, religious studies and assemblies, pupils study examples of inequality, racism and prejudice. Teachers successfully use these opportunities to promote good race relations and respect for different cultures and religious and social groups. The very few pupils from minority ethnic groups integrate well with their peers.
217. Learners with SEN have full access to the curriculum in KS3 and KS4 and the school has high expectations for them in external tests and examinations.
218. More able and talented learners have been identified and there are good examples of work and activities designed to challenge them.
219. At KS4, the school offers more practical and vocational courses for those learners who are suited to them in line with WAG recommendations and requirements in Learning Pathways 14-19.
220. The provision and monitoring of anti-bullying strategies are good. Both learners and parents are aware of the school's arrangements to eliminate oppressive

behaviour and bullying. Listening to learners confirmed that isolated incidents of bullying are dealt with generally quickly and effectively.

221. The school has a relevant policy on the Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan. Parts of the school would be inaccessible to wheelchair users. At present there are no learners or staff working in the school in that position.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

222. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade. Improvements in the quality of leadership and management have contributed to the improvement of standards in the school.

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

223. The way in which the headteacher communicates a vision clearly focussed on school improvement is good. His aims and values are shared by the vast majority of members of the school community and are reflected in their work.
224. Staff share high expectations of themselves and pupils. Increasingly there are shared norms about learning, behaviour and relationships. There is a clear and focussed understanding of the purposes and priorities needed to sustain continuous improvement in levels of pupils' and students' achievement.
225. The school has drawn up a suitable range of policies which reflect these aims. These policies are having a positive impact on practice. There is a clear understanding of how to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
226. At a senior level, the effectiveness of the leadership team in setting the strategic direction for the school, and in implementing, monitoring and evaluating school policy is consistently good. Their areas of responsibility are clearly defined and they are accountable for the quality of their work.
227. Senior leaders and managers have effective links with departmental teams. They monitor their work, identify and support their professional development needs, and monitor the impact of their training on standards.
228. The SIP is clearly focussed on increasing levels of attainment. It supports sustained progress in implementing school policy in this area and increases the school's capacity for critical self-review.
229. The ways in which the school reviews provision and outcomes critically and supports the process by target-setting are worthwhile. The messages contained in data on pupils' and students' attainment help leaders and managers to identify strengths and shortcomings and set the direction for future development.
230. As with senior leaders and managers, so with middle managers, areas of responsibility are clearly defined. This has led to consistency of practice within and between most departments.
231. Good account is taken of UA and national priorities. Working relationships with local providers at primary, secondary and further education levels are good and the school provides learning pathways at KS4 and the WBQ in the sixth form.

The school works well to promote healthy lifestyles and is developing an understanding of the importance of education for sustainable development and global citizenship.

232. The arrangements to monitor and evaluate the school's performance are effective. Though inspectors disagreed with the school's grading of key questions 3 and 7 nevertheless they judged that the SER contained an accurate appraisal of the school's strengths and weaknesses and reflected the views of all stakeholders.
233. Performance management arrangements for teaching and non-teaching staff have had a useful impact on identifying and sharing good practice. The way the process has secured accountability for school improvement has been valuable.

How well governors or other supervisory bodies meet their responsibilities

234. The contribution of the governing body to the improvement of the school since the last inspection has been good.
235. Governors have a clear understanding of their role and work efficiently through a range of appropriate committees. Governors receive regular reports from leaders and managers and act as effective critical friends of the school.
236. Governors fulfil their regulatory and legal requirements.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

How effectively the school's performance is monitored and evaluated

238. The grades awarded in five out of the seven key questions are the same as the school awarded itself. For key question 3, the team awarded one grade lower than the school because of its failure to ensure a daily act of collective worship. For key question 7, they awarded one grade lower because of shortcomings in relation to the school's accommodation.
239. The procedures for self-evaluation are well embedded across the school. An outstanding feature is the involvement of the SLT in leading, supporting and challenging performance in the areas they manage. There is a clear focus on teaching and learning and on improving standards of achievement.
240. Systems and structures are well used to gather first-hand information through regular timetabled meetings with middle managers, lesson observations, book scrutiny, external and interval reviews and data analysis. Consequently the SLT is very well informed about the strengths and areas in need of improvement across the whole school.
241. A strong culture of self evaluation and accountability has been established and developed over the last two years with a majority of middle managers judging performance critically and using self-evaluation to improve standards. A small minority of departments, however, does not fully recognise the importance of

critical self-evaluation. This results in a lack of consistency in implementing agreed whole-school policy.

242. The views of staff at all levels are considered as well as those of parents and others with links to the school. The opinions of pupils and students are sought mainly through the work of the school council whose members believe the school is improving and changing for the better. These are good features, although further opportunities exist to involve the pupil voice in curricular decisions.

The effectiveness of planning for improvement

243. The SIP is of good quality and identifies the key priorities for improving standards of achievement.

244. Many departments produce thorough self-evaluations, identify areas for improvement and incorporate these into their development plans (DDP). Many DDPs link closely to the SER, the priorities are clearly identified, carefully costed and have clear success criteria. Some departments, however, identify too many priority areas and do not include actual costing or quantifiable targets within their plans.

245. Since the last inspection, development planning and a culture of self-improvement have resulted in a number of measurable improvements.

246. Good features outweigh shortcomings in the progress made by the school in addressing the key issues arising from the previous inspection. In particular it has:

- improved standards of achievement;
- complied with statutory requirements for religious education in the sixth form and IEPs;
- improved the provision and effectiveness of behaviour support; and
- taken appropriate action to address the various health and safety issues identified at that time.

247. However, the school still does not meet the requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship and, notwithstanding the school's comprehensive programme of repair and maintenance, the overall accommodation remains unsatisfactory.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

248. In its self-evaluation report, the school awarded this key question a grade 2. The inspection team disagrees and has awarded a grade three because of shortcomings in the deployment of teaching staff and in accommodation.

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

249. There are sufficient qualified teachers to deliver the curriculum. Falling roles have resulted in some staff teaching a number of subjects. This is impacting on standards in a small number of cases. The level of non-teacher support for pupils has significantly improved. Since 2005 the number of LSAs has risen from

2 to 5.4, but there remains a shortfall in provision. They make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

250. The school has also created the posts of patrol officer and inclusion officer for pupils with additional needs. Attendance has improved and for those pupils who are challenging there has been a greater degree of success. In addition there are three parent pupil support officers, who similarly make a very positive contribution to helping pupils achieve.
251. Administrative, technical and site staff make an important contribution to the smooth running of the school, underpinning many of the recent improvements; for example, the site is litter free. A business manager has been appointed to further improve the site, manage teacher cover and produce educational data. There is good liaison with the business manager in charge of personnel.
252. While the learning resource centre provides a pleasant learning environment it does not support school-wide pupil learning. The room size is inadequate for the task in hand. Capitation amounts are totally inadequate. There are no newspapers available and magazines are out of date.
253. Within its budget the school manages the site very well and finds ways to alleviate some of the inadequacies of the buildings. It has commissioned a health and safety report, has a proactive programme of improvement and works closely with the local authority to get the very best use of the available unsatisfactory resource. The school makes good use of the adjacent leisure centre.
254. However, pupils and staff have to endure working in many substandard buildings, where ingress of water, rotten windows sills and failing external walling are common. In one teaching block a prop holds up a staircase. There is no outside lighting around some of the buildings and this presents a potential hazard. The school site is a cluster of buildings and demountables, which causes inconvenience to pupil and staff movement in inclement weather.
255. The canteen is too small. As a result the school runs a split lunch hour. Toilet facilities are inadequate for both pupils and staff. The new student support centre is making a useful contribution to pupils' learning, but the external fabric of the building is unsatisfactory.
256. Pathway widths around part of the site are totally inadequate and there is no pathway to the red gra area, which makes access across the grass difficult in wet weather.

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

257. The school manages its budget well. The most recent audit report of May 2009 said budget control was good. The deployment and organisation of staff is under regular review, but as the budget resource is very low, teacher contact time is high and class size is often high at KS3 and KS4.
258. Through careful and focused planning the school has protected the whole school amount spent on capitation, ensuring good provision of classroom materials and equipment. There has been a significant improvement in the availability and use of ICT since the time of the last inspection. Departmental budgets are tracked to ensure value for money.

259. The 2009-10 school timetable has been poorly constructed and there are a significant number of split classes, particularly at KS3. In many cases these adversely affect standards. The headteacher remedied a number of anomalies in September and he has put in place plans for 2010-11 to resolve the issues.
260. Despite very careful and cost-effective management, a small deficit budget has been set for 2009-10. This has been done with the agreement of the local authority. The three-year budget plan shows that it will be back in balance by 2010-11, given current funding streams.
261. There is a sixth form of 205. Group sizes are generally cost-effective though the sixth form curriculum is subsidised to a limited extent from KS3 and KS4. The school and UA are in the early stages of implementation of 14-19 plans, with regard to partnerships. These are likely to improve the situation.
262. Planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time for teachers and all other workload restructuring requirements have been successfully implemented. Three cover supervisors are in post and three LSAs can be used in emergencies. Planning, preparation and assessment time is used well. Criminal record bureau checks are in place for all staff who work at the school.
263. The availability and the management of continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities for all staff are strengths of the school. There is a clearly focused CPD plan, which is linked to the school priorities and individual need. Very good use is made of external funding and whole school training days. The Investors in People review showed that a significant number of middle managers undertake national programmes. A significant number of teachers hold higher degrees and three of the four senior teacher managers have gained the National Professional Qualification for Headship.
264. Newly-qualified teachers and all new staff are well provided for with induction programmes. The sharing of good practice and opportunities for teachers to undertake, for a set period, senior management tasks to develop their expertise are characteristics of CPD. Provision for initial teacher training (ITT) is good.
265. The budget is planned and managed systematically and amounts spent directly relate to the SIP. Regular reviews and active governor involvement, advice and help are strong features. One governor meets with the headteacher regularly and the budget position is then reported to the finance committee in an understandable form. The school is involved in WAG's "Value Wales" pilot.
266. Good features outweigh shortcomings in the ways in which the school provides value for money. The budget is extremely well managed by the headteacher and his team. Successful and focused forward planning and the careful targeting of resources have begun to have an impact upon standards. The timetabling issue has been identified by the school. The inadequacy of much of the accommodation provided detracts from the school's attempts to raise standards and give good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

English

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

Key Stage 4: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

267. GCSE results in this subject at grades A*-C are below the UA and national averages. At Grades A*-G results are in line with UA and national averages. These results are broadly in line with what might be expected for pupils of similar ability.

268. Results at A Level are below the national and UA average for grades A-B and in line with the average for grades A-E. However, in the previous year, results were above both UA and national figures for all grades. Overall these results represent good progress.

KS3

Good features

269. Many pupils listen to their teachers and to each other in pair, group and whole-class work. They discuss a good range of topics including the characteristics of respective newspaper genres. Most pupils are able to recall previous learning. They demonstrate secure knowledge of their work in response to teachers' questions. A minority offers extended responses and demonstrates knowledge and understanding.

270. All pupils read a range of appropriate non-literary texts, fiction, poetry and drama including texts that reflect the culture of Wales. They read with interest and engagement. Most pupils demonstrate secure knowledge of plot and character. The more able produce close analysis of texts. A minority of the more able pupils demonstrates inferential and deductive skills.

271. The majority of pupils makes good progress in writing. They write for a range of purposes and audiences. Fluency and technical accuracy match broadly their ability level. A majority of the pupils improves their writing significantly through careful planning and effective drafting.

272. Pupils with SEN make good progress and produce work in line with their abilities.

Shortcomings

273. A small minority of pupils fails to listen with due attention.

274. A small minority of pupils does not redraft work with sufficient rigour. Their work displays a range of technical errors.

KS4

Good features

275. Most pupils listen attentively. A majority is responsive to the views and ideas of others and engages readily in discussions. Pupils collaborate effectively in small groups and negotiate outcomes on a range of topics including identifying characteristics of effective persuasive writing, Steinbeck's use of imagery and

interpreting the poetry of Rossetti. The most able students put forward ideas, justify them with reference to the text and negotiate the views of the small group.

276. All pupils read an appropriate range of literary and non-literary texts. A majority of pupils knows and understands the texts well. They make good progress in textual analysis.

277. Most pupils respond to a wide and appropriate range of writing tasks including analytical, literary comparison and imaginative writing. The majority of writing is good in relation to ability. In the best cases pupils' writing is often the product of diligent drafting. It is structured, organised and sustained.

278. Most pupils with SEN make good progress in relation to ability.

Shortcomings

279. A significant minority of pupils is reticent in oral contributions and less skilled in taking turns in class discussion.

280. A small minority of pupils fails to draft and proof-read their written work with sufficient rigour.

281. A similar proportion of pupils struggles to progress beyond decoding the meaning of literary texts.

Sixth form

Good features

282. Students do co-operate effectively in pair and group discussions. They share their ideas effectively. The more able promote opinions and negotiate and present views. They do so with a growing confidence on a range of appropriately challenging texts including Miller's 'Broken Glass', the poetry of Duffy and Shakespeare's 'Hamlet'.

283. Students are increasingly able to draw information from across more than one text. They use one text in order to reflect upon techniques used and issues raised in another.

284. By the end of the course a majority of students produces a range of written coursework that is at least in line with their ability. The work of the most able students is well-structured and comments upon the writer's craft, use of language and impact of structure upon meaning.

Shortcomings

285. A minority of students, particularly in Y12, finds it difficult to understand and respond to the literary techniques used by writers.

286. The writing of a small minority of students is not sufficiently perceptive nor insightful.

Welsh second language

Key Stage 3: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key Stage 4: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Sixth form: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

287. The majority of the cohort sits the GCSE short-course qualification. Results in 2007 were slightly above UA and Wales averages, but the school fell

significantly below these averages in 2008. Vast improvements were made in 2009 with the school performing well above the UA and Wales.

KS3

Good features

- 288. Many pupils speak with appropriate pronunciation and intonation.
- 289. Many understand the general flow of short straight-forward passages on topics that are within their experience, either by responding orally or in closed or structured written tasks.
- 290. Most pupils give straight forward answers to familiar questions asked by the teacher. They express likes and dislikes with ease and many give extended answers.
- 291. Written work is usually completed to a good standard and neatly presented. Most pupils generate a range of basic sentence patterns. They make good use of support material available to them to produce work that is accurate in the main.
- 292. Pupils with SEN perform in line with expectation.

Shortcomings

- 293. Many pupils lack confidence and are content to give very brief answers. Voluntary use of the target language is very limited.
- 294. Many learners are too dependent on support to allow them to operate easily and fluently in Welsh.
- 295. Viewing, listening and reading skills are underdeveloped. Learners do not discuss ideas and characters and they do not express opinions based on audio-visual and reading stimuli.

KS4

Good features

- 296. As at KS3, pupils speak with appropriate pronunciation and intonation and many read aloud with meaning and expression.
- 297. Pupils understand the general flow of straight-forward passages on set GCSE topics, either by responding orally or in structured tasks.
- 298. Most pupils can answer familiar questions asked by the teacher. With encouragement many extend their responses to express opinions and give generic reasons for their views.
- 299. As at KS3, written work is usually completed to a good standard and neatly presented. Most pupils vary sentence patterns and produce work in a range of forms for a variety of purposes and make good use of dictionaries and support material available to them to produce work that is accurate in the main. A few more able pupils produce more extended pieces of written work that include some detail and a wider range of structures.
- 300. Pupils with SEN perform well in relation to their ability.

Shortcomings

- 301. Many pupils have difficulty in recalling the full range of sentence patterns learnt in previous lessons to enable them to provide more detailed answers. A minority

has difficulty in understanding even basic patterns. Many are also too dependent on support material available to allow them to operate easily and fluently in Welsh.

302. As at KS3, learners' passive skills are underdeveloped. They do not view, listen or read for a variety of purposes.

303. Most learners show little initiative in the use of the target language and a significant minority is reticent to participate in Welsh language oral work.

Sixth form

Good features

304. Most students respond well in lessons delivered in Welsh, speaking with good pronunciation and intonation.

305. Literary appreciation skills are developing well in Y13. Students have acquired more specialist vocabulary and are making good use of it. They make accurate purposeful notes on set works.

306. Students produce coursework of very good quality that includes extended and varied pieces of writing for a range of purposes. They show the ability to elaborate and develop ideas coherently. Standards of language accuracy in the coursework are good and it is well presented.

307. Students use dictionaries appropriately to check meaning and to further develop their vocabulary.

Shortcomings

308. There are inconsistencies in the standard of work produced for the different AS units. Although there is evidence of more complex sentence patterns in coursework, these are not evident in oral work or day-to-day written work. Sometimes students make careless errors with regard to language accuracy.

309. Less able students have only a very limited range of language at their disposal and are unable to develop their ideas fully.

Mathematics

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

Key Stage 4: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

310. In 2007 and 2008 the percentage of pupils gaining grades A*-C was below that for the UA and Wales. Results showed an improving trend in 2009.

311. At AS and A levels, in 2007 and 2008, results were below UA and all-Wales averages.

KS3

Good features

312. Most pupils deal with all aspects of number confidently, understand their classification and understand how to work out questions on fractions and decimals and the relationships between these elements.

313. Pupils have a clear understanding of index form and can use this in given questions involving powers.

314. Pupils can construct angles with the required degree of accuracy using a protractor. They are able to name the different types of angles and to find a missing angle in a triangle when given the value of the other two.
315. Pupils can name shapes and are able to determine areas and volumes including units in their answers.
316. Middle-ability pupils are aware of line symmetry and can draw the correct axes as required.
317. Pupils are able to deal with graphs and include the labelling for the axes and they can use these graphs to find out other answers as required, depending on the question asked.
318. There has been a marked improvement in the teacher assessment results for 2009.
319. Pupils with SEN perform well.

Shortcomings

320. A few pupils have difficulty in quickly recalling work previously covered or in being able to work out some simple mental calculations.

KS4

Good features

321. Pupils' understanding of the subject develops as they follow the course and they are able to apply different concepts to find the answers to problems.
322. Pupils are confident in dealing with all types of numbers, be they negative or positive, and are able to deal with the rules that apply to powers. The most able can apply their knowledge to solve quite complex questions.
323. Pupils can deal with ratios and realise that the numbers considered must be of the same units and they write their answers in a simplified form.
324. Pupils are confident in the aspects of algebra including factorisation, are able to solve simultaneous and quadratic equations by factorisation or by applying the formula as required.
325. Pupils can change the subject of an algebraic equation and can substitute in such an equation to determine a numerical answer.
326. Pupils have a clear understanding of shape and are able to name three-dimensional shapes and to find any required volumes.
327. Pupils can draw graphs with an acceptable degree of accuracy and can read the graphs correctly to find any information required.
328. Pupils with SEN perform well in relation to their abilities.

Shortcomings

329. A minority of pupils are not always able to recall prior work.

Sixth form

Good features

330. Students have a good understanding of the range of concepts that they meet in pure mathematics, mechanics or statistics.

- 331. They can determine the distance between two points of a given equation and know that the product of the gradients of two perpendicular lines is -1 .
- 332. Students can differentiate and integrate correctly and can apply this knowledge to deal with the required aspects of functions, such as determining the turning points.
- 333. They can correctly recall given formulae that appertain to the element being studied and use these appropriately to deal with given problems.
- 334. Students can use the number patterns of Pascal's triangle to expand binomial expressions.
- 335. They can apply the equations of motion to find answers to given questions and can equally deal with questions that involve given forces.
- 336. Students are able to discuss their work appropriately and to determine if answers are sensible within the context of the problem set.

Shortcomings

- 337. There are no significant shortcomings.

Science

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 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

- 338. Examination results at GCSE in the last two years have been higher than those of the UA and Wales for passes at grades A*-C. These results represent good achievement for the pupils.
- 339. Examination results at A level in the last two years in biology, chemistry and physics have been below local and national averages. These results are lower than would be expected of students of similar ability.

KS3

Good features

- 340. Pupils have good recall and understanding of previous work from across a wide range of topics such as chemical reactions, particle theory and photosynthesis.
- 341. They use terminology appropriately, for example evaporation, solution, dissolving, and they can explain in scientific terms what these words mean.
- 342. They are learning to apply their knowledge from one scientific context to another, both in familiar and unfamiliar situations.
- 343. They carry out practical work safely and competently, listening carefully to instructions. They are learning to use apparatus, for example thermometers, correctly and to measure accurately using appropriate units.
- 344. Pupils can draw up tables, put in data and draw good bar charts and line graphs of their results. They can write reports of their methods and findings and are learning to make scientific drawings and diagrams.
- 345. They can draw conclusions from their results and understand the need for reliability and fair testing.
- 346. Pupils with SEN do well in relation to their abilities.

Shortcomings

347. A minority of pupils has untidy and careless presentation of work, with poor scientific drawing and numeracy skills.

348. A small minority of pupils does not finish its work.

KS4

Good features

349. Pupils have confident recall and understanding of previous work. They have good knowledge and understanding from across all aspects of biology, chemistry and physics.

350. Their use of scientific terminology is good. They are able to explain abstract concepts, such as cloning, properties of materials and momentum, both orally and in writing. They use the internet in researching for information to support written accounts.

351. They use and apply their knowledge to predict, to solve problems and to discuss ethical issues. They put forward their own ideas, consider evidence and can justify conclusions.

352. Pupils can interpret data, including the use of computer simulations. They are learning to understand the nature of risk with respect to scientific procedures, for example amniocentesis.

353. They carry out safe and competent practical work. They use apparatus correctly, observe and measure using appropriate units and compile tables of results. They understand fair testing and reliability.

354. Pupils know the criteria for success and can evaluate the quality of their own and others' work.

355. Pupils with SEN perform well in relation to their abilities.

Shortcomings

356. A small minority of pupils loses concentration and does not make adequate progress in the time available.

357. A minority of pupils does not complete work adequately and is disorganised in presentation.

Sixth form

Good features

358. Students in biology, chemistry, physics and applied science show recall of knowledge and an understanding of complex and abstract concepts and principles such as intermolecular forces, capacitance and eutrophication.

359. They use appropriate terminology both orally and in writing to express ideas. They use texts and the internet as sources of information.

360. They are learning to use a range of apparatus and techniques such as microscopes and burettes. They make systematic observations, scientifically correct drawings and associated calculations.

361. They organise and present data using a variety of methods, including graphs of good quality. Attention to health and safety protocols is good. Students can

analyse and interpret their own and group data and evaluate their own and others' work.

362. They can apply their theoretical understanding to explain their findings and in order to solve problems. They use scientific models and ICT simulations to enhance their understanding.

Shortcomings

363. A minority of students has disorganised and careless work, often lacking key features such as units in calculations.

364. A minority of students has unfinished work in their files.

365. A large minority of students is insecure and superficial in their knowledge. Their effort and work lack the depth and rigour of which they are capable.

Design 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 1: Good with outstanding features

366. In the last two years GCSE results in this subject have been higher than local and national averages for grades A*-C. The percentage who gained grades A* - A is much higher. These results reflect very good progress and achievement for the pupils involved.

367. A level results were much higher than local and national averages for grades A-C. The percentage of students who gained grades A or B was significantly higher than those for the UA and Wales. These results reflect outstanding progress and achievement for the students involved.

KS3

Good features

368. Across all areas of design and technology most pupils make good and often very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of a design process and its associated principles. All pupils research their work well. They carefully and systematically analyse existing products and use this information effectively in producing their own design ideas.

369. Almost all pupils in textiles combine materials well and produce well-crafted outcomes as seen in their masks, soft sculpture and bag projects. Most pupils are very creative and show good "tie and dye" outcomes which they use well in their products.

370. In food technology most pupils make good and often very good progress in their understanding of basic hygiene, food preparation, nutrition and dietary considerations.

371. Pupils with SEN achieve to their potential and produce good design work with product outcomes of a good standard.

Shortcomings

372. The presentation skills of a very few students is the weakest element of their work. In some areas pupils occasionally use a ballpoint pen for drawing and do not use colour to aid in the clarity of the presentation.

373. A very few pupils do not always use the technical terminology of the subject confidently when describing their work.

KS4

Good features

374. In all design areas most pupils' knowledge and understanding of the design and making process are at least good and often very good. They discuss and write about their design work using a good level of technical vocabulary and terminology. All pupils show very good skills in using ICT to research, present and produce some elements of their projects.

375. In systems and control, most pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding of electronic products. They can use a wide range of materials, fixings and components well in their projects. They all show an exceptional level of higher-order ICT skills and can use a broad range of subject-specific software competently as seen for example in the automata project.

376. In textiles, most pupils produce very good product outcomes. Design ideas reflect very high levels of uniqueness in terms of creative flair, imagination and innovation as seen in the theatrical costume project. Most pupils' design folios show good investigative work and the use of a variety of sources to gather information relevant to their design task. In the best design folios, almost all pupils produce very good design drawings and annotate their work very clearly.

377. In resistant materials, most pupils readily use computers for research and presentation. They also use computer aided design (CAD) software and basic computer aided manufacturing (CAM) equipment well to design and embellish their products. All pupils plan efficiently and effectively for the making stage of their work. They model their design ideas in card or other suitable material well and as a result refine and improve their design ideas effectively. All pupils readily work in a broad range of materials.

378. Pupils with SEN understand the design process and apply the principles well in their designs. They produce good product outcomes that are comparable to those of their more able peers.

Shortcomings

379. The free hand graphical communication skills of a very few pupils is the weaker element of their work.

380. Pupils' practical work reflects basic CAM work with little evidence of any consideration of the use of more sophisticated CAM equipment in the production or embellishment of their products.

Sixth form

Outstanding features

381. Almost all students' knowledge and understanding of the principles of designing are outstanding. They critically analyse existing products and use their findings very effectively to fashion their own design ideas.

382. In all areas a majority of students produce outstandingly original, creative and innovative design ideas. Design work reflects unique modernistic approaches that incorporate and combine a very wide variety of materials and fixings.

383. In textiles the level of innovation and creativity is outstanding as seen for example in the dresses displayed and in the solutions to the design specifications in the corset project.
384. Most students' knowledge, skills, understanding and application of subject-specific computer software for both the presentation and production of their work are outstanding.
385. Most students' design ideas are developed, systematically and very effectively and recorded in sketchbooks which show outstanding quick developmental design skills.

Good features

386. All students carry out thorough research work using a very broad range of sources including the work of famous designers. Existing products are analysed in great detail when formulating final design ideas.
387. Photographic evidence shows that almost all students produce practical work of a very high standard. They use a range and combination of materials, fixings and fittings to produce designs that clearly meet the original design specification.

Shortcomings

388. There are no significant shortcomings.

Information technology

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

389. Examination results at GCSE in the last two years have been below national averages. However, provisional results in 2009 represent a considerable improvement with 96% achieving A*-C grades, which is well above the national level.
390. Examination results in AS level in the last two years have been above national averages for passes at grades A to E, and well below the national average in 2008 for passes at grades A-C. The provisional 2009 AS level results are well below the national level and represents attainment well below expectations for this group of students. Provisional results at A level for 2009 show performance above expected grades.

KS3

Good features

391. Many pupils access confidently the network and manage their workspace effectively to support their learning. In Y7, most pupils have already become proficient with the system and the school computer rules.
392. Many pupils, in Y8, can add, delete and amend data in a database. Many can also perform simple queries and produce a report to display their results. A minority goes further to use more complex searches and explains their form designs competently.
393. In Y9, many pupils create a spreadsheet model to carry out simple investigations and many use formula and functions well. When challenged, the more able use complex functions.

394. By the end of the key stage, most demonstrate confidence in combining a variety of information and media when creating, refining and developing their own ideas for a presentation. Many also show a good sense of audience and produce work fit for a specific purpose and a minority can reflect on their work and independently suggest appropriate improvements.
395. The majority is able to discuss the social, moral and ethical issues related to film censorship, with most going on to successfully plan their own short documentary film.
396. Pupils with SEN do well in relation to their abilities.

Shortcomings

397. Low-level disruption prevents a minority from making the appropriate progress.
398. Progression across the key stage and the use of higher order skills remain underdeveloped with many pupils.

KS4

Good features

399. Most pupils show awareness of the basic functions of the hardware and software and use the network competently.
400. Many make good use of the internet to import appropriate images or information to enhance their coursework. A minority makes good use of the support materials to progress well through the different modules.
401. Most successfully create a database and demonstrate basic data-handling skills such as simple searching on one field. The more able conduct more complex searches.
402. Many pupils create a spreadsheet model using a variety of data types and demonstrate good use of basic formula, functions and effective formatting techniques.
403. Most pupils demonstrate the ability to create a wide range of presentations using simple formatting techniques and a range of features to meet the needs of a specific purpose and audience. The majority goes on to create multimedia presentations of high quality using advanced skills and a distinct house style.
404. A minority successfully create their own animation and computer graphic using a range of advanced features relevant to an intended audience. A minority also create a short video clip demonstrating advanced skills in editing techniques and adding appropriate effects and sound.
405. By the end of the key stage the more able have sound oral skills and are able to use subject-specific vocabulary accurately.
406. Pupils with SEN do well in relation to their abilities.

Shortcomings

407. Very few are easily distracted which hinders their progress and that of others.
408. There is a general lack of planning by a minority, which results in slower progress than expected.

Sixth form

Good features

409. Most students produce a leaflet and multi-media presentation of professional quality with a common house style, which has been carefully matched to its intended audience.
410. The majority uses advanced features such as hyperlinks, hotspots, transitions and original video to enhance their presentation.
411. All students make informed use of the internet to research and select information, and are discerning about the relevance of information to the intended purpose and audience.
412. The majority creates a database using a range of validation techniques and applies complex searches. A few can confidently explain these techniques to others.
413. By the end of the course, many have learned to critically evaluate their solution and are able to suggest appropriate improvements. Most produce suitable user documentation so that others can use the solution.

Shortcomings

414. Lack of independent study and planning hinders the rate of progress for a minority.

Modern foreign languages

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

415. Examination results in French and German at GCSE in 2007 were below local and national averages for passes at grades A*-C and A*-A but were in line with pupils' ability. In 2008, results in German were similar to local and national averages and in French they were above them. This represents good achievement.
416. Provisional data for 2009 indicate a continuing upward trend in achievement.
417. Examination entries at A level in the past three years have been too small for valid comparison with national figures, but all students have attained grades A, B or C.

KS3

Good features

418. Most pupils listen well, grasp essential details and so build up a good range of vocabulary and the confidence to speak as much as they can.
419. Most of them make good attempts to copy appropriate accents and intonation.
420. By Y9 many pupils keep up effective exchanges in conversation, speaking well in whole sentences.
421. Many pupils read aloud well. They read printed or word-processed text on paper or on screen competently, and reuse the newly-learned language for themselves.

422. From Y7, many pupils write well in simple sentences, linking several sentences together for example to pass on personal details to a pen-friend.
423. Over time, they develop increasingly complex language to include factual details about things they do or places they go, and their own and others' opinions about food and drink, hobbies and interests.
424. By Y9, many pupils write competently about things in the past as well as present. They usually spell words correctly and make the necessary agreements in number, gender and where relevant, case.
425. Most pupils with SEN achieve well, communicating clearly orally and in writing within a suitable range of language.
426. Pupils with SEN make good progress.

Shortcomings

427. A few pupils do not listen well enough, and then make mistakes in elementary grammar. This contributes to excessive hesitation in speaking, and, in writing, errors in spellings, agreements and the use of capital letters.
428. Most pupils do not write longer pieces by making use of several paragraphs.

KS4

Good features

429. Most pupils engage well in simple conversations about school, leisure time or holiday plans.
430. They understand and give both factual information and opinions without ambiguity.
431. Many pupils speak with consistent accents and intonation in sustained exchanges.
432. Most pupils write well, whether in the form of notes, e-mails, letters or essays; many of them demonstrate a good level of accuracy.
433. Most pupils make good use of different adjectives and adverbs to add interest to their writing.
434. They also use an appropriate range of tenses and vocabulary to suit different purposes.
435. Most pupils read a good range of material well, which helps many of them to develop in turn the complexity and variety of their own speaking and writing.
436. Pupils with SEN make good progress.

Shortcomings

437. A few pupils show an obvious English influence in their speech and tend to be overly hesitant, especially when required to take the lead by asking questions.
438. A minority, especially in German, does not use capital letters consistently well, and a few make errors in elementary grammar, particularly in their choice of verb forms.

Sixth form

Good features

439. Many students in Y12 are unselfconscious in using the foreign languages regularly for most purposes. They demonstrate good accents and intonation as a result.
440. Most students go beyond a minimal response to questions, and usually cope well when asked supplementary questions.
441. This is because they read a good range of different material on appropriate topics, and understand, retain and apply relevant information in their own work.
442. They are consequently developing a good vocabulary and level of accuracy in both oral and written work, the latter usually being structured well to suit the purpose, and suitably varied in style.
443. Most students in Y13 understand a wide range of authentic and idiomatic language, including some technical terminology. When necessary they can put this into English with equal impact.
444. Most of them speak well and write short pieces in simple, succinct language.

Shortcomings

445. In Y13, students' productive spoken and written language does not reflect the much wider range that they understand.
446. Students do not structure their essays well enough to support or develop their arguments to best effect.

History

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

447. In GCSE examinations, over the last three years, the proportion of pupils achieving grades A*-C has been consistently above both UA and national figures.
448. A level pass rates have been broadly in line with local and national averages over the last two years.

KS3

Good features

449. In Y7, pupils who follow the new Integrated Humanities course show a capacity for critical thinking. For example, in display work, they show understanding of change in the development of medieval weaponry.
450. Pupils of differing abilities can use their knowledge of topics to compose role-play activities linked to the murder of Becket and to the Black Death.
451. Able pupils in Y8 can undertake an enquiry into Remembrance Day, in which they frame questions and provide answers from evidence taken or inferred from historical sources.
452. Pupils in Y9 show an awareness of empathy in their reconstructions of the predicaments of Merthyr iron masters and their workers.

453. Lower-attaining pupils in Y9 can make simple inferences from sources to explain the outcome of the Second World War.

454. Pupils with SEN achieve well in relation to their ability.

Shortcomings

455. Where classes are split, the presentation of pupils' written work is variable, and in a minority of cases, poor.

456. The level and consistency of pupils' performance are not sustained from year to year. Despite their initial grasp of ideas about change or cause in Y7, pupils in Y8 and Y9 fail to show progression in this facet of their historical understanding.

KS4

Good features

457. The key advance in KS4 is in the quality of pupils' extended writing. With few exceptions, they can build a thematic argument based on reasoned paragraphs that lead to a balanced judgment.

458. Written coursework is of a generally high standard and is underpinned by good subject knowledge. Pupils can interpret and evaluate source material in context to answer an historical question, assess the relative importance of the causes of an event and test historical interpretations (for example, of the success of D-Day).

459. Pupils in Y11 show many of the skills associated with independent learning. For example, for an enquiry into living and working conditions in the United States during the Second World War, they propose their own key question, based on film clips, then search for and select relevant information with which to answer it.

460. Pupils with SEN achieve well in relation to their ability.

Shortcomings

461. Some pupils in Y10 make insufficient progress on tasks requiring them to convert information from one form into another.

Sixth form

Good features

462. Students in the sixth form show good knowledge of both the history and historiography of their subject.

463. An example of the former is the ability shown by Y12 students to explain at some length the meaning of 'conceptual nouns', such as 'Kristallnacht'. An example of the latter, their ability to offer articulate, well-informed appraisals of current thinking about the nature of Hitler's dictatorship - and reasoned opinions about where the real source of power lay in the Third Reich.

464. Students understand that the significance of events in the past can be inferred from source material interpreted or evaluated in context and that sources themselves can be used together to answer complex historical questions.

Shortcomings

465. There are no significant shortcomings.

Geography

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

466. Examination results in this subject at GCSE and at A level in the past two years have been broadly in line with local and national averages.

KS3

Good features

467. Most pupils interpret maps, graphical and statistical information with confidence. They acquire a good range of geographical skills which they apply positively in a variety of contexts.

468. The majority of pupils has a good understanding of geographical terminology. They apply key words with precision in their study of a range of topics including global warming and earthquake activity.

469. Pupils with SEN complete work to a good standard in relation to their ability.

470. The majority of pupils demonstrates a good knowledge and understanding of place. They are confident in locating towns in their study of contrasting places in Wales.

471. Most pupils possess a sound understanding of issues associated with global warming. They can differentiate accurately between the physical and human impact of global warming.

472. Most pupils have a good understanding of the causes and effects of major earthquakes. They fully appreciate the devastating results on a region's infrastructure following a major earthquake.

Shortcomings

473. A minority of pupils is insecure in their understanding and use of geographical terminology.

474. A few pupils have a limited knowledge of the location of place.

KS4

Good features

475. Pupils' understanding of patterns and processes in physical and human geography is good. The coursework assignments based on fieldwork in Cardiff Bay demonstrate their sound grasp of the geographical skills of investigation, analysis, interpretation and recording.

476. Most pupils use maps, atlases and resource materials with confidence. They present accurate work deploying a variety of techniques including graphs, maps and, where appropriate, the use of ICT.

477. Pupils display a good understanding of what is meant by sustainable development with reference to tourism in the Maldives and Malham. They have a sound understanding of the strategies adopted to promote sustainable tourism.

478. Most pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of geographical terminology. They apply complex geographical vocabulary with increasing precision and accuracy in their studies.

479. Most pupils have a good grasp of the issues related to aspects of population studies. They apply case studies to good effect.
480. Pupils with SEN complete work of a good standard in all aspects of their studies.
481. Most pupils display a sound knowledge and understanding of the contributory causes of malaria. They recognise the disastrous effects the disease has on a significant percentage of the Malawi population.

Shortcomings

482. The exercise books of a few pupils contain some incomplete work. This has a negative impact on their standard of work.

Sixth form

Good features

483. Most students apply a wide range of statistical techniques, map and graphical skills to good effect in interpreting, analysing and recording data on all aspects of their course.
484. Nearly all students demonstrate a good knowledge of the natural causes of climate change. They have a sound understanding of the efforts being made by some of the world's Trans National Companies (TNCs) and other organisations to tackle climate change.
485. Student files are systematically organised with neatly presented notes and diagrams, with maps and graphical work of a good standard.
486. Most students possess a good understanding of the impact of global warming on a range of aspects including fauna and flora in the Arctic area. They fully appreciate the linkage between one affected aspect and another.
487. Students apply geographical terminology appropriately in the completion of set written tasks and orally in class activities.

Shortcomings

488. A few students' files have incomplete work which has an adverse effect on standards.
489. The work of a few students lacks the depth of knowledge and detail expected in AS/A2 courses of study.

Art

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

490. In the GCSE examination, results for boys and girls at grade A*-C, over time, match or exceed the national average. Recently girls achieved more A* results than the national average. Pupils generally improve on their estimated grade. These results represent good achievement.
491. At A level, results at grades A-B, over time, match the national average. Girls achieve more of the higher grades and usually exceed the national average. Consistently, the small number of boys that are entered does not achieve as well as boys nationally. Girls generally achieve above expectation. Their results represent good achievement.

KS3

Good features

- 492. Over the key stage, pupils achieve above average standards. This indicates good progress.
- 493. They make appropriate progress in the acquisition and use of the essential elements of line, tone, colour, texture and pattern. They develop their observational drawing skills to a better than average level.
- 494. They have a good awareness and appreciation of the art of other cultures through imaginative painting and three-dimensional exercises in card and clay.
- 495. They are learning about the visual culture of Wales.
- 496. When writing about art, they express their personal opinions and judgements.
- 497. Pupils with SEN make progress.
- 498. Pupils who are introduced to creative computer skills achieve well.
- 499. More able girls achieve good standards in their imaginative use of textiles.
- 500. Pupils are learning how to evaluate their work and are developing critical judgement about art. They have a growing understanding of how to use their assessment process to improve the standard of their work.
- 501. Overall they make progress in developing skills in understanding, making and investigating to, or above, the expected national average.

Shortcomings

- 502. Pupils' knowledge of artists specific to Wales is limited.

KS4

Good features

- 503. Pupils know how to exploit a range of both two- and three-dimensional media.
- 504. Standards of work in print, jewellery, glass and mask-making are high. Pupils improve their knowledge of a wide range of artists' and designers' work.
- 505. They know how to use computers creatively and to support their research. Pupils of all ability ranges perform and achieve good standards.
- 506. Sketchbook work regularly demonstrates good creative outcomes. Pupils following the applied art option are well prepared for the world of work.
- 507. All pupils are well informed of examination requirements. They understand how to use their assessment process to improve the standard of the work.

Shortcomings

- 508. Pupils are not as familiar with the work of designers and craft workers as they are with that of fine artists.

Sixth form

Good features

- 509. Students successfully explore and select from more demanding new media and techniques, including jewellery, metal casting and screen-printing.
- 510. Standards of observational drawing are good. Both pattern and colour are often used with verve.

511. Students achieve good standards when exploring creative photographic collage techniques.
512. Students show flair in their creative sketchbook work. From looking at the work of established artists they develop their own individual creative responses.
513. They support their practical work with useful technical and informative annotation. Their extended writing about art and artists is thorough, personal, and descriptive.
514. Students have a good understanding of the assessment process and examination requirements.

Shortcomings

515. Students' knowledge of contemporary and historical art relies too much on secondary sources.

Music

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

516. During 2007-2009, GCSE results were broadly in line with figures for the UA and the whole of Wales.
517. At AS and A levels, numbers in the sixth form have been too small to make meaningful comparisons.

KS3

Good features

518. Pupils sing well in vocal ensembles with most producing good quality sound, intonation and musical expression.
519. Pupils apply their knowledge of music elements effectively and use appropriate terminology for appraising purposes when listening to music.
520. Pupils use music technology well to create simple melodies and most can apply their understanding of basic musical structures to their compositions.
521. A good understanding of the characteristics of "blues" music is demonstrated by most pupils who also use 12-bar chord progressions to accompany melodic phrases in the "blues" style.
522. Pupils with SEN make good progress.

Shortcomings

523. A few pupils have difficulty maintaining good intonation when singing in larger groups.
524. A small number of pupils have difficulty in adopting musical structure for the purpose of creating their own compositions.

KS4

Good features

525. Pupils make use of appropriate technological software to create compositions related to the topic of film-music and show an understanding of the use of various musical devices for that purpose.

526. Pupils use appropriate musical terminology in order to appraise the effectiveness of aspects of orchestration.

527. Sound knowledge of structural issues is demonstrated by pupils in their study of popular music.

528. Pupils show good knowledge of chord structures, use a range of cadences in harmonic writing in major and minor keys and identify them aurally.

529. Pupils with SEN make good progress.

Shortcomings

530. A few pupils fail to make consistent use of appropriate musical terminology when appraising and analysing music.

Sixth form

Good features

531. Students compose and perform chorales in the style of J S Bach, demonstrating sound knowledge of harmonic characteristics.

532. Students demonstrate competence in reading an orchestral score, as well as adequate skills in personal research by giving classroom presentations on topics such as the development of the concerto as a musical genre.

533. An effective level of creative and technical ability is shown in the composition of programme-music based on an original idea and in the use of appropriate technological software for that purpose.

534. Students perform individually on their respective musical instruments to a reasonable standard.

Shortcomings

535. There are no significant shortcomings.

Physical education

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

536. At GCSE results have been above the national average. There was a dip in grades A*-C in 2008, but results improved in 2009.

537. A small proportion of students studies the subject at AS and A2 levels and results reflect the full range of abilities. Results have improved at BTEC level with a significant proportion gaining passes with merit and distinction.

KS3

Good features

538. In games, most pupils demonstrate skilful handling of the ball, good control, pace and agility. The most able show good vision and apply strategies and tactics to outwit opponents successfully.

539. In a rugby lesson, boys showed good understanding of the purpose of a warm up and of the range of relevant stretches and cardio-vascular tasks necessary to prepare the body for exercise.

540. Most pupils are very capable swimmers. They move through water with confidence and the most able attempt complex skills such as tumble turns. They understand how to improve, which is evident when they analyse their own and others' performance.

541. Pupils with SEN make good progress in relation to their abilities.

Shortcomings

542. Pupils do not always transfer the skills from practice sessions into game play effectively.

KS4

Good features

543. GCSE pupils show good understanding of training methods and of how tasks are developed sequentially when teaching or coaching others.

544. A few of the most able GCSE pupils demonstrate their detailed knowledge of skills when giving technical explanations and accurate and helpful demonstrations in their work on skill acquisition.

545. Many pupils from across the ability range show good knowledge of rules and principles of play in a range of activities.

Shortcomings

546. A minority of pupils does not transfer skills effectively from one activity to another.

Sixth form

Good features

547. Year 12 students show good recall in their work on the structure and functions of the heart.

548. They engage in lively discussion and reflection as they develop more complex ideas and use subject terminology with confidence.

549. Year 13 students show good understanding of rules and game principles as they explore the historical development of team games.

550. Students from the whole ability range comment critically and helpfully on one another's work showing good insight into the world of fitness and health.

551. Written work is often of a very good standard.

Shortcomings

552. Y13 students do not show sufficient initiative or confidence in developing their own ideas.

Religious education (including religious studies)
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Key Stage 3: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

Sixth form: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

553. Examination results at GCSE in 2007 were below local and national averages. Provisional results for 2009 indicate a significant improvement.

554. Examination results at A level in the last two years have been below local and national averages.

KS3

Good features

555. A small majority of pupils in Y7 has good knowledge and understanding of the various aspects of a festival. A few are able to compare and contrast the characteristics of different festivals.

556. In their written work a minority of pupils in Y7 gain knowledge of the Christian and Buddhist views about life after death. They show understanding of how these beliefs may influence a person regarding decisions they will make in life.

557. In Y8, the majority of pupils can express views on Muslim fasting and a few can support their views with appropriate evidence.

558. A few pupils in Y8 are able both to describe 'puja' worship and explain its importance in the daily lives of Hindus.

559. More able pupils in Y9 can give reasons, both for and against, in relation to belief in God.

560. In Y9, the majority of pupils can express empathy towards the views, beliefs and traditions of religious people.

561. Pupils with SEN do well in relation to their abilities.

Shortcomings

562. A minority of pupils is insecure in their understanding of religious terminology.

563. The quality of work in almost half the exercise books is not detailed enough to ensure progress.

564. A minority of pupils is not clear about how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve.

565. In their oral responses many pupils are reluctant to develop longer answers.

KS4

Good features

566. In Y10, the majority of pupils has a good understanding of both Christian and Muslim marriage ceremonies.

567. Many pupils in Y10 are able to provide good responses to moral and religious issues raised in relation to Christian and Muslim views on wealth.

568. A majority of pupils in Y11 can explain in detail religious teachings regarding freewill.

569. In Y11, a significant majority of pupils knows, understands and can evaluate religious and moral responses to abortion. A very few can articulate the strengths and weaknesses of both sides of the debate.

570. Pupils with SEN make good progress.

Shortcomings

571. There is a lack of detail and analysis in a few exercise books.

572. A few pupils lack confidence in evaluating issues studied and coming to a reasoned conclusion.

Sixth form

Good features

573. In their study of environmental issues, a minority of students in Y12 is aware of basic arguments, for and against, regarding the compatibility of animal rights with religious principles.

574. A minority of students in Y13 has good knowledge of the 'Just War' theory. Using relevant Biblical quotations they understand why 'Pacifism' is used as a response to conflict and warfare.

Shortcomings

575. In discussion, the opinions of a minority of students are not developed nor supported by evidence.

576. In both their oral and written work, the majority of students is not familiar with the viewpoints of scholars.

577. Y13 students are often reluctant to use independent thought to evaluate the religious and moral issues studied.

Home economics

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

578. Examination results in home economics at GCSE in the last 2 years, have been in line with local and national averages in grades A*-C. These results represent good achievement for pupils' ability.

579. In the last two years A level examination results in home economics in grades A-C were below the national average. However, the number of students involved in the subject is too few to make meaningful comparisons with national averages. These results are broadly in line with students' ability.

580. Results in Catering and Food and Nutrition in 2008, were above local and national averages for grades A* -C. Provisional results for 2009 show above average results in the grades A*-C. These results reflect very good achievement for these students when set against their predicted target grades.

KS3

Good features

581. Most pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding of nutritional values. They carry out very good sensory analysis when evaluating food products.

582. In lessons seen most pupils demonstrate:

- a good knowledge of food hygiene and the implications of this for safe working practices when preparing food;
- good levels of competence in using a broad range of kitchen equipment;
- a good appreciation of aesthetic factors when decorating their products using a range of techniques; and
- safe working practices when removing very hot trays from the ovens.

583. All pupils enjoy practical food preparation and many utilise well the skills that they acquire in prior lessons.

584. Many pupils have a good awareness of healthy eating and evaluate well food products.

Shortcomings

585. A very few are unsure of technical terms and do not always use the terminology effectively when discussing or describing what they have done.

KS4

Good features

586. Work folders show that pupils choose relevant food items, prepare work plans, cost outcomes and evaluate outcomes well using sensory and dietary analysis techniques.

587. All pupils carry out in-depth research using a variety of sources. They collect and analyse data using questionnaire techniques, investigate and analyse information in line with their investigation brief and present their findings to a good standard. All pupils' ICT skills are good and often very good. They use a range of software applications well in research and presentation work.

588. In lessons seen most pupils used all five senses well when evaluating food products. They can clearly and confidently explain the properties of food using physical, sensory and nutritive terms effectively in their descriptions.

589. Product outcomes show good and often very good levels of creativity and innovation.

Shortcomings

590. There are no significant shortcomings.

Sixth form

Good features

591. Most students have a very good understanding of food choices and their relationship to diet. They demonstrate a very good standard of knowledge and understanding throughout their investigational coursework.

592. Most students can give a number of complex reasons for food allergies and genetic intolerance. They can also explain many aspects of food preservation to a good standard

593. Most students use a good standard of technical vocabulary in oral and written work, and are encouraged to use detailed factual extended writing and many produce written work complemented with a good standard of presentation of collected and analysed data.

594. Students have a good understanding of the concept of dietary functions, dietary reference values, the requirements for various groups, and the link between diet and specific deficiencies. They apply their understanding well in various contexts, and undertake research procedures successfully.

595. Overall, project folders contain a good range of information and research data. All students make very effective use of ICT to communicate information and enhance presentation.

596. Photographic evidence of practical outcomes reflects skills that are generally good and often very good.

Shortcomings

597. There are no significant shortcomings.

Psychology

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

598. Students' attainment exceeds local and national averages.

Sixth form

Good features

599. In Y12 the majority of students has a good knowledge and understanding of a variety of approaches to the study of human psychology, together with their underlying assumptions. They are able to relate their direct experience to current theories.

600. The majority of students has a growing understanding of research methods in the study of psychology and plan their investigative studies effectively.

601. In Y13 the majority of students has a good knowledge of the psychological factors that contribute to the formation of relationships and of the contribution made by the main authors in the field. They are able to evaluate the contribution of a variety of schools of thought and relate them to their direct experience of life.

602. The majority of students have a good understanding of quantitative methods in experimental psychology and put this to good effect in planning their research.

Shortcomings

603. There are no significant shortcomings.

Sociology

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

Sixth form: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

604. At GCSE, pupils' attainment exceeds local and national averages.

605. Results at A level are broadly in line with local and national averages.

KS4

Good features

606. In Y10 the majority of pupils has a good knowledge and understanding of the family's role in the socialisation of children. They are able to give detailed examples from their direct experience and analyse them accurately using key sociological terms.

607. In Y11 the majority of pupils has a secure knowledge of the social factors that influence criminal behaviour. They are able to analyse critically the effect of factors such as peer group influence on behaviour and stereotyping in the ways in which it is reported.

608. Through the key stage the majority of pupils develops a growing understanding of the contribution of major research studies in the study of sociology and uses this effectively in evaluating their work.

Shortcomings

609. There are no significant shortcomings.

Sixth form

Good features

610. Most students have a sound understanding of the functions of the family as well as the ways in which images of family life are portrayed in the media. They are able to use sociological theory effectively to describe and evaluate the various patterns of contemporary family life.

611. Most students show a good knowledge and understanding of the formation and development of gender stereotypes and the ways in which sociologists use theory to explain gender roles in society.

612. Most students display an appropriate knowledge of the main writers in the field of criminal and deviant behaviour and can analyse their contributions critically.

Shortcomings

613. A minority of students has an insecure recall and understanding of sociological theory.

Child development, Health and social care
--

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

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

614. In the last two years GCSE results in Child Development in grades A*-C have been in line with local and national averages. A large number of pupils studies the subject and results reflect very good achievement for pupils' abilities.

615. In Health and Social Care, examination results are at least in line with, and occasionally well above, students' predicted target grades.

KS4

Good features

616. Almost all pupils have good recall of previous work and display sound knowledge and understanding of the care of babies and young children including dietary requirements.

617. Most pupils research issues relating to family life and parenting well, and develop a good awareness of cultural and lifestyle influences.

618. All pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the physical, intellectual, emotional and social development of the child. They can explain the stages well in their work files.

619. All pupils can use various methods of research and extract relevant information from a broad resource base which they use well in their family study and coursework child study.

620. Almost all pupils show good skills in their extended writing in their child study folders. They effectively tabulate and record their observations when making comparisons to the norms of development for the child.

Shortcomings

621. There are no significant shortcomings.

Sixth form

Good features

622. Most students are developing good knowledge and understanding of local and national health and social care provision and the role of professional carers as is evident in class and portfolio work.

623. Most students are able to discuss clients' needs and identify how diversity develops. Subject-specific language is usually used well.

624. All students are able to extract relevant information from text-books and work effectively in groups to record their findings.

625. The majority of students shows good problem-solving skills when they work through case-study scenarios.

626. Most students' research and investigational skills are good. All students effectively prepare suitable questionnaires to establish client views and needs. They analyse their results well.

627. There is good evidence in folios to show that students draft and redraft their work well. ICT is used very well to interpret data and to enhance the quality of finished work.

628. Almost all students develop a good understanding of the importance of the health and well-being of a range of different groups of people and factors that can affect health breakdown.

629. All students make good progress in their understanding of the importance of communication within and between health and social care sectors.

630. Most students use their personal experience well when describing their work and effectively use appropriate terminology and vocabulary.

Shortcomings

631. A very few students are insecure in their understanding of the issues relating to diversity in society.

Drama

Key Stage 3: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Key Stage 4: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Sixth form: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

632. A level and GCSE results have been well above national standards for several years.

KS3

Outstanding features

633. Pupils make excellent progress within individual lessons and over time.

634. They demonstrate an impressive knowledge and use of a range of theatrical techniques to enhance performance.

Good features

635. Pupils devise very creative storylines with unexpected 'twists' in their improvised work leading up to Macbeth.

636. They use gesture and expression in performance with a good sense of audience.

637. They use subject vocabulary with confidence when providing a critique of their own and others' work.

638. Pupils with SEN perform well.

Shortcomings

639. There are no significant shortcomings.

KS4

Outstanding features

640. All pupils, from across the ability range, make significant progress.

641. Pupils show outstandingly good insight into character and empathy with a story line based on their detailed research and discussion.

Good features

642. They use a good range of techniques to enhance performance, rehearse independently and perform with confidence.

643. There is good understanding of the language of theatre used effectively in oral and written work.

644. Pupils with SEN make good progress in relation to their abilities.

Shortcomings

645. There are no significant shortcomings.

Sixth form

Outstanding features

646. Students demonstrate impressive and thorough preparation and research which has a significant impact on the quality of delivery.

647. Written work is excellent, detailed and thorough. Very good critical skills are used effectively with points reinforced and referenced appropriately.

Good features

648. Students show confidence and some inventiveness in using technical equipment and a range of genre.

649. Debate and discussion show maturity and knowledge with examples used to reinforce points which are drawn from both current and previous work.

650. Most students respond readily to questioning, answers are extended and peppered with well-considered opinion.

Shortcomings

651. There are no significant shortcomings.

Business studies

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

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

652. Examination results in this subject at GCSE in 2007 were above local and national averages for passes at grades A*-C. In 2008, they were significantly above local and national averages.

653. In the same two years, examination results at A level for grades A-C were above local and national averages in 2008, but were significantly below in 2007.

KS4

Good features

654. Many pupils have a good understanding of business terminology and can apply their knowledge to a range of business applications.

655. A majority of pupils can apply a range of business principles effectively in tasks and coursework situations in a variety of contexts.

656. Many pupils in Y10 have a good understanding of the difference between sole traders and partnerships, and the advantages and disadvantages of each business structure.

657. Many pupils in Y10 have a secure understanding of the value of market research. A majority can identify the advantages and disadvantages of primary and secondary research methods.

658. Many pupils in Y11 are able to accurately complete a balance sheet for a small company. A majority is able to analyse profit and loss accounts, and identify the usefulness and limitations of cash flow forecasts.

Shortcomings

659. A minority of pupils has a less secure recall of some business terminology and principles.

660. A few pupils lack confidence in entering data and calculating costs and revenue when using formulae in ICT packages.

Sixth form

Good features

661. Many students use ICT well to input and analyse data to identify trends in financial performance.

662. A majority of students is developing an awareness of the importance of business on local, national and international development.

663. Many students in the AS and BTEC classes in Y12 have a secure understanding of the importance of break-even graphs when analysing the performance of a business.

664. A majority of students in the AS class is able to identify the challenges and issues to be considered when starting a business, and the importance of detailed financial planning.

665. Many students in Y13 have a good understanding of the principle of critical path analysis. Many appreciate the importance of network diagrams in planning operational procedures in certain industries.

666. A majority of students in Y13 has a secure understanding of the need to consider internal and external influences when preparing a marketing plan.

Shortcomings

667. A minority of students has a less secure recall of some business principles and applications.

School's response to the inspection

The pupils, staff and governors of Llantwit Major School welcome the very positive commentary contained in this report.

We are pleased that the report recognises that the school has made considerable improvement in terms of standards, effective teaching in meeting the needs of learners and strategic management since the last inspection. The report also recognises that the improvement of standards has been particularly marked in recent years and that this is linked to the proportion of lessons which had good and outstanding features.

The good working relationships that exist between pupils and teachers has been recognised in the report as contributing significantly to pupils' self confidence and positive attitudes to learning. The high expectations that teachers have of pupils in lessons has also been recognised as creating a purposeful learning atmosphere which engages pupils' interest and motivation and secures a high level of independent and collaborative working.

We are delighted that procedures to manage care and support arrangements and services to learners has been recognised as very good. It is particularly pleasing that the work of the staff working in our Student Support section is recognised as being outstanding.

The very good induction programme and relationships with partner primary schools is recognised and reflects the importance the school places on the transition process.

The Senior Leadership Team is recognised as being very effective and their work, coupled with the consistency of middle management, has led to a culture in which staff share high expectations of themselves and pupils.

The report celebrates the availability and management of continuing professional development opportunities for staff at the school and links this to the improvements that have been achieved.

As a school we would like to thank Mr Peter Harris and his team for the integrity and professionalism demonstrated in conducting the inspection process. The school feels that it is in a position to continue to improve, building on many of the features highlighted in the report.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Llantwit Major School
School type	Secondary
Age range of pupils	11-18
Address of school	Ham Lane East Llantwit Major Vale of Glamorgan
Postcode	CF61 1TQ
Telephone number	01446 793300

Headteacher	Dr Vincent Browne
Date of appointment	April 2005
Chair of governors	Mr Derek Mutlow
Reporting inspector	Mr Peter Harris
Dates of inspection	09.11.09 – 13.11.09

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

Year group	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Total
Number of pupils	195	201	181	205	197	96	109	1184

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	62	7	66

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	17;5:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	
Average teaching group size	22.2
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	79%

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole school
Term 1	90.1	90.4	90	87.7	97.3	93.5	91.5	90.8
Term 2	92.3	92.5	91.4	91.6	89.6	92.9	90.1	91.5
Term 3	87.1	90.4	84.8	84.8	93.3	93.2	90.1	88.1

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	10.4%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	66 temporary 0 permanent

Appendix 3

This report uses data for 2009 for LEA and Wales comparative information

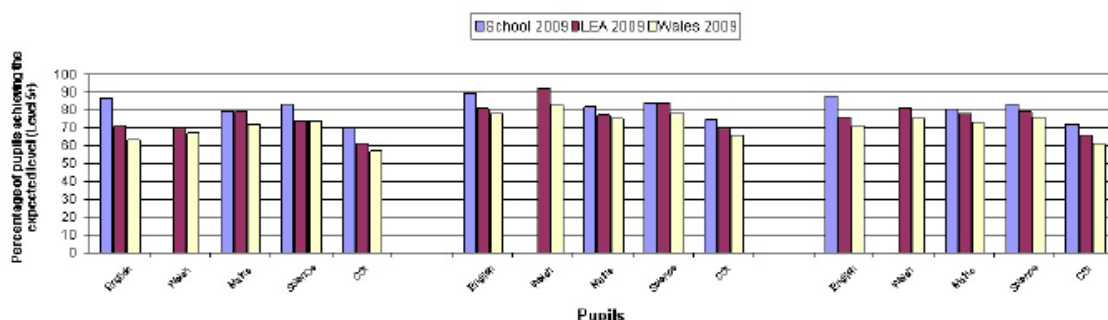
LLANTWIT MAJOR SCHOOL
Vale of Glamorgan

LEA/School no: 673/4060

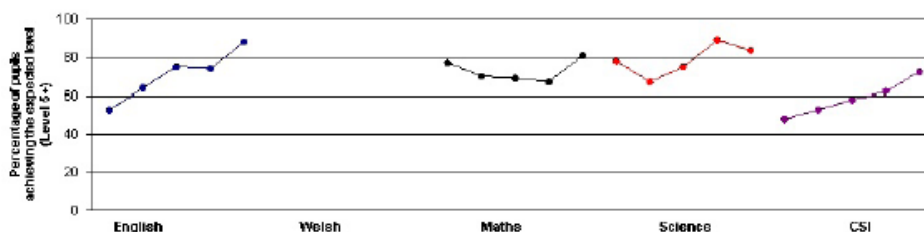
School comparative information: National Curriculum Assessments 2009 with benchmarking Key Stage 3

Percentage of boys, girls, and pupils achieving at least the expected level (Level 5+):

	Boys			Girls			Pupils		
	School 2009	LEA 2009	Wales 2009	School 2009	LEA 2009	Wales 2009	School 2009	LEA 2009	Wales 2009
English	87	71	63	89	81	78	88	76	71
Welsh	.	70	67	.	92	83	.	81	75
Maths	80	79	72	82	77	75	81	78	73
Science	83	74	74	84	84	78	84	79	76
CSI	70	61	57	74	70	66	72	66	61



School Performance over time (2005 - 2009)



Contextual Information

Benchmarked against schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals.

School's results shown in greyed boxes. Column headings refer to...

Quartile 1	School is in the top 25 per cent.
Quartile 2	School is in the top 50 per cent but not the top 25 per cent.
Quartile 3	School is in the bottom 50 per cent but not the bottom 25 per cent.
Quartile 4	School is in the bottom 25 per cent.

Free School Meal Group

More than or equal to 10 per cent and up to 15 per cent eligible for FSM

	Quartile 4	Lower Quartile Boundary	Quartile 3	Median Boundary	Quartile 2	Upper Quartile Boundary	Quartile 1
English		70		74		79	88
Welsh		67		77		81	
Maths		73		78		81	
Science		75		80		82	84
CSI		60		66		71	72

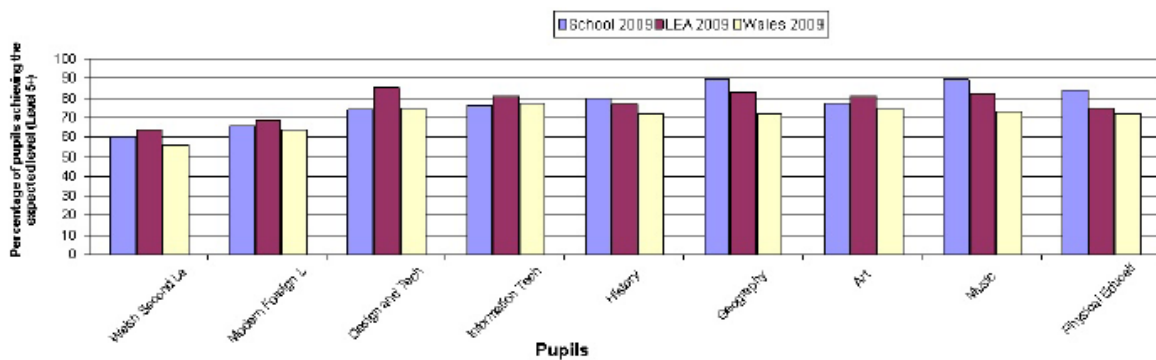
Notes:

- Figures for Welsh refer to attainment in Welsh first language only.
- CSI = Core Subject Indicator. To achieve the CSI a pupil must achieve at least the expected level 5 in both Mathematics and Science and either English or Welsh first language.
- If there were no pupils eligible for assessment in a subject for a particular year the graph will discontinue and show a gap for that year.

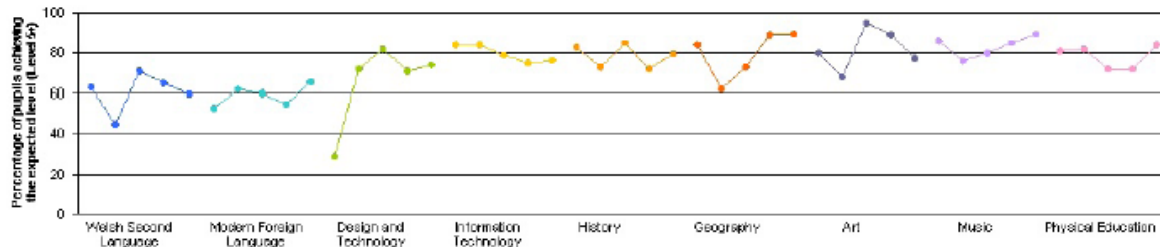
School comparative information: National Curriculum Assessments 2009 with benchmarking
Key Stage 3

Percentage of pupils achieving the expected level (Level 5+)

	Boys			Girls			Pupils		
	School 2009	LEA 2009	Wales 2009	School 2009	LEA 2009	Wales 2009	School 2009	LEA 2009	Wales 2009
Welsh Second Language	49	45	46	69	83	66	60	64	56
Modern Foreign Language	58	57	55	72	81	73	66	69	64
Design and Technology	64	79	68	83	91	83	74	85	75
Information Technology	70	74	72	82	87	83	76	81	77
History	73	71	66	85	83	78	80	77	72
Geography	83	77	67	95	89	77	89	83	72
Art	70	70	66	84	91	85	77	81	75
Music	84	77	66	94	86	81	89	82	73
Physical Education	75	72	72	93	79	72	84	75	72



School Performance over time (2005 - 2009)



Contextual Information

Benchmarked against schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals.

School's results shown in greyed boxes. Column headings refer to...

- Quartile 1 School is in the top 25 per cent.
- Quartile 2 School is in the top 50 per cent but not the top 25 per cent.
- Quartile 3 School is in the bottom 50 per cent but not the bottom 25 per cent.
- Quartile 4 School is in the bottom 25 per cent.

Free School Meal Group

More than or equal to 10 per cent and up to 15 per cent eligible for FSM

	Quartile 4	Lower Quartile Boundary	Quartile 3	Median Boundary	Quartile 2	Upper Quartile Boundary	Quartile 1
Welsh Second Language		50	60	61		71	
Modern Foreign Language		61	66	68		75	
Design and Technology		73	74	80		85	
Information Technology	76	78		83		86	
History		72		76		80	
Geography		74		79		83	89
Art		76	77	83		89	
Music		72		78		83	89
Physical Education		68		76		82	84

Notes:

- 1. If there were no pupils eligible for assessment in a subject for a particular year the graph will discontinue and show a gap for that year.

Pupils aged 15**Number of pupils aged 15 who were on roll in January 2009 : 197****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 2008/09	100	92	71	43	44	402
LEA Area 2008/09	100	93	72	54	54	456
Wales 2008/09	99	88	61	47	46	379
School 07/08/09	100	91	59	..	38	366
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	37	344

Number of boys aged 15 who were on roll in January 2009 : 102**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 2008/09	100	91	63	42	43	374
LEA Area 2008/09	100	91	73	53	53	469
Wales 2008/09	98	86	55	43	43	357
School 07/08/09	99	89	53	..	37	345
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	34	320

Number of girls aged 15 who were on roll in January 2009 : 95**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 2008/09	100	94	79	44	44	433
LEA Area 2008/09	100	95	71	55	54	443
Wales 2008/09	99	91	66	51	50	401
School 07/08/09	100	93	66	..	38	388
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	39	366

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 (3) only	Left full time education without a qualification (4)	achieved one or more ELQ (3) only	Left full time education without a qualification (4)	achieved one or more ELQ (3) only	Left full time education without a qualification (4)
School 2008/09	1	1.5	2	1.0	0	2.1
LEA Area 2008/09	1	0.5	1	0.5	0	0.6
Wales 2008/09	2	0.9	3	1.0	1	0.8
School 07/08/09	2	..	3	..	1	..
School 06/07/08	3	..	4	..	2	..

Pupils aged 17

	Number of pupils aged 17 who were on roll in January 2009 : 111		Number of boys aged 17 who were on roll in January 2009 : 57		Number of girls aged 17 who were on roll in January 2009 : 54	
	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 2008/09	96	642	94	599	98	687
LEA Area 2008/09	97	792	96	755	97	827
Wales 2008/09	96	688	95	656	97	715
School 07/08/09	..	603	..	561	..	636
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	..	..

LLANTWIT MAJOR SCHOOL
School Type: Comprehensive 11-18
Linguistic Delivery: English medium

LEA/School No. 673/4060

Number of SEN Unit/Special Classes: 0

Number of Pupils on Roll in NCY 11: 197

Percentage of compulsory school age pupils eligible for FSM 2008/09: 11.1

Percentage of compulsory school age pupils eligible for FSM 07/08/09: 10.4

Percentage of compulsory school age pupils on SEN register: 18.0

Percentage of 15 year old pupils on SEN register: 10.7

Level of Welsh Bacallaureate Offered:

	Advanced for Post-16 Pupils	Intermediate for post-16 Pupils	Pilot Foundation for post-16 Pupils	Pilot Intermediate for pre-16 Pupils	Pilot Foundation for pre-16 Pupils
Welsh Bacallaureate Offered: Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Inspectors spent a total of 59 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:

- 176 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;
- 49 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 departments, senior managers and governors.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Peter Harris	Rgl, KQ1, KQ5, Psychology, Sociology
Dylan Jones	Lay inspector
Andrew Herdman	KQ2, Health & Social Care, Child Development
Glyn Davies	KQ3, Business Studies, Science
Dai B Morgan	KQ4 & SEN
Keith Davies	KQ6 & Science
Angus Dunphy	KQ7
Tony Sparkes	English
Bethan Clement	Welsh second language
Peredur Francis	Mathematics
Delyth Williams	Science (lead)
Keith Hopkins	Design technology, Home economics
Paul Martin	Information technology
Alan Kelly	History
Huw Llewellyn	Geography
Martyn S Williams	Modern foreign languages
Eric Forster	Art
Hywel Lewis	Music
Debra Makin	Physical education, Drama
Martyn L Williams	Religious education
Debbie Thomas	Nominee
Tim Williams	Peer Assessor

Acknowledgement

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

Contractor

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