

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

**Bryngwyn School
Dafen
Llanelli
SA14 8RP**

School Number: 6694054

Date of Inspection: 6 March 2006

by

Miss Glynis Owen

8205

Date of Publication: 11 May 2006

Under Estyn contract number: 1201905

The purpose of Estyn is to improve quality and standards in education and training in Wales. Estyn is responsible for inspecting:

- * nursery schools and settings maintained or used by local education authorities (LEAs);
- * primary schools;
- * secondary schools;
- * special schools;
- * pupil referral units;
- * independent schools;
- * further education;
- * adult and community-based learning;
- * youth support services;
- * LEAs;
- * teacher education and training;
- * work-based learning;
- * careers companies; and
- * the education, guidance and training elements of Jobcentre Plus.

Estyn also:

- * provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the National Assembly for Wales and others; and
- * makes public good practice based on inspection evidence.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court
Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gsi.gov.uk

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.uk

© Crown Copyright 2006 This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Copies of this report are available from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide copies of the report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the cost of reproduction may be made to others requesting a copy of the report.

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

The inspection of Bryngwyn School took place between 06/03/06 and 09/03/06. An independent team of inspectors, led by Miss Glynis Owen undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

“There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **Standard** inspection.”

Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

Contents	Page
Context	1
Summary	2
Recommendations	6
Standards	6
Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?	6
The quality of education and training	9
Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	9
Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	12
Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	14
Leadership and management	16
Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?	16
Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	19
Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	21
Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning	23
Mathematics	23
Science	25
Modern foreign languages	26
History	28
Music	29
Business studies	30
School's response to the inspection	31
Appendices	32
1 Basic information about the school	32
2 School data and indicators	32
3 National Curriculum assessments results	33
4 Evidence base of the inspection	34
5 Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team	35

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AS	Advanced Subsidiary
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GTCW	General Teaching Council for Wales
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IEPs	Individual Educational Plans
INSET	In-service Training
KS	Key Stage
NC	National Curriculum
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
PPA	Planning Preparation and Assessment
PSE	Personal and Social Education
SDP	School Development Plan
SEN	Special Educational Needs
TLR	Teaching and Learning Responsibility
UA	Unitary Authority
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government
WRE	Work-related Education
Y (1-13)	Year (1-13)

Context

The nature of the provider

1. Bryngwyn School is an 11-16, mixed, community school, maintained by Carmarthenshire UA. It is situated in Dafen, on the north-eastern side of Llanelli, and draws its pupils from parts of the town centre and from a number of outlying villages. There are 967 pupils on roll, compared to 1068 at the time of the last inspection in March 2000. There are 50 more boys than girls.
2. The catchment area is, overall, disadvantaged. Twenty-two per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, compared to 15.7% nationally. Two of the 11 partner primary schools have become bilingual and about two per cent of pupils speak Welsh as a first language or to an equivalent standard. There is a small percentage of pupils from minority ethnic heritages.
3. Overall, pupils' attainment on entry is below the national average. Thirty-nine pupils have statements of SEN and a further 168 have been identified as needing some support. Overall, this is a slightly higher proportion than nationally, and the number of pupils with statements is significantly higher.
4. The headteacher and two assistant headteachers have remained in post since the last inspection. Two deputy headteachers and one assistant headteacher were appointed in September 2003.

The school's priorities and targets

5. The school's motto is "Giving our best to be the best" and its SDP focuses on:
 - standards;
 - teaching and learning;
 - care, support and guidance;
 - the needs of learners and the wider community; and
 - the development of staff, learning resources and accommodation.
6. Numerical targets are set for the next three years and indicate that:
 - Nearly 60% of pupils should reach at least level 5 in all three core subjects combined, in the NC tests at the end of KS3;
 - Nearly 60% of pupils should achieve at least five grades A*-C in the GCSE examinations; and
 - Nearly 90% should achieve at least five grades A*-G.
7. Numerical targets are also set for other criteria, for attendance and for individual subjects and pupils.

Summary

8. Bryngwyn School has many good features, including particular strengths in mathematics and music, a wide range of opportunities for its pupils in school and in the community, and very good learning and pastoral support to enable them to achieve well. It has a culture of continuing improvement which has already led to significant progress in many areas and the determination to extend this to all areas.

Table of grades awarded

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

9. These grades match the school's self-evaluation report in all key questions except key question 4. In this question, inspectors judged there to be outstanding features, whereas the school had been cautious in awarding itself a grade 2.

Standards of achievement

10. Results in the NC tests at the end of KS3 have improved since the last inspection and were highest in 2005. The percentage of pupils gaining level 5 and above in all three core subjects combined has been above the national average in recent years and has placed the school in the top 25% of schools with a similar intake.
11. At GCSE, results improved until 2003, then fell, particularly in 2005. A significant amount of long-term staff absence contributed substantially to this. Results in the core subjects have been particularly good, and have placed the school in the top 25% of schools with a similar intake, in the last three years. Few pupils leave school without qualification. The most able do very well at GCSE.
12. In the last two years, boys' results at both key stages have been significantly lower than girls', mainly because of results in English.
13. In the six subjects inspected, the following grades were awarded:

Subject	KS3	KS4
Mathematics	1	1
Science	3	2
History	3	2
Modern foreign languages	3	3
Music	1	1
Business Studies	-	2

14. In the 77 lessons observed in these subjects, the following grades were awarded:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
15%	53%	27%	5%	0%

15. These grades meet the WAG target for 2007, for 67% of lessons to be awarded grades 1 and 2, but do not quite meet the target for 98% to be awarded grades 1, 2 and 3. They are higher than the grades awarded in all inspections in Wales 2004-05.

16. Despite a difference in the size and nature of the sample from the last inspection, it is clear that progress has been made since that time.

17. Good features in the standards achieved by pupils are the:

- improvement in the standards pupils achieve in mathematics, music and business studies since the last inspection;
- outstanding work in music and in mathematics;
- progress which pupils make in lessons in these six subjects and in other lessons inspected, when teaching is good or outstanding;
- standards in key skills, particularly reading, writing, numeracy and ICT; and
- extent to which pupils collaborate effectively in creative and problem-solving activities of a practical nature.

18. Good features in pupils' personal, social and learning skills are:

- the maturity of pupils in Y11 and their readiness to carry out leadership roles effectively;
- the outcomes in the vast range of extra-curricular learning experiences;
- pupils' behaviour overall, their very good relationships with teachers, and their respect for visitors and for the environment; and
- pupils' awareness of the needs of others and their raising of large sums of money for those less fortunate.

19. The shortcomings are:

- the inconsistency in standards, sometimes because of continuing staff absence in a few subjects, and the shortcomings in those subjects/key stages graded 3;
- pupils' absence rates, resulting in the school not meeting the WAG target for 2007, and the late arrival of a significant minority of pupils in the morning;
- pupils' general chatter in a small minority of lessons, which limits progress; and
- the limited amount of extended speech by pupils in a significant minority of classes.

The quality of education and training

20. There are several outstanding features in the school's provision:

- the wealth of extra-curricular activities in school and in the community through the 'Bryngwyn Youth Zone' partnerships;

- the high quality and range of learning support offered to pupils with SEN;
- the strong pastoral care offered to pupils within the school and from partnerships with parents, carers and external agencies; and
- the innovative approaches in teaching, introduced through the continuing professional development of teachers, cover assistants and learning support assistants.

21. There is much good teaching. The following grades were awarded for the 77 lessons observed in the six subjects and the 45 lessons observed in all other subjects:

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
6 subjects	30%	40%	22%	8%	0%
Other subjects	13%	51%	29%	7%	0%
Total	24%	44%	25%	7%	0%

22. Whilst this is a smaller sample than that in the last inspection, it is clear that teaching has improved. In particular, the provision of new technology in every classroom has improved the quality of teachers' presentations and the range of activities.

23. Teaching in all lessons in music and in a significant proportion in mathematics had outstanding features.

24. Other good features in the quality of education provided are the:

- opportunities for the most able to take two modern foreign languages, three sciences and statistics at GCSE and AS English;
- range of accredited courses for those pupils following the alternative curricula;
- use of data on pupils' prior attainment and the tracking of their subsequent progress;
- links with primary schools, parents, carers and employers;
- planning for the development of pupils' key skills and the receipt of the Basic Skills Quality Award;
- positive contributions to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; and
- house system and the inter-age activities which it promotes, including the Eisteddfod.

25. Shortcomings in the quality of provision are the:

- small amount of teaching which has important shortcomings, concentrated mainly in one area of practice;
- degree of inconsistency between and within departments in the extent to which pupils of different abilities in a class are challenged and supported;
- similar degree of inconsistency in the quality of assessment; and
- limited number of vocationally-based courses at KS4.

Leadership and management

26. The good features of leadership and management are the:

- clear ethos, expectations and sense of purpose, set by the headteacher, which unite the school as a community;
- introduction of new initiatives and pro-active approach to gaining funding for them, during a difficult period of staff absence;
- in particular, the sense of inclusion within the school and its vision to include the community;
- overall good quality of leadership by governors, senior and middle managers in strategic management and monitoring of practice;
- comprehensive systems for self-evaluation and planning for improvement at all levels and an established, reflective culture, effective in nearly all areas;
- involvement of pupils and parents in review and development;
- clear and detailed documentation about all aspects of the school;
- progress generally, very good progress in some areas and specific progress on the key issues from the last report;
- appropriate staffing in all areas and at all levels, their development and the effective use of staff;
- very good resourcing, and specific improvements since the last inspection in music technology, design and technology, drama, fitness suites, and ICT provision across the school;
- improvements to the accommodation and its overall good quality and attractive display work;
- well-managed budget planning, linked to the SDP and deemed effective by auditors; and
- meeting of all statutory requirements.

27. The issues not fully resolved by senior and middle managers are:

- some inconsistency between and within departments in standards, teaching and assessment;
- some variation in the rigour by which practice is monitored, shortcomings identified and plans drawn up for improvement;
- very limited use of the library as a learning resource centre; and
- a few shortcomings in the accommodation.

Recommendations

In order to build on current good practice, the school should focus on the following areas within its comprehensive SDP:

- R1: Continue to improve standards generally and in particular:
- standards in those subjects/key stages which have shortcomings; and
 - pupils' extended speech.
- R2: Continue efforts to improve attendance and punctuality.
- R3: Promote best practice to ensure that teaching strategies meet the needs of all levels of ability in the class.
- R4: Ensure greater consistency in assessment and in its use to further pupils' progress.
- R5: Ensure that monitoring of practice, by senior and middle managers, is consistently rigorous.
- R6: Continue to work with the UA to improve:
- dining facilities; and
 - changing rooms for physical education.

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

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

29. Results in the NC tests at the end of KS3 have improved since the last inspection and were highest in 2005. Good features are that:

- results are above the national average and show that value has been added over the key stage;
- the percentage of pupils gaining at least level five in all three subjects combined has placed the school in the top 25% of schools with a similar intake in each of the last three years;
- results in mathematics have placed the school in the top 25% of similar schools, in each of the last three years; and
- results in English and science have placed the school above average or in the top 25% of similar schools.

30. However, boys have achieved significantly less well than girls, mainly because of results in English.

31. At KS4, results at GCSE improved until 2003, then fell, particularly in 2005. A significant amount of long-term staff absence contributed substantially to this. The good features of results in recent years have been:

- attainment in line with or above the national average in most indicators until 2004;
- strong performance in the core subjects which has continued to place the school in the top 25% of schools with a similar intake;
- very good results by the most able pupils across the curriculum, including several additional GCSE options taught in extra-curricular time, and AS level in English;
- strong performance in English literature, information technology, media studies and music over recent years; and
- few pupils leaving school without qualifications.

32. The shortcomings in performance at GCSE are:

- results in 2005 not adding value to prior performance at KS3;
- boys' results' being significantly lower than girls' particularly in English;
- the percentage of pupils gaining at least five grades A*-G comparing less favourably with results in similar schools than other indicators; and
- some negative residuals in the humanities and design and technology.

33. Results at Entry level, in a few vocationally-based courses and in accredited courses for those on alternative curricula have been appropriate and enabled pupils to achieve success at various levels.

34. In the six subjects inspected, there are:

- outstanding features in music and mathematics at both key stages;
- no important shortcomings in science, history and business studies at KS4; and
- some shortcomings in science, history, and modern foreign languages at KS3, and in modern foreign languages at KS4.

35. The grades awarded for standards achieved in the 77 lessons observed in these six subjects were as follows:

Key stage	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3	19%	42%	30%	9%	0%
KS4	12%	65%	23%	0%	0%
Whole school	15%	53%	27%	5%	0%

36. These grades meet the WAG target for 2007, for 67% of lessons to be awarded grades 1 and 2, but do not quite meet the target for 98% to be awarded grades 1, 2 and 3. They are above the grades recorded in all inspections in Wales in 2004-2005, when eight per cent were awarded grade 1 and 52% grade 2.

37. Despite the difference in the nature and size of the sample from that of the last inspection, it is clear that progress has been made. In 2000, 51% of lessons were graded 1 and 2, with only two per cent graded 1.

38. The good features in the standards pupils achieve are:

- the significant improvement in mathematics, music and business studies since the last inspection;
- outstanding work in mathematics and music;
- very good work by the most able pupils in the additional subjects they can choose;
- good progress by pupils of all abilities when teaching is good or outstanding; and
- the progress of pupils with SEN in small classes and in withdrawal groups.

39. The good features in the standards in key skills in these subjects and in the 45 lessons observed in other subjects are that:

- pupils' reading skills are good, at different levels of ability, and there is an appropriate amount of extended reading for research;
- written work is well presented, in a variety of formats, with a good degree of technical accuracy in relation to ability;
- pupils can manipulate numbers in different contexts and interpret data;
- pupils' ICT skills are good and they use these skills in subjects across the curriculum;
- all pupils at KS4 take a full-course GCSE in Welsh second language and the percentage of pupils achieving a grade A*-C is well above the national average;
- pupils collaborate well in creative and problem-solving activities; and
- pupils work to improve their performance.

40. Pupils make progress regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background, because the school provides strong pastoral and learning support. Most progress is made in practical activities and in those seen to have a practical relevance. Pupils generally understand how well they are doing and work to improve their performance.

41. The shortcomings in standards achieved and in key skills are that:

- there is greater inconsistency between standards in classes at KS3 than at KS4;
- there are shortcomings in modern foreign languages at both key stages;
- in a significant minority of classes, pupils do not use extended speech to explore ideas, debate and justify opinions;
- in a small minority of classes pupils do not listen attentively to the teacher or to other pupils; and

- there is little use of incidental Welsh or promotion of pupils' bilingual skills in subjects other than Welsh.

42. Pupils' personal, social and learning skills develop well on the whole because:

- the school values individuals and is flexible in matching provision to need;
- most pupils show motivation and behave responsibly, towards their teachers, visitors and the environment;
- they are aware of the needs of others and raise large sums of money to help those less fortunate;
- pupils in Y11, in particular, are mature for their age and take on responsibilities towards younger pupils;
- pupils in KS4 who are trained as mentors have skills in empathy and problem-solving;
- through PSE and careers education, pupils show an awareness of the diverse nature of society and the workplace, and form ideas about their role in it;
- they are able to reflect, through many opportunities which promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; and
- the large majority of pupils is prompt arriving at school and attends regularly, a good preparation for the world of work.

43. However, there are some shortcomings:

- despite many initiatives, attendance has not improved significantly since the last inspection and, at 88% annually, does not meet the WAG target of 92%;
- the number of pupils on short-term or permanent exclusion last year was higher than in many schools; and
- a significant minority of pupils is late arriving at school in the morning.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

45. The outstanding feature in the quality of teaching and training is the commitment to CPD which:

- provides opportunities to all staff, teaching and non-teaching;
- makes valuable use of bid monies from such as the GTCW;
- has established learning triads with other schools;
- has formed a CPD group of staff who actively share good practice; and
- tracks and monitors INSET extensively.

46. This has had a significant impact on classroom practice and there are common good features in teaching, evident in lesson planning and practice, across the curriculum.

47. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
6 subjects	30%	40%	22%	8%	0%
Other subjects	13%	51%	29%	7%	0%
Total	24%	44%	25%	7%	0%

48. Whilst this is a different sample from that of the last inspection in size and nature, it is clear that there has been progress. At that time, only three per cent of lessons were graded 1.

49. In this inspection, all lessons in music, and a significant number in mathematics were graded 1. The seven per cent of lessons graded 4 were mostly concentrated in modern foreign languages.

50. There are many good features in the quality of teaching and training. Lesson planning is effective because of the:

- use of the four-part lesson structure;
- shared learning objectives;
- effective re-cap of prior learning; and
- timed activities, which ensure good pace.

51. The use of resources is good because of the:

- extensive use of whiteboards and data projectors;
- stimulating materials to engage pupils;
- exercises which enable pupils to participate actively;
- knowledge of pupils' learning styles, which inform strategies; and
- group and paired-work opportunities.

52. There are positive working relationships between teachers and pupils, and between pupils which enhance the quality of teaching and learning because:

- praise is used to good effect;
- learning and key skills are promoted in a positive atmosphere; and
- individual and collaborative work is encouraged.

53. Good co-operation between cover assistants, learning support assistants and teachers ensures:

- joint planning for effective support;
- IEPs inform classroom practice;
- individual needs of pupils are met; and
- pupils display confidence in seeking help.

54. The shortcomings in the quality of teaching and training are the:

- lack of differentiation in a significant minority of lessons where there is a range of ability;
- lack of clarity in explaining what pupils are expected to do in a small number of lessons;
- low-level disruption in a small minority of lessons, which is not always effectively challenged by teachers; and
- few opportunities to develop pupils' bilingual skills in lessons other than Welsh.

55. There are good features in the quality of assessment:

- there is a good range of assessment strategies;
- there is particularly good practice in English;
- pupils are increasingly involved in assessment for learning, through self-evaluation and peer assessment; and
- through this, they gain greater understanding of their standard and what they need to do to improve.

56. Reports are generated electronically and:

- allow for both pupils' and parents' comments on progress;
- provide sound diagnostic advice for improvement;
- check and report on progress mid-year and at the end of the year; and
- use sub-levelling in the NC levels at KS3.

57. Attainment data are used well. The good features are:

- prior attainment data are stored electronically;
- they are carefully analysed to assess performance;
- data are provided at various levels to all teachers to inform their lesson planning; and
- data are increasingly used to set targets for individual pupils.

58. Statutory requirements are met.

59. The shortcomings in the quality of assessment are:

- the day-to-day marking, which has inconsistencies within and across departments and does not always inform pupils how to improve; and
- the degree of accuracy in levels given in modern foreign languages.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

61. An outstanding feature of the curriculum for learners – made possible by the effective shortening of the school day and the creation of a 'third session' - is the range, variety and quality of enrichment activities that contribute to a vibrant out-of-school-hours community education programme. These include:

- the appointment of a Community Development Officer, who organizes, and raises funds to support, a wide network of community-related projects, under the name of the 'Bryngwyn Youth Zone' (BYZ);
- voluntary academic 'catch-up' classes attended by a significant number of pupils;
- the provision of a variety of activities, open to all, that encourage pupils to use their initiative or entrepreneurial skills; for example, environmental protection projects (in collaboration with local Community Action Zones) and 'Dynamics', a self-help performing arts group; and
- the development of key skills – in particular the wider key skills of improving performance, working with others and problem-solving.

62. There are, besides, many good features of the way in which the school curriculum meets the needs and aspirations of its pupils.

63. The curriculum provides for a variety of learning experiences that incorporates the development of both basic and key skills and accommodates a range of learning styles. It is generally well balanced and flexible enough to meet the needs of individual learners. It is an inclusive model, with open-access provision that encompasses, for example, AS study for the highest attainers, with basic skills, ASDAN and alternative curricula accreditation for those needing more support.

64. Promotion of Welsh language and culture is achieved, for example, by:

- the provision of full-course Welsh second language for all pupils at KS4;
- a popular annual eisteddfod;
- an appropriate emphasis, through the '*laith ar Waith*' project, on the importance of bilingualism in the workplace; and
- emphasis on the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* in subject teaching – with particularly good practice in music and history.

65. There is a well-organized and comprehensive programme of PSE, complemented by the extended curriculum, in which pupils:

- gain a progressive awareness of social, moral, spiritual and cultural issues;

- learn about moral issues and apply this awareness, for example, by being involved in peer mentoring, anti-bullying initiatives, or fund-raising charity activities;
 - learn about sustainable development through both taught PSE lessons and involvement in conservation projects;
 - develop spiritual awareness through statutory religious education, which forms an integral part of the PSE carousel in KS4, through weekly assemblies, and by a 'thought for the week' that permeates both registration and PSE activities; and
 - develop an understanding of their own and other peoples' cultures and have opportunities to express this, for example through fund-raising charity activities and through experience of the performing arts.
66. The school places considerable importance on the development of both basic skills and key skills, as evidenced by:
- award of the Basic Skills Quality Mark;
 - the range and quality of learning support available in both the mainstream, extended and alternative curricula; and
 - CPD time spent on the development of literacy and other founder key skills and penetration of this kind of awareness into schemes of work and lesson plans.
67. The curriculum in both key stages meets statutory requirements.
68. However, despite this very positive picture of the school's curricular provision, there are a few shortcomings:
- provision for PSE is less good in KS3 than in KS4, where it has roughly twice as much time and is taught by specialist staff;
 - whilst inclusion of statutory religious education as part of PSE provision in KS4 takes advantage of its relationship to other elements, the effectiveness of teaching is undermined by the uneven sequencing of lessons in religious education within the overall programme;
 - though evident throughout the extended curriculum, the wider key skills of problem-solving, improving performance and working with others have still to become fully integrated into teaching and learning in both key stages; and
 - the relatively high incidence of split classes (those taught by more than one teacher per subject) in SEN provision in KS3 undermines both the continuity and progression in pupils' learning.
69. The school provides a highly effective programme of WRE, in collaboration with Careers Wales, whose representative is based in the school.
70. Typical examples of the effectiveness of this collaboration are:
- organization of the careers/WRE elements of the PSE programme in both key stages and involvement of local employers in its delivery;

- a well-established work experience programme of good quality, in which pupils are carefully placed, their progress is well monitored and their safety assured; and
- provision of an annual Careers Conference and other special WRE events, such as the '*laith ar Waith*' and '*Tre-Gwaith*' initiatives, both of which were very well received by pupils.

71. The school makes effective use of WRE to tackle social disadvantage and ensure equality of curriculum access to all learners. The strengths of this provision are:

- the inclusive enrichment programme, which includes several enterprise projects and is open to all;
- alternative curricula that are workplace/enterprise-based, grounded in the development of basic and key skills;
- the setting of worthwhile, relevant, achievable goals that enable pupils to rebuild their self-confidence and renew their attitudes to learning; and
- the developing sense that pupils have of the relationship between self-sufficiency and life-long learning.

72. The only shortcoming in WRE is the imbalance between academic and vocational courses in KS4. There are currently few vocationally-based courses to meet the needs of pupils of differing abilities in KS4 who might wish to follow this route. The school is reviewing its provision and partnerships, and further courses are planned.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
--

73. The school judged this key question to be grade 2. The team has awarded grade 1 because it judged there to be outstanding features in this aspect of the school's provision.

74. The outstanding features are:

- the quality of pastoral care for individual pupils;
- the effectiveness of the school's work in partnership with parents, carers and outside agencies; and
- the quality of support for pupils with additional learning needs.

Outstanding practice

75. Since the last inspection the learning support department has extended its range of provision for pupils with additional learning needs significantly and it is now an outstanding feature of the school.

76. This outstanding practice includes:

- thorough diagnosis of pupils' needs;
- exemplary record keeping; and
- detailed individual and group education plans.

77. The range of provision is very wide and comprehensive and includes:

- discrete special needs classes in KS3;
- support from teaching assistants in mainstream classes in KS3 and KS4;
- small group withdrawal classes for literacy and numeracy in years 7 and 8; and
- Early Bird reading clubs every morning for pupils in each year in KS3, with teaching assistants and Y10 reading mentors.

78. The thoughtful and sensitive deployment of the now considerable team of support staff (15 in all) and the quality of their work are making a significant contribution to pupils' progress. The head of department meets regularly with her team to evaluate and to plan. When supporting pupils in mainstream lessons, teaching assistants are increasingly taking responsibility for the modification of teaching materials so that the needs of pupils with difficulties are more successfully met.

79. A further very positive complement to the work of the department is the recently established study support centre. Pupils attending the centre include those with statements of SEN, pupils with specific learning difficulties, looked-after children and pupils in Y11 requiring additional support. There is a range of good quality resources, including computers and an interactive whiteboard.

80. There are also many other good features of the school's provision. These include the:

- positive relationships between pupils and the school's approachable and supportive staff;
- relationships with parents and carers and their involvement in the pastoral and academic progress of the pupils;
- quality of arrangements for transfer to secondary school and the induction programme for new pupils;
- mentoring programme in which Y10 pupils are appointed to support Y7 tutor groups;
- support and advice, which pupils receive when making subject choices for KS4 and when deciding upon courses of study, training or employment post-16;
- positive links and relationships with outside agencies to ensure support for pupils with SEN and pupils for whom alternative provision may be appropriate in KS4;

- school's behaviour support centre, which seeks to address the behavioural and social difficulties of pupils in KS3;
- process, which the school has in place, to monitor attendance and punctuality, including a reward system for good and improving attendance; and
- counselling of pupils, who have been taken out of a lesson and placed in 'Remove', in order to bring about resolution of the situation.

81. The school also appropriately fulfils its duty to:

- promote good race relations across all areas of activity;
- provide systems for reporting and dealing with incidents of bullying and harassment; and
- ensure effective procedures for child protection and for looked-after children.

82. However despite this very positive picture of the school's provision there are some shortcomings. These are that:

- work is not always planned appropriately to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties;
- the time allocation for some pupils in the behaviour support centre is not always adequate; and
- some pupils, both boys and girls, tend to make gender stereotypical choices when deciding upon option subjects at KS4.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

84. The school has a clear ethos and sense of community. This good feature is achieved through:

- clear direction from the headteacher and shared values among managers, teaching and support staff to provide opportunities for all pupils and help them to achieve their best;
- easily understood mottos, about expectations, conveyed to pupils and reinforced regularly;
- detailed and comprehensive policy documents; and
- good communication with parents.

85. The headteacher and other members of the senior management team are effective because they:

- have vision and are pro-active in introducing new initiatives;
- secure the funding necessary to provide the appropriate resources;

- are committed to continuing improvement, identify priorities and strategies and monitor practice;
- maintain a presence around the school to reinforce expectations of behaviour; and
- work to resolve problems, such as those created by significant long-term staff absence in the last eighteen months.

86. In particular, the headteacher and other senior managers are focused on improving standards, teaching and learning. Since the last inspection, there has been good overall progress because:

- they are each linked to middle managers and oversee performance;
- staff have been involved in working parties on important priorities;
- some of this collaboration has resulted in innovation and sharing of best practice within the school and with other schools;
- there has been heavy investment in ICT, to equip every classroom with new technology to enhance teaching and learning and training for staff in maximising its potential;
- continuing professional development in many areas, for teaching staff, cover assistants and learning support assistants, has been well planned and tracked; and
- systems for self-evaluation and planning are well established, with reflective attitudes in the school as a whole.

87. The quality of middle managers, pastoral and academic, is also generally good. Particularly good features are the:

- leadership skills of most middle managers, in giving direction, monitoring and evaluating practice and planning for improvement;
- sense of team-work in departments and year teams; and
- reflective attitudes to developing their roles further and adapting to change.

88. The school has set itself clear targets for improvement in its development plan, based on appropriate priorities. It has also set itself numerical targets in subjects, for pupils, and for the school as a whole. Very good progress has been made in:

- mathematics, music and business studies;
- literacy, particularly writing, and ICT;
- community links and learning support; and
- all other aspects of the key issues from the last inspection report, except attendance and punctuality, despite numerous initiatives.

89. The priorities of the WAG have been incorporated in the SDP. The school is inclusive, with strong learning and pastoral support and very good community links. There are also planned opportunities to promote:

- personal, social and work-related education;

- sustainable development;
 - racial awareness and global citizenship through assemblies and PSE; and
 - pupils' bilingual skills through full-course Welsh for all at KS4.
90. The school has very good links with community providers, which have resulted in a wealth of extra-curricular activities, many based in the community. It also has very good partnerships with partner primary schools.
91. There remain areas, however, which are not yet fully resolved by senior and middle managers. With regard to standards, teaching and learning:
- there remain some inconsistencies between performance in different subjects, both in examination results and in standards as judged by inspectors;
 - there is a small amount of teaching graded 4, and some issues related to teaching and assessment strategies within and between departments;
 - the monitoring of standards, teaching and learning is not always sufficiently rigorous to identify shortcomings and eliminate them; and
 - the library is not sufficiently developed as a resource centre for independent learning.
92. In the implementation of the WAG priorities, there are some shortcomings in:
- the time for and varied delivery of PSE, particularly at KS3; and
 - limited cross-curricular planning for themes as sustainable development, racial awareness, global citizenship and bilingualism.
93. Links with other schools and colleges to extend the range of options at KS4 have diminished in recent years, apart from those for the alternative curricula. There are plans to expand vocationally-based courses in the near future.
94. Governors are fully involved in strategic management and in monitoring and evaluating practice. Particularly good features are:
- the expertise in specific areas which they bring to the school;
 - the structure of committees which works effectively;
 - their overall knowledge of the school's performance, priorities and difficulties;
 - their attendance at lessons and links to subjects;
 - the involvement with staff and the school council in gaining views before making decisions;
 - the analysis of data and receipt of reports to inform them of practice; and
 - governors' pertinent questioning of the school in their role as 'critical friends'.
95. All statutory requirements are met.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

96. This grade matches the grade in the school's self-evaluation report.
97. The headteacher has created a culture which has enabled the school to identify and share good practice. This has resulted in the development of a reflective attitude and professional dialogue among staff which has raised standards in many areas.
98. The school is well informed about its performance. It uses a variety of approaches to gather information. These include analysis of data on prior attainment, the scrutiny of pupils' work and classroom observation.
99. The headteacher's self-evaluation report, prepared for the inspection, is accurate and informative. Its good features are its:
- concise statements of the school's best features;
 - honest identification of subjects and areas most in need of improvement; and
 - clear statements of action already taken by the school to improve.
100. The good features of the school's monitoring and evaluation of its performance are:
- clear policy statements at whole-school and departmental level;
 - a well-established cycle of self-evaluation throughout the year;
 - the use of a variety of approaches to gather information on school performance;
 - frequent monitoring of teaching and learning with clear feedback as to how performance can be improved;
 - the incorporation of self-evaluation findings into whole-school and departmental development priorities;
 - consultation with pupils, parents and members of the wider school community;
 - the clear understanding of their responsibilities regarding self-evaluation by most leaders and managers; and
 - the role of both the governing body and the UA link adviser as effective critical friends.
101. However there are some shortcomings. In one or two departments they are as follows:
- the monitoring policy is not comprehensive;
 - little use is made of prior attainment data to set appropriate targets; and
 - insufficient classroom observation takes place so that good practice is not identified and shared.
102. There is insufficient rigour, accountability and consistency of approach in some of the monitoring by senior managers in their links to middle managers.

103. In addition, heads of year do not yet carry out their role in monitoring pupils' academic progress fully, nor give sufficient direction to their teams of tutors in this respect.
104. The school's planning for improvement is good. The way that leaders and managers have ensured that the school has the resources to meet its objectives in ICT across the curriculum is very good. The installation of interactive whiteboards or data projectors in every classroom has had a major impact on the development of teaching approaches and pupils' key skills.
105. Where departments have been effective in planning for improvement, contributory factors to this development have been:
- departmental self-evaluation practice that has clear links with development planning;
 - innovative attempts to make the curriculum more relevant;
 - consistent and shared approaches to lesson planning and assessment;
 - rigorous use of assessment data to set targets;
 - regular monitoring of performance against targets, revising them in line with pupils' progress and attendance; and
 - the development of middle managers' leadership skills and sharing of good practice through the staff working group.
106. However there are still shortcomings in the following areas:
- one or two departments are unclear about the priorities and actions required to bring about improvement; and
 - self-evaluation has not yet led to measurable improvements in performance in a small minority of departments.
107. Good progress has been made overall since the last inspection. The key issues have been addressed as follows:
1. significant progress has been made in business studies and ICT across the curriculum;
 2. standards generally have improved, though long-term staff absence has led to a dip in some subjects;
 3. good progress has been made in the development of key skills;
 4. NC requirements are now met in boys' physical education, ICT and music; and
 - 5 & 6. many initiatives have been introduced to improve attendance and punctuality, but without significant improvement. This remains a key issue.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.
--

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

109. There are many good features in the school's provision of resources.

110. There are sufficient, qualified, and specialist teachers. These are supported in their work by a substantial number of learning support assistants, technicians, administrative staff and cover supervisors. There is effective management of support staff, who add value to pupils' learning opportunities.

111. A significant impact on the quality of teaching and learning has been made by:

- high levels of support for the provision of books and materials; and
- the considerable and significant investment in ICT for every classroom.

112. There is adequate accommodation for the number of pupils on roll and for the curriculum provided. Substantial improvements have been made to the buildings and grounds since the last inspection. These have supported pupils' learning as well as providing a safe and secure environment. They include the:

- refurbishment of the music suite;
- upgrading of the drama hall with sound equipment/ICT;
- enhancement of the design and technology facilities;
- provision of a fitness suite for sport and leisure activities;
- development of a behaviour support centre;
- installation of closed-circuit television (CCTV); and
- provision of boundary fencing.

113. The school's buildings and grounds are well maintained and innovatively managed. This is evidenced by:

- the respect pupils show for their environment and the way they conduct themselves during lesson change, break and lunch times;
- the absence of graffiti;
- the satisfactory standards of hygiene observed in toilet areas; and
- the implementation of the school's health and safety policy, which includes the tight management of fire regulations.

114. However, there are some shortcomings.

115. The library fails to serve its purpose in sufficiently supporting pupils' reading and research. This is evidenced by the fact that:

- it is not well used and there is no development plan;
- few books are borrowed and much of the stock is old;
- there are no newspapers or magazines and only a few DVDs and videos are available;

- the teacher in charge of the library has little time to spend in the library and has no formal link with a senior manager; and
 - the room is relatively small and the opportunity to integrate the adjacent ICT rooms into mainstream library provision has not been taken.
116. The design of a centrally-located dining-hall has a negative impact upon the ethos of the school and:
- makes pupils' movement difficult at lesson change;
 - makes the management of breaks and lunch hours difficult because of overcrowding;
 - makes it difficult for visitors to access the school entrance; and
 - only works because of the mature attitude of pupils and the effective management of staff;
117. Physical education changing rooms, for both girls and boys, are too small for the numbers of pupils who need to use them.
118. In the use made of resources, there are many good features:
- staffing and resources are annually assessed on the basis of curricular need and their use reflects good value for money;
 - workforce remodelling has been carried out, which has seen an increasingly effective use of teaching, administrative and support staff;
 - PPA time for teaching staff has been timetabled and there is a growing awareness and use by staff of the opportunities that this affords;
 - the school is on target to publish its staffing structure for teaching and learning posts (TLRs), by the 31st March, 2006;
 - CPD is a strength of the school; and
 - NQTs have a planned programme which provides guidance and support, lesson observation and INSET.
119. The budget is well managed and tightly controlled by the headteacher, governors and finance officer. Its good features are that:
- all budget-planning is directly linked to the SDP;
 - large sums of additional monies are raised by the school;
 - governors play an effective role in the budget-setting and monitoring process;
 - prudent and careful planning takes into account national and local trends, and subsequently allows the three-year SDP to be delivered on target; and
 - very good value is obtained from the resource base.
120. However, there are some shortcomings.
121. Year 7 and Y8 pupils taught in the SEN class have a much higher number of teachers than their peer group.

122. Whilst the school has a sickness absence policy which is actively managed, long-term staff absence has been significant over the last two years. This has resulted in:

- an adverse impact on standards in English, modern foreign languages, religious education, Welsh, physical education, design technology, child development and health and social care; and
- some classes having several supply teachers.

123. Reserves have been set aside in order to make provision for commitments already made but not yet paid for, and to provide a contingency to off-set the effects of demographic changes. However, there remains further money that has not been spent on pupils within the financial year.

124. The school has not yet registered for data protection.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Mathematics

Key Stage 3: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Key Stage 4: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Key Stage 3

Outstanding features

125. Pupils make good use of ICT to develop very good understanding of mathematics.

126. Standards are particularly high in the Cognitive Acceleration in Mathematical Education (CAME) project, in which pupils increase their understanding of robots, co-ordinates and distance.

127. The more able pupils produce a large amount of good work. They deal with complex mathematical issues, namely, manipulating algebraic equations, and issues relating to volume and area.

128. Pupils of average and lower ability also achieve very well in relation to ability.

Good features

129. Particular good features in the standards achieved are that pupils:

- complete set work at a good pace;
- generally include units in their answers as appropriate and the units they use are generally correct;
- are able to determine what mathematical process is required to solve a particular problem;
- are conversant with the meaning of inverse functions;
- show good understanding when working with equations; and
- are conscious of the difference between metric and imperial units and know when these various units are used.

Shortcomings

130. Not all pupils:

- are fully conversant with the way the four rules apply to negative numbers;
- complete all the work set;
- understand fully the area and volumes of shapes.

Key Stage 4

Outstanding features

131. The most able complete a large amount of good work and attain very well in:

- GCSE mathematics;
- work in statistics, gaining an additional GCSE qualification; and
- work in calculus.

132. Pupils of average and lower ability also achieve very well. In particular they:

- change easily from percentages to decimals or fractions;
- estimate their answers with a fair degree of accuracy in all given circumstances;
- have good understanding of mathematical terms;
- apply their knowledge to solving problems;
- regularly include units in their answers; and
- deal effectively with equations, solving simple, simultaneous and quadratic equations effectively.

Good features

133. Pupils are able to determine squares and square roots of numbers and to correct a decimal number to a given number of decimal places.

134. Pupils factorise algebraic expressions, and solve equations to a good standard in relation to their ability; and

135. The more able pupils can draw graphs for the sine, cosine and tangent expressions and use these correctly to answer any set question.

Shortcomings

136. There are no significant shortcomings.

Science

Key Stage 3: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

Key Stage 3

Good features

137. National Curriculum test results have improved over the last three years and compare well with those of similar schools.

138. Most pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of scientific facts and ideas. They remember their previous work and the more able can use this to explain some everyday scientific events.

139. Pupils use scientific terminology correctly, both orally and in writing.

140. Pupils carry out practical work carefully and safely. They:

- work well together in groups;
- understand how to make a fair test;
- plan a scientific investigation; and
- collect experimental results carefully and accurately.

141. Most pupils organise their data using tables and understand the need to calculate average values. Many pupils can present their results using graphs.

Shortcomings

142. A small minority of pupils does not fully understand the work. Often they have difficulty in remembering and using previous work. These pupils are making very little progress.

143. A small minority of pupils is not well motivated and does not pay attention in lessons. They underachieve.

144. In some classes, pupils misbehave and this has an adverse effect on the standards that they, and others, achieve.

Key Stage 4

Good features

145. Although GCSE science results have declined during the past two years they still compare well with those of similar schools.

146. Pupils have a good understanding of scientific facts and ideas. In particular, they:

- can use their knowledge to explain scientific events; and
- use a range of resources to collect scientific information.

147. Most pupils are making good progress during their science lessons over the key stage.

148. The most able pupils have a very good and mature understanding of their work. They have well-considered views about the impact of science on society.

149. All pupils are able to use scientific terminology correctly, both orally and in writing.

150. Pupils have good practical skills and carry out experimental work carefully and safely. They

- co-operate well during group practical work;
- collect experimental results accurately and record them carefully, with due regard to the use of scientific units; and
- analyse and understand the meaning of their results.

151. The more able understand about experimental error and know how to minimise this in their practical work.

Shortcomings

152. When biology, chemistry and physics are taught as separate subjects at GCSE, only a small minority of pupils achieves an A* grade.

153. A small minority of pupils:

- does not fully understand the work and cannot apply knowledge easily;
- does not understand the purpose or significance of practical work; and
- does not attend school regularly and as a result work is often incomplete.

Modern foreign languages

Key Stage 3: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key Stage 4: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key Stage 3

Good features

154. Pupils generally understand French and Spanish spoken by the teacher and on recordings.

155. Pupils participate enthusiastically in class oral work. They

- answer questions in single words and short sentences; and
- enjoy strengthening their oral skills and recall of language by taking part in songs and rhymes from the department's very good resource bank.

156. Some pupils are able to show good recall of previously learnt material and apply this to new situations.

157. Pupils use the department's very good ICT resources to complete reading tasks, matching key words to pictures.

158. The most able pupils write sentences and phrases accurately using a range of vocabulary. They understand and are able to apply simple grammatical principles.

Shortcomings

159. Some pupils are inattentive and do not understand the language spoken in the classroom.

160. Some pupils show poor retention of vocabulary because they have not practised speaking enough in the classroom.

161. A minority of pupils does not participate in class oral and pair work.

162. Pupils rarely give longer answers to questions.

163. Some pupils are unable to read aloud accurately or confidently and have weak pronunciation.

Key Stage 4

Good features

164. The small numbers of pupils who continue with the subject build on the knowledge and skills they have developed previously and progress to more complex language.
165. They listen attentively in class and understand the general gist of spoken language.
166. Many pupils demonstrate good recall of previously learnt material because they benefit from practice with the very good whiteboard resources.
167. The most able can:
- construct longer spoken sentences;
 - write longer paragraphs;
 - begin to show, in French, the confidence to apply their language for classroom transactions;
 - pronounce well; and
 - understand details as well as the general gist of language spoken at speed by the teacher and in recordings.
168. The reading skills of a number of pupils improve because of the extensive reinforcement they gain from the department's whiteboard resource bank.
169. Pupils are able to use dictionaries for simple reference.
170. Pupils consolidate their knowledge and develop their vocabulary through effective use of the department's revision materials, which are of high quality.

Shortcomings

171. A number of pupils are very hesitant and insecure with their pronunciation in both languages.
172. A significant number of pupils rarely speak or write at length because their answers tend to be restricted to short sentences.
173. Some pupils are reluctant and hesitant with speaking. These pupils do not use the target language for classroom communication.
174. Pupils are generally hesitant at reading aloud.
175. Some pupils do not pay sufficient attention to writing accurately. Their progress and revision are hindered by incomplete work.

History

Key Stage 3: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

Key Stage 3

Good features

176. Most pupils have appropriate levels of historical knowledge and understanding. In particular their:
- recall of previous learning is generally sound;

- chronological awareness is good; and
- historical terms are used currently in most cases.

177. Pupils are able to locate, organise and communicate relevant information from texts and other sources of evidence to answer historical questions.

178. By the end of KS3, most pupils are able to distinguish between different types of causes, including long and short-term reasons for events such as popular protests in the nineteenth century.

179. Some lower ability pupils are able to use the Internet to undertake historical investigations of a good standard and then present their findings using ICT.

Shortcomings

180. The work of some pupils lacks the necessary degree of depth, analysis and evaluation to explain the significance of their study.

181. Some pupils offer only brief factual responses in both their written and oral work.

182. A minority of pupils completes written tasks irregularly and does not make contributions to the lesson.

Key Stage 4

Good features

183. Most pupils develop the historical skills and understanding acquired in KS3 and demonstrate this progress through their responses to tasks and activities.

184. Achievement is good because pupils:

- use their skills effectively when analysing sources;
- achieve good standards when considering key concepts in their studies of Nazi Germany and the United States of America;
- evaluate the reliability and usefulness of information effectively; and
- make informed judgements, of good quality, based on the historical evidence and their background knowledge.

185. Pupils are aware that historical events can be interpreted in different ways and many are able to demonstrate and explain varying perspectives when undertaking their GCSE coursework assignments.

186. Pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of both the historical development of Wales and their local heritage.

187. Standards of achievement are improving as a result of effective self-evaluation by pupils and peer assessment activities, which inform pupils what they need to do to develop further their historical understanding.

Shortcomings

188. There are no significant shortcomings.

Music

Key Stage 3: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Key Stage 4: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Key Stage 3

Outstanding features

189. The standard of singing in Y7 and Y8 is frequently very good because pupils

- sing with enthusiasm;
- respond very positively to excellent PowerPoint presentations, including Karaoke style; and
- produce even tone, good diction and sing expressively.

190. Keyboard and percussion performance standards are good to very good overall.

191. Able musicians produce some very good compositions. Their standards are enhanced by very well-developed skills using computer programs.

192. Most pupils with SEN achieve very good standards particularly in:

- singing *Dacw Mam yn Dŵad*; and
- modern music units in Y7 and Y9 respectively.

Good features

193. The majority of pupils achieve good standards of work in all aspects of the NC.

194. In appraising work, pupils show confidence in using technical vocabulary, linked directly to the elements of music.

Shortcomings

195. There are no important shortcomings.

Key Stage 4

Outstanding features

196. Performance standards are very good, especially:

- in Y11, where the majority of pupils demonstrate advanced vocal and instrumental skills in both classical and rock/pop styles; and
- when pupils respond very enthusiastically to a wide range of class ensemble experience.

197. Composing skills in a wide range of genres are very well developed. Pupils take full advantage of the department's outstanding computer provision to develop creative skills.

Good features

198. Less musically able pupils make good progress in whole-class and group activities.

199. Pupils respond enthusiastically to appraising and aural work and standards are frequently very good.

Shortcomings

200. There are no important shortcomings.

Business Studies

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

Good features

201. Standards of achievement are good in KS4, as departmental GCSE results at grades:

- A*-G have improved between 2002-2005;
- A*-C have increased significantly from the 2002 figures.

202. Pupils are able to:

- analyse business information and reach correct conclusions;
- recall information well from work completed in the previous lesson;
- apply their knowledge and understanding of the business world;
- make presentations to fellow pupils and also win Young Enterprise competitions;
- use ICT appropriately to compile a memorandum in lessons; and
- use ICT effectively to produce bar charts and tables for coursework.

203. In Y10, pupils:

- have a good understanding of health and safety issues in an industrial and office environment; and
- are confident to compile an accident report from a simulated classroom accident.

204. In Y11:

- pupils understand the advantages and disadvantages of internal/external recruitment processes; and
- a significant number of the more able pupils produce coursework of a high standard.

Shortcomings

205. A minority of pupils has only a satisfactory level of ICT skills. This limits the quality of these pupils' coursework.

206. A small minority of Y10 pupils needs to expand answers, when questioned.

School's response to the inspection

The headteacher, staff and governors are very pleased that the findings of the Estyn inspection have endorsed the school's self evaluation report, which is based on our own comprehensive systems for monitoring and evaluation. Recognition is given to the school's culture of continuing improvement and the good progress made since the last inspection. Improvement in the quality of teaching is noted as well as the very good progress made on most of the key issues from the last report.

The report highlights many strengths in the school's provision, including a number of outstanding features. The strong performance of pupils in the core subjects and the good standards achieved in key skills reflect the school's priorities. The high quality and range of learning support for pupils with SEN is identified as outstanding practice. Also, the outstanding work in mathematics and music at both key stages is recognised.

Innovative approaches in teaching have been introduced through a variety of good quality continuous professional development activities for staff, which are highly commended. In addition, the investment in ICT resources for every classroom has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning.

It is particularly pleasing that the quality of care, support and guidance provided by the school is judged to be outstanding. This is a reflection of the hard work and commitment of our staff in seeking to provide all pupils with the opportunity to give of their best. It is acknowledged that the school's clear ethos, expectations and sense of purpose unite the school as a community. The good behaviour of pupils is commended, as is the very good quality of the relationships they form with teachers and the respect shown to visitors and the environment.

The wealth of extra-curricular activities is identified as an outstanding feature of the learning experiences provided. The curriculum is described as an inclusive model which is well balanced and flexible enough to meet the needs of individual learners, whatever their level of ability.

An action plan will be developed to address the report's recommendations for further improving performance. In particular, the school will strive to promote best practice in the differentiation of work, to ensure greater consistency in assessment and in the rigorous monitoring of practice. Also, existing plans to improve standards of achievement and pupils' attendance and punctuality will be further developed.

A copy of the school's action plan in response to the inspection recommendations will be sent to all parents and the governors' annual report will include information on the school's progress.

The school acknowledges and appreciates the highly professional, collaborative approach of the inspection team and the opportunity to discuss issues arising from the inspection findings. The recommendations given provide clear guidance to the school in prioritizing action and building on the many areas of good practice identified in the report.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Bryngwyn School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	11-16
Address of school	Dafen Llanelli Carmarthenshire
Postcode	SA14 8RP
Telephone number	01554-750661

Headteacher	Dr M A Williams
Date of appointment	1 September 1996
Chair of governors	Mr F St John Roberts
Reporting inspector	Miss G M Owen
Dates of inspection	6-9 March 2006

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

Year group	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Total
Number of pupils	162	185	197	207	216	967

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	56	4	58.3

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	16.6:1
Average teaching group size	21.5
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	77.1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection						
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Whole School
Term 1	93.3	91.3	88.7	88.3	92.2	90.63
Term 2	89.0	87.2	85.8	85.7	86.1	86.7
Term 3	90.0	86.2	84.3	86.2	94.6	88.1

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	22%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	71 temporary 7 permanent

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 3:

National Curriculum Assessment KS3 results: 2005															
Total number of pupils in Y9: 205															
Percentage of pupils at each level															
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	EP
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0.5	0.5	0	0	0	10	18	37	22	10	1	
		National	0	1	1	0	0	2	8	21	34	24	9	0	
Mathematics	Test	School	0	5	5	-	-	-	7	19	33	20	11		
		National	0	4	1	-	-	-	8	20	33	23	10		
	Teacher assessment	School	0	1	1	0	0	2	8	9	26	38	15	0	
		National	0	1	1	0	0	1	7	19	26	32	14	0	
Science	Test	School	0	9	1	-	-	-	6	11	19	37	17	-	
		National	0	5	1	-	-	-	5	17	20	36	15	-	
	Teacher assessment	School	0	1	1	0	0	0	6	20	33	27	12	0	
		National	0	1	1	0	0	0	6	20	33	27	12	0	
		School	0	5	1	-	-	-	7	13	29	29	16	-	
		National	0	4	0	-	-	-	5	17	33	28	13	-	

- D Pupils exempted 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	64	In the school	59
In Wales	56	In Wales	57

Public Examination Results:

For pupils aged 15, results in GCSE, Entry Level Qualification, GNVQ and NVQ	
Number of pupils aged 15 on the school roll in January 2005	187
Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil	38

The percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2005:	School	UA	Wales
entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent	84	89	87
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	44	57	52
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	83	87	85
attained GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator)	37	43	38
entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or GCSE	97	96	97
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification equivalent	73	81	76
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G or the vocational qualification equivalent	92	94	93
attained no graded GCSE or the vocational qualification equivalent	8	6	7
attained one or more Entry level qualification only	5	2	3
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Foundation level or NVQ level 1			
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Intermediate level or NVQ level 2			

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Fourteen inspectors spent a total of 42 days in the school and were joined by the school's assistant headteacher as nominee. They held a meeting before the inspection. They were joined, during the week, by a peer assessor.

During the inspection inspectors visited:

- 77 lessons, in the six subjects inspected and 45 lessons in other subjects;
- registrations and assemblies;
- some extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team met with;

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

The team also considered:

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

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

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Miss Glynis Owen Rgl	Context, Summary, Recommendations, Key Questions 1 and 5. Appendix
Mrs Irene Perry Core	Key Question 2
Mr Alan Kelly Core	Key Question 3
Mrs Irene Mackie Core	Key Question 4, Modern foreign languages: Spanish
Mr Peter Harris Core	Key Question 6
Mr Angus Dunphy Core	Key Question 7
Mrs Helen Adams Lay Inspector	contributing to Key Questions 1 and 4 (behaviour and attendance) and Key Question 5 (middle management)
Mr Peredur Francis	Mathematics and Bilingualism
Mr David Hughes	Lead science
Mr Stephen Rowland	Supporting science
Mr Graham Longster	History
Mr Brian Lightman	Modern foreign languages: French
Mr John Jenkins	Music
Mr Gwyn Thomas	Business Studies
Miss Wendy Jones	Nominee
Mr Kenneth Phillips	Peer assessor: contributing to Key Question 1 (key skills and SEN), Key Question 2, Key Question 5 (leadership)

Acknowledgement

The inspectors wish to express their thanks to the governors, head, staff, pupils and parents for their co-operation during the inspection and wish them well on their improvement agenda for the school.

Contractor:

EPPC-Severn Crossing Ltd
Suite H, Britannic House
Llandarcy
Neath SA10 6JQ