Inspection under Section 28 of the Education Act 2005

A Report on the Quality of Education in

Flintshire Portfolio Pupil Referral Unit
Nant Mawr Inclusion Centre
Nant Mawr Road
Buckley
Flintshire
CH7 2PX

School Number: 6641102

Date of Inspection: 15 December 2008

by

Glyn Griffiths
79321

Date of Publication: 19 February 2009

Under Estyn contract number: 1400108
The Flintshire Portfolio Pupil Referral Unit (PPRU) 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 Flintshire PPRU took place between 15/12/08 and 18/12/08. An independent team of inspectors, led by Glyn Griffiths 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 nursery schools, special schools, pupil referral units and any new or amalgamated schools receive a full inspection.

This Pupil Referral Unit received a **full** inspection.
Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>Y1</th>
<th>Y2</th>
<th>Y3</th>
<th>Y4</th>
<th>Y5</th>
<th>Y6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ages</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>8-9</td>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>10-11</td>
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Secondary phase:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Y7</th>
<th>Y8</th>
<th>Y9</th>
<th>Y10</th>
<th>Y11</th>
<th>Y12</th>
<th>Y13</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ages</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>12-13</td>
<td>13-14</td>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>15-16</td>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>17-18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key stage 1</th>
<th>Year 1 and Year 2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key stage 2</td>
<td>Year 3 to Year 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key stage 3</td>
<td>Year 7 to Year 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key stage 4</td>
<td>Year 10 and Year 11</td>
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<td>Contents</td>
<td>Page</td>
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<td>Summary</td>
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<td>Recommendations</td>
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<td>Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?</td>
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<tr>
<td>The quality of education and training</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interests of learners and the wider community?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership and management</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quality and standards?</td>
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<td>Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>resources?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh second language</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td>Mathematics</td>
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<td>Science</td>
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<td>Information technology</td>
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<td>Design technology</td>
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<td>Modern foreign languages</td>
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<td>History</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
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<td>Art</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical education</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious education (including religious studies)</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>School's response to the inspection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2 School data and indicators</td>
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<td>4 Evidence base of the inspection</td>
<td>31</td>
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<td>5 Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Context

The nature of the provider

1 The Portfolio Pupil Referral Unit (PPRU) serves the whole of the county of Flintshire and provides educational opportunities for all learners who may not be fully accessing mainstream education.

2 This includes learners who are unable to attend school because of personal, social, emotional or behavioural reasons, learners who have been excluded from mainstream school, and also those learners who are in danger of being excluded.

3 At the time of the inspection, provision was made for 95 learners in all its centres.

4 The PPRU in its current form came into existence in 2000 and its administrative centre is based at the Nant Mawr Inclusion Centre, Buckley.

5 Since its inception into its current form, the provision has changed from being a single provision for age range 11 to 16 based at the Llwyn Onn Centre in Holywell.

6 At the time of the inspection, the overall management of the PPRU was the responsibility of the head of the Local Education Authority (LEA) Inclusion Service with each PPRU having a head of centre or teacher with responsibility on a day-to-day basis.

7 All levels of ability are possible within the PPRU. However, because of the circumstances for referral, the learners frequently have not reached their potential and are below average ability for their chronological age.

8 The PPRU's provision is based around eight locations throughout the county as follows:
   - the Alun School Special Educational Needs (SEN) Resource class, Mold – a key stage (KS) 3 facility for learners with significant behavioural, emotional and social difficulties who should re-integrate into mainstream schooling at the end of KS3, if not before;
   - Bryn Tirion, Shotton – a KS3 and KS4 longer term, full-time placement for learners with severe and complex behavioural and for those with emotional and social difficulties; and
   - the Young Persons’ Education Centre (YPEC), Deeside College, Connah’s Quay, providing education for those learners in Years (Y) 10 and 11 who need an alternative curriculum.

9 The PPRU has also three locations for part-time provision based at:
   - Llwyn Onn, Mold, a temporary location meeting the short-term and long-term needs of KS3 learners who show behavioural, emotional and social difficulties;
   - the Learning Centre, Shotton, a facility which supports KS3 and KS4 learners who experience anxieties and may be classed as school refusers;
   - Hawarden House, a part time KS4 placement for learners not accessing mainstream school, and who are known to the Youth Justice Service (YJS), and
   - the Daniel Owen Centre, Mold, and Flint Library as a part-time placement for KS4 learners who are not able to access mainstream education, and who are seeking formal qualifications.
10 In addition, the PPRU provides home-tuition for learners due to medical reasons, and for those in-between placements.

11 At the time of the inspection, 95 secondary-school-aged learners were enrolled with the PPRU as follows:-
   • 10 attend Bryn Tirion Unit, Shotton;
   • 14 attend the YPEC at Deeside College, Connah’s Quay;
   • 22 attend Llwyn Onn pupil Referral Unit, Mold;
   • three attend Hawarden House, Hawarden;
   • 15 attend the Learning Centre, Shotton;
   • 12 attend the Daniel Owen Centre, Mold;
   • seven attend the Alun Resource class, and
   • 12 attend Flint Library.

12 In addition, the PPRU provides home-tuition to 30 pupils due to medical reasons and for those who are in between placements.

13 Five learners attend from out of county and 12 are looked after by the local authority. The packages of provision range from a minimum of five hours per week of home tuition (12 learners) to combinations of provision, for example 25+ hours (32 learners) which includes elements such as teaching within the centres, work-experience, volunteering, outdoor education, Forest School, and Youth Work.

14 Twenty-three learners maintain dual registration with their mainstream school and the PPRU.

15 The Flintshire Behaviour Moderation Group oversees referrals, admissions to the PPRU, and re-integration into mainstream schools. An increasing number of learners transfer into mainstream schools or alternative provision each year.

16 Seventy-four primary schools, 12 secondary schools, and three special schools are served by the PPRU.

17 Twenty-two learners (all boys) receive a statement of SEN, mainly for emotional and behavioural difficulties.

18 Seventy-three learners are placed on the SEN register for school action plus.

19 Provision at KS3 is mainly on a short-term basis, with an emphasis based on addressing learners’ identified needs and returning them to mainstream education as soon as possible.

20 At KS4, learners attend the centres on both a short and long term basis. Links have been established with local colleges, and work-experience is provided in conjunction with local employers. For some learners out of mainstream school, alternatives at KS4 may be offered via the Youth Access Initiative to include full-time and part-time placements at local further education (FE) colleges, work placements, projects and activities provided by staff from the Youth Service and Careers Wales and home tuition.

21 Learners come from working and non-working backgrounds, and approximately 72% of the learners come from areas, which are described as disadvantaged, and 45% of learners are entitled to free school meals. The linguistic background of all the learners is English.
22 The PPRU has not previously been inspected in its current form but the previous referral unit based at the Llwyn Onn centre in Holywell was inspected on the 6th November, 1999.

The school's priorities and targets

23 The PPRU’s main objectives are to:
- provide continued education for learners best described as having behavioural, emotional or social difficulties (BESD); and
- support learners and their parents/carers in addressing difficulties that are preventing learners from fully accessing mainstream education.

24 In order to meet its aims, the PPRU has identified a number of targets for improving its current provision as a result of its self-evaluation process. These include:
- monitoring the progress of building work at Deeside College with a view to securing suitable accommodation at Deeside College for the YPEC;
- relocating Llwyn Onn to a permanent location;
- providing Internet access at Daniel Owen Centre and at the Alun Resource;
- developing Hawarden House as a joint Inclusion/YJS short term PRU;
- developing a flexible curriculum which leads to transferable qualifications;
- supporting local operational initiatives;
- the development of Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) as a qualification, and
- raising awareness amongst mainstream colleagues of issues around anxiety/school refusal.

Summary

25 The PPRU is a challenging project which successfully addresses the varying personal, social and behavioural needs of its learners. The learners show exceptionally high standards of behaviour at the PPRU, which indicates significant success in meeting their behavioural targets and serves well as a springboard towards raising standards and seeking further improvement in other areas of learning.

26 However, during the inspection, although there were good features apparent within the management and leadership structure of the PPRU, the team also identified shortcomings which restrict a unified strategic direction at the PPRU. There are insufficient arrangements to develop an over-arching self-evaluation process, to monitor standards, and to develop performance management strategies which are linked effectively to continuing professional development.
Table of grades awarded

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Questions</th>
<th>Inspection Grades</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How well do learners achieve?</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How effective are teaching, learning and assessment?</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of the learners and the wider community?</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How effective are leadership and strategic management?</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27 The inspection team agrees with five of the judgments made by the PPRU in its self-evaluation report, but has awarded a lower grade in Key Questions 1 and 6. This is because the inspection team found shortcomings in standards and progress achieved overall by learners, and in the lack of a collective approach to self-evaluation arrangements across the various centres of the PPRU.

Standards of achievement

28 The inspection team considered, overall, that learners’ standards and achievements overall showed good features, which outweighed shortcomings.

29 Learners’ standards of achievement based on 38 lessons observed in KS3 and KS4 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 1</th>
<th>Grade 2</th>
<th>Grade 3</th>
<th>Grade 4</th>
<th>Grade 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30 These figures are below the national averages for special schools, as reported by Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector for Education and Training in Wales (HMCI) in his latest annual report.

31 The grades awarded for standards in the subjects inspected are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inspection area</th>
<th>KS3</th>
<th>KS4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh second language</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information technology</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design technology</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>no grade awarded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern foreign languages</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>not taught</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>not taught</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical education</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious education (including religious studies)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>not taught</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
32 Nearly all learners achieve good examination results in General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) Entry Level courses, and a few of the more able learners successfully complete GCSE examinations and achieve a pass grade.

33 In KS3, learners achieve good standards in English, mathematics, science, information technology, design technology, modern foreign languages, history, physical education and religious education. There are shortcomings in Welsh (second language), geography, and art.

34 In KS4, learners achieve good standards in English, science, information technology, history, art and physical education. There are shortcomings in Welsh (second language), mathematics, and geography.

35 There are shortcomings in lessons where:
   - a minority of learners is unfamiliar with language and terms which are specific to subjects, and is over-reliant on text books to seek information;
   - a minority of learners shows limited problem-solving skills and is over-dependent on support by staff when introduced to new or unfamiliar tasks;
   - a few learners do not pay enough attention to detail, and are unfamiliar on how to use simple resources effectively, and
   - a few learners are reluctant to participate, or do not make sufficient progress and fail to complete tasks.

36 Nearly all learners show limited bilingual skills. This is an important shortcoming, which affects their overall standards in this area of communication.

37 For many learners, attendance has increased significantly since their enrolment at the PPRU. Many of the absences are caused by a minority of learners in one or two centres, who show a high level of persistent absence.

38 Nearly all learners show very good progress in their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. This is an outstanding feature.

39 Nearly all learners show exceptionally high standards of behaviour and work well with others. The listen attentively and most are eager to participate in their lessons.

40 Most learners show a good understanding of the community and the requirements of the world of work, and they make good progress towards applying their basic skills to tasks reflecting real-life situations.

The quality of education and training

41 Teaching and curricular provision are good with no important shortcomings, and there are a few outstanding features in teaching. This is particularly evident in the high quality of relationships in the classrooms and other areas of activities. In the best examples, these create a motivating and stimulating environment.

42 The effective use of a range of strategies successfully promotes good teaching and learning, although in a minority of lessons there are shortcomings, which reflect insufficient planning of lessons.

43 The curricular provision in all the centres meets learners’ aspirations, and provides good and appropriate routes towards achieving formal qualifications. All the centres provide good opportunities for learners to develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural skills in a variety of appropriate and meaningful situations.
This is strongly supported by a well-planned personal and social education (PSE) provision.

44 Extra-curricular activities make a valuable contribution towards learners understanding of topics.

45 The curriculum offered does not fully reflect Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) priorities, particularly in regard to the development of bilingualism, healthy schools initiative, sustainable development and global citizenship.

46 The quality of personal care, support and guidance to learners has outstanding features. The use of a range of specialist services and other partners, including other educational and social support services, the world of work and further education, is very effective. These features, together with high quality support and guidance from staff within the centres help new learners settle into the PPRU, and are outstanding features.

47 The staff at the PPRU apply a range of appropriate strategies and procedures to support those learners whose behaviour may inhibit learning at the centres. These are consistently applied successfully ensuring the learners are re-engaged in their lessons with minimum disruption. This is an outstanding feature.

48 The PPRU's provision, and range of support offered, to ensure that each learner is aware of the courses and routes available to promote learning within the 14-19 Learning Pathways programme, is an outstanding feature.

49 The distances between the locations of the centres, which comprise the PPRU, inhibit the establishment of a formal school council, although each centre provides opportunities for learners to express opinions. In one instance, a learner from a PPRU centre sits on the on-site mainstream school council.

50 A number of policies and procedures ensure for the learners’ well-being while they are under the care of the PPRU. However, arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking are yet to be developed.

**Leadership and management**

51 There are good features within aspects of leadership and management, which outweigh shortcomings.

52 The good features include the manner in which the PPRU addresses and meets the varying needs of the learners, making good and effective use of resources, specialist services and the expertise and flexibility of its teaching and support staff. The inspection team also recognises that most centres are well led on a daily basis.

53 Staff are becoming more informed through the self-evaluation process and this helps them to identify areas for improvement at the centres. As a result there is an increasing link between the self-evaluation process and the PPRU improvement plan.

54 Measurable improvements have seen the successful re-engagement of learners, and the development of links with the local college of FE, and the YJS. Action to improve has also involved increasing the opportunities for learners to achieve accreditation, and increasing learners' attendance from that which they attained prior to entry to the PPRU.
55 The team identified shortcomings, which involve the need for all centres to work together towards the PPRU’s strategic vision and practices.

56 There is a lack of co-ordination in aspects of over-arching management, which restricts a unified strategic direction at the PPRU. There are also insufficient arrangements to monitor development and standards at the PPRU.

57 The PPRU has not previously been inspected in its current form, and no key issues are therefore identified. However, the LEA’s unified vision of a PPRU provision has yet to be fully embraced by all the centres, and comprehensive performance management arrangements are not clearly established nor linked effectively to continuing professional development.

58 The team also identified:

- inconsistencies in the quality of accommodation;
- insufficient attention given to national priorities, and
- the need for a comprehensive, systematic and co-ordinated self-evaluation process, whereby all constituent centres contribute towards planning for improvement.

**Recommendations**

In their plans to improve provision and raise standards at the PPRU, its management committee and LEA need to:

**R1** Address overall leadership and management issues so that there is a cohesive approach to ensure that:
- all staff work together to develop a strategic vision and common procedures across the PPRU;
- there are comprehensive performance management arrangements linked to continuing professional development and the monitoring of standards, and
- there is an overarching self-evaluation process so that all staff contribute towards planning for improvement;

**R2** Raise standards in the four subjects where shortcomings have been identified;

**R3** Continue to improve attendance levels;

**R4** Ensure that the PPRU reflects WAG priorities, particularly in regard to the development of bilingualism, the healthy schools initiative, sustainable development and global citizenship;

**R5** Introduce formal opportunities for learners to be consulted, and

**R6** Address the shortcomings in the accommodation. * 

* This recommendation has been identified by the PPRU prior to the inspection.

The PPRU’s Management Committee and LEA are responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 days of receiving the report, showing what the PPRU is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the PPRU.
Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

59 In its self-evaluation report, the PPRU awarded this key question a Grade 2. The findings of the inspection team differ from the judgements made by the PPRU as shortcomings were identified in areas of learners’ progress and standards of achievement.

60 Learners’ standards of achievement in the 38 lessons inspected are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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61 These figures are below the national averages for special schools, as reported by HMCI in his latest annual report.

62 The grades awarded for standards in the subjects inspected are as follows:

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63 Throughout this report, learners’ standards of achievement are judged in relation to the progress they make in relation to their previous attainments.

64 It is not appropriate to compare the levels of learners’ attainment in the end of key stage tests and examinations with local or national averages, since the PPRU caters for learners whose ability and specific educational needs differ from year to year.

65 Learners achieve good standards, with no important shortcomings in 68% of lessons, with 3% being outstanding (i.e. an overall total of 71%). The good features are identified in English, mathematics (KS3), science, information technology, design technology, modern foreign languages (French), history, physical education and religious education. Achievement of a few learners in art, in KS4, show outstanding features.

66 Good features identified in lessons include:

- the majority of learners presenting work in a neat and organised manner;
- many learners working at a good pace;
• most learners focusing well on tasks;
• learners in KS4 extending their basic skills and achieving accredited examination results in GCSE Entry Level courses, and a few of the more able learners successfully completing GCSE examinations and achieving a pass grade, and
• the good progress made by learners who use an on-line accredited examination Entry-level course.

67 There are shortcomings in Welsh (second language), mathematics (KS4), geography, and art (KS3), as identified in 29% of the lessons observed.

68 Shortcomings identified in lessons across all subjects inspected include:
• a minority of learners being unfamiliar with language and terms which are specific to subjects;
• a minority of learners being over-reliant on text books to seek information;
• a minority of learners showing limited problem-solving skills and a few being over-dependent on support by staff when introduced to new or unfamiliar tasks;
• a few learners not paying enough attention to detail;
• a few learners unfamiliar on how to use simple resources effectively, and
• a few learners showing reluctance to participate, or not making sufficient progress and failing to complete tasks.

69 Attendance for the last three terms averages 80.7%, a figure lower than expected levels for learners of secondary school age. However, within the context of the specific provision made by the PPRU, the majority of learners attends regularly and achieves rates in excess of 90%. For many learners, attendance has increased significantly since their enrolment at the PPRU. Many of the absences are caused by a minority of learners in one or two centres, who show a high level of persistent absence. Their low rate of attendance makes continuity and progress in learning difficult, and inhibits their attainments.

70 There is no significant difference between attainments of learners from different social backgrounds, except where previous low attendance, on entry to the PPRU, has seriously affected a minority of learners’ opportunities to complete GCSE courses.

71 Girls generally achieve better than boys and learners who receive home tuition show good progress in their work. Most of the learners who are looked after by the local authority make good progress.

72 Standards achieved by learners in key skills show good features, which outweigh shortcomings.

73 Many learners make good progress in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Many learners read clearly and use their reading skills effectively to gather information relevant to projects they are studying. Most learners speak well and express themselves confidently in a variety of situations, although a few have yet to develop fully an extended vocabulary to maintain focused discussions on specific topics with other learners.

74 Nearly all learners listen very well and most are eager to respond with enthusiasm to their tasks. Most work very well with each other and respond
courteously to other adults and show a healthy attitude towards learning. The readiness of most learners to listen, remain focused, and show a positive attitude when working with others is a strength within the PPRU.

75 Learners' writing skills are variable. In the best examples, many learners are developing a clear and well-presented style of writing. However, a minority of learners' writing is unclear and badly formed. The majority of learners show good spelling strategies, although the less able pupils have difficulties identifying the correct sounds of some letters.

76 Nearly all learners show limited bilingual skills. They are reluctant to speak Welsh and are unable to clarify the meaning of many Welsh words. This is an important shortcoming which affects their overall standards in this area of communication.

77 Many learners use information and communications technology (ICT) resources competently to improve their knowledge, skills and presentation of their work, and to find information from the Internet to enhance their topic work.

78 Many learners use a variety of numeracy skills across subjects. Older learners use their numeracy skills in tasks, which reflect the world of work and relate well to these real-life situations.

79 Although many learners are not fully aware of what they need to do to improve on their own performance, most learners show good progress when applying skills, such as writing letters of application for a job, or how to pay bills, in specific aspects of a wider community-based life-skills course.

80 Nearly all learners make very good progress in their behaviour, and for many of the learners this is a major achievement. They are considerate, friendly and polite to each other, to staff and visitors to the school.

81 Most learners behave exceptionally well, and show good co-operation in the classes. They mix together well socially at break times and at other informal occasions. The exemplary behaviour of nearly all learners, at all the centres, is an outstanding feature and a credit to their development.

82 As they become more confident, many learners:
   - show an increased motivation to complete their tasks;
   - are proud of their achievements, and
   - take good care of the work they produce.

83 Learners celebrate their improved behaviour and respond well to the daily reward points given to them when meeting their personal targets.

84 Nearly all learners make outstanding progress in their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Many of them show good moral values and demonstrate these regularly in discussion groups and in lessons.

85 Most learners show a good understanding of equal opportunity issues and show respect to other pupils. They show a good understanding of a variety of religions and cultures. These are well reflected in their work in subjects such as religious education and art.

86 Many learners have a very good awareness of the community and the world of work. They make very good use of work-experience placements and demonstrate a clear understanding of the roles of various people who work within their community.
The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

87 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the PPRU in the self-evaluation report.

88 The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 1</th>
<th>Grade 2</th>
<th>Grade 3</th>
<th>Grade 4</th>
<th>Grade 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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</table>

89 These figures are slightly below the national averages for special schools, as reported by HMCI in his latest annual report.

90 Where the quality of teaching was judged to be grade 1, the outstanding features include exceptionally good personal support for learners, very effective positive encouragement and praise, and outstanding use of learners' personal experience to enhance discussion and ensure learning has relevance for individuals.

91 Good features of teaching include:

- learning objectives shared with learners, with strong links to previous learning and a focus on the skills to be developed;
- a range of teaching strategies used effectively and matched to the preferred learning styles of individuals;
- brisk pace of lessons taking into account the ability of learners;
- the use of pertinent open-ended questions which encourage learners to reflect on their learning and develop their understanding;
- appropriate individual support which ensures that most learners develop their independent learning skills;
- opportunities for learners to make decisions and play a role in deciding how to undertake tasks, and
- a good variety in the tasks, which ensures learners remain focused and well motivated.

92 In the lessons where shortcomings were observed these included occasions when learners' independence is restricted by over-use of support, activities lacking appropriate adaptation to meet learners' needs, and limited opportunities for all learners to participate fully.

93 The quality of relationships within the classrooms is an outstanding feature. The level of respect between teachers and learners is good, and has an exceptionally positive effect on learners' development. Teachers have very high expectations in term of learners' self-discipline and communicate this clearly to learners. All teachers and teaching assistants support and manage learners very well, taking into account the needs of individuals and groups of learners.

94 All teachers demonstrate good up-to-date subject knowledge and familiarity with recent developments. Teachers are making good use of their knowledge by adapting their approaches to ensure a focus on the development of learners'
skills in a range of subjects, in line with recent changes to the National Curriculum (NC).

95 In most centres planning is very effective, with clear learning objectives, and full account taken of the needs of individual learners. Lessons are set in well-structured sequences and build successfully on learners’ previous experiences. In the best examples of planning, individual learners’ education plans (IEPs) and behaviour plans (IBPs) are an integral part of the planning process. However, in a small number of cases, planning of individual lessons is insufficiently linked to previous learning and learners’ levels of achievement. Consequently on a few occasions lessons lack sufficient challenge for learners.

96 Teachers take every opportunity to promote equality of opportunity. They successfully communicate high expectations that all learners will work together co-operatively. They ensure that all learners are treated fairly and with respect. Teaching assistants provide extremely effective help and guidance for individuals and groups of learners in all centres. They show good initiative and sensitivity in their dealings with learners.

97 Overall the rigour of assessment and its use in planning and improving learning is good.

98 The extent and range of assessments undertaken for learners varies between centres, depending on the purpose and key stage of the placement. On entry to a centre, the amount of information on learners’ achievements obtained from mainstream settings which learners have previously attended is sometimes limited. In some centres formal procedures for obtaining information have been put in place and these work well.

99 Detailed assessments are undertaken for all learners on entry to a centre, which provide a clear basis on which to plan for future learning. Many centres make good use of standardised tests and commercially-produced packages, particularly to assess learners’ basic skills.

100 On-going assessments are undertaken regularly and provide valuable and relevant information on learners’ progress. The information gained from assessments is used well in all centres to inform future learning, with targets incorporated into IEPs, IBPs or curriculum plans, as appropriate. Records maintained of assessments in all centres are detailed, systematic and useful.

101 Statutory requirements for assessing and reporting on the NC are met. Although there is no statutory requirement to assess learners at the end of KS3 in a PRU, the assessments are undertaken in a number of centres particularly to ensure that all relevant information is available should a learner be able to return to mainstream education. Appropriate procedures exist at the end of KS4 to meet the requirements of external accreditation.

102 Centres make every effort to ensure that the judgements made on learners’ levels of achievement are accurate through, for example, external moderation or moderation exercises, which take place between some centres and mainstream schools.

103 Learners receive regular and relevant feedback on their performance both verbally during lessons and through the marking of their work. Marking is completed regularly in all centres and in the best examples provides very detailed
guidance to learners on how well they have succeeded and how to improve. In a few centres, the involvement of learners in the assessment of their progress is developing well but overall there are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to play an active role in the assessment process.

104 Annual reports to parents are of a good quality and all centres meet statutory requirements in full. In addition to annual reports, all parents are informed of learners’ academic attainment and progress at regular review meetings. In the best examples of reporting to parents, a number of centres produce very detailed reports every half term, with involvement from learners, and with parents given the opportunity to comment on the report. However, this very good practice has not currently been adopted by all centres.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

105 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the PPRU in the self-evaluation report.

106 The PPRU makes a suitable range of provision on all its sites that gives the learners worthwhile experiences in all the subjects. In this way learners, whose needs are wide and varied, have access to education that is appropriate to their social and emotional needs. The planned activities meet the aspirations of the pupils well, and give them the opportunity to gain accreditation at GCSE or by other means such as the ASDAN course.

107 The courses offered at KS4 provide well for the various elements of the Learning Pathways (14-19). The PPRU is considering the use of other examination systems that will not require substantial coursework as part of the accreditation, and progress in this area has already been made in one centre.

108 The PPRU has established links with two local colleges of further education to enable learners to study vocational courses at appropriate levels. Generally, however, these courses are only offered at level 1, although a few learners could meet the challenge offered at higher levels.

109 The PPRU takes good account of the WAG ‘Inclusion and Pupils Support’ guidance (circular 47/2006) when planning its curricular provision, and ensures that an appropriate amount of time is spent on activities aimed at addressing learners individual needs. In this context, the curriculum at the PPRU is sufficiently broad, balanced and flexible to meet the needs of the learners and also ensures progression and opportunities for learning.

110 There are many beneficial opportunities to develop the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, as well as developing learners ICT skills, and social and key skills such as working with others. These elements are integral to the content of nearly all the lessons observed and are a strong element in the PPRU. Music is not taught and the provision for science is hampered by the lack of suitable facilities in all centres. However, the efforts made by the staff to teach science ensures that there are no important shortcomings in this subject. Travelling time, however, does erode the curriculum time available but the staff work hard to overcome this shortcoming.
111 The PPRU provides a good quality core curriculum which covers English, mathematics, science, information technology and PHSE. It is expanded by offering elements such as art, design and technology, and physical education and provides a good balance between individual and group work. In one centre, the provision is enhanced by the close links with a high school on the campus which provides learners with the opportunity to study a wider variety of subjects according to their needs and gives them the opportunity to integrate successfully with mainstream provision.

112 A wide range of off-site and extra-curricular activities enhances the opportunities for learners, through well-planned visits to a nature reserve, trekking experiences, involvement in various workshops, voluntary work, and residential experiences. These activities provide very valuable opportunities in developing effective team work, confidence and also provide excellent opportunities for personal and social development. This is an outstanding feature within the PPRU.

113 Many centres have established extensive and highly effective links with many community-based organisations. These serve the learners well to apply their personal, social and academic skills in practical activities and situations outside the classroom.

114 The PPRU plans well for the development of learners’ social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

115 The social development of the learners is central to the success of the PPRU. Nearly all learners work well together and are very co-operative with one another, with staff and with other adults with whom they come into contact. This provision is effective in helping learners develop a sound understanding of the requirements of life in their community, such as the need to relate to others.

116 The PPRU has a clear set of values that develops the moral education of the learners. Every centre has clear behavioural polices that make all learners aware of right and wrong. This element is dealt with in a very caring and supportive way by all the staff involved.

117 Spiritual development of learners is enhanced by the provision of a ‘Thought for the day’ in all the centres. This is a good feature, which provides appropriate opportunities for learners to reflect on their own beliefs.

118 The cultural development of learners is promoted well by the work done in many subjects. In English, learners consider the work of renowned Welsh poets, in art the work of foreign artists is studied, and aspects of culture within other subjects also contribute well to this development.

119 The curriculum offered in the centres prepares learners well for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. It provides sound information on the dangers of substance misuse and the importance of healthy living. This is further enhanced by the effective use of supportive external organisations in order to expand the opportunities for the learners within a comprehensive PHSE curriculum.

120 The curriculum offered at the PPRU meets all legal and course requirements.

121 Although there are a few bilingual notices in a few centres, the use of oral incidental Welsh is limited throughout all centres. There is no clear bilingual
policy evident in the PPRU. This area has been identified as an area for future development by the PPRU in its improvement plan.

122 The ‘Cwricwlwm Cymreig’ is incorporated appropriately within many subjects such as English, mathematics, history and geography but no audit has been carried out of what is done at each centre.

123 The PPRU strives and succeeds in promoting equality of access to all learners and tackles social disadvantage very well. There is no stereotyping in the evidence studied or the lesson observations during the inspection week. All the staff, at each centre, work hard to ensure equality of opportunity for all learners to achieve high standards in all activities.

124 A limited amount of work is done to promote sustainable development and global citizenship. The PPRU recycles paper and plastic and aspects of this are covered in the PHSE programme. A few centres have established effective links with organisations such as Groundforce to promote and develop awareness of sustainable development but the programmes are variable across the centres.

125 Effective work-related education is provided at all the centres, which gives the learners appropriate knowledge about what is involved in the world of work. Learners receive the opportunity for work experience at KS4 and this becomes an integral part of the course in many centres.

126 The PPRU takes good account of employers’ needs. Employers speak positively about the links that exist between themselves and the PPRU. These links effectively enrich the curriculum available to the pupils which includes work-related visits as well as work placement opportunities. These links serve the learners well and in the past have created employment possibilities for many of them.

127 Opportunities exist to develop learners’ entrepreneurial skills and the skills necessary to support economic development. In a few centres, the learners have conducted various fund-raising activities, which have provided them with planning and organising opportunities. These activities have raised money for the learners to arrange visits to local places of interest, which effectively enhance their learning experiences.

128 The PPRU’s curricular provision successfully lays the foundation for lifelong learning, and ensures the learners acquire the appropriate skills and attitudes to become independent, valued members of society.

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

| Grade 1: Good with outstanding features |

129 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the PPRU in the self-evaluation report.

130 The quality of care, support and guidance to learners has many outstanding features.

131 The planning and management of care arrangements for the learners throughout each of the centres are of a very high standard. The PPRU as a whole makes
very effective use of a wide range and variety of support services in a way that is exceptional in its quality of support for the learners.

132 The distances between the locations of the centres, which comprise the PPRU, inhibit the establishment of a formal school council, although each centre provides opportunities for learners to express opinions. In one instance, a learner from a PPRU centre sits on the on-site mainstream school council.

133 The quality of information and the extent of guidance and support for learners when they are choosing courses, in particular at KS4, is outstanding. Staff from support services, including Careers Wales, and impartial learning coaches ensure that learners are given every possible opportunity to follow the appropriate course within the Learning Pathways (14-19) options.

134 The PPRU has effective induction programmes that identify the most suitable course for learners to follow and which centre to attend. This may involve external provision as well as what is offered in the centres.

135 Each centre has an induction programme that is of high quality and is appropriate to that particular centre. Each programme eases learners sensitively into a new situation and helps them settle with as little disruption as possible. Learners understand their roles and responsibilities from an early stage. Links with other schools and colleges during the transition process are very good. This may involve staff and partners in extensive continual support between the end of one school year and the beginning of another.

136 The quality of personal support and guidance for individual learners is outstanding. The skills and commitment of the staff from the PPRU in association with their partners from the various youth support services are highly effective in their impact. Each learner’s needs are identified in full and progress in development is monitored closely and continuously. Staff have the trust and confidence of the learners. The degree of involvement of professionals from specialist agencies such as the police, health, psychological and social services is exemplary, and fully enables access for personal support as required in the Learning Pathways 14-19 provision.

137 The provision of suitable and appropriate careers education and guidance at both KS3 and KS4 is of a very high standard. Links with outside agencies, including Careers Wales, are highly effective in providing for the learners’ futures. The partnership with the Careers service is a strength and an outstanding feature, which contributes greatly towards ensuring impartial information, advice and guidance to learners as required in the Learning Pathways 14-19 provision.

138 Arrangements for monitoring learners’ academic performance are good across many of the centres. Detailed records show their progress against a variety of appropriate indicators.

139 The PPRU has very effective child protection procedures. All members of staff have qualifications in child protection and some senior staff have additional qualifications. There is a clear procedure for dealing with appeals and a full and detailed complaints policy is also available.

140 A number of policies and procedures ensure the learners’ well-being while they are under the care of the PPRU. Health and safety and anti-bullying policies are
appropriate to each centre and are followed through into practice. However, arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking are yet to be developed.

141 All centres work pro-actively with parents and carers in the support and guidance of the learners, but the extent to which their views are sought and taken into account is inconsistent across the centres.

142 The PPRU takes good account of the Code of Practice for Wales and the framework for inclusive education. On admission, all learners have baseline assessments, which add significantly to the information provided by schools. Learners are carefully placed in the centre that can best meet their needs. This is a strength of the overall provision.

143 All learners have detailed and comprehensive individual education and behaviour plans. Targets are realistic and often related to effectively adapted learning programmes.

144 Learning support assistants provide very good support and teamwork with teaching staff is very effective, both significantly contributing to valuable learning experiences for all learners.

145 Staff at two centres have received training in specific learning difficulties and these centres are working towards the LEA’s dyslexia-friendly status.

146 All statutory requirements with regard to statements of SEN, their annual review and transition planning are fully met.

147 A notable strength of the PPRU is the quiet and effective way that very challenging behaviour is dealt with and learners are quickly re-engaged in the learning process. Most staff have received training in de-escalating confrontational situations.

148 There are very effective measures in place to eliminate oppressive behaviour including racial discrimination, bullying and other forms of harassment. This aspect is an outstanding strength of the PPRU and diversity is recognised and respected by all.

149 Considering the needs of the learners, the number of fixed-term exclusions over the past year is low in both key stages and only one learner has been permanently excluded.

150 The equal opportunities policy of either the individual centre (or the LEA’s policy when there is no specific centre policy), is implemented effectively. The staff recognise the diversity of learners’ backgrounds and ensure that all learners are valued equally and are treated with respect and dignity.

151 The head of the PPRU and the staff successfully challenge stereotypes, promote gender equality and in their lessons positively influence learners’ attitude to race and ethnic diversity.

152 Although some sites are difficult for disabled learners, the staff take all reasonable action to ensure those with disabilities do not suffer from less favourable treatment. An accessibility plan is in place for all the units as required by the Disability Discrimination Act.
Leadership and management

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the PPRU in the self-evaluation report.

The LEA’s recently promoted Head of Inclusion is currently continuing in his previous role of the PPRU’s overall manager, whilst the post remains unfilled; this is clearly an unsatisfactory situation and adds significantly to the workload of the Head of Inclusion.

The LEA and the LEA’s Head of Inclusion have set a clear strategic direction for the PPRU in providing to meet the diverse needs of all learners who require education other than that provided by schools. This challenging concept brings together a very wide range of provision for KS3 and KS4 including full-time education, part-time courses in GCSE subjects and a variety of different learning pathways designed to meet learners’ particular difficulties and needs.

However there are leadership and strategic management issues that have yet to be addressed. These shortcomings include the overarching co-ordination of all centres in such areas as self-evaluation arrangements and performance management. The LEA’s unified vision of a PPRU provision has yet to be fully embraced by all the centres.

The LEA and Head of Inclusion have unambiguous values, which clearly promote equality of opportunity. This is exemplified in the positive and purposeful ethos found in all centres. Very good teamwork is clearly evident amongst all staff and learners who have every opportunity to develop to their full potential.

Very good partnerships have been developed with a range of other providers and specialist services and agencies. However, the emphasis placed on developing national priorities is variable. All centres are very effective in promoting social inclusion but other priorities have yet to be fully developed. Little attention is paid to promoting bilingualism, the ‘Healthy Schools’ initiative is under-developed in all but one of the centres and insufficient attention is paid to education for sustainable development and global citizenship.

Learners are set clear targets through their IEPs and IBPs. However, centres use different arrangements for formulating such plans and their formats also differ between the centres. This is another example of the unco-ordinated approach to important practices and procedures.

Neither the Head of Inclusion nor centre managers are subject to annual appraisal. The LEA and Head of Inclusion are aware of this significant shortcoming and are addressing the issue through the PPRU’s improvement plan. Performance management is well implemented in a few of the centres but it lacks consistency across the PPRU. This is recognised by the LEA who plan to train centre managers to assume accountability for this. The effectiveness of performance management, in those centres where it is undertaken, is variable; not all staff have clear targets that relate to their professional development.

The LEA has appointed a management committee to be responsible, within strictly defined terms of reference, for the overall management of the PPRU. Although the
management committee meets all its regulatory and legal requirements it does not however, effectively monitor the quality of provision and standards at the PPRU.

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

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<tr>
<th>Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings</th>
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<tr>
<td>162 In its self-evaluation report, the PPRU awarded this key question a Grade 2. The findings of the inspection team differ from the judgements made by the PPRU as the team identified shortcomings in the PPRU’s overall approach to self-evaluation arrangements across the various centres.</td>
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<tr>
<td>163 The PPRU is now developing a more co-operative focus with staff beginning to share and exchange ideas. Leaders and managers in some of the centres are very well informed about the areas for which they are responsible. They involve their staff in planning and review. Equally the co-ordinators of the PPRU ensure that the organisational overview within the planning and evaluation processes is improving and are increasingly taking greater corporate leadership and responsibility.</td>
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<td>164 Self-evaluation arrangements vary across the PPRU with evidence of very good practice in a few of the centres. In the best examples, staff are involved through regular monitoring of progress, effective assessment of pupils, and ensuring that good performance management arrangements exist. Although the PPRU has now in place a comprehensive and systematic self-evaluation process it remains the case that because of the historical independence of the various centres the process is currently not fully embedded and consistently implemented.</td>
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<tr>
<td>165 The overall self-evaluation report (SER) was collated from individual centres’ self-evaluation reports, and presented as a collective evaluation of the PPRU. The inspection team differed from the PPRU’s judgements on two key questions, and awarded a lower grade for both key questions 1 and 6. This was due to the shortcomings identified in learners’ standards of achievement, and in the lack of a collective approach in compiling the SER.</td>
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<td>166 There is now an effective and planned cycle in place enabling staff to be aware of issues, developments and progress. Targets and priorities are regularly reviewed and refined. In three of the centres stakeholders are encouraged to participate in the self-evaluation process with pupils, parental and staff questionnaires being used. However, this aspect is not yet fully developed across all centres, and is identified as an area to improve in various improvement documents.</td>
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<tr>
<td>167 A better understanding and ownership by staff and other stakeholders is developing within the PPRU priorities, targets and outcomes. However staff in the various centres have a clearer understanding of their own priorities, than they have of the PPRU’s overall vision and direction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>168 The PPRU co-ordinators use a broad range of evidence, including the various centres’ self-evaluation reports, classroom observations, curriculum leaders evaluation of progress and identification of need, to ensure accurate identification of areas of strength and further development. Learners’ performance data and evidence from a range of external perspectives are also used effectively to enhance this area of evaluation.</td>
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169 Senior managers understand the importance of identifying the views of the wider community on many issues relating to the PPRU.

170 The PPRU has not previously been inspected in its current form, and no key issues are therefore identified. The PPRU's planning for improvement has some good features but lacks the identification of medium to longer-term priorities.

171 Performance management is well implemented in a few of the centres and its' strategic planning processes includes greater involvement of all staff, ensuring more improved co-ordination. The focus is always on improving performance, standards, providing a widely based curriculum and ensuring a high level of care. There is comprehensive and well-established feedback at all levels as to how performance can be improved in some of the centres. However, these processes have not yet been consistently developed across the PPRU.

172 The LEA, management committee and senior managers are working well together to ensure that the PPRU is well resourced to ensure that priorities and objectives are met.

173 There is regular review of progress at all levels and revised targets are then established in line with the progress being made. Progress is identifiable with measurable improvements in areas such as:

- progression from a PRU with a static population to a range of provision across many centres meeting a variety of needs;
- the development of YPEC to meet the needs of learners at KS4 who had become disengaged from education;
- the development of Flint Library and the Daniel Owen Centre to provide courses leading to GCSE and Entry Level qualifications;
- the provision of a base specifically for learners who experience anxieties and may be classed as school refusers; and
- the joint provision with YJS for pupils involved with the criminal system; this is an outstanding feature.

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

| Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings |

174 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the PPRU in the self-evaluation report.

175 Teachers are well qualified, suitably experienced, and bring their adaptability and creativity to bear well in order to teach all aspects of the curriculum. Several of them possess advanced qualifications, which demonstrate their particular expertise in dealing with learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

176 The PPRU co-ordinates the input of a range of specialist professionals well within its own work, to meet learners’ needs.

177 Whilst the number of teachers means there is a highly positive learner:teacher ratio over the PPRU as a whole, for much of the week one centre has only one qualified teacher based there. There are no formal contingency plans to address the requirement for two qualified teachers, nor are teaching assistants’ duties organised to guarantee the presence of at least two adults.
178 There is, overall, a high number of skilled support staff, many of whom have a long association with the various centres. They make a knowledgeable, skilful and constructive contribution to teaching and learning, and also to administration. There is in consequence a very positive learner:adult ratio.

179 The local authority has yet to give formal instruction regarding workforce remodelling. The staff however, have agreed their workload to include adequate planning, preparation and assessment time. The precise nature of this provision varies from centre to centre, and the level of administrative support is inconsistent, but meets at least minimum legal requirements.

180 There is a good range of appropriate resources to meet learning and developmental needs well. The provision of ICT resources is sufficient to meet current needs. The PPRU makes good use of a range of off-site facilities to enhance and extend learners’ experiences.

181 Accommodation is dispersed over eight locations. Whilst generally providing a good learning environment it is inconsistent in quality. The provision at three of the centres is of particularly high quality, and stimulates and encourages learners’ achievement well. In contrast, learners themselves describe one centre as cold and uncomfortable. The temporary location of another centre in small rooms in a shared building offers an uncertain future to staff and learners alike since there is no indication of either where or when a permanent base may be found.

182 The PPRU budget is set by the LEA and is not fully delegated. Within these constraints spending decisions are taken carefully, good use is made of purchasing consortia, and available resources are used well. The innovative LINK project at one centre (at the time of the inspection being refurbished and equipped prior to full use by learners) is run jointly by the LEA and the YJS, so costs are shared. Good use is made of ICT facilities developed by the LEA as part of its 14-19 Learning Pathways provision for all its establishments, and which is conveniently located at one centre.

183 Resources are prioritised and teaching and support staff are deployed according to learners’ needs. All staff have undergone Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks and there has been much relevant and valuable in-service training, including child protection, for all staff.

184 There are, however, no systematic or consistent mechanisms in the different centres nor in the PPRU as a whole to identify staff development needs or to monitor the impact of developments and changes. This leads to uncertainty as to how accurately the PPRU’s priorities and objectives are identified and subsequently reviewed.

185 The PPRU has identified, in its own self-evaluation, a need to consolidate staffing to reduce supply staff employment. Budget information at the time of the inspection shows that teaching and support staff costs are high, and there is no capacity for contingency funds; but when this is set against the outcomes achieved by learners, then the PPRU provides adequate value for money.
Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

**English**

**Key Stage 3:** Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings  
**Key Stage 4:** Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings

**Good features**

186 At both key stages, most learners show that they are able to:
- listen attentively;
- respond well to questions;
- speak clearly and confidently;
- use appropriate vocabulary;
- participate effectively in class discussions, and
- read out loud, clearly and with good expression.

187 At KS3, most learners show:
- a good basic understanding of texts they have studied, including poetry, plays and novels;
- a good understanding of the purpose behind their writing and write specifically and clearly for a range purposes;
- a good understanding of the effect of their writing, and
- a good understanding on how to write effectively for a variety of audiences.

188 At KS4, most learners show that they can:
- understand literary conventions used by authors;
- understand a plot in studied texts and appreciate elements of sub-text;
- understand specific aspects of characters in studied texts;
- sustain their writing well with imagination and creativity, and
- can write succinctly and precisely about their analyses and comparisons of different texts.

**Shortcomings**

189 At KS3, a very few learners, because of their over-reliance on commercial worksheets, do not:
- produce purposeful or sustained writing;
- write for a range of purposes or for a variety of audiences, nor
- make sufficient progress in the English programmes of study.

**Welsh second language.**

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

**Good features**

190 All the learners listen well to their teacher and have a positive attitude to the language.

191 At both key stages, most learners are able to:
- use language presented in the lesson confidently, using simple sentences;
• pronounce most words correctly and are able to remember and use words and phrases to answer questions in the summing up at the end of the lesson, and
• read basic sentences correctly and the use appropriate intonation and expression.

192 A small minority of pupils at KS4 writes extended tasks to a good standard for their course work.

Shortcomings
193 Most pupils make basic grammatical errors in their written work.
194 The vast majority of pupils does not expand on the set answers in their work sheets when speaking as individuals and in groups.

Mathematics

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

Good features
195 In KS3, most learners demonstrate that they:
• have a clear understanding of all aspects of number and deal confidently with fractions, decimals and percentages at levels appropriate to their understanding;
• change decimals to fractions correctly, and apply percentages as required;
• apply their numerical skills effectively in other subjects to further develop their understanding;
• understand correctly the names of angles and apply their knowledge to determine missing angles or angles that involve more complex situations such as parallel lines;
• deal effectively with data to create frequency tables and to use this information to generate appropriate graphs and use those to determine further information such as urban populations;
• draw co-ordinates accurately in geometry, and use their tables to draw accurate, neat graphs which they are then able to use to determine further answers depending on any question posed, and
• have an appropriate understanding of basic algebra and deal effectively with simple equations.

196 In KS4, the majority of learners:
• have an appropriate understanding of aspects of algebra and are able to generalise numerical rules to generate algebraic equations as appropriate;
• show relevant geometrical skills where they have a good understanding of shapes and the means required to calculate surface areas and volumes of more complex shapes;
• deal effectively with measurement and time in all situations and apply their knowledge or information to deal with more complex time-based problems, and
• carry out investigational work for examinations with a good degree of accuracy.
197 Most of the more able pupils at both key stages make good progress.

**Shortcomings**

198 At both KS3 and KS4, absences affect the ability of a minority of learners to complete the subject to a level which matches their ability.

199 Some answers given by a minority of learners in KS4 are too accurate in terms of decimal places quoted to be meaningful; these are quoted from the calculator without recourse to their meaning and, accordingly, are not valuable.

200 The presentation of the work completed by a minority of learners in KS4 is of little value for further study since only answers are given and no attempt made to show the method by which those answers were obtained.

**Science**

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

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

**Good features**

201 In KS3, learners:

- are knowledgeable and show good recall of scientific facts and concepts on topics such as classification, pollution and electricity generation;
- have a wide range of scientific vocabulary, which they use appropriately;
- are observant and describe their findings;
- explain how things work, for examples turbines;
- apply their knowledge from previous experiences to new situations;
- understand the importance of conservation and green issues and how science relates to everyday life;
- carry out practical work safely and sensibly;
- interpret data and apply previous knowledge to explain it, and
- know what fair tests are and can predict, giving their reasons, complete tables and draw conclusions.

202 Learners’ numeracy is good, which supports their competence in science. They create tally charts, calculate percentages and draw bar charts. Many learners extract information from texts and reports and express their scientific ideas well in writing.

203 At KS4, learners:

- have good recall and understanding of work covered previously on scientific facts and principles relating to topics such genetics, energy and atomic structure;
- understand the importance of correct units and use scientific vocabulary correctly;
- interpret data from charts given and are able to explain their reasoning;
- are aware of health and safety issues, how to make risk assessments and work safely and competently;
- draw up and record data on tables and understand why results need to be reliable;
• draw conclusions, evaluate the validity of their results and make suggestions as to improvements in their method;
• have a sound grasp of experimental procedures and processes and show good investigational skills;
• use texts well to research facts, and
• can apply previous knowledge to new situations.

Shortcomings
204 There are no significant shortcomings.

Information technology

Key stage 3: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings
Key stage 4: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features
205 In KS3, nearly all learners:
• have well-developed keyboard skills;
• type with speed and accuracy, demonstrating a good knowledge of other keyboard functions, for example the TAB key;
• successfully locate and use a range of icons and programs on the desktop;
• create an attractive magazine cover, successfully copying and pasting clip art, and creating and arranging boxes, resizing and overlaying them creatively, and
• manipulate text confidently, changing the size and style of font, and inserting text art to create an effective finished product.

206 In KS4, nearly all learners:
• input data into spreadsheets with confidence and accuracy, and
• have a well-developed understanding of relative cell references and absolute cell reference, successfully creating a formula in order to calculate a total amount.

207 Most learners:
• understand the meaning of devices and correctly name a number of basic devices and additional hardware, and
• correctly classify peripherals into input and output devices.

Shortcomings
208 A very few learners work at a slow pace, and do not make sufficient progress in their tasks.

Design technology

Key stage 3: Grade 2 - Good with no important shortcomings
Key stage 4: No grade awarded. There is insufficient evidence of learners’ work in KS4 to judge overall standards of achievement or learners’ progress.

Good features
209 In KS3, nearly all pupils:
• handle tools and small pieces of equipment skilfully when producing a gift box;
consider carefully their use of materials, and evaluate their finished products critically and suggest improvements;

correctly identify a range of textiles found within the home;
create imaginative design ideas and select an appropriate technique to use in order to produce a finished product;
handle pins, scissors and sewing machines with care, paying good attention to health and safety issues;
show very well-developed sewing skills, and
have a well-developed knowledge of healthy and unhealthy foods.

Shortcomings
210 There are no significant shortcomings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modern foreign languages (French)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key stage 3: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The subject is not taught at key stage 4.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Good features**
211 Most learners:
- pronounce words well when exchanging greetings and stating their names in French;
- write short sentences giving simple information about themselves, and whether or not they have brothers, sisters or pets;
- identify different places in a town, and follow basic directions to them;
- adapt a pattern in order to ask for different items, and find out the price;
- recognise the names of most colours;
- identify and name different parts of the body; and
- tell the time and give dates, including birthdays.

**Shortcomings**
212 Most learners do not speak or write at length, and only use the present tense.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>History</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key stage 3: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key stage 4: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
213 No lessons were observed in this subject. The judgments are based on scrutiny of learners’ work in both key stages.

**Good features**
214 Most learners in KS3:
- create impressive models of Celtic crosses;
- identify, and record accurately, features at Conwy castle which protected the castle when it was attacked;
- use an ICT programme confidently to label correctly parts of a castle;
- observe, and record details of several activities identified on the Bayeux tapestry;
• provide sound reasons why a Motte and Bailey castle had been built, and link their knowledge with the reason as to why the Bailey Hill area of Mold is so-called;
• outline clearly, the living conditions of the poor in Britain during Victorian times;
• identify and record the different types of transport in Victorian times;
• write a brief evaluation of the work of the Home Guard and the A.R.P during the second World War, and
• use pictorial evidence to good effect when interpreting the meaning of slogans on wartime posters.

215 Many learners in KS4:
• trace the important events in the life of Winston Churchill, and outline his role in leading Britain during the second World War;
• discuss the importance of, and explain clearly, the influential effect of organisations such as the Nazi regime or dictators on the life of people, and how their actions can affect the history of a country, and
• compare life today in rural areas to that which rural people followed one hundred years ago, and report accurately on their findings.

Shortcomings
216 There are no significant shortcomings.

Geography
Key Stage 3: Grade 3 - Good features outweigh shortcomings.
Key Stage 4: Grade 3 - Good features outweigh shortcomings.

Good features
217 In KS3, the majority of learners:
• correctly identifies countries on a world atlas and label the main features within those countries;
• understands why and how physical changes take place over time to the landscape and how erosion changes river valleys, rocks, cliffs and mountains, and
• uses map work, photographs and 3-D images effectively to illustrate physical geographical concepts of places they have visited.

218 In KS4, the majority of learners:
• understands how people change the environment and illustrate this clearly in their work on South America and Cyprus, and
• shows a good awareness of their locality and of work opportunities available, and the personal qualities needed for specific jobs by local employers.

219 A minority of learners is able to interpret graphs and diagrams to analyse patterns in tourism.

Shortcomings
220 At both key stages:
• many learners are over-reliant on work sheets and do not sustain their writing sufficiently;
• a majority of learners cannot interpret graphs and diagrams to solve problems, and
• a minority of learners is unfamiliar with basic geographical terms and cannot recall work completed earlier in the course.

Art

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

Good features
221 At both KS3 and KS4, learners:
• have a wide knowledge of artists and designers, including local and Welsh examples;
• work in a range of media, including ICT;
• use ideas from a variety of sources such as Celtic art, the Impressionists and local industrial design to develop their own work;
• show good use of colour, shape and form when representing still life and in illustrations;
• understand spatial concepts and apply these during the construction of three-dimensional models;
• use a variety of techniques such as finger painting and differing brush strokes to create distinctive styles and textures;
• observe well, most showing good attention to detail and precision when recording images, and
• show a high level of creative thinking and imagination in design.

Shortcomings
222 In some lessons in KS3, the majority of learners:
• has poor control to draw fine lines;
• is inattentive to detail, and
• does not control and experiment sufficiently with materials.

Music

223 This subject is not taught at any of the PPRU centres.

Physical education

Key stage 3: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings
Key stage 4: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features
224 Many learners, at KS3:
• show good technique when handling a table tennis bat, and strike the ball accurately at varying speeds;
• use the correct method of scoring in a table tennis match, and
• show fast foot movements when quickly adjusting their bodies to be in a good position to return the ball when playing table tennis competitively.
Most learners in KS3 and KS4:
- apply the appropriate skills when presented with specific situations, such as passing accurately in a football match;
- understand and apply the rules when playing football in competitive matches;
- strike a golf ball accurately over a long distance showing good technique;
- identify activities available at a leisure centre and state how they may help promote healthy living;
- use a float correctly, and develop the most appropriate techniques when swimming;
- swim confidently using the front crawl style, and
- demonstrate good technique when abseiling or climbing.

A few learners in KS4 successfully complete a survival and introduction to lifesaving course in swimming.

**Shortcomings**

There are no significant shortcomings.

**Religious education**

**Key stage 3: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings**

The subject is not taught at key stage 4

**Good features**

Most learners:
- recall accurately the interior of the Church they visited, and describe it well using the correct terms;
- explain that the orange in a Christingle symbolises the world, and the sweets the good things of life, and
- give an honest opinion about the impact of attitudes, including anger, on behaviour.

Many learners understand that the Christingle candle illustrates Jesus as Light of the World, and its red ribbon Jesus’ blood.

One learner, unprompted, quotes a relevant Bible text: that it is better to give than receive, and correctly explains its relevance within contemporary lifestyle.

**Shortcomings**

Most learners find the concept of sacrifice and atonement too hard to grasp.

**The PPRU's response to the inspection**

Staff and pupils of Flintshire's Portfolio PRU would like to thank the inspection team for the sensitive manner in which the inspection was conducted.

The Portfolio PRU is complex and this was recognised by the inspection team.

We are delighted that the inspection team recognised that the quality of care, support and guidance to learners has many outstanding features.

The inspection report will provide a firm basis for developing the Portfolio PRU both strategically and operationally.
**Appendix 1**

**Basic information about the school**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of school</th>
<th>Flintshire Portfolio Pupil Referral Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School type</td>
<td>Pupil Referral Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age-range of pupils</td>
<td>11-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address of school</td>
<td>Nant Mawr Inclusion Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nant Mawr Road, Buckley, Flintshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postcode</td>
<td>CH7 2PX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone number</td>
<td>01244 551070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>Mr Ray Davies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of appointment</td>
<td>September 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair of Management Committee</td>
<td>Mr Ray Dickson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered inspector</td>
<td>Mr Glyn Griffiths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates of inspection</td>
<td>15/12/2008 – 18/12/2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Appendix 2**

**School data and indicators**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year group</th>
<th>N (fte)</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>Y1</th>
<th>Y2</th>
<th>Y3</th>
<th>Y4</th>
<th>Y5</th>
<th>Y6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of pupils</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year group</th>
<th>Y7</th>
<th>Y8</th>
<th>Y9</th>
<th>Y10</th>
<th>Y11</th>
<th>Y12</th>
<th>Y13</th>
<th>Y 14</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of pupils</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total number of teachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
<th>Full-time equivalent (fte)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Staffing information**

| Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery) | 1 : 2.8 |
| Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes | -       |
| Average class size, excluding nursery classes | 5       |
| Teacher (fte): class ratio                  | N/A     |

**Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year group</th>
<th>Y7</th>
<th>Y8</th>
<th>Y9</th>
<th>Y10</th>
<th>Y11</th>
<th>Y12</th>
<th>Y13</th>
<th>Y14</th>
<th>Whole School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term 1</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>83.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 2</td>
<td>90.8</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>80.2</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>82.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 3</td>
<td>89.7</td>
<td>77.4</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td>69.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>76.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals**

45

**Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection**

15 (fixed term)
1 permanent
Appendix 3

Public examination results

Pupils at the PPRU are entered for Entry Level Examinations or GCSEs.

GCSE

In 2008, 27 pupils (16M: 11F) were entered for 79 GCSE subjects including English Language, English Literature, mathematics, science, media studies, history and art and design.

Seventy-one examinations were passed at grades A-G with 17 passes at grades A-C.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006</th>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Entries</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Entries</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>95</td>
<td>A-G</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>A-G</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>92</td>
<td>A-C</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>A-C</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Entry Level Examinations

In 2008, 44 pupils (31M: 13F) were entered for 79 Entry Level examinations including English, Mathematics, Science, Physical Education and History. Of the 79 examinations sat, 64 achieved pass grades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006</th>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Entries</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Entries</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>95</td>
<td>Passes</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>Passes</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>73</td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Eight inspectors, spent a total of 31 inspector days at the school, and met as a team before the inspection.

The inspectors visited:
- 38 lessons or part-lessons in school;
- break periods, lunchtime and the beginning and end of the school day sessions;
- assemblies and registration periods, and
- a cross section of extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:
- staff, parents, carers and management committee members before the inspection;
- teachers, support staff, middle managers and administrative staff, and
- groups of learners in each key stage.

The team also considered:
- documents provided by the school before and during the inspection, including the school's self-evaluation report;
- contributions from various community-based agencies involved with the school;
• a selection of learners' work in all subjects;
• learners' behaviour during break periods, at lunchtime and at the beginning and end of the school day;
• samples of reports to parents and carers, and
• 14 responses from the parents' questionnaire.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inspector</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Aspect / responsibilities</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glyn Griffiths</td>
<td>RGl</td>
<td>Context, Summary, Recommendations, Appendices Key Question 1.</td>
<td>history, physical education,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane Williams</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Key Question 2.</td>
<td>ICT, DT,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peredur Francis</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Key Question 3.</td>
<td>mathematics,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delyth Williams</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Key Question 4.</td>
<td>science, art,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Donovan</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Key Question 5.</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwynoro Jones</td>
<td>Lay</td>
<td>Key Question 6.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martyn Williams</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Key Question 7.</td>
<td>modern foreign languages (French),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>religious education, Welsh (second language),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>geography.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trefor Williams</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Contributions to Key Question 4 (Equal opportunities) and Key Questions 1, 2 and 3 (bilingualism).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ray Davies</td>
<td>Nominee</td>
<td>Liaison with the inspection team, attending team meetings, and providing additional evidence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Acknowledgement

_The inspection team would like to thank the local authority representatives, involved professionals, teaching and support staff, and the learners at all the centres for their co-operation and courtesy throughout the inspection._

_The inspection contractor was:_
EPPC/Severn Crossing Ltd
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Britannic House
Britannic Way
Llandarcy
Neath SA10 6JQ