

**Inspection under Section 10 of the  
Schools Inspections Act 1996**

**Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr  
Talbot Street  
Gowerton  
Swansea  
SA4 3DB**

**School Number:670/4074**

**Date of Inspection: 24 - 28 January 2005**

**by**

**Gareth Wyn Roberts  
WO19/17166**

**Date: 30 March 2005**

**Under Estyn contract number: T/26/04**

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Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose 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 more information about their child's school. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

The inspection of Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr took place between 24-28 January 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mr Gareth Wyn Roberts 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. This summary report may be reproduced for non-commercial educational purposes but only as a whole and provided it is reproduced verbatim without adaptation and the source and date thereof are stated.

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

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

### Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years 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 attain the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who attain the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who attain 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. Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr is a designated bilingual community comprehensive school for 11 – 18 year old pupils, maintained by Swansea Unitary Authority's Local Education Authority. It has approximately 660 pupils in Y7 – Y11 and around 170 sixth form students. Until September 2003, when a second bilingual school was opened in the city to cope with increasing numbers of pupils desiring to be taught through the medium of Welsh, this was the only designated Welsh-medium school in the county of Swansea. As a result of redefining catchment areas, there has been a reduction of around 160 in the number of pupils attending Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr and, accordingly, a reduction in the number of teaching staff since September 2003. It is envisaged that numbers will continue to fall.
2. The school is located in the centre of the village of Gowerton. The youngest pupils come from the urban areas of Pontarddulais, Gorseinon, Waunarlwydd, Garnswllt, areas of Swansea and the Gower Peninsula. The older pupils and students come from the county of Swansea as a whole. The vast majority of pupils are from areas which are not economically or socially privileged or underprivileged. Seven point three percent of pupils have been registered as being entitled to free school meals. This current percentage is lower than the county average. Ninety nine percent of pupils are from the white ethnic group. No pupil needs support to learn English as an additional language. One pupil is in the care of the local education authority.
3. The school accepts pupils from the full ability range. Thirteen pupils (around 1.5%) have a statement of special or additional educational needs. The National Curriculum has been modified for eight pupils. One pupil has been disapplied from the requirements of the National Curriculum. In addition, 127 pupils and students (15.3% of the cohort) are on 'school action' and 'school action plus' stages of the Code of Practice for pupils with additional educational needs. These percentages are lower than national percentages.
4. Twenty two per cent of pupils come from homes where Welsh is the first language and 78% are from homes where English is the main language. All pupils are able to speak Welsh to first language standard. The school uses Welsh as the main medium of education; science is taught through the medium of both Welsh and English at key stage 4. Some subjects are taught through the medium of English in the sixth form.
5. The school was previously inspected during December 1998. Since then, a new headteacher has been appointed. The current headteacher has been in post since September 2002.

6. Four vocational courses are offered at key stage 4 in conjunction with Swansea Tertiary College. A small number of sixth form students attend other establishments which also provide education and training and there are informal arrangements to co-operate with these establishments.

<b>The school's priorities and targets</b>
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7. The school's priorities for 2005 and 2006 are to:
  - a) raise standards, specifically at key stage 3;
  - b) continue to implement the whole school self-appraisal and performance management strategies;
  - c) further develop the school's curriculum;
  - d) continue to develop the school's community and links with the wider community;
  - e) pay due attention to health and safety issues relating to the buildings.
8. The school's quantitative targets for 2005 are as follows:

<b>Key Stage</b>	<b>Subject etc</b>	<b>% of school's pupils at level 5 or above at key stage 3</b>	<b>County Target (%)</b>
Key Stage 3	Welsh	78	78
	English	76	67
	Mathematics	72	68
	Science	70	69
	Key subject indicator	61.5	56
Key Stage 4	5 GCSE subjects at grades A*-C	68	55
	% GCSE subjects at grades A*-G	97	89
	Core subject indicators	52	44
	% leaving without qualification	1	3.7
	% unauthorised absences	1	1.6

## Summary

9. Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr is a good school which has many outstanding features and some shortcomings. It has made good progress in dealing with the key issues for action emanating from the last inspection report.

### 10. Table of grades awarded

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

### Standards

11. The team inspected six subjects. The following table shows ten subjects and reflects the fact that the sciences are inspected as separate subjects in the sixth form, and also that the information technology course is called computing in the sixth form.

Standards in subjects inspected			
Subject	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4	Sixth Form
Welsh	2	2	1
Science	3	3	
Biology			2
Chemistry			2
Physics			3
Design and Technology	2	2	1
Information Technology	2	2	
Computing			2
Geography	2	2	1
Art	2	1	1

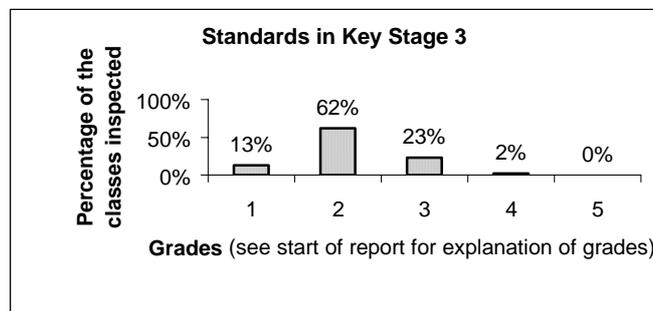
12. At key stage 3, standards are good and there are no important shortcomings in Welsh, design and technology, information technology, geography and art. In science good features outweigh shortcomings. At key stage 4, standards in art are good with some outstanding features. Standards in Welsh, design and

technology, information technology and geography are good and there are no important shortcomings. In science, good features outweigh shortcomings.

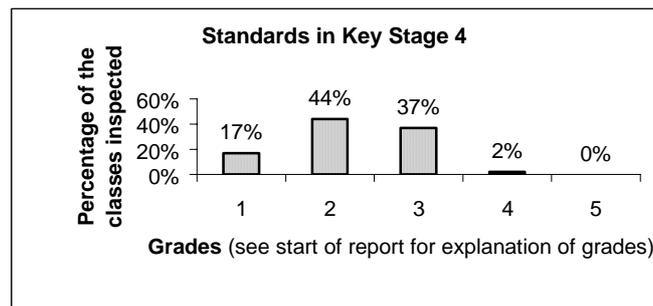
13. In the sixth form, standards are good with some outstanding features in Welsh, design and technology, geography and art. Standards in biology, chemistry and computing are good and there are no important shortcomings. In physics, good features outweigh shortcomings.

### Standards of achievement

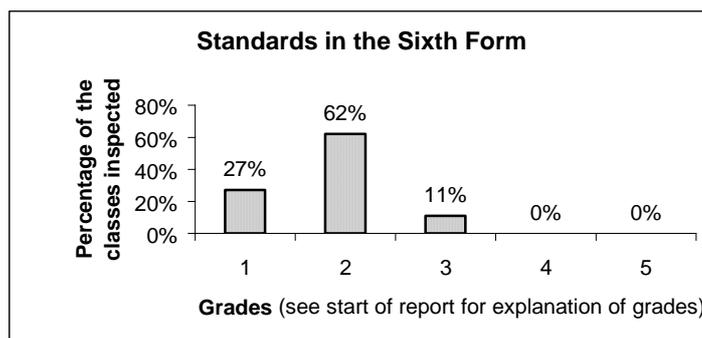
14. The following graph shows the standards across the subjects inspected at key stage 3. Standards are good. There were shortcomings in important areas in only 2% of lessons and standards were deemed to be good with outstanding features or good with no important shortcomings in 75% of lessons observed. Good features outweighed shortcomings in 23% of lessons.



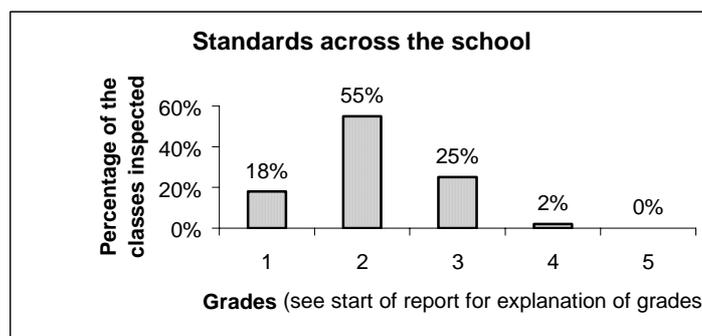
15. The following graph shows standards across the subjects inspected at key stage 4. Standards are good. There were shortcomings in important areas in only 2% of lessons and standards were deemed to be good with outstanding features or good with no important shortcomings in 61% of lessons observed. Good features outweighed shortcomings in 37% of lessons.



16. Standards are good in the sixth form and, frequently, they are very good. The following graph shows that there were no shortcomings in standards in important areas in the lessons observed in the sixth form. A grade 1 was awarded to standards in 27% of the lessons observed and a further 62% achieved a grade 2. This is a high percentage of lessons displaying standards which were either good with outstanding features or good with no important shortcomings. Good features outweighed shortcomings in 11% of lessons.



17. The final graph shows whole school standards. They are good. There were shortcomings in important areas in just 2% of lessons, and as standards in 73% of lessons were given either a grade 1 or a grade 2, the school reaches the targets set by the Welsh Assembly Government which require standards in class to be either grade 1 or grade 2 in over 50% of lessons and grade 3 or above in 95% of lessons.



18. Pupils with additional or special educational needs achieve good standards. Dyslexic pupils with special educational needs achieve very good standards.

### Standards in the key skills and the wider key skills

19. The following table shows the standards achieved by pupils and students in the key skills and the wider key skills. Occasionally, differences are noted between standards in Welsh and in English.

Key Skill	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4	The Sixth Form
Speaking and listening	2	2	Welsh 1 English 2
Reading	2	2	2

Writing	2	2	Welsh 1 English 2
Numeracy	2	2	2
Information and Communication Technology	2	2	2
Working together	1	1	1
Problem solving	2	2	2
Improving their own learning	2	2	2

20. Pupils and students make good progress throughout the school in their bilingual skills. Pupils' bilingual skills are good with no important shortcomings at key stage 3 and key stage 4. In the sixth form, they are good with outstanding features.

### External examination and test results

21. Over the past three years, pupils' standards of achievement in tests in English, mathematics and science at key stage 3 have varied but they place the school in the lowest quartile of schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals. As results in science have not been as good as those in English and mathematics, the percentage of pupils achieving the core subject indicator<sup>1</sup> has also been low. However, results in Welsh have been good in statutory tests and assessments at key stage 3 over the years. The County's added value statistics, and some other indicators, show that the school does provide added value as regards pupil standards at this key stage. The school is aware of the shortcomings in these results and of differences between boys' and girls' results. A strategy for raising standards at key stage 3 was drawn up after the headteacher took up her post in September 2002. This strategy has already started to be reflected in the 2004 statutory test results at this key stage.
22. At key stage 4, despite variations from one year to the next, examination results continue to improve and have been very good for a number of years. They are better than results for the whole of Wales and those of the county. Over the past three years, the school has frequently been placed in the highest quartile for schools with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals for a number of the usual benchmarked indicators.
23. Advanced level examination results are also very good. They are better than those of the County and for the whole of Wales from the point of view of average scores and also students achieving grade C or above, or achieving a grade E or above.

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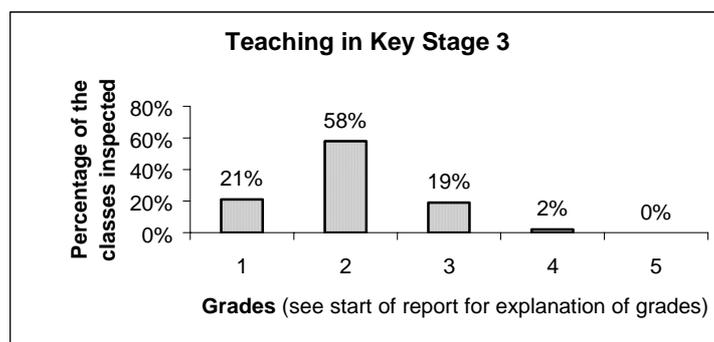
<sup>1</sup> The percentage of pupils in Y9 who attain level 5 or above in either Welsh (first language) or English, mathematics and science.

24. Students completing their Y13 courses were successful in gaining entry to their chosen university or college. A good number of pupils return to the sixth form at this school, the only secondary school offering Welsh-medium post-16 courses in the County. Those leaving to attend other institutions which provide for post-16 students gain appropriate qualifications for the courses which they follow at the institutions.
25. The progress pupils and students make is good at key stage 3 and very good at key stage 4 and in the sixth form. Pupils of all abilities acquire knowledge and new skills and understand what they need to do in order to improve. They develop good or very good personal, social and learning skills, have a healthy attitude towards learning and respect the opinions and beliefs of others. Pupils' abilities to become independent learners are still developing. There are also some examples of untidy and unfinished work.
26. Pupils' behaviour around the school and in the classroom is very good.
27. Figures for pupil attendance reach the target set by the Welsh Assembly Government and punctuality is generally good.

## The quality of education and training

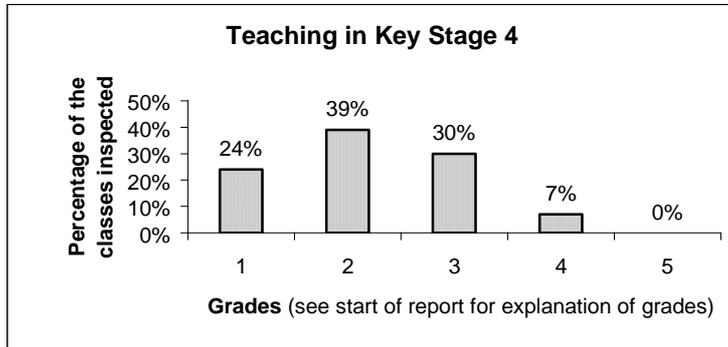
### The quality of teaching

28. The graphs in the following paragraphs show the quality of teaching in classes at key stage 3 and key stage 4 in the six subjects inspected.
29. Teaching is good with outstanding features in 21% of lessons at key stage 3. In another 58%, teaching is good and there are no significant shortcomings. In 19% of classes, good features in the teaching outweigh shortcomings and in the remaining 2% there were good features but shortcomings also in important areas.

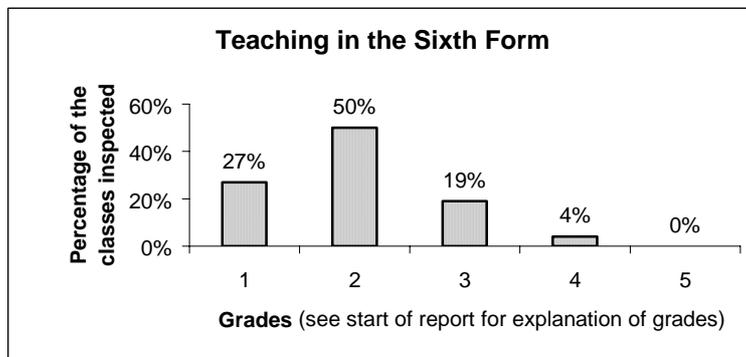


30. At key stage 4, teaching is good with outstanding features in 24% of lessons. In a further 39%, teaching is good and there are no significant shortcomings. In 30% of lessons, good features in the teaching outweigh shortcomings. In the

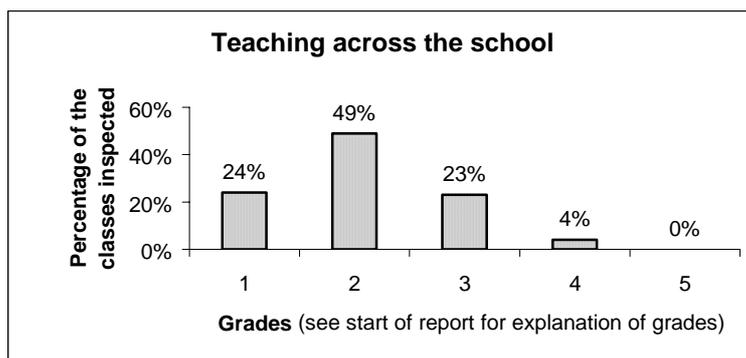
remaining 7% at this key stage, there were good features but shortcomings also in important areas.



31. The following graph shows the quality of teaching in classes in the eight subjects inspected in the sixth form. Teaching is good with outstanding features in 27% of lessons. In a further 50%, teaching is good and there are no significant shortcomings. In 19% of sixth form classes, good features in the teaching outweigh shortcomings and in the remaining 4% there were shortcomings in important areas as well as good features.



32. The following graph shows the quality of teaching across the school. There are good and outstanding features in 24% of lessons and 49% where teaching is good with no significant shortcomings, making a total of 73% of classes throughout the school. This exceeds the target set by the Welsh Assembly Government that teaching should be grade 2 or above in 50% of classes. In 4% of classes, the teaching has good features but some shortcomings in important areas. The school, therefore, meets the Welsh Assembly Government's target that teaching should be grade 1 or grade 2 in 50% of classes and grade 3 or above in 95% of classes.



### Quality of assessment

33. The school meets the statutory requirements for assessment and reporting on the National Curriculum at key stage 3 and the assessment requirements for pupils with special or additional educational needs. The requirements of the examination boards are also satisfied at key stage 4 and in the sixth form.
34. Pupils understand the assessment process and its purpose. Despite the fact that there are good examples of pupils assessing their own work, this good practice has not permeated into all departments in school.
35. Parents receive one full report and one interim assessment annually. These are based on a detailed and consistent assessment and recording process which measures pupils' progress regularly.

### The quality of learning experiences offered by the school

36. The school satisfies pupils' learning requirements very well and the curriculum is broad, varied and balanced. Many of the pupils' learning experiences are also enriched by the very wide range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school. The school's extra-curricular provision is an outstanding feature.
37. The school satisfies all the statutory curricular requirements.
38. The school has very good links with local primary schools and the wider community, including local employers and Careers Wales. It has very good links with parents.
39. The school has appropriate equal opportunities' policies and a clear commitment to offer opportunities and access to the curriculum to all so that they achieve their potential. The efficacy of the social inclusion strategy is an outstanding feature of the school. Pupils are very well supported by their teachers.

40. Strategies and procedures to improve attendance have given rise to improvements. The school has a very effective reward system which celebrates academic, pastoral and personal achievements.
41. The school has very effective policies and procedures to deal with unacceptable behaviour when it occurs.
42. The provision for pupils with special or additional needs satisfies statutory requirements. The individual action plans give teachers and learning support assistants clear guidance regarding what pupils need to do to meet their targets.

### **Leadership and management**

43. The school has clear aims and objectives which are shared with governors, staff, parents and pupils.
44. The Senior Management Team leads the school very well. The headteacher is clearly focused on raising standards and offers the school unambiguous and very appropriate direction.
45. In their role as line managers, members of the Senior Management Team set clear expectations for middle management. They co-operate with teachers and staff, at all levels, and support them in order to improve the provision and the standards achieved. This is an outstanding feature.
46. Departments' performance against targets is thoroughly evaluated. The Senior Management Team works in close conjunction with middle management to help them achieve this. The arrangements which exist for monitoring the performance of departments is an outstanding feature.
47. The school has very thorough procedures to monitor the staff's performance. This information is used effectively to draw up a programme of continuous professional development.
48. The governing body is very supportive and performs its responsibilities very well.

### **Self-evaluation**

49. The school's self-evaluation document is detailed and thorough. It is based on the school managers' very good knowledge of the school. This comprehensive and evaluative report outlines the school's strengths and areas in need of further attention very clearly.
50. The Senior Management Team and middle managers have very good knowledge of the school and its departments. They have a sound understanding of the

standards achieved by the pupils and of teaching standards. This is an outstanding feature.

51. The process of planning for improvement is effective. There is a definite link between the findings of the self-evaluation processes and the priorities revealed in the development plans, at school and departmental level.

### **The school's use of resources**

52. The school has sufficient well qualified staff to meet its requirements in all areas of the curriculum. In addition, the school has sufficient support, administrative and ancillary staff to ensure that the school runs smoothly. All members of staff are very supportive of the school and perform a wide range of responsibilities effectively.
53. There are sufficient resources for all subjects other than for control technology in design and technology at key stage 3. Resources are used economically, efficiently and effectively. Good use is made of the community as an additional resource through numerous external links.
54. The school has made much progress since the last inspection when the condition of the buildings was deemed not to be satisfactory. The sports hall has been renovated and the science laboratories have been totally renewed and refurbished. The school environment is kept clean and tidy.
55. Despite the improvements and the valiant efforts of the school staff to create a stimulating and colourful environment, substantial shortcomings remain as regards the condition and quality of the building and the available space. Some shortcomings are health and safety issues.
56. The good quality of examination results at key stage 4 and in the sixth form, the strategies which exist to further improve test results in some subjects at the end of key stage 3, the quality of teaching, a very rich curriculum and the standard of pupils' work and behaviour ensure that the school provides good value for money.

## **Recommendations**

**In order to improve, the school must:**

- R1. ensure the success of the strategy for raising standards at key stage 3 in general and specifically in science, and continue to reduce the gap between the results of boys and girls in external tests and assessments;\*
- R2. continue to develop pupils' abilities in the key skills, and particularly the independent learning skills:\*
- R3. disseminate good and very good teaching practices throughout the school;\*
- R4. attend to the health and safety issues referred to in the body of the report and continue to discuss improvements to the building with the appropriate authorities;\*

\* The School Development Plan for 2004-2006 or the school's self-evaluation document include action steps to deal with these recommendations.

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

## Standards

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

57. The grade the school awarded itself for this key question in its self-evaluation report corresponds to the grade awarded by the inspection team.

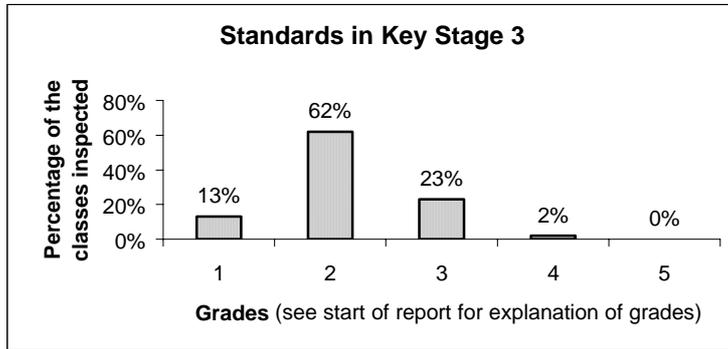
### Standards

58. Standards are good throughout the school. In the sixth form, standards are good with outstanding features, at times. Despite this, there are shortcomings which are noted in the subject reports.
59. The inspection team inspected six subjects. The following table which shows ten subjects reflects the fact that the sciences are inspected separately in the sixth form and the information technology course is called computing in the sixth form.

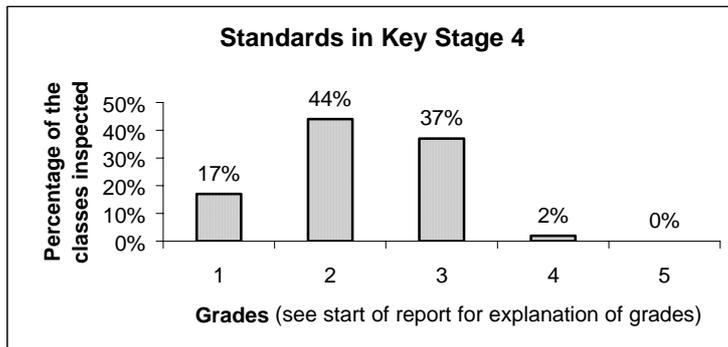
Standards in subjects inspected			
Subject	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4	Sixth Form
Welsh	2	2	1
Science	3	3	
Biology			2
Chemistry			2
Physics			3
Design and Technology	2	2	1
Information Technology	2	2	
Computing			2
Geography	2	2	1
Art	2	1	1

60. At key stage 3, standards are good and there are no important shortcomings in Welsh, design and technology, information technology, geography and art. In science good features outweigh shortcomings.
61. At key stage 4, standards in art are good with outstanding features. Standards are good and there are no important shortcomings in Welsh, design and technology, information technology and geography. In science, good features outweigh shortcomings.
62. In the sixth form, standards in Welsh, design and technology, geography and art are good with outstanding features. Standards are good with no important shortcomings in biology, chemistry and computing. In physics, good features outweigh shortcomings.

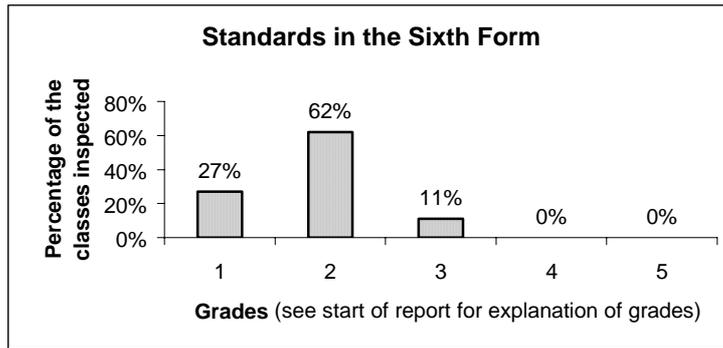
63. The following graph shows standards across the subjects inspected at key stage 3.



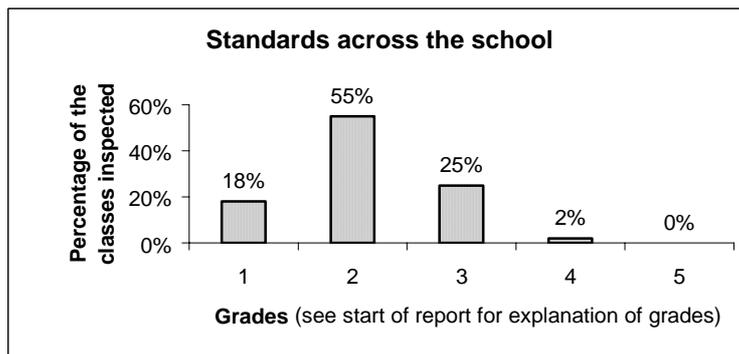
64. Standards are good. There were shortcomings in important areas in only 2% of lessons and it was deemed that standards were either good with outstanding features or good with no important shortcomings in 75% of lessons observed. Good features outweighed shortcomings in 23% of lessons.
65. The following graph shows the standards across the subjects inspected at key stage 4.



66. Standards are good. There were shortcomings in important areas in only 2% of lessons and it was deemed that standards were either good with outstanding features or good with no important shortcomings in 61% of lessons observed. Good features outweighed shortcomings in 37% of lessons.
67. The following graph shows the standards across the subjects inspected in the sixth form.



68. Standards are good in the sixth form. Frequently, standards are very good. The preceding graph shows that there were no shortcomings in standards in important areas in any of the lessons observed in the sixth form. A grade 1 was awarded to 27% of lessons and a further 62% were awarded a grade 2. This is a high percentage of lessons where standards were either good with outstanding features or good with no important shortcomings. Good features outweighed shortcomings in 11% of lessons.
69. The following graph shows standards across the school.



70. Standards are good. There were shortcomings in important areas in only 2% of lessons and as it was deemed that standards were either grade 1 or grade 2 in 73% of lessons observed the school reaches the target set by the Welsh Assembly government for standards in lessons (namely achieving grade 1 or 2 in over 50% of lessons and grade 3 or above in 95% of lessons).
71. Pupils and students of all abilities are successful regardless of linguistic, social, ethnic or religious background. Differences between boys and girls, as regards achievement in some subjects, reflect national patterns. The school is aware of these differences and is adopting appropriate teaching and support strategies to promote pupils' progress, irrespective of gender.
72. Pupils with special or additional educational needs achieve good standards. Dyslexic pupils with special educational needs achieve very good standards.

### **Standards in the key skills and wider key skills.**

### Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4

73. The following table shows the standards achieved by key stage 3 and key stage 4 pupils in the key skills and wider key skills.

Key Skill	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
Speaking and listening	2	2
Reading	2	2
Writing	2	2
Numeracy	2	2
Information and Communication Technology	2	2
Working Together	1	1
Problem solving	2	2
Improving their own learning	2	2

74. Pupils possess good communication skills. Their listening skills are also good. Pupils pay careful attention to what their teachers and fellow pupils say. Pupils' speaking skills are good and there are no important shortcomings in either Welsh or English. Pupils are eager to answer questions and usually do so confidently. Their reading and writing skills are good, on the whole. The vast majority of pupils read confidently and derive pleasure from personal reading. They read effectively to glean information. Reading aloud is not always of a high standard. Pupils write well and frequently write at length.
75. Pupils' numeracy skills are good. Pupils develop and use these skills well in mathematics and a number of other subjects as they measure or produce scaled drawings or in other similar tasks. In some tasks in science, they do not avail themselves of the skills which they possess.
76. Information and communication technology skills are good. Pupils use these skills well to glean information or to produce interesting work. The majority of pupils develop a good range of information technology skills. Because there is a lack of equipment, pupils at key stage 3 are unable to derive full benefit from work involving computer control.
77. Standards in working together are very good at key stage 3 and key stage 4. At times, these are outstanding because pupils work with their peers and embark on discussions which extend their subject knowledge and further improve their oral skills.
78. The standards of problem solving are good. Some pupils are overly dependent on their teachers when they tackle a problem. Pupils are often aware of what they need to do to improve their work and are able to note requirements, but

they are not as good at explaining in detail the strategies they need to take to reach their targets.

79. Pupils make good progress in their bilingual skills. The standard of pupils' bilingual skills is good and there are no important shortcomings at key stage 3 and key stage 4.

### The Sixth Form

80. The following table shows the standards achieved by students in the key skills and wider key skills.

Key Skill	The Sixth Form
Speaking and listening	Welsh 1 English 2
Reading	2
Writing	Welsh 1 English 2
Numeracy	2
Information and Communication Technology	2
Working together	1
Problem solving	2
Improving their own learning	2

81. Students possess good communication skills in both languages. In Welsh, moreover, there are some outstanding features. Likewise, students' listening skills are very good. Students pay careful attention to what their teachers and fellow students say. Students' speaking skills are good, with some outstanding features in Welsh, and good with no important shortcomings in English. They are eager to ask and answer questions and usually do so confidently. Students' reading skills are good in both languages; writing skills are good in English and are often excellent in Welsh.
82. Students' numeracy skills are good. Students use these skills well in their advanced level subjects.
83. Information technology skills are good. Students use information and communication technology skills well to glean information or to produce interesting work. They carry out careful research using the internet and they use their skills to present coursework of a high standard.

84. Standards in working together are outstanding in the sixth form as students practice their skills, gaining much competence, working in groups.
85. The standards of problem solving are good. Some students are still overly dependent on their teachers when they tackle a problem. Students, like pupils at key stages 3 and 4, are often aware of what they need to do to improve their work and are able to note requirements, but they are not as good at explaining in detail the strategies they need to take to reach their targets.
86. In the sixth form, students' standards in the bilingual skills are good with outstanding qualities. This reflects the cumulative effect of the rich linguistic experiences they receive throughout their time in school.

### **External test and examination results**

87. Over the past three years, pupils' standards of achievement in English, mathematics and science tests at key stage 3 have been variable but they place the school in the lowest quartile of schools with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. As results in science have not been as good as those in English and mathematics, the percentage of pupils achieving the core subjects indicator has also been low. However, results in Welsh have been good in key stage 3 statutory tests and assessments over the years. The County's added value statistics, and some other measures, show that the school does provide added value as regards pupil standards at this key stage. The school is aware of shortcomings in these results and the difference between the results of boys and those of girls. A strategy for raising standards at key stage 3 was drawn up after the headteacher took up her post in September 2002. In the 2004 statutory test results at this key stage, the initial beneficial consequences of this strategy are to be seen.
88. At key stage 4, despite variations from one year to the next, results continue to improve and are very good. They are better than those for the whole of Wales and those within the County. Over the past three years, the school has frequently been placed in the highest quartile for schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals for a number of the usual benchmark indicators.
89. Advanced level examination results are also very good. They are better than the County's results and those for the whole of Wales as regards average points and also the percentage of students gaining grade C or above, or gaining grade E or above.
90. Students completing their Y13 courses have successfully gained entry to their chosen university or college. The sixth form retention rates are good in this school which is the only school within the county offering Welsh-medium post-16 courses. Pupils who leave in order to attend other establishments which provide for post-16 students gain appropriate qualifications for the courses they follow at those establishments.

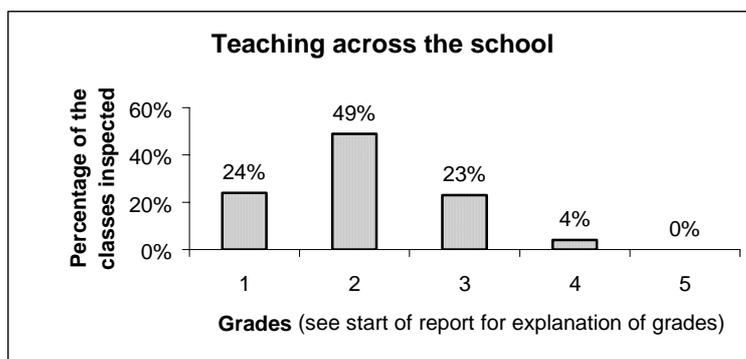
91. The progress pupils and students make is good at key stage 3 and very good at key stage 4 and in the sixth form.
92. Pupils of all abilities gain knowledge and new skills and understand what they need to do in order to improve. They develop good or very good personal, social and learning skills, display very positive attitudes towards learning, and they respect other people's opinions and beliefs.
93. The abilities of a significant number of pupils to become independent learners are still developing. There are also examples of untidy and unfinished work.
94. Behaviour is very good at formal and informal times in the life of the school.
95. Pupils are aware of school rules. The rules are reinforced by means of posters displayed around the school and in the pupils' contact book. Pupils who do not respect the school's high expectations as regards behaviour are exceptions. There is no vandalism or graffiti around the school.
96. In a homely and friendly environment, pupils conduct a mature relationship with their teachers. They are always polite to visitors.
97. Thirty pupils were temporarily excluded and two were permanently excluded during the year preceding the school inspection. Appropriate procedures were followed by staff and governors.
98. Pupils and parents state that bullying is not an apparent problem in this school. During the inspection, there was no indication of any bullying.
99. Attendance has been above the target of 92% set by the Welsh Assembly Government during two out of the last three terms before the inspection. Also, the school has reached this target on a regular basis over the past four years. Attendance is better in classes at key stage 3 than at key stage 4. In one of the last three terms, attendance in Y11 was under 90%.
100. Since the beginning of this academic year, there has been a significant increase of around 2% in the attendance of pupils of statutory school age. Definite steps have been taken towards achieving the challenging target of 95% which the school has set.
101. With the exception of the sixth form, there has been a substantial reduction over the same period in the number of unauthorised absences which used to be high.
102. A small minority of pupils arrive late. Occasionally, lessons overrun, taking time away from the lesson which follows on the timetable.
103. The school conforms fully with current registration requirements.

## The quality of education and training

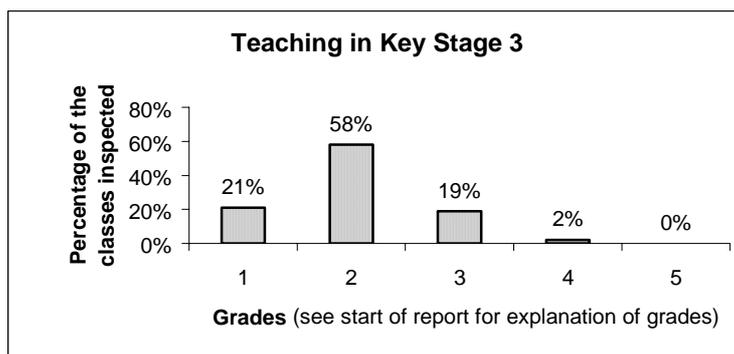
### Key question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

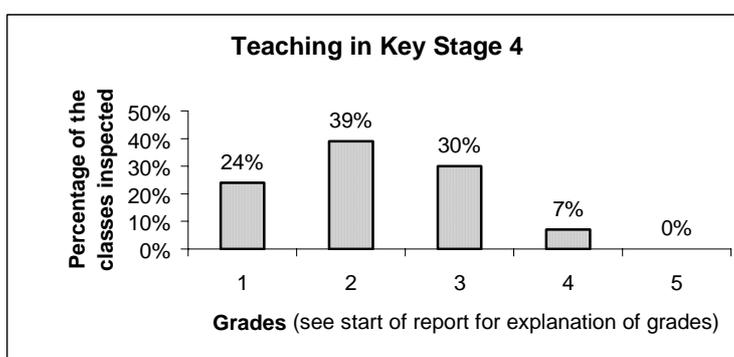
104. This grade does not correspond to the grade 1 the school awarded itself for this key question in its self-evaluation report.
105. There are good features and no important shortcomings in the teaching, on the whole, throughout the school. However, there are a few discrepancies in relation to the means of implementing whole school assessment strategies and variations in the standards of teaching across and within departments and, as a result, the inspection team is awarding this key question a grade 2.
106. The following graph shows the quality of teaching throughout the school. There are good and outstanding features in 24% of lessons and there are good features and no important shortcomings in another 49%, making a total of 73% of classes throughout the school. This exceeds the target set by the Welsh Assembly Government that teaching should be at least grade 2, or above, in 50% of classes. In 4% of classes there are good features in the teaching but there are some shortcomings in important areas. The school reaches the Welsh Assembly Government target for teaching which requires that the quality of teaching to be a grade 3 or above in 95% of classes.



107. The following graphs show the quality of teaching in classes at key stage 3 and key stage 4 in the six subjects inspected.



108. The teaching is good with outstanding features in 21% of lessons at key stage 3. In another 58%, teaching is good and there are no important shortcomings. In 19% of classes, good features in the teaching outweigh shortcomings and there are 2% of lessons where there are good features but shortcomings also in important areas.



109. At key stage 4, 24% of lessons are good with outstanding features. In another 39%, there are good features and no important shortcomings. In 30% of classes, good features in the teaching outweigh shortcomings. Seven per cent of lessons at this key stage have good features but shortcomings also in important areas.

110. The quality of the teaching is often good and there are no important shortcomings in Welsh, design and technology, information technology, geography and art. In some science lessons, there are shortcomings in important areas.

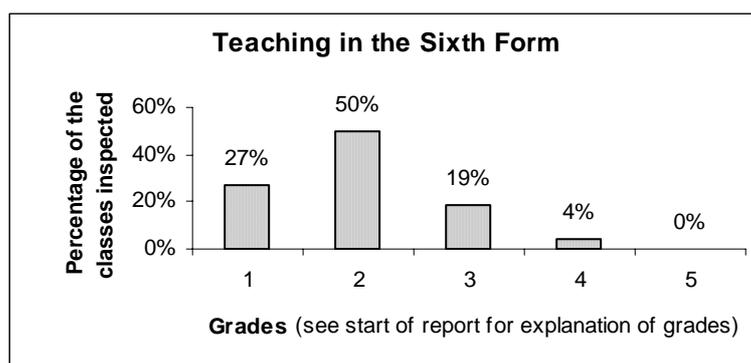
111. Teachers are appropriately qualified and have good, current knowledge and understanding of subjects and of cross-curricular aspects.

112. The vast majority of lessons are well planned and carefully structured. The aims are clearly shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons and, usually, they are reviewed at the end. Schemes of work vary in quality within and across subjects.

113. The working relationship between pupils and teachers, in the vast majority of lessons, ensures that pupils learn in a friendly and supportive atmosphere. Teachers show respect to each individual pupil irrespective of gender, race or disability. This promotes pupils' motivation to concentrate and persevere. Teacher expectations are high and they expect pupils to behave well and to work hard, in accordance with the individual pupil's age, ability and understanding. In a very small number of classes, teachers tolerate some whispering amongst pupils.
114. In the vast majority of subjects, teachers set challenging, achievable tasks and the questioning is incisive. The use of a variety of learning and teaching techniques, including praise and humour, and the use of examples of good practice in pupils' work motivates them to work diligently and to make progress in the majority of lessons. The oral and practical explanations are clear and effective. In a small number of classes, the tasks are not sufficiently challenging, teachers' presentations are too long and the questioning is limited. As a result, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to develop their work in depth or to nurture their independent learning skills.
115. A good number of teachers give generously of their time, during the lunch hour and after school, in order to provide extra support in clubs and work sessions which reinforce pupils' learning.
116. Teachers ensure that all pupils participate fully in the vast majority of classes and that they monitor and review their own progress according to individual departmental strategies. Pupils with special or additional educational needs are taught well. In a few lessons, the work is not well matched to pupils' abilities and previous achievements. In science, there was little evidence of differentiation through planning or outcome in classes.
117. The school meets pupils' linguistic requirements very well; this includes bilingual teaching provision. Teachers are aware of the fact that pupils can speak more than one language. During periods of work experience placements, there are opportunities for pupils to work bilingually. Appropriate opportunities to develop and use bilingual skills through science and to an extent, English, are planned. Dual literacy work of this type permeates across the subjects. It is also an important aspect of a number of extra-curricular activities, such as educational visits.

### **Teaching in the Sixth form**

118. Teaching in the sixth form is good, on the whole, and there are no important shortcomings. The following graph shows the quality of teaching in the eight subjects inspected in the sixth form.



119. In the sixth form, teaching is good with outstanding features in 27% of lessons. There are good features and no important shortcomings in the teaching in another 50% of lessons. Good features outweigh shortcomings in 19% of sixth form classes and in 4% there were shortcomings in important areas despite the fact that there were good features.
120. The quality of teaching is usually good with outstanding features in Welsh, design and technology, geography and art, and good with no important shortcomings in biology, chemistry and computing. Occasionally, in physics, despite the fact that there were good features, there were shortcomings in important areas.
121. A good, constructive working relationship exists between teachers and students. Teachers know their pupils well and respect them as individuals.
122. The vast majority of lessons are held in a supportive and stimulating atmosphere. Lessons are structured and well planned and an appropriate pace is maintained in lessons. Teachers use a variety of teaching techniques and a wide range of appropriate resources to provide good learning opportunities.
123. There are high expectations of students and they respond positively as they work on current, challenging and interesting activities and contexts. These high expectations continually challenge students to achieve very high standards.
124. In the majority of lessons, teachers' questioning is incisive and this consolidates factual knowledge and promotes further development in students' work. In some physics lessons, the questioning is not sufficiently challenging.
125. There are good and appropriate opportunities for students to work independently, to co-operate in groups, to solve real problems and to promote the development of their key skills.

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

126. The school satisfies statutory requirements for assessing and reporting on the National Curriculum at key stage 3 and the assessment requirements for pupils with special or additional educational needs. Examination board regulations are also satisfied at key stage 4 and in the sixth form.

127. Since the last inspection, the school has striven to improve the assessment system. The school's assessment policy has been revised in the light of recent research and departmental assessment policies conform to school policy.
128. The school has an Assessment Handbook which clearly explains all aspects of assessment and the procedures involved and it provides a detailed timetable for assessing and reporting.
129. With a few exceptions, pupils' and students' work is marked carefully and regularly. Despite the fact that practice varies from one department to another, assessment is generally correct and consistent. In some departments, including some that were not amongst the subjects being inspected, there are examples of unmarked work, insufficient follow-up when work is incomplete and, comments and marking are superficial. In the best examples, marking is carried out regularly and consistently, comments are constructive and challenging and appropriate targets which help pupils to improve the standard of their work are set.
130. Pupils and students understand the assessment process and its purpose. Despite the fact that there are good examples of pupils assessing their own work, this good practice has not filtered through to all departments. Pupils' and students' self-assessment processes are not consistently good in all departments, but, in several, they are developing well.
131. Parents and guardians are informed of their children's progress through an interim assessment and an annual report, and there are opportunities to discuss the child at the annual parents' evening. The report and the assessment are based on a computerised system which tracks pupils' and students' progress over the whole year. The reports, which have been amended recently in response to parents' comments, are effective and provide each pupil with an opportunity to contribute by commenting on his or her own work and targets.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding qualities

132. The grade the school awarded itself for this key question in its self-evaluation report corresponds to the grade awarded by the inspection team.

**The extent to which learning experiences meet pupils' needs and interests**

133. The curriculum is successful in providing for all pupils at key stage 3 and key stage 4 and satisfies the requirements of the 1996 Education Act for pupils of statutory school age.
134. All pupils, including pupils with physical needs and those with additional educational needs, have access to all areas of the curriculum. Pupils are given the opportunity to gain an appropriate range of qualifications, including the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and vocational GCSE and the Entry Level Certificate. In the sixth form, students are offered opportunities to gain Advanced Subsidiary Level and Advanced Level qualifications across an appropriate range of subjects, including three vocational subjects.
135. At key stage 3 and key stage 4, the curriculum is broad, varied and balanced and ensures continuity and progression between years and key stages. By means of a two week timetable, an appropriate allocation of time is given to all subjects within the two key stages.
136. Welsh is the medium of education in all lessons at key stage 3 and key stage 4, apart from English and science. In science, at key stage 4, there is an option whereby pupils can choose their language medium. All pupils follow a first language course in Welsh.
137. There are various appropriate arrangements for grouping pupils but this can give rise to an imbalance in numbers in classes. However, no significant adverse effect on standards was observed.
138. Pupils are offered opportunities to learn French as their main foreign language and, in Y9, German is offered as a second foreign language. On this basis, German, as well as French, is an option at key stage 4 and a high percentage of pupils follow the course. Optional beginners' courses are also provided in Spanish and Italian.
139. The statutory key stage 3 provision is enhanced by offering drama to all pupils.
140. An appropriate range of subject options is offered at key stage 4 to respond to pupils' aspirations and these include courses of a more practical nature.
141. In the sixth form, a good range of Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Level subjects are offered.

142. A high percentage of students chooses to return to school to follow post-16 education courses. Y12 and Y13 are taught separately in all subjects. The numbers following the majority of courses makes the provision financially viable. Three Advanced Level vocational courses are provided, as well as traditional, academic subjects. Students can opt to follow the full twelve unit vocational course or a six or three unit course. Welsh is the medium of education in all subjects apart from English, the three science subjects, economics and computing.
143. In Y12, students are offered opportunities to re-sit their GCSE examinations in core subjects and specific lessons are offered for this purpose. Those pupils who wish to retake other subjects can join Y11 groups.
144. An hour session of physical education is offered each week for each Y12 student. Students in Y13 are expected to attend physical education sessions when their timetable permits.
145. The provision of personal and social education throughout the school is good with outstanding features. The programme has been mapped carefully against all the requirements of the Personal and Social Education Framework and meets with statutory requirements. The central programme is reinforced by additional, planned contributions from individual subjects and extra-curricular activities.
146. Arrangements are made for all the key skills to be developed across all curricular subjects and there is a comprehensive and detailed structure to co-ordinate the provision. A week is earmarked each term as key skills' week. The quality of key skills' provision is good, and very good in some subjects.
147. The school plans very well for developing the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Both co-ordinators perform their work effectively. This provision has been endorsed by the Basic Skills' Agency and, in July 2004, the school was accredited with the Basic Skills Quality mark.
148. Information technology is taught to all as a subject throughout key stage 3 and the provision conforms to National Curriculum requirements. At key stage 4, pupils follow the GCSE short course and are given the opportunity to follow the full course. Opportunities are provided at both key stages within the subjects of the curriculum for pupils to practise their information and communication technology skills and this provision is still developing.
149. Appropriate homework is set regularly across the subjects. The contact books are used to record homework and this is a convenient method of informing parents and class tutors of homework requirements.
150. The school's extra-curricular provision is an outstanding feature. A very wide range of extra-curricular activities are available, as appropriate, to all pupils and students. The quality and range of activities are very good. They contribute towards the subject curriculum and towards pupils' and students' personal,

social and cultural education. They promote the development of the wider key skills and social inclusion.

151. Pupils' and students' spiritual development is good. A daily act of communal worship, complying with statutory requirements, is held either in the school hall, the drama studio or the classroom. Opportunities are provided for pupils and students to participate in the planning and presentation. Wherever these acts of communal worship are held, their quality is usually good and it makes a valuable contribution towards pupils' and students' spiritual development. In a number of subjects, pupils are given opportunities to reflect upon their experiences and to develop a sense of wonder and curiosity about life. Frequently, when it is appropriate, the opportunity to reflect is linked to that particular week's theme.
152. Pupils' and students' moral development is outstanding. They show much respect towards one another, their teachers and visitors. They know the difference between good and evil and how this has a bearing on lives.
153. Pupils' and students' social awareness is very good. They relate very well to one another and to teachers and other members of staff. Students in the sixth form are given opportunities to undertake responsibilities and pupils throughout the school have many opportunities to contribute to the school's social life. Within the "Life" programme, citizenship is addressed and this is reinforced when pupils and students are given opportunities to voice their opinions. In the School Council, due consideration is paid regularly to their views and they are taken seriously.
154. The development of cultural education is very good. In lessons, and on an extra-curricular basis, pupils and students are given opportunities to develop their awareness of Welsh, British, European and world culture.
155. Very effective bridging links with primary schools ensure curricular development and continuity between key stage 2 and key stage 3 in the core subjects, the foundation subjects and the key skills.
156. There are strong links with the local community and members of the community visit the school to discuss their work and to share experiences. The curriculum is reinforced by links with the police, the youth service and the health and welfare services. This again is an outstanding feature.
157. Links with a local college of further education have ensured that there is appropriate curricular provision for a small number of key stage 4 pupils. The school belongs to a consortium of Welsh schools that plan jointly to expand Welsh medium vocational provision within the wider locality. The school is also a member of a consortium of Swansea secondary schools with sixth forms and, in sessions after school, students are offered a wider choice of subjects taught through the medium of English.
158. There are good links with establishments which offer initial teacher training. The school has also developed into a training centre for the graduate teachers' programme.

159. The quality of the school's programme of careers education and guidance to pupils at key stage 3 and key stage 4 is good and it conforms to statutory requirements despite the fact that the Y9 programme has not been carefully mapped out against the Careers Education and Guidance Framework. The school responds fully to the Work Related Education Framework for 14-19 year old pupils. Co-operation between the school and Careers Wales' representatives is good. This adds to the school's provision and enhances both aspects of learning.
160. A number of departments, namely art, design and technology, leisure and recreation, media studies, health and social care and business have developed useful links with external agencies relevant to their curriculum.
161. Key stage 3 pupils' understanding of the world of work is developed in personal and social education lessons. A large number of speakers visit the school to discuss their work. External mentors, including civil servants from the near-by licensing centre and members of staff from a chain of well known stores, visit the school to advise key stage 4 pupils and Y12 students. These visits make a good contribution to awareness raising amongst pupils and students.
162. All Y10 pupils and Y12 students are offered work experience in association with Careers Wales. The safety and suitability of these placements are appropriately monitored.
163. There is an intention to map all links with the world of work across all subjects. Until this is done, the extent and value of such placements depend on individual teachers' interests rather than on a whole school strategy.
164. The school responds effectively to the constant need for Welsh speakers within services such as care and the media; this includes periods of work experience.
165. The provision of entrepreneurial education is gradually being expanded to cover every year in school, through events such as 'Dynamo Day' and Young Enterprise contributions.
166. Currently, one enterprise project, originally undertaken in Y12 by some students currently in Y13, is coming to an end.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

167. This grade does not correspond to the grade 2 the school awarded itself for this key question in its self-evaluation report. The inspection team awarded this key question a grade 1 because of the many outstanding features.

#### **The quality of care, support and guidance to learners**

168. The school places much emphasis on creating a caring and supportive ethos for all pupils and students without exception. Pupils, students and parents alike praise the school's friendly and supportive atmosphere. Subject teachers, class tutors, heads of year and the Senior Management Team work together in particularly close conjunction to weave a safety net of academic and pastoral support and thus pupils are very well guided.
169. Pupils and students also provide mutual support within classes and in the numerous and varied clubs and societies. This is also the case with peer mentoring schemes under the guidance of a group of sixth form students who have been specifically trained by external agencies. When there are concerns or matters of a sensitive nature, pupils know to whom they should turn to for advice. When circumstances demand, however, the one appropriate member of the Senior Management Team responds quickly and appropriately to seek relevant assistance from external agencies. All the appropriate strategies, including child protection guidelines, are in place, in operation and known to all.
170. During the inspection, no cases of bullying were witnessed and pupils, students and staff state that such cases are rare. Any cases that do arise are dealt with according to the school's Anti-bullying Policy. Behaviour is very good, and pupils' courtesy is outstanding. This is an excellent feature.
171. The school has a system of rewarding good attendance and successes and, throughout the year, an ethos which celebrates success is evident in lessons and in morning assemblies. Some departments have their own reward system. Pupils know that the school does not tolerate misbehaviour and testify to the positive impact of the extra-curricular opportunities provided during the lunch hour, after school, at weekends and during holidays. These provide strong motivation to behave maturely and to maintain a good relationship with staff.
172. Pupils are afforded opportunities to express their views to the Senior Management Team on different issues which relate to them through regular meetings of class, year and school councils. These councils appreciate the Senior Management Team's thorough and respectful responses. Consultations about the healthy eating plan were held over a period of time. As a result, a range of healthy eating options are offered in the school canteen and a vending machine providing healthy snacks, drinks and water is also available.
173. The school makes effective use of external support services such as social services and educational psychologists. They benefit from arrangements with businesses, national institutions and local bodies within the community to

broaden the outlook of pupils and students. The Licensing Authority has been very supportive of one target group at key stage 4 and the school has used the expertise of external agencies in the sixth form induction course.

174. Through the personal and social education programme, contributions within subject areas and extra curricular provision, the close knit school community looks further afield to new horizons. Pupils and students pay particular attention to learning skills within subjects and as part of their personal and social education programme. Pupils demonstrate an understanding of personal targets and of the importance of the key skills. Health, and this includes emotional health, is given appropriate status. There are physical education lessons for Y7 to Y12 and arrangements are made for Y13 to join other classes. Additionally, there are opportunities after school to play in teams and those with more enthusiasm than skill are offered opportunities to join in the activities if they so desire.
175. Pupils and students make good use of opportunities to increase their understanding of matters relating to local and world citizenship. By sponsoring two children, one from Africa and the other from Asia, pupils learn about the lives of those who are less fortunate than themselves and also develop respect towards other cultures and beliefs.
176. Pupils and students become more socially aware and their understanding of the variety within society develops very well as they collect substantial sums of money for good causes. As a consequence of their charity work, and on particular occasions, such as remembering the holocaust, pupils and students reflect on the situation and develop the spiritual dimension as well. Occasionally, in some communal worship sessions, the atmosphere is electric as the whole congregation responds to the combination of words, music and images. This is an outstanding feature.
177. The school has a highly successful, generous and lively Parent Teacher Association which is preparing to celebrate the school's twentieth anniversary celebrations this year. It becomes evident from parental responses that a particularly good relationship exists between the school and parents who appreciate the willingness of the Senior Management Team to listen to concerns conveyed in parental questionnaires.
178. Heads of year are in close and regular contact with parents, particularly the parents of those pupils who need more intensive support. Information is also shared with parents by means of the Contact Book, reports and assessments, school handbooks, newsletters and annual parents' meetings.
179. At some key stages in the life of the pupil, such as Y7, additional meetings are held to provide parents with guidance as to how they can support their children. Every care is taken to ensure that the transition from primary to secondary education is as smooth as possible. Similarly, parents of sixth form students are given opportunities to learn more about that important stage with all its implications for the future.
180. Links with the community and relationships with parents are outstanding features. Within the school, there is the sense of a caring family offering

compassionate care and friendship to the local community and to the whole world. This creates an outstanding educational environment which nurtures the development of the whole person, prepared for life in the twenty first century.

181. A full time attendance officer has been appointed to be responsible for the recording and monitoring process. The officer contacts the homes of those pupils who are absent without an explanation on the first morning of absence. These new arrangements have improved attendance to a significant degree since they started last September.
182. A computerised system is used effectively to record attendance at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions and during individual lessons. The school expects pupils and parents to note reasons for absence in the home/school contact book or by letter or a telephone call.
183. The vast majority of pupils and students are punctual in the morning and to lessons apart from instances, such as traffic problems in the morning, when it is beyond their control.
184. Unacceptable behaviour is dealt with firmly and promptly. The school is very sensitively aware of personal circumstances which underlie such behaviour. The valuable assistance of the welfare officer and the county educational psychologist is utilised.
185. Careers education and guidance is offered in effective co-operation with the local Careers Company. A careers officer visits the school regularly. Pupils of all ages can arrange an interview in a room set aside for this purpose where there is a computer link and on-line careers information.
186. Y9 pupils are given effective assistance to make informed decisions which will increase their chance of following their choice of career or specialty. Theme days are also arranged for them when employers visit the school to reinforce the school's messages about the importance of aspects such as punctuality.
187. The school has a health and safety working party which takes the lead on relevant issues and is a point of contact for staff to communicate their concerns. A new member of staff has been appointed as health and safety officer following the retirement of the previous incumbent and he has started working very conscientiously.
188. A whole school risk assessment has been completed and a number of issues requiring attention were dealt with quickly and appropriately. However, some health and safety issues have not yet been addressed. These were drawn to the attention of school managers during the inspection.
189. A basic first aid course has been provided for each teacher but numbers possessing a formal first aid qualification are limited. Plans are afoot to reinforce this basic course.

### **Quality of provision for additional needs**

190. The school's provision for pupils and students with a wide range of additional or special educational needs is good. Tasks are differentiated appropriately for pupils with additional or special educational needs, and the school provides appropriate specialist resources to help with learning.
191. A team of assistants help and supports pupils with special educational needs effectively and sensitively. They support the learning whilst nurturing pupils' independence skills. Those assistants who work in the Lunchtime Club of "Y Tŷ" (Special Unit) and the co-ordinator make valuable contributions to pupils' personal, communication and social skills.
192. The support teachers working with pupils in mainstream classes who have special or additional educational needs are effective.
193. The school satisfies the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special or additional educational needs and conforms to statutory requirements. Statements are reviewed effectively each year and this includes preparing transition plans for Y9 pupils. Pupils have individual education plans which note appropriate targets and learning strategies. In Y7 and Y8, individual education plan targets are placed in the pupils contact books and they are regularly monitored and updated twice a year. The Special Educational Needs Working Party which represents curricular areas is an effective implement to ensure good contact between the special needs co-ordinator and individual subject departments.
194. The school maintains very good links with external agencies such as psychology, social care, behaviour therapy and speech and language therapy. This is an outstanding feature.
195. Pupils with dyslexia, as well as those who attend the reading sessions, make excellent progress. The one pupil who has been disapplied from the National Curriculum is making good progress and learning personal and social skills.
196. The school has implemented a course which is externally accredited for some key stage 4 pupils. This course develops pupils' key skills and in particular their communication and information and communication technology skills.
197. Suitable strategies are in place to deal with the few pupils whose behaviour has a detrimental effect on their progress and that of their peers.
198. The Assistant Head with pastoral responsibility prepares a detailed programme of pastoral support for pupils in danger of being excluded from school, and the school works effectively with the local education authority to support these pupils.

### **The quality of provision for equal opportunities**

199. The school takes care to ensure that it creates a climate in which any unpleasant behaviour or discrimination is not tolerated so that each individual

pupil and student is treated fairly. Parents and pupils are confident that the school would respond immediately to cases of unfairness or discrimination.

200. The school monitors and compares the examination results of boys and girls and uses teaching and learning methods which match their different learning styles.
201. Each subject option is available to boys and girls at key stage 4 and the school attempts to challenge stereotyping when advising pupils on their options at key stage 4 and in the sixth form.
202. The school's tradition and its pastoral system encourage all pupils to adopt high expectations in their work and leisure activities. The achievements and successes of individual pupils are frequently praised.
203. Currently, there are no permanently physically disabled pupils in the school. The few pupils temporarily disabled as the result of an accident, for example, are able to gain access to all relevant parts of the school.
204. Each pupil is given sensitive and effective support if problems arise at school. A good number of sixth form students have been given special training to form part of this support network. The school has a very good working relationship with a range of external agencies. Arrangements to support the one pupil who is in the care of the local education authority this year are very good. Close support has been arranged by the appropriate agencies and by the school.
205. The very, very few pupils in the school from minority ethnic groups have either been brought up in the same community as the other pupils or been integrated naturally with their peers, or they were accepted without any problems by pupils as soon as they arrived. The school promotes racial and social equality through its personal and social education programme, as well as communal worship and extra-curricular activities. It has procedures which would deal very firmly with any racist incident.

## **Leadership and management**

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding qualities

206. This grade differs from the grade 2 the school awarded itself for this key question in its self-evaluation report. The team awarded the quality of leadership and management a grade 1 because there are some outstanding qualities.

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

207. The school has clear aims and objectives which are shared with the governors, staff, parents and pupils.

208. The Senior Management Team leads the school very well. The headteacher has a strong vision focussed on raising standards and she offers the school clear and purposeful direction. Concurrently, she deals successfully with the school's day to day problems which arise because of changes in pupil and staff levels.

209. In their role as line managers, the Senior Management Team set clear expectations for middle managers. They work with teachers and staff at all levels and support them in order to improve the quality of the provision and the standards achieved. This is an outstanding feature.

210. The school heeds the Welsh Assembly Government's priorities as outlined in 'The Learning Country'. The arrangements for transferring from key stage 2 to key stage 3 have been reviewed jointly with catchment area primary schools. The school also provides effectively for matters such as key skills, sustainable education and teaching talented and gifted pupils.

211. The school co-operates effectively within a number of partnerships to enrich the curriculum offered to pupils and students, at key stage 4 and in the sixth form.

212. The school has good links with parents.

213. The process of setting quantitative targets for pupils has been improved to ensure that targets are realistic and challenging. Targets which are appropriately challenging are agreed upon annually and this enables pupils to achieve them. Pupils possess good knowledge of their personal targets.

214. Departmental performance against targets is thoroughly evaluated and heads of departments and their teams are required to take appropriate steps to achieve them. The Senior Management Team works in close co-operation with middle managers to help the managers to achieve this.

215. The arrangements which exist for monitoring departmental performance are outstanding. Each member of the Senior Management Team takes responsibility for a number of departments and is then responsible for writing a

report on specific areas in each department's performance, evaluating it and providing specific targets for improvement.

216. Internal methods of monitoring within departments are focussed on evaluating improvements and the effect which they have on standards of achievement but this aspect has not been fully developed in a minority of departments.
217. The school has suitable arrangements in place to identify its training requirements and those of the departments and each individual. Substantial sums of extra money are set aside for the staff's continuous professional development in order to raise standards and improve the learning and teaching.
218. The school's day to day administration is very good.
219. The school's arrangements for the induction of new members of staff and for training staff undertaking new responsibilities are an outstanding feature. Teachers are offered opportunities to 'shadow' experienced staff and school in service training sessions have been used to share and discuss the role of middle managers.
220. There is very good provision for newly qualified teachers.
221. One member of the Senior Management Team has followed an external course on aspects of management.

### **How well governors and other supervisory bodies meet their responsibilities**

222. Governors are very supportive and work closely with the school's staff and the local education authority in performing their duties. Governors possess full information to enable them, in consultation with the school's staff, to participate actively in discussions about the school's strategic development and to cope with the specific challenge that it is currently facing. There are close links between governors and the school which increase their understanding of the school's requirements and work linked to priorities.
223. Governors have very good knowledge of the results achieved by pupils and students in external tests and examinations and of how well the school performs in comparison with other similar schools. Standards are discussed at governors' meetings. They are regularly informed about the school's financial situation. The governors have ensured that the school meets statutory requirements and they took a full and active part in the school's self-evaluation process. The governing body makes a very good contribution to the school's leadership.



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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

224. The grade the school awarded itself for this key question in its self-evaluation report corresponds to the grade awarded by the inspection team.

**How effectively the school's performance is monitored and evaluated?**

225. The school's self-evaluation report is thorough and detailed and based on the managers' very good knowledge of the school. The report is comprehensive, evaluative and notes clearly the school's strengths and those aspects which need further attention. The findings of the inspection team correspond closely with those of the school in its self-evaluation process. The inspection team awarded a higher grade for two of the seven key questions and a lower grade for one.

226. The Senior Management Team and middle managers possess very good knowledge of the school and its departments. They have a clear understanding of the standards achieved by pupils and of the quality of education. This is an outstanding feature.

227. The school uses a very wide range of evidence for self-evaluation. The Senior Management Team's plans and monitoring reports include systematic classroom observations, reviews of pupils' work, analyses of performance data and evaluations of schemes of work. This again is an outstanding feature.

228. Each department has a monitoring policy, in line with school guidelines, and a specific monitoring timetable which notes the department's intentions as regards monitoring and evaluation during the school year.

229. The school prepares a detailed analysis of external test and examination results each year. Pupils' progress is carefully scrutinized and their performance monitored against subject targets. Specific mentoring strategies have been established to support those pupils found to be underachieving.

230. The school has appropriate processes to seek the opinions of staff, pupils, parents and governors. The parents receive a detailed questionnaire annually in order to seek their opinion about different aspects of the school's work and life. Having analysed the results, the school reports back to parents on the findings and takes any consequent steps. Similar arrangements exist as regards the school's staff. This is an outstanding feature.

231. The pupil and student councils which represent the opinion of each school year, and the School Council, are effective forums for conducting dialogue between staff and pupils. The pupils are confident that the school will give their opinions and views due consideration. A number of departments receive useful feedback on the quality of their work by inviting pupils to make comments.

232. Enabling the culture of self-evaluation to become established throughout the school has been a priority. Following school guidelines, each department prepares a self-evaluation report which concentrates on key questions 1-4 of the 'ESTYN Common Inspection Framework'.

233. In addition to evaluating pupils' standards of achievement, the school uses a range of indicators to evaluate matters such as attendance and behaviour.

### **The effectiveness of planning for improvement**

234. There is a definite link between the findings of the self-evaluation processes and the priorities revealed in the departmental and school development plans.

235. The School Development Plan is a comprehensive document which notes the school's main priorities and the appropriate action steps, over a period of three years. The School Development Plan concentrates on five themes which deal specifically with raising standards, noting specific targets, outlining responsibilities and arrangements for monitoring and evaluating.

236. During this period, the school also considers other issues which come to the fore as a result of its self-evaluation processes or local or national priorities. This establishment is continually evolving. This is also an outstanding feature.

237. The task of planning for improvement is clear and unambiguous and departmental plans support school guidelines. Despite the fact that the written plans of some departments are not sufficiently detailed, middle managers are monitoring how well strategies work and, when necessary, they take action to ensure improvements.

238. Working parties have been established, members being a representative cross-section of staff, in order to evaluate and develop some key areas for the school's development, such as teaching methodology. The working parties are having a good influence on the standards of learning and teaching.

239. The school's arrangements for Performance Management and continuous professional development are well linked to the development plans.

240. The school provides sufficient finance and resources to support its main priorities. Specific money is set aside in the school's budget to meet the needs of the departmental development plans.

241. The school's work on evaluating and planning improvement is very effective and the steps taken by a number of departments have given rise to the improvement noted as a target at key stage 3.

242. The school has made good progress on the key issues noted in the last inspection; namely it has:

- succeeded in working in close conjunction with the County to ensure substantial extra capital to improve the school site and to make a large investment in the work of eliminating health and safety problems on the site;
- reinforced the system for assessing, recording and reporting on pupils' achievements;

- invested substantially in information and communication technology resources;
- ensured provision for religious education and is continuing in its efforts to raise standards in this subject;
- reinforced the school's links with industry;
- ensured an improved focus in the individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs;
- made arrangements for pupils to attend an act of communal worship on a daily basis.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

243. This grade corresponds to the grade the school awarded itself for this key question in its self-evaluation report.

### **Sufficiency, suitability and deployment of staff, use of learning resources and school accommodation**

244. The school has sufficient staff to meet its curricular requirements and the vast majority have qualifications appropriate to the curricular areas they teach. There is a good balance between experienced teachers and teachers new to the profession.

245. The pupil-teacher ratio is 1:15.75 and is lower than the ratio of the County of Swansea and that of Wales. There are eight classroom assistants who offer good, unobtrusive support for pupils with special educational needs.

246. As a result of a substantial reduction in pupil numbers over the past two years, it has been necessary to reduce the number of teachers. There have also been significant changes in duties carried out by staff. The school has coped well with the changes, has ensured effective support for those undertaking new responsibilities and is still employing new members of staff to ensure continuity of provision.

247. The induction programme for newly qualified staff is very good and the school ensures that new members of staff receive clear information about its modus operandi. The school has good links with three initial teacher training establishments and teachers undergoing training participate fully in the life of the school.

248. The provision for continuous professional development is very well organised. Individual training requirements are identified through interviews and departmental development plans.

249. The school participates in the Graduate Teachers' Programme. Over the past few years, four graduates have followed this plan to become fully qualified teachers in the school and one member of staff is following the course this year. The comprehensive programme is managed and implemented effectively and thoroughly. The graduates are given excellent experiences and opportunities under the supervision of one of the school's assistant heads.

250. The school has sufficient administrative and support staff who enable the smooth running of the school. They are very supportive of the school and provide effective assistance across a wide range of responsibilities.

251. There are sufficient resources for most subjects but there are a few exceptions such as the lack of control technology equipment in design and technology at key stage 3 which school managers and departments are aware of and plan to

rectify through the School Development Plan. Resources are used economically, efficiently and effectively.

252. A large investment has been made in information and communication technology equipment and this includes interactive whiteboards. In departments such as the Welsh and art departments, resources are particularly good. Several departments prepare their own specific work sheets because of the lack of Welsh medium resources. Some physical education equipment is old.
253. Colourful displays in all departments help pupils to learn and gives status to their best work.
254. The community is well used as an additional resource through numerous external contacts.
255. Due attention is paid to maintaining electrical and fire fighting equipment.
256. The school site itself is a cluster of individual and scattered buildings with no obvious focal point. Some buildings are newly renovated whilst others need attention. The site is not big even for the reduced number of pupils envisaged in future.
257. The school has made much progress since the last inspection when it was deemed that the condition of the building was not satisfactory. The sports hall and the science laboratories have been completely renovated, a MUGA (multi use games area) has been constructed and there are new cabins on site.
258. Echoing the philosophy of the Welsh Children's Commissioner about the importance of toilets being of a high standard, the school has prioritised the work of improving all the school's toilets so that they are all now in good condition. The school environment is kept clean and tidy.
259. Despite the improvements and the praiseworthy efforts of teachers to create a colourful and motivating ambience, substantial defects remain. The County has promised an improvement programme worth £1.5 million towards solving this problem. The money will be spent mainly on the school's main block which was opened in 1898 and is showing signs of its age. Some other parts of the school also are not up to standard.
260. The school is fully aware of the current problems which include dangerous floors, damp permeating walls, lack of tarmac areas, lack of sheltered play areas, a soggy playing field with small stones jutting to the surface and insufficient space in the canteen so that pupils have to wait their turn (patiently) for long periods of time.
261. There is insufficient space for displaying the good work produced in the art room. There are no specialist rooms for media studies and health and social care.

262. Effective arrangements are in place to oversee the bustle of convoys of buses at the start and end of the school day. However, pedestrians and cars jointly use one other tarmac area in another part of the school. During the next phase of planned improvements, the school hopes to remedy this.
263. The community uses the school buildings, including teams using the new sports hall and a local male voice choir that practises in the school hall.

### **How efficiently resources are managed to achieve value for money**

264. The headteacher is responsible for the school budget at a strategic level with another member of the Senior Management Team and the Finance Officer managing and monitoring the budget very effectively on a daily basis.
265. As a consequence of a visit from the education authority's accountant, monthly financial reports are prepared for the headteacher and every three months for the governing body.
266. Now that another bilingual school has been established in the County and because of resulting substantial changes in the catchment area and the effect that has had on the school's pupil population, there are arrangements in place to support the school.
267. The Senior Management Team conducts an annual review/evaluation of the school's curricular and staffing needs and there is a direct link between the School Development Plan and the budget. Managers focus the spending on priorities identified in the development plans.
268. Departmental budgets are allocated according to formula. Extra money is set aside to cater for the main priorities listed in departmental development plans.
269. At the end of the 2004-05 financial year, it is envisaged that around 1.4% of the budget will be held in reserve which is lower than the percentage (5%) recommended by the Audit Commission.
270. The school uses its teaching and support staff effectively making the best use of their time and experience. The school makes substantial and effective investments in developing staff to meet its requirements.
271. Good examination and test results at key stage 4 and in the sixth form and, specifically, the strategies which exist to further improve test results in some subjects at key stage 3, the quality of education, a very rich curriculum and pupils' standards of work and behaviour all mean that the school provides good value for money.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

### Welsh

**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

### **Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4**

#### **Good and outstanding features**

272. Pupils display positive attitudes towards their work, they concentrate and listen purposefully during lessons.
273. In class, the oral responses of the vast majority of pupils are clear and audible. The most able pupils respond at length using appropriate and sophisticated language. A high percentage of pupils are able to express views confidently and are able to support their views using relevant evidence.

274. Pupils work together successfully in group and pair situations, without wasting time, and show much respect towards one another. They support each other well by forming short resumes of what has been discussed, thus ensuring that they understand one step before they move on to the next. The pupils' oral work is an outstanding feature at both key stages; vocabulary, sentence constructions and subject matter discussed by pupils all display very clear evidence of pupils' progress from one year to the next.
275. Reading standards are good. The vast majority of pupils become increasingly adept at reading aloud and boys frequently volunteer to read in class, showing good awareness that reading should be meaningful and interesting. The most able pupils use appropriate intonation and read aloud intelligently.
276. Pupils respond well to literary, non-literary and media reading texts in class. In Y7 and Y8, this response is mainly oral but, from Y9 onwards, pupils achieve good and very good standards and use opportunities to produce written responses also. The most able produce mature responses and expand upon them after reading challenging texts. By Y9, pupils are able to use a good range of grammatical and literary terms successfully. Pupils at key stage 4 build upon the reading skills which they have already acquired and the vast majority achieve good standards by the end of that key stage.
277. Pupils in Y7 and Y8 keep a good record of the books they read for pleasure and all pupils across key stage 3 and key stage 4 benefit from the encouragement given them by their teachers to borrow interesting, recently published books.
278. The standard of writing is variable from the point of view of length, content, style and degree of accuracy. Increasingly at key stage 3, and throughout key stage 4, the most able pupils achieve very good standards. By Y9, the majority of pupils can write for different audiences and purposes and the more able pupils write effectively. Able pupils also write very good creative pieces, in both poetry and prose. In addition, very effective descriptions and a degree of originality are evident in the work of pupils of average ability and, occasionally, the same can be said of the work of less able pupils when they write personal pieces or work of a creative nature. This cohort also displays the ability to express a definite point of view in their writing. A good number of able pupils convey well-balanced views and are able to support opinions skilfully.
279. All the pupils co-operate well and the atmosphere created provides a very positive linguistic climate. This is an outstanding feature.

### **Shortcomings**

280. At key stage 3 and at key stage 4, the responses of a significant minority of pupils are short and a number of these pupils are shy and lack clarity and succinctness of speech.
281. In Y7 and Y8 in particular, a significant minority use simple or incorrect constructions in their written work. Incorrect spellings and mutations are a

feature of the work of the same pupils. The same shortcomings are a feature of the work of a fairly small minority of pupils at key stage 4.

282. When they read aloud, a minority of pupils at both key stages do not read aloud audibly and with clear enunciation.

## **Sixth Form**

### **Good and outstanding features**

283. Sixth form students are self-disciplined and display very positive attitudes towards their work. In all classroom activities, they display very high standards and this is an outstanding feature.
284. They all make extended oral contributions and rise very well to the challenge of analysing literary texts from different periods. They speak fluently and audibly with sound audience and task awareness and their vocabulary is appropriate and extensive. The students work together in pairs and in groups and hone each other's literary discussion skills and analyse incisively. They derive benefit from the variety within the group and from the combined intelligence of the whole group, in Y 12 and Y13, as they expand the horizons of their linguistic knowledge and their literary criticism skills.
285. They read texts with care when they analyse them. During class discussions of texts which they have read, they achieve high standards as they broaden discussions to examine the relevance of the texts to their own lives and experiences and modern life. In Y13, students cope very well with the academic demands of texts from the middle ages and they show very good understanding of linguistic and historical aspects as well as the characteristics of mythical tales.
286. In Y12 and Y13, students produce mature, analytical essays, using appropriate style and tone. They produce polished pieces of creative writing which are accurate and of appropriate length. Moreover, the style of writing is interesting. Portfolios produced at the end of Y12 display a good deal of creative originality. Script writing is of a particularly high standard and this reflects a very sound understanding of all the required aspects of this medium. Individual students are given opportunities to develop their own particular strengths and produce written work of a very high standard. This is an outstanding feature.

### **Shortcomings**

287. There are no significant shortcomings in the sixth form.

<b>Science</b>
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**Key Stage 3** – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

**Key Stage 4** - Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

**Sixth Form:**

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

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

**Physics** - Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

### **Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4**

#### **Good and outstanding features**

288. Pupils show increasing knowledge of aspects of the natural world, substances and inanimate systems.
289. Pupils display increasing ability to use scientific terms correctly and appropriately. The vast majority of pupils are able to recall previous work effectively and are able to apply that information to new situations.
290. Pupils undertake practical work enthusiastically. They work safely, discuss the best way of setting about to do tasks with one another and share out tasks so that each individual participates.
291. In practical work, the majority display an understanding of variables and the essentials of a fair test.
292. Pupils listen to the teacher and to each other effectively and they are able to follow instructions effectively and responsibly.
293. At key stage 4, pupils are able to draw conclusions from data collected and are able to link these with their predictions and with scientific theory.
294. Pupils show good awareness of the contribution science makes to daily life, to industry and of its effect on the environment.
295. Pupils with special or additional educational needs make good progress.

#### **Shortcomings**

296. Some pupils are disorganised when they record data – in diagrams, tables, charts or graphs. Some pupils are not confident when selecting the scale or the type of graph to use to display data.
297. The presentation of some work is untidy or work is incomplete.

298. In Y7 and Y8, some pupils do not fully understand the purpose of some of the activities and they predict outcomes which are not based on scientific fact.
299. At key stage 3, the pupils' ability to use information and communication technology in their work is insufficiently developed.
300. A small number of pupils at key stage 4 find recalling previous work difficult and have difficulties understanding parts of the work and, as a result, lose interest.

## **Sixth Form**

### **Biology:**

#### **Good and outstanding features**

301. Students' knowledge and understanding of key biological concepts is good.
302. Students are able to form hypotheses based on scientific knowledge and can plan experiments to test these hypotheses and evaluate those methods.
303. They carry out practical work in a systematic and orderly fashion, recording their observations in the form of correct diagrams.
304. They communicate well orally using appropriate terminology. They listen well to one another and respond sensibly to others' comments.
305. Good use is made of information and communication technology within research tasks to present information in the form of text, diagrams, tables and graphs and for modelling, to carry out experiments and to manage data.
306. They make good use of their knowledge and understanding and of their scientific skills to solve problems.

#### **Shortcomings**

307. Not all students are able to apply previous knowledge of scientific concepts to new situations.
308. Some students have not developed the ability to carry out research into secondary sources of reference.

### **Chemistry:**

#### **Good and outstanding features**

309. Students can recall, select and use scientific knowledge and concepts.
310. They can evaluate scientific data and knowledge correctly.

- 311. If students know the chemical structure of a substance, they can predict its properties. They are able to analyse and solve its structural features.
- 312. Students are able to analyse data, graphs and problems using information and communication technology competently and for the purpose of measurement.
- 313. Students use their chemical knowledge to form sensible hypotheses about the way chemicals will react and they are able to plan investigations to prove their hypotheses.
- 314. They are able to plan experiments effectively, purposefully and safely.
- 315. They are able to apply their knowledge and their skills in new situations.

### **Shortcomings**

- 316. A minority of students do not fully understand the concepts presented.
- 317. A few students are unwilling to convey their ideas orally.

### **Physics:**

#### **Good and outstanding features**

- 318. Students develop their understanding of physical concepts and can use them in practical situations and to solve simple problems or to make predictions about the way objects will react under different conditions.
- 319. Students have developed good research skills, including the use of information and communication technology.
- 320. Students' independent learning skills have developed effectively.
- 321. They complete practical tasks in an organised manner, recording their findings in textual, diagrammatic and graphical format.

### **Shortcomings**

- 322. Some students do not possess full knowledge and understanding of previous work.

- 323. A minority of students have not developed their independent learning skills sufficiently.
- 324. Some students have not developed their practical work skills sufficiently.
- 325. Some students' work files are untidy and incomplete.

## Design and 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 qualities

### **Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4**

#### **Good and outstanding features**

- 326. At key stage 3 and key stage 4, pupils have good knowledge and understanding of units of work they undertake within their study programme at key stage 3 and in line with external examination specifications at key stage 4.
- 327. The vast majority of pupils take responsibility for their own work, show the ability to work independently, concentrate and persevere. They work constructively in groups. Pupils can use technical terms relevant to the subject well.
- 328. Their ability to use numeracy skills to reinforce design and technology standards are also good. This is particularly true in food and textile units.

329. Pupils make appropriate use of information and communication technology skills, including computer assisted design and computer assisted manufacturing (CAD/CAM), mainly through resistant materials.
330. Pupils work through varied projects and contexts which interest them.
331. Using a range of materials, such as food, wood, plastics, metals and textiles, pupils design and make a variety of products which meet specific needs.
332. In their folios, there is detailed evidence of working through design and make processes and this displays clear understanding of what needs to be accomplished.
333. Pupils use a variety of sources to gather information relevant to the task, to enable them to brainstorm and develop interesting ideas. Consequently, they recognise a specific brief to develop using different types and combinations of materials.
334. The majority of students produce drawing and annotating work, including technical drawing, that is of a good standard and the fashion drawing is particularly skilful.
335. Pupils create striking and appropriate image boards and achieve successful modelling work. These result in creative outcomes.
336. Pupils evaluate and analyse existing products thoroughly and use ergonomic analysis to further develop their understanding of design processes.
337. Pupils draw up specifications, plan the making and control the quality of the work. They evaluate continuously and the final product is tested against the specification.
338. Pupils use a range of colour experiments and creative techniques. Frequently, materials are successfully combined and colour, texture and pattern in textiles are used effectively.
339. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of a range of materials and techniques, and frequently consideration is given to the requirements of sustainability when selecting materials.
340. Pupils use equipment and machines deftly. They possess good knowledge and understanding of health and safety requirements when they produce creative end products which are of a good standard.

### **Shortcomings**

#### **Key Stage 3**

341. Pupils at key stage 3 do not learn about control work.

342. Pupils do not learn about an appropriate range of information and communication technology skills to support their design and make work in textiles and food.
343. There is unfinished work in the folders of a small number of pupils.

#### **Key Stage 4**

344. At key stage 4, some pupils make insufficient use of their knowledge and understanding, and of their research work into materials and techniques, in order to develop their work further.

#### **Sixth Form**

##### **Good and outstanding features**

345. Students understand the principles of design. They can produce original, creative and appropriate designs.
346. They deal with contemporary concepts and show awareness of this area of study within the world of work.
347. Varied and effective use is made of information and communication technology, including CAD/CAM and PRODESKTOP by students to produce, present and develop images.
348. Students make appropriate and good use of sketchbooks to support the development of original ideas, particularly within textiles.
349. Students use a variety of techniques and materials to present and record design work.
350. They carry out thorough research work using a range of sources. Existing products are analysed in great detail.
351. Students' drawing, technical drawing and annotating skills are good. Their use of colour and image boards is striking. These make a substantial contribution to their work. Morphological analysis, ergonomic requirements and modelling work is at the core of all the work.
352. Students accomplish challenging experiments using different materials and techniques.
353. They develop effective strategies to solve real problems.
354. They plan and evaluate in detail. They test the work against specific specifications.
355. The students' practical work is of a high standard. They use a range and combination of materials to produce and finish items which meet clear needs.

356. Students plan their work experience placements in industry well. They produce thorough case studies which have been thoughtfully and carefully evaluated.

### **Shortcomings**

357. There are no significant shortcomings in the sixth form.

<b>Information Technology and Computing</b>
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**Key Stage 3** – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

**Sixth Form (Computing)** - Grade 2: Good and no important shortcomings

### **Good and outstanding features**

358. At both key stages, pupils possess an understanding of the social effects of computers.

#### **Key Stage 3**

359. Pupils are able to present information using computers to a good standard. They combine image, sound and text skilfully to prepare presentations which are suitable for various audiences. The most able can create very attractive presentations.

360. The standard of computer modelling is good. Pupils internalise data correctly into spreadsheets and use formulae to process the information. In addition, they use spreadsheets for simple predictions.

361. Pupils are familiar with subject terms and concepts linked to data management in standard commercial data bases. By the end of Y9, they become accustomed to the most common types of investigations.

#### **Key Stage 4**

362. Pupils are able to make increasingly complex use of combinations of different types of software.

363. They use publishing board and word processing software to produce a range of different presentations for businesses or clubs.

364. They create data bases and interrogate them skilfully. The standards of computer modelling are also good.
365. Pupils can explain in writing the purpose of their examination project, the processes, the software and hardware used and the outcomes of the work. They often do this to a good standard.

### **Shortcomings**

366. Pupils at key stage 3 do not interrogate data sources with sufficient incisiveness.
367. A significant number of key stage 4 pupils have difficulties in evaluating their computer studies projects.

### **Sixth Form**

#### **Good and outstanding features**

368. Students possess good knowledge of the characteristics of computer systems and are able to explain why the features of different types of software make them suitable for particular applications.
369. They develop the ability to select, justify and use suitable techniques to solve specific problems. The level of their practical skills are often high.
370. In their Advanced Subsidiary level projects, and even more so in their A level projects, students display the ability to apply information technology to problem solving in the real world. The standard of some individual students' projects is very good.

### **Shortcomings**

371. In a number of projects, there is insufficient detail or insight in written descriptions, particularly in first drafts.

**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

### **Good and outstanding features**

#### **Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4**

- 372. Pupils listen intently, respond enthusiastically and use subject terms precisely and correctly.
- 373. They can discuss geographical features intelligently and offer comments about and explanations for earthquakes; they are able to contemplate their effect in terms of human geography.
- 374. They possess sound knowledge of Italy's physical and human geography.
- 375. They are able to use photographs, maps, pictures and diagrams well.
- 376. At key stage 3, pupils' graphic skills are good when they display and interpret climatic data.
- 377. Pupils show good awareness of current developments and their geographic relevance. They understand the geographic relevance of environmental and social issues such as climate, tourism, population and landscape.
- 378. Pupils possess sound knowledge of the local area and are able to offer precise and relevant comments when discussing dwellings in Swansea.
- 379. At key stage 4, the individual studies show pupils' ability to carry out relevant research and to present the completed, final study carefully making good use of information technology resources at different stages of the work.

### **Shortcomings**

- 380. Some pupils at key stage 3 do not always complete their tasks and, in places, handwriting and presentation are rather untidy.
- 381. At times, oral and written answers, mainly at key stage 3, lack detail.

### **Sixth Form**

#### **Good and outstanding qualities**

382. Students possess very good knowledge and understanding of concepts in this subject and can analyse information from sources of evidence, such as photographs of Swansea. They show very good understanding of local human factors and of current developments in Swansea, such as SA1. Students possess sound knowledge of the local area and are able to relate it to locations further a field. This is an outstanding feature.
383. Students in Y13 possess very good understanding of aspects of urbanisation and counter urbanisation when they study inequalities of development in Japan. They are able to discuss this with insight and confidence, orally and in writing. This also is an outstanding feature.
384. Pupils can interweave the work in the physical units with the work in the human units and then combine them with environmental, economic and social studies.
385. Students in Y12 communicate orally in a confident and appropriate manner and all the students use subject terms correctly. On the whole, students' written work is appropriate and its range meets with external examination requirements.
386. In the personal studies for external examinations, there are good examples of students' work and of their use of information technology.

### **Shortcomings**

387. There are no significant shortcomings in the sixth form.

<b>Art</b>
------------

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

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

**Sixth Form** – Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

### **Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4**

#### **Good and outstanding features**

388. In Key Stage 3, pupils demonstrate a developing understanding of the visual language of line, tone, colour, texture, pattern, shape, form and space in

response to a well-balanced programme of work, which enables them to build progressively upon previous experiences.

389. Pupils' growing knowledge of the work of other artists, craft workers and designers from different times and different cultures, including Welsh examples, enriches their own work effectively.
390. Pupils experiment with a range of techniques and materials and apply their developing understanding of the various media successfully to their own work, showing growing expertise.
391. In Key Stage 4, pupils show progress in the confidence with which they select, control and experiment with a variety of processes. For instance, their silk-screen prints on fabric are well designed and have a very professional finish; collagraphs (prints made from card) demonstrate growing design skills in the way pupils modify images to suit the particular characteristics of the technique. Units of work at this stage are diligently researched and supported with high quality investigations.

### **Shortcomings**

392. The only shortcoming, in key stage 3, is a tendency by a minority of pupils to leave work unfinished in their sketchbooks.
393. There are no significant shortcomings in key stage 4.

### **Sixth Form**

#### **Good and outstanding features**

394. Students are mature and self-motivated. They work independently, visualising their ideas expressively from memory, feelings and imagination as well as from direct observation, and make good use of their knowledge of other artists. Of particular note are the issue-based investigations, which display a depth of emotion and thought, as well as highly refined art skills, knowledge and understanding.
395. An outstanding feature which runs throughout the department and contributes to the high standards is pupils' understanding of the purpose of the sketchbook as a repository of ideas, experiments, notes, investigations, collections, to inform their own creative pieces.
396. Another outstanding feature is the practice of review and self assessment, which is integral to the creative process and develops progressively from Y7 onwards, contributing effectively to pupils' and students' growing critical vocabulary.

397. The very strong element of design in both two- and three- dimensions, on a small and large scale in student's work is also outstanding. This promotes good problem-solving skills.
398. Students' personal, social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding develop as a result of art's considerable contribution.

### **Shortcomings**

399. There are no significant shortcomings in the sixth form.

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

400. The governors, headteacher and staff rejoice in the fact that the findings of ESTYN's inspection endorse most of the school's self-evaluation findings resulting from whole school self-evaluation processes. It recognises the good progress made since the last Inspection. It is recognised that the school has high standards in each of the seven key questions.
401. The school is very proud of the good and very good standards achieved by our pupils in external examinations and in lessons. They reflect the emphasis the school places on developing varied and interesting methodology. Our Development Plans have been targeting key stage 3 standards and there have been improvements already. The school will continue to disseminate the very good teaching practices across the school.
402. The school's curricular provision, as well as the breadth and quality of its extra-curricular experiences are described as outstanding. The school's strategies to reinforce the basic and key skills of our pupils are reflected in the good standards achieved in all the skills. It was noted that our pupils' social awareness and moral development are very good and there are outstanding aspects appertaining to the personal and social education provision which ensure that 'the close knit school community looks further afield to new horizons'. The school will continue to concentrate on developing pupils' abilities in the key skills, paying further attention to independent learning skills.

403. The standard of care within the school receives high praise and refers to the strong emphasis the school places on 'creating a caring and supportive ethos for all pupils and students without exception'. The school's very strong and varied links with the community have been acknowledged as an outstanding feature. The pupils' and students' very good behaviour in formal and informal situations is praised. The school's inclusive ethos also receives praise and it is noted that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds succeed in the school. It is pleasing to note the progress made since the last inspection as regards special educational needs and, specifically, the progress made by pupils who suffer from dyslexia.
404. Whole school systems for training, induction and monitoring which enable managers to acquire very good knowledge of pupil standards and the quality of the teaching are praised. The school is described in the report as an 'establishment which is continually evolving.' Reference is made to the consultation process with pupils, parents, staff and governors which is an aspect of the self-evaluation process and it is described as an outstanding feature. The valuable contribution the Governing Body makes to the school's strategic direction is praised.
405. Issues relating to the school site remain as priorities in the School Development Plan. There is an intention to deal with these over the next few years when a substantial investment of £1.5 million will be made in the school buildings by the Welsh Assembly Government.
406. In the report, the school was described as having a 'sense of a caring family offering compassionate care and friendship to the local community and to the whole world. This creates an outstanding educational environment within which the whole person is given succour to face life in the twenty first century'. This statement encapsulates the fact that the school manages to achieve its main aim.
407. The school would like to thank the inspectors for their professional approach during inspection week. This report provides the school with a clear direction and the confidence for future development in order to maintain the high standards; and this is within the challenging context of reorganising bilingual education in the County.

## Appendix A

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr
School type	Community, comprehensive, designated bilingual
Age-range of pupils	11 to 18 years
Address of school	Talbot Street Gowerton Swansea
Post-code	SA4 3DB
Telephone number	01792 874197

Headteacher	Mrs Katherine Davies
Date of appointment	01 September 2002
Chair of governors / Appropriate authority	Reverend John Walters
Registered inspector	Mr Gareth Wyn Roberts
Dates of appointment	24 – 28 January 2005

## Appendix B

### School data and indicators

Year group	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Total
Number of pupils	88	95	168	163	147	94	77	832

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	48	9	52.84

Staffing information	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	1 : 15.75
Average teaching group sizes	22
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	76.5%

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole school
Autum 2004	94.53	94.70	93.98	92.90	92.90	92.83	54.73	90.8
Summer 2004	94	92	91.5	90.2	90.5	72.5	72.5	91.5
Spring 2004	95.6	93.2	92	91	89.2	62	54.8	92

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	7.3%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to the inspection	Temporary: 30 Permanent: 2

## Appendix C

### National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 3:

National Curriculum Assessment KEY STAGE 3 results: 2004															
Total number of pupils in Y9: 163															
Percentage of pupils at each level															
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	EP
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0		0	0	1	8	31	34	18	8	0	
		National	0	1		0	0	2	9	22	34	22	9	0	
	Test	School	0	3		-	-	-	7	25	26	23	15	-	
		National	0	3		-	-	-	8	21	31	23	10	-	
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School	0	4		0	0	0	8	20	29	33	10	0	
		National	0	0		0	0	1	6	19	34	29	10	0	
	Test	School	0	2		-	-	-	5	18	31	33	11	-	
		National	0	2		-	-	-	4	19	35	28	10	-	
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0		0	0	0	3	19	34	32	12	0	
		National	0	1		0	0	1	8	2	25	29	14	0	
	Test	School	1	4		-	-	-	4	16	23	40	12	-	
		National	0	5		-	-	-	7	19	21	32	14	-	
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	4		0	0	1	6	22	38	26	7	0	
		National	0	1		0	0	1	8	21	32	25	11	0	
	Test	School	0	4		-	-	-	2	8	35	27	25	-	
		National	0	4		-	-	-	10	20	41	18	7	0	

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

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 5 in mathematics, science and either English or Welsh (first language)			
By Teacher Assessment		By Test	
In the school	61%	In the school	61%
In Wales	58%	In Wales	58%

## Public Examination Results:

**Ysgol Gyfun Gwyr**  
**Summary Report of achievements of pupils aged**  
**15 2003/04.**

LEA/School No.  
670/4074

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru  
National Assembly for Wales

**RE2**

### GCSE, ELQ (1) and Equivalent Achievements

**Number of pupils aged 15 who were on roll in January 2004: 168**  
**Percentage of pupils aged 15 who:**

	Entered 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent	Achieved GCSE and vocational qualifications equivalent to five or more GCSE grades		Core Subjects Indicator (2)	Average GCSE/GNVQ points score per pupil
		A* to C	A* to G		
School 2003/04	96	72	95	49	52
LEA Area 2003/04	84	50	82	37	37
Wales 2003/04	87	51	85	38	40
School 02/03/04	96	73	96	50	52
School 01/02/03	96	71	95	50	52

	Entered at least one short course, ELQ (1), GCSE short course, GCSE or equivalent	Entered one or more GCSE or equivalent	Achieved GCSE and vocational qualifications equivalent to		Achieved at least 1 GCSE short course - grades A* to G or equivalent	Achieved no graded GCSE or equivalent	Achieved one or more ELQ(1) only	Did not achieve a GCSE, GCSE short course ELQ (1) or equivalent
			One or more GCSEs at grades A* to C	A* to G				
School 2003/04	100	100	87	99	12	1	1	0
LEA Area 2003/04	96	93	72	90	37	10	4	6
Wales 2003/04	97	95	75	93	47	7	3	4
School 02/03/04	100	100	90	99	5	1	0	1
School 01/02/03	99	99	91	99	2	1	0	1

### GCSE results in selected subjects

**Percentage of pupils aged 15 who:**

	Entered any GCSE in	Achieved a GCSE grade		Entered any GCSE in	Achieved a GCSE grade	
		A* to C in	A* to G in		A* to C in	A* to G in
		<b>English (2)</b>			<b>Welsh (2)</b>	
School 2003/04	96	71	96	98	82	98
LEA Area 2003/04	87	56	85	45	25	43
Wales 2003/04	90	55	88	63	37	62
School 02/03/04	94	72	94	97	85	97

Report by Gareth Wyn Roberts  
Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyl – January 2005

School 01/02/03	94	72	94	97	85	97
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	Entered any GCSE in			Achieved a GCSE grade		
	A* to C in	A* to G in		A* to C in	A* to G in	
	Mathematics (2)			Science (2)		
School 2003/04	92	63	91	100	55	95
LEA Area 2003/04	87	46	83	87	48	84
Wales 2003/04	91	46	87	90	48	87
School 02/03/04	95	60	92	99	56	97
School 01/02/03	95	58	93	97	56	96

Figures include pupils on Youth Access courses and similar schemes

(1) Entry Level Qualification

(2) For information about which syllabuses are included in each subject area see Notes for Guidance.

### Vocational qualifications (1)

Percentage of pupils aged 15 who were awarded a GNVQ or NVQ between 1 September 2003 and 31 August 2004

	Part 1 GNVQ Foundation	GNVQ Foundation or NVQ Level 1	Part 1 GNVQ Intermediate	GNVQ Intermediate or NVQ Level 2
School 2003/04	0	5	0	0

Number of pupils aged 17 who were awarded a GNVQ or NVQ between 1 September 2003 and 31 August 2004

	GNVQ Intermediate or NVQ Level 2	GNVQ Advanced or NVQ Level 3
School 2003/04	0	0

(1) Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE) and Advanced Subsidiary Vocational Certificate of Education (ASVCE) are included with A/AS level examination results.

### GCE A level/AVCE or AS level ASVCE equivalent achievements (1)(2)

Number of pupils aged 17 who were entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations/AVCE or AS/ASVCE equivalent: 82

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Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr – January 2005

Percentage of pupils aged 17 entered for 2 or more A level examinations/AVCE or AS/ASVCE equivalent who achieved a points score of:

	0	1 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 14	15 to 19	20 to 24	25 to 29	30 or more
School 2003/04	0	4	9	15	13	15	15	30
LEA Area 2003/04	0	2	11	16	15	21	17	18
Wales 2003/04	0	3	10	18	16	18	14	20
School 02/03/04	0	2	10	14	12	18	14	29

Percentage of pupils aged 17 entered for 2 or more A level examinations/AVCE or AS/ASVCE equivalent who achieved 2 or more A level examinations or equivalent at grades:

	A-C	A-E	Average score per candidate Entering 2 or more A levels/AVCE or AS/ASVCE equivalent
School 2003/04	74	96	23
LEA Area 2003/04	71	96	21
Wales 2003/04	68	95	20
School 02/03/04	73	97	22

**Number of pupils aged 17 who were entered for fewer than 2 GCE A level examinations/AVCE or AS/ASVCE equivalent: 11**

Percentage of the pupils aged 17 entered for fewer than 2 A level examinations/AVCE or AS/ASVCE equivalent who achieved a points score of:

	0 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 15	Average score per candidate
School 2003/04	64	36	0	4
LEA Area 2003/04	80	15	5	3
Wales 2003/04	74	22	5	3
School 02/03/04	80	20	0	3

- (1) Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE) and Advanced Subsidiary Vocational Certificate of Education (ASVCE).  
 (2) The figures do not include the BTEC National certificate or diploma.

## Appendix D

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

Thirteen inspectors spent a total of 43 inspection days at the school and 114 lessons or part lessons were observed in the six subjects being inspected formally. Another 34 lessons or part lessons were inspected in the other subjects to gather evidence of pupil standards in the key and personal skills. In addition, inspectors visited a cross section of registration periods, extra curricular activities during the lunch hour and sessions of communal worship in the morning. Interviews were arranged with members of the Senior Management Team, heads of department and year and class tutors, as well as members of staff, including ancillary staff with specific responsibilities.

A cross section of work from able, average and lower ability pupils from Y7 – Y11 was inspected and a cross section of Y12 and Y13 students' work. In addition, further work produced by pupils and students was seen when visiting classes, workshops and laboratories. Regular discussions were held with members of the School Council and other pupils and students selected to represent their own years.

Each document presented by the school before and during the inspection was analysed. Pre inspection meetings were held with members of the Senior Management Team, the staff, the governing body and parents. Twenty one parents attended the Parents' Meeting and 44 questionnaires were returned. Three letters and three comments on the questionnaire were received from parents.

## Appendix E

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team Member	Responsibilities and contributions to Key Questions
Gareth W Roberts Registered Inspector	Summary, recommendations Contributions to key question 1 Contribution to key questions 4 and 5 Appendix Information technology and computing
John Roberts Lay Inspector	Contributions to key questions 1, 3 and 7
Susan Edwards	Contribution to key question 3 Contribution to science and biology
Gwilym Williams	Contributions to key questions 1, 2, 3 and 7 and to science
Paul Donovan	Contribute to key question 4 (additional educational needs)
Neil Trevor Jones	Contributions to key questions 5 and 7 Key Question 6 Leading the science team, chemistry
Anna Roberts	Contribution to key question 4 Welsh
Beryl Portlock	Contribute to key question 2 Design and Technology
Gill Figg	Art
Menna Jones	Geography
Keith Davies	Contribution to science and physics
Helen Lewis	Contributions to key questions 1 and 2
Mrs Llinos John	School's nominee, assistant principal

There was no peer assessor within the team.

**Contractor** Cwmni Cynnal  
Technology Unit  
Bridge Street  
Llangefni  
LL77 7HL

### Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the governors, staff, pupils and students of Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyl for their co-operation during the inspection.



# **SUMMARY REPORT FOR PARENTS**

**Inspection under Section 10 of the  
Schools Inspections Act 1996**

**Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr  
Talbot Street  
Gowerton  
Swansea  
SA4 3DB**

**School Number:670/4074**

**Date of Inspection: 24 - 28 January 2005**

**by**

**Gareth Wyn Roberts  
WO19/17166**

**Date: 30 March 2005**

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Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose 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 more information about their child's school. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

The inspection of Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr took place between 24-28 January 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mr Gareth Wyn Roberts 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. This summary report may be reproduced for non-commercial educational purposes but only as a whole and provided it is reproduced verbatim without adaptation and the source and date thereof are stated.

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

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

## Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years 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 attain the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who attain the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who attain 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

## The nature of the provider

1. Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr is a designated bilingual community comprehensive school for 11 – 18 year old pupils, maintained by Swansea Unitary Authority's Local Education Authority. It has approximately 660 pupils in Y7 – Y11 and around 170 sixth form students. Until September 2003, when a second bilingual school was opened in the city to cope with increasing numbers of pupils desiring to be taught through the medium of Welsh, this was the only designated Welsh-medium school in the county of Swansea. As a result of redefining catchment areas, there has been a reduction of around 160 in the number of pupils attending Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr and, accordingly, a reduction in the number of teaching staff since September 2003. It is envisaged that numbers will continue to fall.
2. The school is located in the centre of the village of Gowerton. The youngest pupils come from the urban areas of Pontarddulais, Gorseinon, Waunarlwydd, Garnswllt, areas of Swansea and the Gower Peninsula. The older pupils and students come from the county of Swansea as a whole. The vast majority of pupils are from areas which are not economically or socially privileged or underprivileged. Seven point three percent of pupils have been registered as being entitled to free school meals. This current percentage is lower than the county average. Ninety nine percent of pupils are from the white ethnic group. No pupil needs support to learn English as an additional language. One pupil is in the care of the local education authority.
3. The school accepts pupils from the full ability range. Thirteen pupils (around 1.5%) have a statement of special or additional educational needs. The National Curriculum has been modified for eight pupils. One pupil has been disapplied from the requirements of the National Curriculum. In addition, 127 pupils and students (15.3% of the cohort) are on 'school action' and 'school action plus' stages of the Code of Practice for pupils with additional educational needs. These percentages are lower than national percentages.
4. Twenty two per cent of pupils come from homes where Welsh is the first language and 78% are from homes where English is the main language. All pupils are able to speak Welsh to first language standard. The school uses Welsh as the main medium of education; science is taught through the medium of both Welsh and English at key stage 4. Some subjects are taught through the medium of English in the sixth form.
5. The school was previously inspected during December 1998. Since then, a new headteacher has been appointed. The current headteacher has been in post since September 2002.
6. Four vocational courses are offered at key stage 4 in conjunction with Swansea Tertiary College. A small number of sixth form students attend other

establishments which also provide education and training and there are informal arrangements to co-operate with these establishments.

<b>The school's priorities and targets</b>
--

7. The school's priorities for 2005 and 2006 are to:
- a) raise standards, specifically at key stage 3;
  - b) continue to implement the whole school self-appraisal and performance management strategies;
  - c) further develop the school's curriculum;
  - d) continue to develop the school's community and links with the wider community;
  - e) pay due attention to health and safety issues relating to the buildings.
8. The school's quantitative targets for 2005 are as follows:

<b>Key Stage</b>	<b>Subject etc</b>	<b>% of school's pupils at level 5 or above at key</b>	<b>County Target (%)</b>
------------------	--------------------	--	--------------------------

		<b>stage 3</b>	
Key Stage 3	Welsh	78	78
	English	76	67
	Mathematics	72	68
	Science	70	69
	Key subject indicator	61.5	56
Key Stage 4	5 GCSE subjects at grades A*-C	68	55
	% GCSE subjects at grades A*-G	97	89
	Core subject indicators	52	44
	% leaving without qualification	1	3.7
	% unauthorised absences	1	1.6

## Summary

9. Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr is a good school which has many outstanding features and some shortcomings. It has made good progress in dealing with the key issues for action emanating from the last inspection report.

### 10. Table of grades awarded

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

### Standards

11. The team inspected six subjects. The following table shows ten subjects and reflects the fact that the sciences are inspected as separate subjects in the sixth form, and also that the information technology course is called computing in the sixth form.

Standards in subjects inspected			
Subject	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4	Sixth Form
Welsh	2	2	1
Science	3	3	
Biology			2
Chemistry			2
Physics			3
Design and Technology	2	2	1
Information Technology	2	2	
Computing			2
Geography	2	2	1
Art	2	1	1

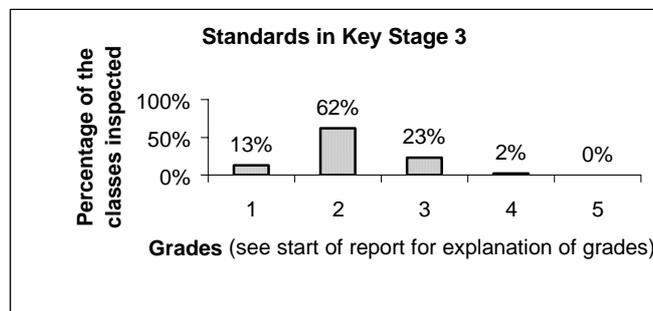
12. At key stage 3, standards are good and there are no important shortcomings in Welsh, design and technology, information technology, geography and art. In science good features outweigh shortcomings. At key stage 4, standards in art are good with some outstanding features. Standards in Welsh, design and

technology, information technology and geography are good and there are no important shortcomings. In science, good features outweigh shortcomings.

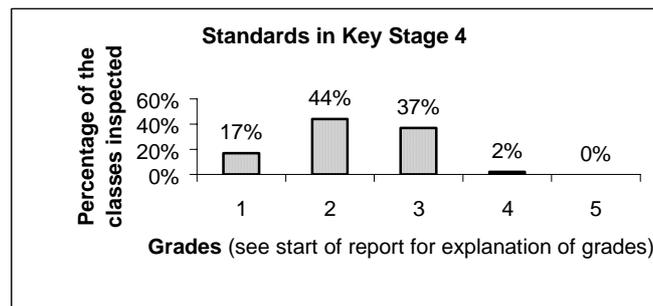
13. In the sixth form, standards are good with some outstanding features in Welsh, design and technology, geography and art. Standards in biology, chemistry and computing are good and there are no important shortcomings. In physics, good features outweigh shortcomings.

### Standards of achievement

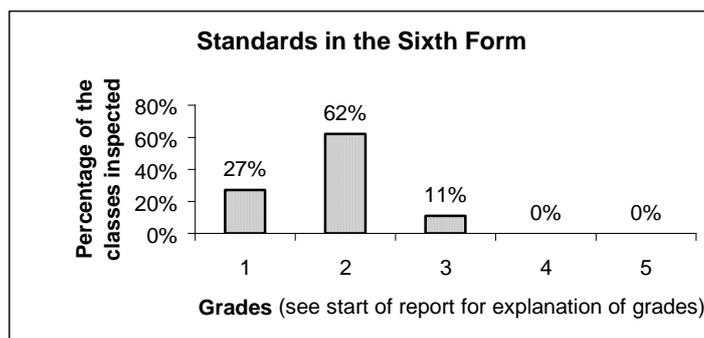
14. The following graph shows the standards across the subjects inspected at key stage 3. Standards are good. There were shortcomings in important areas in only 2% of lessons and standards were deemed to be good with outstanding features or good with no important shortcomings in 75% of lessons observed. Good features outweighed shortcomings in 23% of lessons.



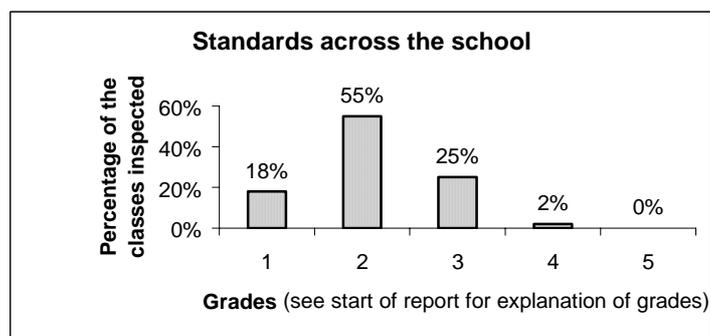
15. The following graph shows standards across the subjects inspected at key stage 4. Standards are good. There were shortcomings in important areas in only 2% of lessons and standards were deemed to be good with outstanding features or good with no important shortcomings in 61% of lessons observed. Good features outweighed shortcomings in 37% of lessons.



16. Standards are good in the sixth form and, frequently, they are very good. The following graph shows that there were no shortcomings in standards in important areas in the lessons observed in the sixth form. A grade 1 was awarded to standards in 27% of the lessons observed and a further 62% achieved a grade 2. This is a high percentage of lessons displaying standards which were either good with outstanding features or good with no important shortcomings. Good features outweighed shortcomings in 11% of lessons.



17. The final graph shows whole school standards. They are good. There were shortcomings in important areas in just 2% of lessons, and as standards in 73% of lessons were given either a grade 1 or a grade 2, the school reaches the targets set by the Welsh Assembly Government which require standards in class to be either grade 1 or grade 2 in over 50% of lessons and grade 3 or above in 95% of lessons.



18. Pupils with additional or special educational needs achieve good standards. Dyslexic pupils with special educational needs achieve very good standards.

### Standards in the key skills and the wider key skills

19. The following table shows the standards achieved by pupils and students in the key skills and the wider key skills. Occasionally, differences are noted between standards in Welsh and in English.

Key Skill	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4	The Sixth Form
Speaking and listening	2	2	Welsh 1 English 2
Reading	2	2	2

Writing	2	2	Welsh 1 English 2
Numeracy	2	2	2
Information and Communication Technology	2	2	2
Working together	1	1	1
Problem solving	2	2	2
Improving their own learning	2	2	2

20. Pupils and students make good progress throughout the school in their bilingual skills. Pupils' bilingual skills are good with no important shortcomings at key stage 3 and key stage 4. In the sixth form, they are good with outstanding features.

### External examination and test results

21. Over the past three years, pupils' standards of achievement in tests in English, mathematics and science at key stage 3 have varied but they place the school in the lowest quartile of schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals. As results in science have not been as good as those in English and mathematics, the percentage of pupils achieving the core subject indicator<sup>1</sup> has also been low. However, results in Welsh have been good in statutory tests and assessments at key stage 3 over the years. The County's added value statistics, and some other indicators, show that the school does provide added value as regards pupil standards at this key stage. The school is aware of the shortcomings in these results and of differences between boys' and girls' results. A strategy for raising standards at key stage 3 was drawn up after the headteacher took up her post in September 2002. This strategy has already started to be reflected in the 2004 statutory test results at this key stage.
22. At key stage 4, despite variations from one year to the next, examination results continue to improve and have been very good for a number of years. They are better than results for the whole of Wales and those of the county. Over the past three years, the school has frequently been placed in the highest quartile for schools with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals for a number of the usual benchmarked indicators.
23. Advanced level examination results are also very good. They are better than those of the County and for the whole of Wales from the point of view of average scores and also students achieving grade C or above, or achieving a grade E or above.

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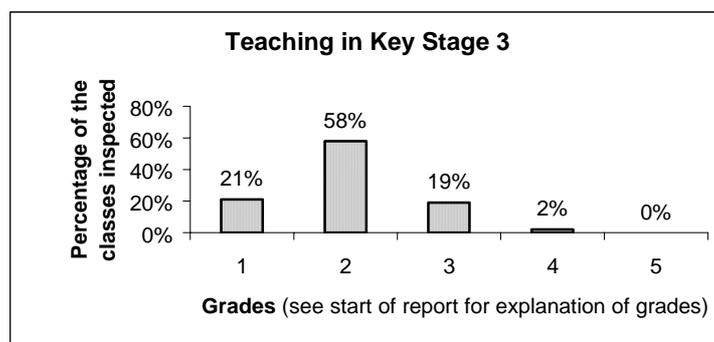
<sup>1</sup> The percentage of pupils in Y9 who attain level 5 or above in either Welsh (first language) or English, mathematics and science.

24. Students completing their Y13 courses were successful in gaining entry to their chosen university or college. A good number of pupils return to the sixth form at this school, the only secondary school offering Welsh-medium post-16 courses in the County. Those leaving to attend other institutions which provide for post-16 students gain appropriate qualifications for the courses which they follow at the institutions.
25. The progress pupils and students make is good at key stage 3 and very good at key stage 4 and in the sixth form. Pupils of all abilities acquire knowledge and new skills and understand what they need to do in order to improve. They develop good or very good personal, social and learning skills, have a healthy attitude towards learning and respect the opinions and beliefs of others. Pupils' abilities to become independent learners are still developing. There are also some examples of untidy and unfinished work.
26. Pupils' behaviour around the school and in the classroom is very good.
27. Figures for pupil attendance reach the target set by the Welsh Assembly Government and punctuality is generally good.

### The quality of education and training

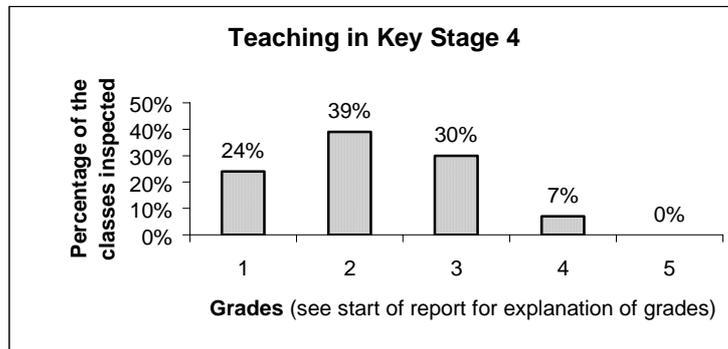
#### The quality of teaching

28. The graphs in the following paragraphs show the quality of teaching in classes at key stage 3 and key stage 4 in the six subjects inspected.
29. Teaching is good with outstanding features in 21% of lessons at key stage 3. In another 58%, teaching is good and there are no significant shortcomings. In 19% of classes, good features in the teaching outweigh shortcomings and in the remaining 2% there were good features but shortcomings also in important areas.

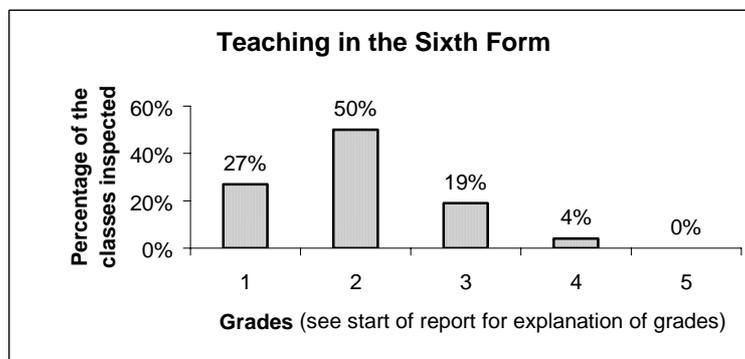


30. At key stage 4, teaching is good with outstanding features in 24% of lessons. In a further 39%, teaching is good and there are no significant shortcomings. In 30% of lessons, good features in the teaching outweigh shortcomings. In the

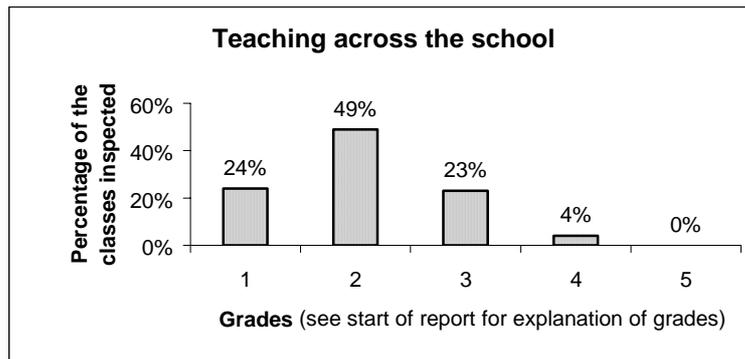
remaining 7% at this key stage, there were good features but shortcomings also in important areas.



31. The following graph shows the quality of teaching in classes in the eight subjects inspected in the sixth form. Teaching is good with outstanding features in 27% of lessons. In a further 50%, teaching is good and there are no significant shortcomings. In 19% of sixth form classes, good features in the teaching outweigh shortcomings and in the remaining 4% there were shortcomings in important areas as well as good features.



32. The following graph shows the quality of teaching across the school. There are good and outstanding features in 24% of lessons and 49% where teaching is good with no significant shortcomings, making a total of 73% of classes throughout the school. This exceeds the target set by the Welsh Assembly Government that teaching should be grade 2 or above in 50% of classes. In 4% of classes, the teaching has good features but some shortcomings in important areas. The school, therefore, meets the Welsh Assembly Government's target that teaching should be grade 1 or grade 2 in 50% of classes and grade 3 or above in 95% of classes.



### Quality of assessment

33. The school meets the statutory requirements for assessment and reporting on the National Curriculum at key stage 3 and the assessment requirements for pupils with special or additional educational needs. The requirements of the examination boards are also satisfied at key stage 4 and in the sixth form.
34. Pupils understand the assessment process and its purpose. Despite the fact that there are good examples of pupils assessing their own work, this good practice has not permeated into all departments in school.
35. Parents receive one full report and one interim assessment annually. These are based on a detailed and consistent assessment and recording process which measures pupils' progress regularly.

### The quality of learning experiences offered by the school

36. The school satisfies pupils' learning requirements very well and the curriculum is broad, varied and balanced. Many of the pupils' learning experiences are also enriched by the very wide range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school. The school's extra-curricular provision is an outstanding feature.
37. The school satisfies all the statutory curricular requirements.
38. The school has very good links with local primary schools and the wider community, including local employers and Careers Wales. It has very good links with parents.
39. The school has appropriate equal opportunities' policies and a clear commitment to offer opportunities and access to the curriculum to all so that they achieve their potential. The efficacy of the social inclusion strategy is an outstanding feature of the school. Pupils are very well supported by their teachers.

40. Strategies and procedures to improve attendance have given rise to improvements. The school has a very effective reward system which celebrates academic, pastoral and personal achievements.
41. The school has very effective policies and procedures to deal with unacceptable behaviour when it occurs.
42. The provision for pupils with special or additional needs satisfies statutory requirements. The individual action plans give teachers and learning support assistants clear guidance regarding what pupils need to do to meet their targets.

### **Leadership and management**

43. The school has clear aims and objectives which are shared with governors, staff, parents and pupils.
44. The Senior Management Team leads the school very well. The headteacher is clearly focused on raising standards and offers the school unambiguous and very appropriate direction.
45. In their role as line managers, members of the Senior Management Team set clear expectations for middle management. They co-operate with teachers and staff, at all levels, and support them in order to improve the provision and the standards achieved. This is an outstanding feature.
46. Departments' performance against targets is thoroughly evaluated. The Senior Management Team works in close conjunction with middle management to help them achieve this. The arrangements which exist for monitoring the performance of departments is an outstanding feature.
47. The school has very thorough procedures to monitor the staff's performance. This information is used effectively to draw up a programme of continuous professional development.
48. The governing body is very supportive and performs its responsibilities very well.

### **Self-evaluation**

49. The school's self-evaluation document is detailed and thorough. It is based on the school managers' very good knowledge of the school. This comprehensive and evaluative report outlines the school's strengths and areas in need of further attention very clearly.
50. The Senior Management Team and middle managers have very good knowledge of the school and its departments. They have a sound understanding of the

standards achieved by the pupils and of teaching standards. This is an outstanding feature.

51. The process of planning for improvement is effective. There is a definite link between the findings of the self-evaluation processes and the priorities revealed in the development plans, at school and departmental level.

### **The school's use of resources**

52. The school has sufficient well qualified staff to meet its requirements in all areas of the curriculum. In addition, the school has sufficient support, administrative and ancillary staff to ensure that the school runs smoothly. All members of staff are very supportive of the school and perform a wide range of responsibilities effectively.
53. There are sufficient resources for all subjects other than for control technology in design and technology at key stage 3. Resources are used economically, efficiently and effectively. Good use is made of the community as an additional resource through numerous external links.
54. The school has made much progress since the last inspection when the condition of the buildings was deemed not to be satisfactory. The sports hall has been renovated and the science laboratories have been totally renewed and refurbished. The school environment is kept clean and tidy.
55. Despite the improvements and the valiant efforts of the school staff to create a stimulating and colourful environment, substantial shortcomings remain as regards the condition and quality of the building and the available space. Some shortcomings are health and safety issues.
56. The good quality of examination results at key stage 4 and in the sixth form, the strategies which exist to further improve test results in some subjects at the end of key stage 3, the quality of teaching, a very rich curriculum and the standard of pupils' work and behaviour ensure that the school provides good value for money.

## **Recommendations**

**In order to improve, the school must:**

- R1. ensure the success of the strategy for raising standards at key stage 3 in general and specifically in science, and continue to reduce the gap between the results of boys and girls in external tests and assessments;\*
- R2. continue to develop pupils' abilities in the key skills, and particularly the independent learning skills:\*
- R3. disseminate good and very good teaching practices throughout the school;\*
- R4. attend to the health and safety issues referred to in the body of the report and continue to discuss improvements to the building with the appropriate authorities;\*

\* The School Development Plan for 2004-2006 or the school's self-evaluation document include action steps to deal with these recommendations.

*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.*