

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

**Ysgol Bro Gwaun  
Heol Dyfed  
Fishguard  
Pembrokeshire  
SA65 9DT**

**School Number: 6684031**

**Date of Inspection: 08/05/06**

**by**

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- \* pupil referral units;
- \* independent schools;
- \* further education;
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- \* LEAs;
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- \* work-based learning;
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Ysgol Bro Gwaun, Fishguard was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents information about the performance of their child's school.

The inspection of Ysgol Bro Gwaun, Fishguard took place between 08/05/06 and 12/05/06. An independent team of inspectors, led by Dr Neil Trevor Jones undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

"There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **standard** inspection."

## Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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## Context

### The nature of the provider

1. Ysgol Bro Gwaun, Fishguard, is a naturally bilingual community, comprehensive school for pupils aged between 11 and 18. It is maintained by the Pembrokeshire Local Education Authority. At present, it has 686 pupils, including 115 sixth form Y12 and Y13 students. The school accepts between 110 and 130 new pupils each year. It has 49.2 teachers (full time equivalent), including the head teacher. There are 47 full time and three part-time teachers.
2. The school serves the towns of Fishguard and Wdig and the surrounding rural community. Unemployment has increased in this rural catchment area and, according to the school, there is evidence that some families who have faced long term unemployment are disadvantaged. Eighteen percent of the pupils are registered as being entitled to free school meals and this is higher than the county average of 14%.
3. Thirty five pupils (around 6% of Y7 to Y11 pupils) have statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) and this is approximately double the Welsh percentage. In addition, 91 pupils (around 16% of Y7 to Y11 pupils) are on one of the school action or school action plus stages of the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs. The National Curriculum has been disapplied for four pupils and modified for nine other pupils. There are seven pupils in the care of the Local Authority. Two pupils receive teaching assistance to learn English as an additional language.
4. Almost all pupils (99.5%) belong to the white ethnic group. Around 73% of pupils come from homes where English is the first language and 27% from Welsh speaking homes. Around 33% of pupils are able to speak Welsh to first language standard. The school makes provision to teach Welsh as a first language and as a second language. Five subjects, history, geography, religious education, music and art are taught through the medium of Welsh.
5. The school was previously inspected in March 2000. Since that time, the name of the school has changed from Fishguard High School to Ysgol Bro Gwaun. A new head teacher was appointed in September 2000. In addition, since the last inspection, the facilities for teaching design and technology and physical education have improved as a result of building work.

## **The school's priorities and targets**

### **The school aims to:**

- provide an all-round education of the highest standard, in a well- disciplined, tolerant and supportive environment. The school's 'mission statement' is: 'Always our best: For our school; for others; for ourselves'.
- maintain its growth and development, by aiming to mirror more accurately the bilingual nature of the community, by strengthening its bilingual ethos and Welsh medium provision, and
- develop the following aspects in its strategic planning for 2005 – 2008:
  - Standards of learning, in Key Stages 3, 4 and 5;
  - Teaching and Assessment;
  - The development of pupils' and students' Key Skills;
  - Pastoral support for learning (including attendance),
  - Developing the school environment, resources and accommodation.

## Summary

### Table of grades awarded

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

6. Ysgol Bro Gwaun is a good school. It has many good features but has also some shortcomings. The school has made very good progress in dealing with the key issues for action emanating from the last report.

### Standards

7. In key stages 3 and 4, standards have good features which outweigh shortcomings. In the sixth form, standards are good.
8. Grades awarded for standards in the subjects specifically inspected are as follows:

Subject	Key stage 3	Key stage 4	Sixth Form
Welsh (first language)	3	3	2
Mathematics	2	2	2
Science	2	2	
History	3	2	1
Physical Education	3	3	2
Drama*	-	3	-
Biology			2
Chemistry			2
Physics			1

\*Drama is taught only in year 11.

9. In the lessons observed in the above subjects. the percentage of lessons awarded each grade, at key stages 3 and 4 and in the sixth form, is as follows:

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
<b>Key Stages 3 and 4</b>	2%	58%	38%	2%	0%
<b>Sixth Form</b>	26%	74%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Whole school</b>	8%	61%	29%	2%	0%

10. Grade 3 standards were observed in all subjects inspected and were more evident in those subjects where overall standards in a key stage were grade 3. In some instances, the unsatisfactory behaviour of a minority of pupils affected the grade awarded.
11. The percentage of lessons awarded grades 1 and 2 is higher than the current target set by the Welsh Assembly Government for the whole of Wales, which requires that standards in 50% of lessons be a grade 2 or better and that standards in 95% of lessons be a grade 3 or better. These figures are also higher than the target set for schools in 2007, which requires standards to be grade 2 or above in 65% of lessons.

### **The quality of external test and examination results**

12. Although often broadly similar to those for the county or for Wales as a whole, the quality of the school's results in external tests, statutory assessments and examinations is very good when compared with schools which have a similar percentage (18%) of pupils who are entitled to free school meals.
13. At key stage 3, results in English have been consistently above the median for similar schools since 2001. The results for mathematics have been variable but in two of the last three years, they have been below the median. In 2005, however, they were in the upper quartile. Over the last five years results for science have been above the median and occasionally in the top quartile. Results for Welsh first language, when compared with other 'Welsh-speaking schools' were above the median in 2005 but in the previous four years they were in the lowest quartile.
14. The percentage of pupils achieving the core subject indicator (namely level 5 or better in a combination of either English or Welsh (first language), mathematics and science) places the school above the median for similar schools throughout Wales for 2005.
15. At key stage 3 girls tend to achieve better than boys, most significantly in English.
16. Key stage 4 results have also been very good for a number of years. When the school's results are compared with those of schools with similar percentages of pupils entitled to free school meals, the school has been placed in the highest quartile between 2003 and 2005 when using three of the usual indicators, namely the percentage of pupils gaining grades A\*-C or grades A\*-G in five or more subjects at GCSE and the percentage of pupils gaining a grade C or better in a combination of either English or Welsh (first language), mathematics and science.
17. The school was in the highest quartile of similar schools in 2003 and 2004 when using the pupils' examination points total as an indicator. In 2005 it was also above the median. Nevertheless 5% of pupils left school in 2005 without a GCSE qualification and this is a higher percentage than that for the county.

18. According to many of the Welsh Assembly Government's indicators, the school adds significant value and is often in the upper quartile of similar schools.
19. Results in the sixth form are good and have been consistently good over the last three years with students' average points score being higher than that for Wales and the county. The percentage of students gaining A-C grades is high. Advanced Subsidiary results are also good.

### **Standards in the key skills, the wider key skills and other personal skills**

20. The following table shows the standards in the key skills and the wider key skills. Where appropriate, in communication, different grades are noted for English (E) and Welsh (W). The standards in Welsh across the curriculum relate to those pupils and students who study Welsh as a first language

<b>Key Skill / Wider Key Skill</b>	<b>Key stage 3</b>	<b>Key stage 4</b>	<b>Sixth Form</b>
Speaking and listening	(E) 3 (W)3	(E)3 (W)3	(E)2 (W)2
Reading	(E) 3 (W)3	(E)3 (W)3	(E)2 (W)2
Writing	(E)2 (W)3	(E)2 (W)3	(E)2 (W)2
Numeracy	2	2	2
Information and Communication Technology	3	2	2
Problem solving	3	3	2
Improving their own learning	3	3	2
Working together	2	2	2

21. The pupils' and students' bilingual competence displays some positive features but there are also weaknesses.
22. Pupils and students of all abilities achieve good subject standards regardless of gender, social or linguistic background. The standards achieved by pupils and students with special educational needs are good. Gifted and talented pupils become high achievers.
23. The progress pupils and students make in their learning is good. Pupils and students of all abilities acquire new knowledge and skills. Pupils understand to some extent what they need to do in order to improve but many do not develop a reasonable level of independence in their work. In the sixth form, students understand what they need to do in order to improve and become independent learners. Both pupils and students develop good creative, personal and social skills. These skills prepare them for further training or the world of work.

24. Pupils and students with special educational needs make good progress as do those pupils at key stages 3 and 4 who receive extra support to improve their basic numeracy and literacy skills.
25. The vast majority of pupils display positive attitudes towards learning, concentrate well and persevere with their work. While the behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is good or very good, there are a minority of pupils whose behaviour is unsatisfactory and this affects the standard of their work and can affect the standard of other pupils' work.
26. Students display positive attitudes towards learning, concentrate well and persevere with their work. Their behaviour is generally very good.
27. Generally pupils and students show respect towards the opinions and beliefs of others and towards the views of people who are different from them.
28. The school is an organised and civilised community and the vast majority of pupils and students respect their teachers and are polite to visitors.
29. Attendance levels at 91.7% for the three terms prior to the inspection are near the target the Welsh Assembly Government sets for secondary schools (namely 92%). The percentage is comparable to the national average. There are no significant differences between the attendances of different cohorts and school years.
30. With rare exceptions, pupils and students arrive at school punctually.

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

31. The expertise of teachers and the quality of teaching is good.
32. The quality of teaching in the six subjects specifically inspected is as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
10%	65%	19%	6%	0%

33. The quality of teaching in all the lessons observed is as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
12%	60%	21%	7%	0%

34. Both tables show that teaching standards are above the Welsh Assembly Government's target for 2007, which requires that 65% of the teaching in lessons should be either a grade 1 or 2.

35. In the best lessons observed, some of the outstanding features of the teaching are:
- teachers' very thorough subject knowledge and understanding;
  - a very wide range of activities and teaching styles well matched to pupils' and students' age and ability;
  - very good and thorough preparation of pupils and students for external examinations, and
  - very high expectations and active encouragement for students, especially, to become independent learners.
36. Some features of lessons where the teaching is good include:
- effective planning and detailed preparation of well structured lessons;
  - appropriate and challenging expectations and well paced lessons;
  - clear presentations which build well on previous work;
  - skillful questioning that promotes the development of pupils' and students' thinking skills and creative skills, and
  - thorough support and guidance for individuals.
37. Although there are no important shortcomings in lessons observed in the sixth form, in key stages 3 and 4 some of the following shortcomings were observed in grade 3 or grade 4 lessons:
- teacher presentations that are too long and, as a result, the pace of the work is slow;
  - questioning which is too restricted and lost opportunities to develop subject concepts ;
  - too much emphasis placed on the acquisition of knowledge at the expense of subject skills and understanding, and
  - failure to maintain pupils' interest, leading to some individuals being unable to concentrate on their work; this disrupts the lesson and the work of others.
38. Pupils and students with additional educational needs are well taught and are fully integrated into classroom activities. Effective support is offered by the learning support assistants to individuals and groups of pupils and students.
39. The school satisfies the statutory requirements for assessing the National Curriculum at key stage 3 as well as the examination boards' regulations at key stage 4 and in the sixth form.
40. The school complies with the assessment requirements for pupils and students with additional educational needs.
41. The school has a clear assessment policy which gives good guidance to departments on the implementation of the assessment system. It shows how to develop departmental assessment policies which reflect individual subject requirements.

42. The assessment grading system based on both effort and achievement is working well. The pupils and students are clear about the significance of the levels and the grades awarded to them.
43. Teachers use assessment well, and sometimes very well, to promote higher standards.
44. With a few exceptions, teachers mark pupils' and students' work carefully and consistently and, on the whole, constructive comments identify strengths and weaknesses and offer targets and guidance for improvement.
45. Assessment for learning has not yet been fully implemented as a means of raising pupils' standards of work.
46. The quality of the reports to parents is good and achievement and effort grades as well as improvement targets are included. Subject comments in the final reports are detailed and provide sufficient and appropriate information for parents.

### **The pupils' and students' learning experiences**

47. The curriculum offers a broad and balanced education which satisfies the needs of pupils across the ability range and also the requirements of the 1996 Education Act for pupils of statutory school age.
48. There are many good features in the school curriculum. They include the following:
  - the opportunities given to pupils at key stage 4 and sixth form students to gain a good range of traditional qualifications as well as key skills;
  - continuity between years and across key stages as a result of curricular planning. The school continues to develop curricular links between key stage 2 and key stage 3 in the core subjects and arranges effective induction days to ease transition into the sixth form;
  - the effective provision for basic skills;
  - the school's good links with parents and the community;
  - social disadvantage is dealt with effectively, and
  - the enrichment of the academic curriculum through extra curricular activities and activities which promote an awareness of being Welsh. A very wide range of good quality activities are arranged and are open to all pupils and students. These activities make a valuable contribution to pupils' and students' personal, social and cultural development.

49. There are, however, a few shortcomings. They include the following:
- the weekly teaching time of 24 hours 35 minutes, which falls short of that recommended by the Welsh Assembly Government (25 hours);
  - the teaching of key skills, including the wider key skills, which is not co-ordinated effectively across the whole school, and
  - the recommended fortnight's work experience for sixth form students is not met.

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

50. The school prospectus emphasises that the school aims to 'create a happy, caring, learning environment, in which pupils work hard and enjoy their education'; the care, guidance and support pupils and students receive is good, with no important shortcomings.

51. **Good features include:**

- heads of year, who work closely with tutors and form an effective pastoral team;
- the very good induction programme, which ensures a smooth transition for pupils transferring from primary schools in the catchment area;
- effective careers education and guidance that helps pupils make informed choices;
- the school's provision for pupils and students with a wide range of additional or special education needs, and the early identification of pupils who need extra support, and
- access to all parts of the school and to the full curriculum, where practical, for disabled pupils.

### **Leadership and management**

52. The effectiveness of leadership and strategic management has good features and no important shortcomings.

53. **Good features include:**

- the links between the senior management team, as line managers, to subject departments and year groups, working with them to raise standards;
- the setting of challenging, yet realistic, targets at all levels – for the school, departments and pupils;

- the effective procedures for identifying staff development and training needs;
- the very good programme of induction and mentoring for new teachers and those assuming new responsibilities, and
- governors who are well informed about the work and performance of the school.

### **The quality of self-evaluation**

54. The way in which leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards has good features which outweigh shortcomings.
55. The school's self-evaluation report correctly recognises the school's strengths and weaknesses, though the findings of the inspection team differ from those of the school, with the inspection team awarding two of the seven key questions a lower grade.
56. **Good features include:**
- the inclusion in the school development plan of the vast majority of aspects identified as requiring attention in the school's self evaluation report;
  - the successful identification of many strengths by the school's self evaluation process;
  - the consideration of pupils' views, through questionnaires, by subject departments, who then make detailed analyses of pupils' responses and respond positively;
  - the identification of suitable priorities in the school development plan, which reflect those of the Welsh Assembly Government, the local education authority and the school, and
  - the sufficient resources and finance provided by the school, which support and implement whole school and departmental priorities.
57. **Noted shortcomings include:**
- the school's self evaluation procedures, which are insufficiently based on the direct observation of teaching and learning within the school;
  - inconsistencies in the quality of departmental self evaluation procedures, and
  - departmental development plans, which do not consistently include quantitative targets and benchmarked criteria.

## **Staffing, resources and accommodation**

58. The way in which leaders and managers use resources efficiently has good features with no important shortcomings.
59. **Good features include:**
- sufficient staff, to meet the needs of the curriculum and learning needs of pupils and students. The vast majority of teachers have qualifications appropriate to the curricular areas they teach;
  - the implementation of all the statutory requirements of the Teachers' Workload Agreement and the completion of the Review of Staffing Structures within the timescale set by the Welsh Assembly Government;
  - the provision for continuous professional development, which is well organised and appropriately linked to the school's Performance Management procedures;
  - the careful monitoring of the school's budget by the headteacher and the finance and administrative manager and the provision of regular, detailed financial reports to governors.
60. Considering the very good examination and test results, especially at key stage 4, the good quality of teaching, the good curricular provision and the very good progress made by the school since the last inspection, the school provides good value for money.

## Recommendations

The school needs to:

- R1. maintain the good and very good standards achieved and raise standards in the subjects where there are shortcomings;
- R2. continue to develop pupils' abilities in the key and wider key skills and in particular independent learning skills and pupils' ability to assess their own work;\*
- R3. disseminate good and very good teaching practices across the school and ensure that priorities such as assessment for learning and 'thinking skills' are implemented in the classroom;\*
- R4. continue to develop whole-school and classroom strategies to improve the behaviour of a small minority of under-achieving pupils;\*and
- R5. ensure that the processes of whole-school and departmental self-evaluation are focused, rigorous and based on first hand evidence, and lead to development plans which are monitored against clear targets and benchmarked criteria.\*

\* The School Development Plan for 2005 – 06 or the school's self evaluation includes steps to deal with these recommendations.

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

## Standards

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

**Grade 3:** good features outweigh shortcomings

61. This grade is lower than the grade the school awarded this key question in its self evaluation report because of the unsatisfactory behaviour of a small number of pupils in key stage 3 and key stage 4 which impedes learning.

### Standards at key stage 3 and key stage 4

62. The following are the grades awarded for standards in the subjects specifically inspected:

Subject	Key stage 3	Key stage 4
Welsh (first language)	3	3
Mathematics	2	2
Science	2	2
History	3	2
Physical Education	3	3
Drama*	-	3

\*Drama is taught only in year 11.

63. In the lessons observed in the above subjects, the percentage of lessons awarded each grade at key stages 3 and 4 is as follows:

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

64. Grade 3 standards were observed in all subjects inspected and were more evident in those subjects where overall standards in a key stage were grade 3. In some instances, pupils' unsatisfactory behaviour affected the grade awarded.
65. The percentage of lessons awarded grade 1 and grade 2 for standards is higher than the current target set by the Welsh Assembly Government for the whole of Wales which requires that standards in 50% of lessons be a grade 2 or better and that standards in 95% of lessons be a grade 3 or better. These figures, however, are below the target set for schools in 2007 which requires standards in 65% of lessons be grade 2 or above.

### The quality of external test and examination results

66. Although often broadly similar to those for the county or for Wales as a whole, the quality of the school's results in external tests, statutory assessments and examinations is very good when compared with schools which have a similar percentage (18%) of pupils who are entitled to free school meals.

67. At key stage 3, results in English have been consistently above the median for similar schools since 2001. The results for mathematics have been variable but in two of the last three years, they have been below the median. In 2005, however, they were in the upper quartile. Over the last five years results for science have been above the median and occasionally in the top quartile. Results for Welsh first language, when compared with other 'Welsh-speaking schools' were above the median in 2005 but in the previous four years they were in the lowest quartile.
68. The percentage of pupils achieving the core subject indicator (namely level 5 or better in a combination of either English or Welsh (first language), mathematics and science) places the school above the median for similar schools throughout Wales in 2005.
69. At key stage 3, girls tend to achieve better than boys, most significantly in English.
70. Key stage 4 results have also been very good for a number of years. When the school's results are compared with those of schools with similar percentages of pupils entitled to free school meals, the school has been placed in the highest quartile between 2003 and 2005 when using three of the usual indicators, namely the percentage of pupils gaining grades A\*-C or grades A\*-G in five or more subjects at GCSE and the percentage of pupils gaining a grade C or better in a combination of either English or Welsh (first language), mathematics and science.
71. The school was in the highest quartile of similar schools in 2003 and 2004 when using the pupils' examination total point score as an indicator. In 2005 it was above the median. Nevertheless 5% of pupils left school in 2005 without a GCSE qualification and this is a higher percentage than that for the county.
72. When four different value added analyses are considered, the school is seen to be adding value between the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4. These analyses include the two models the Welsh Assembly Government uses for comparison purposes and two commercially available analyses which compare pupils' performance with that of other pupils. According to many of the Welsh Assembly Government's indicators, the school adds significant value and is often in the upper quartile of similar schools.

### **Standards in the key skills, the wider key skills and other personal skills**

73. The following table shows the pupils' standards in the key skills and the wider key skills. Where appropriate, in communication, different grades are noted for English (E) and Welsh (W).
74. This table below shows the standards in Welsh across the curriculum of those pupils who study Welsh as a first language. (At key stage 4, evidence is taken almost exclusively from Welsh lessons as there is very little formal teaching through the medium of Welsh for year 10 and year 11 pupils.)

<b>Key Skill / Wider Key Skill</b>	<b>Key stage 3</b>	<b>Key stage 4</b>
Speaking and listening	(E) 3 (W)3	(E)3 (W)3
Reading	(E) 3 (W)3	(E)3 (W)3
Writing	(E)2 (W)3	(E)2 (W)3
Numeracy	2	2
Information and Communication Technology	3	2
Problem solving	3	3
Improving their own learning	3	3
Working together	2	2

75. The standard of the pupils' oral expression in both languages has good features and some shortcomings. Pupils do answer questions and contribute to pair and group discussion but many do not speak confidently or at length. The vast majority of pupils, however, do listen well to each other and to their teachers. The standards of reading, including reading to find information and reading aloud are satisfactory. Standards in writing are good in English throughout the school. Whilst the most able pupils speak, read and write well in Welsh, incorrect grammar and expression are more prevalent in the oral and written work of pupils who are less confident in this language.
76. The standards of pupils' work in measuring and estimating are good. Pupils are able to carry out numerical calculations and apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding across the curriculum. Standards in the drawing and interpreting of graphs are good. The quality of mental work in numeracy is also good.
77. In information and communication technology the standards of information presentation are good throughout the key stages. The standards of modelling and data handling show both strengths and weaknesses at key stage 3. Pupils at key stage 4 who study information technology as a subject (over half the pupils) extend and apply all their skills to a very high standard. The remainder retain their skill levels gained at key stage 3 and apply them well in key stage 4 GCSE course work in different subjects
78. The pupils' standards in two of the three wider key skills show strengths as well as weaknesses. Pupils have some idea how to improve their own learning but their abilities to set targets and to evaluate their own learning is still developing. Problem solving skills also show strengths and weaknesses and this reflects, in part, the teaching style where teachers tend to give the pupils too much guidance. Pupils show a good ability to work together. The standards in the three wider key skills make some contribution to the skills pupils require for lifelong learning.

## **The standard of pupils' bilingual competence**

79. The pupils' bilingual competence displays some positive features but there are also weaknesses. Standards in English across the curriculum vary from Grade 2 to Grade 3 according to the language skill. A small percentage of the cohort study Welsh as a first language. The remainder successfully follow Welsh as a second language. However, although there are exceptions, the pupils do not transfer their linguistic skills from one language to the other to any obvious extent. This is mainly because there are relatively few formal or informal opportunities to do this in the life and work of the school.

## **Pupils' standards of achievement**

80. Pupils of all abilities achieve good subject standards regardless of gender, social or linguistic background. The standards achieved by pupils with special educational needs are good. Gifted and talented pupils become high achievers.

## **Pupils' progress in learning**

81. The progress pupils make in their learning is good. Pupils of all abilities acquire new knowledge and skills. They understand to some extent what they need to do in order to improve but many do not develop a reasonable level of independence in their work. They develop good creative, personal and social skills. Pupils have some good learning skills which help them prepare for external tests and examination but, on occasion, they find it difficult to remember facts learnt. All these skills prepare them for post 16 education or the world of work.
82. Pupils are aware of their levels of achievement in the subjects. They acquire a good grasp of their achievements following teachers' assessments and they are aware of criteria for assessments and external examinations. Pupils are often given targets for improving their work by their teachers, and they also set their own personal targets.
83. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as do those pupils who receive extra support to improve their basic numeracy and literacy skills.
84. The vast majority of pupils display positive attitudes towards learning, concentrate well and persevere with their work. Nevertheless, a small minority of pupils, of all ages and abilities, do not wish to learn. While the behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is good or very good, there is a significant minority of pupils whose behaviour is unsatisfactory and this affects the standard of their work and can affect the standard of other pupils' work. Behaviour around the school is generally good but can be boisterous on occasion.
85. Generally pupils show respect towards the opinions and beliefs of others and towards the views of people who are different from them.

86. The school is an organised and civilised community and the vast majority of pupils respect their teachers and are polite to visitors.
87. Attendance levels at 91.7% for the three terms prior to the inspection are very near the target the Welsh Assembly Government sets for secondary schools (namely 92%). There are no significant differences between the attendances of different cohorts and school years.
88. With rare exceptions, pupils arrive at school punctually. Absences resulting from parents taking their children on holiday during the school term affect preparations for external examinations.
89. Pupils' awareness of the world of work has both strengths and weaknesses.
90. Pupils have good performance skills and in addition have a good understanding of their own local community and national and international communities.

### Standards in the sixth form

**Grade2:** good features and no important shortcomings

91. The grade awarded for standards in the sixth form corresponds to that the school awarded itself in its self evaluation document.
92. The following are the grades awarded for standards in the subjects specifically inspected:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Sixth Form</b>
Welsh (first language)	2
Mathematics	2
Science	2
History	1
Physical Education	2

93. In the lessons observed in the above subjects, the percentage of lessons awarded each grade in the sixth form is as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
26%	74%	0%	0%	0%

94. Standards of achievement in the sixth form classes are good. Students of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve well.

### **The quality of external examination results in the sixth form.**

95. Results in the sixth form are good and have been consistently good over the last three years with students' average points score being higher than that for Wales and the county. The percentage of students gaining A-C grades is high. Advanced Subsidiary results are also good.

### **Standards in the key skills and the wider key skills in the sixth form**

96. The following table summarises the standards in the key skills and wider key skills in the sixth form.
97. Evidence for language skills in Welsh is taken from the standards shown by students following Welsh as a first language as, apart from history, no other courses are taught formally through the medium of Welsh in the sixth form.

<b>Key Skill / Wider Key Skill</b>	<b>Sixth Form</b>
Speaking and listening	(E) 2 (W)2
Reading	(E) 2 (W)2
Writing	(E)2 (W)2
Numeracy	2
Information and Communication Technology	2
Problem solving	2
Improving their own learning	2
Working together	2

98. Standards in the key skills in the sixth form are good with no important shortcomings. Students listen well to each other and to their teachers. They speak at length and, on occasion, can ask searching questions. They are good at seeking out information and reading aloud. They apply their numeracy skills well when studying their subjects. They retain and apply the high level of information communication technology skills acquired at key stage 4.
99. Standards in the students' wider key skills are also good with no important shortcomings. Students work well together, are good at problem solving and as they are aware of examination criteria they are good at improving their own learning.

### **The standard of students' bilingual competence**

100. The students' bilingual competence displays some positive features but there are also weaknesses. Although there are exceptions, the students do not transfer their linguistic skills from one language to the other to any obvious extent.

### **Students' standards of achievement**

101. Students of all abilities achieve good subject standards regardless of gender, social or linguistic background. The standards achieved by students with special educational needs are good. Gifted and talented students become high achievers.

### **Students' progress in learning**

102. The progress students make in their learning is good. Students of all abilities acquire new knowledge and skills. They understand what they need to do in order to improve and students become independent learners. They develop good creative, personal, social and learning skills. They are willing to undertake duties and to act as mentors to younger pupils and play a significant role in the school. They extend their understanding of their own and other communities. All these skills prepare them for post 18 education or training or employment.
103. Students are very aware of their levels of achievement in the subjects. They acquire a good grasp of their achievements following teachers' assessments and they are aware of criteria for assessments and external examinations. Students are often given targets for improving their work. They also set their own personal targets.
104. Students with special educational needs make good progress.
105. Students display positive attitudes towards learning, concentrate well and persevere with their work. Their behaviour is generally very good.
106. Students show respect towards the opinions and beliefs of others and towards the views of people who are different from them. They respect their teachers and are polite to visitors.
107. Attendance levels for the three terms prior to the inspection are below those of key stage 3 and key stage 4. Students are allowed study periods at home as part of their school-home agreement. Students arrive at school punctually for their lessons.
108. Students' awareness of the world of work has strengths as well as weaknesses. Not all students in the sixth form undertake the recommended fortnight's work experience.
109. Students' performance skills are very good as the sixth form prepares, scripts and performs an annual Christmas play and almost every student is involved in this activity.

## The quality of education and training

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

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

110. In its self evaluation report, the school awarded itself a Grade 2 for this key question. The inspection team's findings correspond with those of the school.

### How well teaching and training meet learner's needs and the curricular or course requirements.

111. The following tables show the quality of teaching throughout the school. The first table shows the quality of teaching in the six subjects specifically inspected. In addition to this, all the school's teachers were observed teaching; the second table [all subjects] shows the percentages of each grade for all the lessons observed during the inspection.

Subjects specifically inspected:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
10%	65%	19%	6%	0%

All subjects:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
12%	60%	21%	7%	0%

112. There is little difference between the standards of teaching in the six subjects specifically inspected and the standards of teaching throughout the school. The table for all subjects shows that the teaching is good with outstanding features in 12% of lessons and that there are good features and no important shortcomings in a further 60%, a total of 72% of lessons throughout the school. The school, therefore exceeds the current target for 2007 set by the Welsh Assembly Government, that the quality of teaching should be at least a grade 2 in 65% of lessons.

113. In 21% of lessons good features outweigh shortcomings and in another 7% there are good features in the teaching with some shortcomings in important areas. The school, therefore does not reach the second teaching target set by the Welsh Assembly Government that the quality of teaching should be at least a Grade 3 in 95% of lessons.

### Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4

114. The following table shows the quality of teaching in lessons at key stage 3 and key stage 4 in all the lessons observed:

	<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
Key Stage 3	8%	57%	25%	10%	0%
Key Stage 4	8%	55%	29%	8%	0%

**115. The outstanding features of the teaching include:**

- teachers' very thorough subject knowledge and understanding;
- the use of a very wide range of activities and teaching styles, well matched to pupils' age and ability, and
- very good and thorough preparation of pupils for external examinations;

**116. The good features of the teaching include:**

- effective planning and detailed preparation of well structured lessons;
- good supportive working relationships between teachers and pupils;
- the respect shown to each pupil as an individual regardless of gender, race or disability;
- appropriate and challenging expectations and well paced lessons;
- lessons that have clear presentations which build well on previous work;
- skillful questioning that promotes the development of pupils' thinking and creative skills, and
- lesson objectives which are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons and, in the vast majority of cases, reviewed at the end to ensure pupils' understanding of the work learnt.

**117. Shortcomings in some of the lessons observed include:**

- teacher presentations that are too long and, as a result, the pace of the work is slow;
- questioning which is too restricted and lost opportunities to develop the understanding of subject concepts;
- too much emphasis placed on the acquisition of knowledge, at the expense of developing subject skills and concepts, and
- failure to maintain pupils' interest leading to some individuals being unable to concentrate on their work; this disrupts the lesson and the work of others.

118. During the inspection very limited use of information and communication technology to enhance learning and teaching was observed.

119. Limited opportunities were planned to develop pupils' bilingual skills.

120. Pupils with additional educational needs are well taught and are fully integrated into classroom activities. Effective support is offered by the learning support assistants to individuals and groups of pupils.

121. Departmental documentation varies in quality from the very good to the barely satisfactory. Schemes of work also vary in quality from subject to subject. In some subjects, they are detailed in terms of subject content and teaching methods and provide an overview of the teaching over a period of time. In other subjects they only reflect the requirements of external examination specifications.

### **The Sixth Form**

122. The first table below shows the quality of the teaching in the five subjects inspected in the sixth form. The second table [all subjects] shows the percentages for all lessons observed in the sixth form during the inspection.

Five Subjects:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
21%	79%	0%	0%	0%

All Subjects:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
25%	75%	0%	0%	0%

123. There is little difference between the quality of the teaching in the five subjects and in the teaching across the sixth form. The quality of teaching in the sixth form has obvious strengths. There are good or outstanding features in all the lessons observed and no important shortcomings.
124. **The outstanding features of the teaching in the sixth form include:**
- teachers' very thorough and current subject knowledge;
  - very effective working relationships between teachers and students;
  - very good and thorough preparation of students for external examinations, and
  - very high expectations and active encouragement for students to become independent learners.
125. **The good features of the teaching in the sixth form include:**
- the thorough support and guidance provided for students;
  - effective planning and detailed preparation of lessons;
  - the range of activities and tasks organized, set at an appropriate pace;
  - opportunities for all students to participate and respond in lessons, and
  - questioning that encourages in depth thinking, to improve students' understanding.

126. There is a restricted range of opportunities to develop bilingualism.
127. Students with additional educational needs are well taught in the sixth form.

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

128. The school satisfies the statutory requirements for assessing the National Curriculum at key stage 3 as well as the examination boards' regulations at key stage 4 and in the sixth form.
129. The school complies with the assessment requirements for pupils and students with additional educational needs.
130. **Good features in assessment and reporting include:**
  - a clear assessment policy, which requires formative marking, clear targets for improvement, regular assessment and school examinations. It gives good guidance to departments on the implementation of the assessment system. The school's assessment policy also provides guidance for departments on how to develop departmental assessment policies which reflect individual subject requirements. Teachers follow these guidelines, making regular and accurate assessments of pupils' and students' progress. Teachers, pupils and students understand the assessment procedures;
  - rigorous assessment procedures in the majority of departments. Across departments, the accuracy and consistency of assessments is generally good;
  - a sound assessment grading system based on both effort and achievement, which is working well. Pupils and students are clear about the significance of the levels and the grades awarded to them;
  - good, and sometimes very good, use of assessment by teachers, to promote higher standards. Most set challenging but achievable targets for the pupils and students, who in turn, set their own targets based on the targets set by their teachers. The targets are reviewed regularly, in line with school procedures for pupil progress checks. The quality of pupils' and students' progress files is good;
  - careful and consistent marking of pupils' and students' work by teachers. On the whole, constructive comments identify strengths and weaknesses and offer targets and guidance for improvement, and
  - effective analysis of data for the whole school by a member of the senior management team. This information is readily available to all staff and is used appropriately.

131. Parents receive reports on their children's progress three times a year. They receive two concise interim reports as well as a full report. The quality of the reports is good and achievement and effort grades, as well as improvement targets, are included. Subject comments in the full reports are detailed and provide sufficient and appropriate information for parents. Whilst there is no space for parents to respond on the reports, many parents do take up the invitation to discuss any aspect of the report with the school.
132. **Shortcomings in assessment and reporting include:**
- standards and methods of assessment, which are inconsistent in a minority of departments;
  - the variation in the quality of pupils' and students' self evaluation. In some instances, it is superficial and in most instances it is not instrumental in improving standards, and
  - the implementation of assessment for learning, which has not yet been fully realised as a means of raising pupils' standards of work.

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

**Grade 2:** good features and no important shortcomings.

133. In its self evaluation report the school awarded itself a Grade 2 for this key question. The inspection team's findings coincide with the school's view.

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

134. In general, and in line with school aims, the curriculum offers a broad and balanced education which satisfies the needs of pupils across the ability range and also the requirements of the 1996 Education Act for pupils of statutory school age.

135. **Good features include:**

- the opportunities for pupils at key stage 4 and sixth form students to gain a good range of traditional qualifications as well as key skills in the sixth form. Vocational qualifications are offered to lower ability students in the sixth form;
- the opportunities offered to pupils to study five subjects formally through the medium of Welsh at key stage 3. Pupils can currently follow religious studies and history through the medium of Welsh at key stage 4. Welsh language is taught to all pupils in the school either as a first or second language and pupils are given the opportunity for appropriate accreditation;
- continuity between years and across key stages, as a result of curricular planning. The school continues to develop curricular links between key stage 2 and key stage 3 in the core subjects and arranges effective induction days to ease transition into the sixth form;
- appropriate provision for pupils with special educational needs across the whole curriculum, with specific classes for these pupils in Years 7 and 8. They are given the opportunity to re-integrate into mainstream classes as appropriate. Provision for pupils disapplied from a National Curriculum subject or where the curriculum has been modified is appropriate and responds to the needs of the individual pupil;
- arrangements for grouping in key stage 3, which allows up to five departments to agree on appropriate banding and setting. Although higher ability sets are large, this gives the opportunity for pupils to achieve their highest possible potential, promotes differentiation and has a positive effect on standards;
- specific key skills lessons within the timetable for all pupils in key stage 4 and the sixth form. Sixth form students are given the opportunity to obtain key skills accreditation in communication, application of number and information and communication technology at a level appropriate to their ability. The quality of provision for developing literacy and numeracy in some subjects is good;

- specific information technology lessons at key stage 3. Information technology is also offered as a subject option in key stage 4 which provides an opportunity for pupils to continue with the subject;
- very effective provision for basic skills and in particular the use of sixth form students as numeracy and literacy trainers, and
- enrichment of the academic curriculum through extra curricular activities and activities which promote an awareness of being Welsh. A wide range of good quality activities are arranged which are open to all pupils and students. These activities make a valuable contribution to pupils' personal, social and cultural development.

### **Personal and Social Education**

136. The personal and social education (PSE) provision, including spiritual, moral and cultural development has good features and no important shortcomings.

137. **Good features include:**

- the combination of PSE lessons, some subject based contributions and a wide range of extra curricular activities, which ensures that the school responds fully to the requirements of The Personal and Social Education Framework;
- provision for careers education, which is planned in effective partnership with Careers Wales and meets the requirements of the Careers Education and Guidance Framework for young people aged 11 to 19;
- the enhancement of pupils' spiritual development, through daily communal acts of worship and by the contributions of a number of subjects across the curriculum, in particular history, Welsh and religious education;
- the clear sense of right and wrong demonstrated by the vast majority of pupils. In general they show respect for each other, the staff and the environment;
- the good co-operation of pupils with one another and their willingness to lend a hand. Some pupils and students have been involved in raising considerable sums of money for charity and good causes;
- the awareness of other cultures and the respect shown to other people's way of life and diversity by pupils and students. This is developed through a range of curricular and extra curricular experiences, and
- opportunities arranged to develop pupils' awareness of the 'Curriculum Cymreig'.

## **Links with parents and the community**

138. The school has good links with parents and the community.

139. **Good features include:**

- the important contribution made by the Parent - Teacher Association to support pupils' learning. The school also provides helpful information and organises educational and social events for parents. The school has taken advantage of its community to enrich learning experiences for pupils and also offers services to the community by staging dramatic and musical productions;
- the school's very good links with primary schools, which promote effective pastoral transition;
- an alternative learning pathway, with up to NVQ accreditation, for a small number of pupils in the sixth form, through links with a nearby secondary school and a special educational needs school;
- an engineering course offered in partnership with a local engineering company for a small number of key stage 4 pupils, and
- the commencement of planning work to expand the vocational provision on the school site in response to the Welsh Assembly's 'Learning Pathways 14-19' initiative. This is one of the schools priorities for 2006-7.

140. **Shortcomings include:**

- the weekly teaching time of 24 hours and 35 minutes, which falls short of that recommended by the Welsh Assembly Government (25 hours);
- the fact that there is little vocational provision in key stage 4 and for the majority of students in the sixth form;
- the movement of pupils between bands in key stage 3 during the school year. This creates problems with regard to some subjects taught in rota formation;
- the teaching of key skills, including the wider key skills, which is not co-ordinated effectively across the whole school;
- the quality of personal and social education provision, which varies across tutor groups;
- the recommended fortnight's work experience for sixth form students is not met, and
- no structured planning for the spiritual dimension across the curriculum. There is inconsistency in the quality of spiritual experience across tutor groups and a minority of acts of communal worship lack enrichment and inspiration.

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

141. The extent to which the learning experiences respond to the needs of employers and the wider community has good features which outweigh shortcomings.

142. **Good features include:**

- the development by the school of some links with employers. The provision of work related education has several good features;
- visits to the school by local employers raising pupils' understanding of the world of work and helping to plan work experience placements;
- the active encouragement within the school of a Welsh ethos, so that it more effectively reflects the bilingual nature of its catchment area. An 'Athrawes Fro' initiates and supports Welsh medium enrichment activities;
- the school's effective response to social disadvantage. A number of initiatives are in place to support a small minority of pupils who have lost interest in the normal school curriculum;
- the development of an appropriate policy in respect of sustainable development and global citizenship by the school. Sustainable development is an important focus in science and in mathematics and the school has an active 'Eco' group. Good use is made of outside speakers to enhance the teaching of this aspect;
- the planning and sensible linking of various enterprise activities to aspects of personal and social education and work related education programmes. Projects such as 'Welsh in the workplace' and 'Careers, Business and Enterprise' days are used to enhance pupils' understanding of business and entrepreneurial skills, and
- the provision of a broad curriculum and an opportunity for pupils to acquire good information and communication technology skills, which give pupils a foundation for life-long learning.

143. **Shortcomings include:**

- limited bilingual provision at key stages 3 and 4 and in the sixth form; and
- school strategies, which are not fully developed to encourage pupils' independent learning skills, and which do not contribute towards providing pupils with a foundation for further learning.

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

**Grade 2:** good features, and no important shortcomings.

144. This grade coincides with the grade the school awarded itself.

145. The quality of the care, the guidance and the support given to pupils and students is good.

146. **Good features include:**

- emphasis in the school prospectus on the school's aims to "provide a happy and caring learning environment where pupils work hard and enjoy their education;"
- effective planning and management of care arrangements. Relevant policies exist. Through close co-operation with the staff of the health, welfare and education departments, as well as the police, the school makes appropriate use of external support services. A youth worker, based at the school, also offers good support;
- good co-operation between heads of years and their form tutors. They form an effective pastoral team and hold co-ordinating meetings every half term to review the care given to pupils in specific year groups. This is a way for them to recognise pupils who cause concern and to decide on the support they require;
- a good relationship between the school and the parents and the community. Valuable information is shared with parents in the school prospectus and regular meetings are held for parents to discuss their children's work during the year. The pupils' contact book is also a means of reinforcing the link;
- opportunities for the area's primary school pupils to visit the secondary school to experience a wide range of activities before they transfer to it. The induction programme which is praised by pupils and their parents ensures a smooth transition to the secondary school;
- good quality curricular bridging units that contribute towards effective progression from the primary to the secondary sector;
- the extra support given to younger pupils by sixth form students, who are trained as peer mentors, ensures that the new pupils settle down quickly. In addition, the 'Buddy Scheme' operated by sixth form students for pupils who experience difficulties in literacy and numeracy, offers useful extra support;

- opportunities for year 6 pupils in the primary schools to attend a language bridging course in the Language Centre on the school site. This prepares them well to continue to learn Welsh in year 7. Pupils receive extra support from the peripatetic area teacher after they have transferred to the secondary school;
- comprehensive information about all the opportunities available to pupils and a good link with Careers Wales. Pupils are given opportunities to attend conferences and a Careers' Fair which disseminates information and offers advice on various careers. The pupils are well prepared for their periods of work experience, and
- a broad and relevant programme of personal and social education for all the pupils, taught on a regular basis in specific lessons. The provision is carefully structured and includes statutory health and sex education and teachers present these lessons effectively. The school enriches pupils' experiences further by inviting specialists in their fields into school to speak to pupils about relevant subjects. There are also opportunities to discuss aspects arising naturally from themes that occur in some of the school's subjects.

147. By these means and through its pastoral structure, the school succeeds in ensuring that:

- each pupil's needs and progress are noted;
- that pupils are monitored by members of staff whom they trust and are able to go to regularly and with ease;
- Personal and Social Education and Careers' Guidance Frameworks are given due consideration;
- there is effective use of specialist services such as the social, psychological, medical, careers' and police services.

### **The quality of the provision for additional educational needs**

148. The school's provision for pupils and students with a wide range of additional or special education needs is good.

149. **Good features include:**

- the early identification of pupils who need extra support based on information provided by primary schools and on the results of an appropriate range of screening tests;
- a continuous and effective process of identifying pupils based on close links between special education needs' staff and heads of year and heads of department and an effective referral system;

- effective support provided by subject teachers and a well coordinated team of learning support assistants in mainstream classes;
- additional support in basic skills and life skills development;
- a well differentiated curriculum provision within a small support group in year 7 and year 8 where pupils make good progress;
- effective communication between members of the special educational needs' team and other teaching staff;
- good individual education plans with appropriate targets and strategies which effectively monitor individual pupils' academic, social and emotional progress;
- the effective use of external agencies, support workers and partnerships with other schools;
- measures to involve pupils and their parents at all stages' and
- access to appropriate accreditation at the end of key stage 4 for almost all pupils who are or have been on the register of special or additional needs.

150. The school satisfies the requirements of the Code of Practice for learners with special or additional needs and conforms to statutory requirements. Statements of special educational needs are reviewed effectively every year and parents and external agencies, where appropriate, take a practical role in the process.

### **Outstanding practice**

With the assistance of the Unitary Authority's Behaviour Support Services the school is developing a good range of strategies to deal with individual pupils and small groups of pupils, whose behaviour has a detrimental effect on their progress and that of their peers. These intervention strategies depend on the effectively co-ordinated efforts of the school's Special Education Needs Coordinator, pastoral staff and specialist Unitary Authority support workers who include a Behaviour Support Teacher, a youth worker, and a Children in Need Coordinator. The Behaviour Support Teacher, who is partly funded by the school, forms an important focal point for behaviour support within the school and its 'family' of nine feeder primary schools. The school takes advantage of the Authority's provision of short term placements at the Pupil Referral Unit or full time or part time placements on the PRIDE project and the recently established Nurture Group set up within the school allows pupils to be withdrawn for targeted lessons.

The range of both internal and external behaviour support mechanisms succeeds in many cases in ensuring that pupils with behavioural problems are empowered to continue their education at the school.

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

151. The quality of the provision for equal opportunities is good.

152. **An outstanding feature:**

- access to all parts of the school by the few disabled pupils in the school. The school's disabled pupils are given access to the full curriculum, where practical, and they are taught in the same classes as their peers. The school provides the necessary support to ensure the effectiveness of these arrangements.

153. **Good features include:**

- the school's recognition of pupils' and students' varied social backgrounds and the provision of a broad and flexible curriculum. This includes special arrangements for a very small number of pupils to spend part of their course off-site and for sixth form students with additional learning needs to collaborate with similar students from a local special school and a neighbouring secondary school;
- appropriate provision for pupils and students from the whole ability range. The most able are given extension work or sit suitable examinations whilst the school offers a limited range of practical and vocational courses for those key stage 4 pupils who are suited to them;
- high expectations, in their work and leisure activities, encouraged in all pupils by the school's pastoral system and tradition. The school frequently praises the successes of individual pupils;
- the learning of Welsh as either a first or second language by all pupils, apart from those for whom the National Curriculum has been modified. As a result, they are given the opportunity, linguistically, to become full members of the local community;
- the monitoring and comparison of the results of boys and girls. Every subject option is available to both boys and girls at key stage 4 and the school tries to challenge stereotyping in advising pupils on subject choices;
- the school's efforts to ensure equality of opportunity in extra-curricular and social activities;
- the sensitive and effective support given to every pupil and student if problems arise in school. The school has a very good working relationship with a wide range of external agencies. Currently, there are seven pupils in the care of the Local Authority. The school has procedures to provide them with the necessary support and guidance and there is close liaison with the authority's "Looked After Children" officer;

- the personal and social education programme, as well as acts of communal worship and religious education, which recognise and respect diversity. They also promote social and racial equality. The school has procedures which would deal very firmly with any racial incident, and
- a climate created by the school, where any discrimination or unpleasant attitudes will not be tolerated. It aims to ensure fair play for all its pupils and students. The vast majority of parents and pupils are confident that the school would respond without delay to any instance of discrimination or unfair treatment.

154. **Shortcomings include:**

- the number of short term exclusions at the school, which remains comparatively high, despite the use of suitable action plans and pastoral support plans for pupils at risk of exclusion.

## Leadership and management

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

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

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

156. **Good features include:**

- the school's objectives, which aim to provide all pupils with the best education possible in their local school. This is reflected in the school's emphasis on equality, equal opportunity and achievement;
- the good links between members of the senior management team as line managers to subject departments and to year groups, working collaboratively with them to raise standards of teaching and learning.
- the very good progress made by the school since the last inspection;
- the secure foundation for work provided by middle managers within their areas of responsibility. The vast majority of heads of department provide good leadership which is focussed on raising standards. Heads of year also lead their teams well, supporting pupils both academically and pastorally;
- the clear reflection, in the school's work and strategic planning, of the priorities of both the Welsh Assembly Government and the local education authority. There are very good curricular and pastoral links with feeder primary schools. The school has responded positively to priorities such as sustainable development, inclusion and bilingualism;
- the challenging yet realistic targets set at all levels – for the school, departments and pupils. Teachers and pupils are aware of their targets and they work well together to achieve them;
- the school's effective procedures for identifying staff development and training needs. Training within the school has strengthened teachers' skills in information and communication technology and the use of data to raise standards;
- the very good programme of induction and mentoring for newly qualified teachers, teachers new to the school and for those assuming new responsibilities. Currently, one member of the senior management team is following a course for the National Professional Qualification for Headteachers.

### **Outstanding practice**

The procedures for the induction of new teachers are very effective and support them well.

A personal letter is sent to all new members of staff before the start of the term, confirming arrangements for the first day. During the first week, a meeting of all new teachers is held by the senior mentor, to go through the specific handbook for new staff, outlining the school routine and staff duties. An induction time-table, during their first term, for all new members of staff, including newly qualified teachers, lists ten meetings in which more experienced members of staff lead discussions on matters such as pupil behaviour, information and communication technology, examinations, personal and social education and pupils with special educational needs.

A specific course – ‘Changing Roles’ – is also available for teachers assuming new responsibilities within the school, and can entail job-shadowing, internal mentoring and suitable external courses.

- governors who are well informed about the work and performance of the school, which allows them to participate actively in discussions about the school's strategic development;
- governors who are very knowledgeable about the results of pupils and students in external tests and examinations. They are aware of how the school performs compared to similar schools and of the performance of subject departments within the school, and
- governors who ensure that legal and course requirements are met.

### **157. Shortcomings include:**

- the fact that the Senior Management Team has not been entirely successful in ensuring that its vision and direction for the school has been fully adopted by all members of staff, pupils and parents;
- the limited effect on standards of teaching and learning by some training initiatives, such as assessment for learning and ‘thinking skills’, and
- the link between governors and some departments, which is insufficiently developed to have a positive effect on the raising of standards.

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

**Grade 3:** good features outweigh shortcomings

158. The school awarded itself a Grade 2 for this key question. The findings of the inspection team coincide with some of the school's judgments. However, the lack of focus in the school's development plan and the limited information obtained from direct observation of pupil work has resulted in the team awarding a grade 3 for this key question.
159. The findings of the inspection team correspond to those of the school in five of the seven key questions, but the team has awarded a lower grade in two of the questions, namely key question 1 and key question 6.
160. **Good features include:**
- a self evaluation report which correctly recognises the school's strengths and shortcomings and deals honestly with the seven key questions of the Common Inspection Framework;
  - a self evaluation report which provides the basis for whole-school and departmental development and planning;
  - self evaluation processes which are successful in identifying many strengths. These strengths are reflected in departmental self evaluation reports;
  - a school development plan which incorporates the vast majority of aspects identified as requiring attention in the school's self evaluation report;
  - a thorough analysis of external test and examination results and this analysis lays the foundation for subject reviews and targets for improvement, for departments and pupils;
  - effective use of assessment, the provision of an extensive but relevant range of data, and effective pupil target-setting, which have all impacted positively on external test and examination results;
  - departmental consideration of pupils' views through questionnaires, followed by detailed analyses of the responses. The majority of departments respond positively to the evidence provided by these questionnaires, and in particular, to aspects related to the pupils' attitudes to learning;
  - regular meetings of the school council, in which, pupils are encouraged to contribute to the agenda;

- a school development plan which identifies suitable priorities which, in turn, reflect those of the Welsh Assembly Government, the local education authority and the school;
  - the appropriate and challenging targets set for pupils based on their previous performance and the projected added value in the pupils' progress between key stages. These systems are thorough and effective, and
  - the allocation of sufficient resources and finance to support and implement the main priorities identified by departments.
161. The school has responded very well to the key issues in the last inspection.
162. Strategic planning, whole school strategies, and the efforts of the senior management team have had a positive impact on a number of aspects of the school's work.
163. **Shortcomings include:**
- self evaluation procedures which are insufficiently based on the direct observation of teaching and learning within the school;
  - a school development plan which lacks sufficient clarity and focus, and does not highlight teaching and learning as the main priority for development within the school;
  - inconsistencies and a lack of focus in some departments' response to the school's expectations with regards to the self evaluation process;
  - departmental development plans, which do not consistently include quantitative targets and benchmarked criteria; nor do they always reflect the issues identified in the school evaluation report;
  - not always giving due consideration to the school council's recommendations, and
  - the potential of the school development forum, where heads of department and year meet with members of the senior management team, has not been fully developed in realising the school's priorities.

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

**Grade 2:** good features and no important shortcomings.

164. In its self evaluation report, the school awarded itself a Grade 2 for this key question. The inspection team's findings coincide with the school's view.

165. **Good features include:**

- sufficient teaching staff to meet the needs of the curriculum and learning needs of pupils and students. The vast majority of teachers have qualifications appropriate to the curricular areas they teach. There is a good balance between experienced teachers and those new to the profession. The 18 learning support assistants cooperate effectively with teachers in the classroom and offer good, unobtrusive support to pupils with special or additional needs;
- the school's implementation of all the statutory requirements of the Teachers' Workload Agreement and the completion of the Review of Staffing Structures within the timescale set by the Welsh Assembly Government;
- the number of administrative staff and other non teaching staff, which is sufficient to provide effective support for teaching and administration and to enable the school to run smoothly from day to day;
- the provision for continuous professional development, which is well organised and appropriately linked to the school's Performance Management procedures. Newly qualified teachers are very well supported and, together with other members of staff who are new to the school, are provided with a very good induction programme covering a range of topics;
- the provision of adequate accommodation for the number of pupils on roll and the curriculum provided, in a mixture of older and new buildings. In general, the grounds and buildings are well maintained, clean and litter free;
- a security camera system which monitors the whole campus, and minimises the possibility of unauthorised access to the building. The perimeter of the campus has a boundary fence but there is open access to the front, where the site is shared with the community leisure and e-learning centre; and
- school playing fields which are adequate and well maintained. At present, some areas are not available for use, due to maintenance work.

166. The school manages its resources effectively and ensures appropriate levels of staffing and resources for teaching the curriculum.

**167. Good features include:**

- the careful monitoring of the budget by the headteacher and the finance and administrative manager, with detailed financial reports provided to the governors on a regular basis. The headteacher and the finance and administrative manager are also responsible for the school budget at a strategic level;
- effective use of the school's teaching and support staff, making best use of their time, qualifications and experience to deliver the present curriculum;
- the fact that about 5.7% of the budget was held in reserve at the end of the 2005 – 06 financial year, which is in accordance with what the Audit Commission recommends;
- the good response of the Governing Body to the recent (July 2005) Local Authority audit report and the approval of an appropriate action plan to meet the recommendations made;
- the effective arrangements which exist to identify the professional development needs of each member of staff; and
- the thorough annual evaluation undertaken by the school of its curricular and staffing requirements.

**168. Shortcomings include:**

- toilets for pupils which are adequate and generally well kept, but standards of hygiene in the toilets are not monitored closely enough during the school day, and
- the detrimental effect on the standards of teaching and learning in a small number of classes due to staff teaching outside their specialist subject or employed on a temporary basis; some posts of responsibility are unfilled.

169. Considering the very good examination and test results, especially at key stage 4, the good quality of teaching, the good curricular provision and the very good progress made by the school since the last inspection, the school provides good value for money.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

### Welsh first language

**Key stage 3 - Grade 3:** good features outweigh shortcomings

**Key stage 4 - Grade 3:** good features outweigh shortcomings

**Sixth form - Grade 2:** good features and no important shortcomings

### Key stage 3 and key stage 4

#### Good features

170. The vast majority of pupils across both key stages display a positive attitude towards their work and a willingness to persevere and to make an effort.
171. At their best, pupils at both key stages listen intently and concentrate well on teachers' questions and presentations and on each others' contributions.
172. As their understanding of the language and their grasp of it increases, pupils are successful in making themselves understood and in expressing themselves clearly. By key stage 4, they are more confident, speak at greater length and are more accurate. By that stage, they conduct their discussions with increasing success through the medium of Welsh when they work independently within groups.
173. By working on a variety of short tasks, the pupils practice their oral skills and they become more confident as they tackle more demanding tasks.
174. The most able read aloud to others fluently and with appropriate expression. The vast majority of pupils are able to read quietly during the short periods set aside for that purpose at the beginning of lessons.
175. A good number of pupils maintain a comprehensive personal reading programme.
176. Pupils display good understanding of what they have read from different factual and fiction sources which are appropriate to their ability. They respond to their reading in various ways through oral work, drawings and writing.
177. The most able pupils are able to respond intelligently to fact and fiction, showing good knowledge of character and authors' style. At their best, particularly at key stage 4, the responses they offer to more challenging reading matter is often good.
178. Pupils at both key stages write original pieces, including some based on literary texts, and increasingly write extended and successful pieces in different formats which include factual and fiction writing.

179. In their written work, by the end of key stage 4, a good number of pupils have a good grasp of accuracy and constructions. Using the assistance they are given in the form of vocabulary and sentence patterns, as well as visual images and interesting practical activities, others succeed to show good progress as well.
180. Pupils at all key stages benefit from the opportunities the Welsh Department offers them to become involved in varied extra-curricular activities in school and further afield. These allow them to further extend their experiences in Welsh and their awareness of being Welsh and to use the language for different purposes.

### **Shortcomings**

181. In general, in key stage 3, a good number of pupils lack the confidence to express themselves orally in Welsh with fluency. As a result, their responses are often short and they have an unsure grasp of the language.
182. At both key stages, the mutations in particular give rise to some difficulties and affect the accuracy and fluency of the oral and written expression of a significant minority of pupils.
183. A small number of pupils at both key stages have not yet fully developed the ability to read fluently.

### **Sixth Form**

#### **Good features**

184. Students are able to express their views orally showing good knowledge and understanding of different texts, including visual and dramatic materials.
185. They discuss different aspects of their work with ease and the most able show an increasing grasp of accurate, natural expression.
186. The students' ability to discuss the set texts develops well throughout the sixth form. They display good oral and written understanding of the content and style of complex reading matter, including early Welsh poetry and 'cywyddau', as well as recent poems.
187. The extended written work of a good number of students displays their ability to write effectively and to deal intelligently with different points of view and information, showing an awareness of purpose and audience. Often there is evidence of mature views as well as creativity as they write in different forms and tones.

### **Shortcomings**

188. The oral and written work of a small number of students displays lack of accuracy which has an impact on the flow and accuracy of expression.
189. At times, as a result of a lack of confidence and uncertainty, a small number of students have difficulty in contributing orally at appropriate length.

## Mathematics

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

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

**Sixth form - Grade 2:** good features and no important shortcomings.

### Key stage 3 and Key stage 4

#### Good features

190. In key stages 3 and 4, pupils in general have sound skills and knowledge of the subject. Pupils of all abilities answer and ask questions confidently, with some asking specific and well thought out questions, which promotes further learning.
191. Pupils in both key stages are fluent and confident in number work. They understand place value, can round figures confidently and can apply this understanding to fractions, decimals and percentages. Pupils in key stage 4 show a firm understanding of appropriate degrees of accuracy.
192. In both key stages, pupils can manipulate algebraic expressions and solve equations, including simultaneous equations appropriate to their ability and record their solutions correctly. Skills in algebra progress effectively through both key stages.
193. Pupils show an understanding of the purpose and usefulness of charts and graphs and are able to construct and interpret graphs such as distance charts, frequency graphs and cumulative frequency graphs. They can calculate the mean, median, mode and range of sets of data.
194. Pupils are able to calculate area, perimeter and volume and can record their solutions correctly. Pupils of all ability are able to solve angle problems, and progress can be seen in their work on transformations.
195. Pupils in key stage 4 understand Pythagoras' Theorem and trigonometric functions and can apply their understanding to problems involving bearings.
196. In key stage 4 pupils understand, and can calculate, probabilities of two events with confidence.

#### Shortcomings

197. A significant minority of pupils at both key stages are not confident in explaining their ideas, reasoning and methods in any detail using mathematical terminology. Some tend not to contribute to whole class activities.

198. Pupils' retention and understanding of concepts at both key stages, especially at the middle and lower end of the ability range, is inconsistent. Some are very willing to follow methods mechanically and tend not to think for themselves.
199. Some lower ability pupils in key stage 3 have difficulty with addition, subtraction and mental calculations and do not have suitable strategies to aid them.

## **Sixth Form**

### **Good features**

200. The vast majority of year 12 students are able to solve problems involving Geometric Progression effectively.
201. Year 13 students show good understanding in recognising distributions and in calculating probabilities of Binomial and Poisson events.
202. A significant minority of students are able to ask specific questions in order to secure a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts.
203. In revision work on rectilinear motion, year 13 students are able to apply differential equations to solve problems.
204. Year 13 students' manipulation of algebra including integrals is effective.
205. Students' recall of previous work is good.

### **Shortcomings**

206. A significant minority of students are uncertain of how to solve quite simple equations and in particular equations involving denominators.
207. Some students lack confidence and ability in manipulating fractions and negative numbers.

<b>Science</b>
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**Key Stage 3 - Grade 2:** good features and no important shortcomings

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

**The Sixth form:**

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

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

**Physics - Grade 1:** good with outstanding features

**Key stage 3 and Key stage 4**

**Good features**

208. Pupils in key stage 3 and key stage 4 demonstrate, in accordance with their age and ability, good, and sometimes very good, knowledge and understanding across all aspects of science – plants and animals, inanimate materials and systems. They demonstrate good recall of previous work and are able to apply their understanding of scientific concepts to both familiar and unfamiliar situations to explain their observations.
209. The vast majority of pupils listen attentively during class discussions. Some pupils provide extended answers to questions or ask questions which promote scientific discussion and this leads to increased understanding.
210. Pupils keep full, accurate and well presented records of their work, including written notes, diagrams, tables, graphs and completed worksheets, which make a positive contribution to improved learning.
211. They can use scientific terms correctly and appropriately during class discussions and also in their written work.
212. Pupils show a good attitude to practical work. They follow instructions carefully, and pay due attention to health and safety precautions. In some key stage 4 classes, pupils demonstrate an awareness of the need to make risk assessments prior to starting practical work. In both key stages, pupils work well in groups. They discuss the work to be done, listen well to each other, and share out the work between members of the group. They make accurate observations and measurements using the appropriate units of measurement and record their results clearly and appropriately.
213. Pupils in both key stages complete mathematical calculations accurately and use mathematical equations appropriately to enhance their knowledge and understanding of science.

214. Pupils make good progress in practical investigative work in both key stages:
- They are able to use their knowledge and understanding of scientific theory to plan a scientific investigation. They demonstrate an understanding of the steps to be taken and of the factors to be changed and of fair testing. They are able to identify the equipment needed and the range of measurements and observations to be made. They make sound predictions based on their knowledge and understanding of scientific theory, and in key stage 4 pupils demonstrate an increasing ability to identify sources of error and ways of controlling them.
  - In both key stages, but particularly in key stage 4, pupils collect their results systematically and present their findings well and make good use of appropriate graphs. Some pupils in key stage 4 make good use of Information and Communication Technology to present their work. They are able to identify trends and patterns in their findings and to draw sound and reasoned conclusions from them.
  - In accordance with their age and ability, pupils are able to evaluate their own investigative work and suggest ways of improving it.
215. In both key stages, pupils with additional needs make good progress.
216. Pupils in both key stages show a good understanding of the contribution science makes to everyday life and to industry and an increasing awareness of the impact of science and its application on industry, the environment and the economy.

### **Shortcomings**

217. A significant number of pupils at both key stages do not present extended answers to questions during classroom discussions and tend to be passive learners.
218. At both key stages, a small minority of pupils do not fully understand the purpose of some of the activities they are asked to undertake and therefore do not make progress in their scientific understanding. Many of the predictions they make are not based on scientific knowledge and understanding and they have difficulty in drawing conclusions based on their results.
219. A small minority of pupils in both key stages has difficulty in recalling previous work, show poor understanding of some aspects of the work and consequently they lose interest and become easily distracted.

## The Sixth Form

### Biology

#### Good features

- 220. Students have a good knowledge and understanding of biological concepts.
- 221. Students can make hypotheses based on scientific knowledge, plan practical methods to test these hypotheses and evaluate their methods.
- 222. Students keep detailed and well presented records of their work which provide a valuable resource for reference and revision.
- 223. Students make good use of their scientific knowledge, understanding and skills to solve scientific problems.

#### Shortcomings

- 224. A small minority of students have difficulty in the application of prior knowledge of biological concepts to new situations.

### Chemistry

#### Good features

- 225. Students have a good, and sometimes very good, knowledge and understanding of chemical principles and can discuss these principles intelligently and confidently, using scientific terms accurately and appropriately.
- 226. Students can apply their knowledge and understanding and scientific skills to a variety of new situations.
- 227. Students' files are complete and orderly, providing a good reference and revision resource, which enhances their understanding.
- 228. Students appreciate the ways in which the chemistry they have studied can be applied to industrial processes and to everyday life.

#### Shortcomings

- 229. A small minority of students find difficulty in applying their knowledge and understanding to problem solving within the context of A level questions.

## Physics

### Outstanding features

230. The principles and theory of physics are understood well by all students; able students understand them very well.
231. The standard of the presentation of students' work is consistently at least of a good standard; in some cases presentation is outstanding.

### Good features

232. Students demonstrate a sound and secure knowledge of physics.
233. Students gain information from a variety of sources, and they use it purposefully for class presentation and for coursework.
234. Students use scientific terms accurately and confidently.
235. Students plan, prepare and carry out practical work confidently, with care and with diligence. They are able to make effective use of Information and Communication Technology when given the opportunity.
236. They demonstrate a good awareness of errors and a good understanding of how to minimise them; this is reflected in the presentation of their findings and conclusions.

### Shortcomings

237. There were no significant shortcomings.

## History

**Key Stage 3 - Grade 3:** good features outweigh shortcomings

**Key stage 4 -Grade 2:** good features and no important shortcomings

**Sixth Form: Grade 1:** good with outstanding features

### Key stage 3

#### Good features

238. Pupils show that they are aware of chronology. Most pupils can place events within the correct historical time scale, and are aware of chronology when discussing important developments.
239. Many pupils show sound knowledge and understanding of the period studied. The vast majority ask pertinent questions about the issues being studied.
240. The vast majority of pupils across key stage 3 are able to make comparisons and connections between the main events and developments studied. They are able to assess the significance of important historical events, and some are confident in recalling historical information previously learnt to support their assessment.
241. Pupils across the key stage are aware of the importance of evidence and its reliability.
242. The more able pupils show that they understand that events and issues in the past, would not have been viewed then, as they are now.
243. Pupils with special educational needs in key stage 3 achieve good standards.
244. Pupils demonstrate a sound knowledge of historical terminology and concepts. The majority of pupils can communicate effectively, according to age and ability, using a variety of genres, in both oral and written work.

#### Shortcomings

245. In a minority of lessons, the standards achieved by a few pupils reflect lack of motivation and insufficient participation in activities
246. A very few pupils make limited responses in their written and oral work; their work lacks the depth of knowledge expected of their age and ability.
247. A very few pupils have work missing which affects their progress in the subject.
248. The disruptive and challenging behaviour of a very few pupils affects the standard of work achieved.

## **Key stage 4**

### **Good features**

249. Pupils demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding of the period studied and are confident in placing events, issues and ideas within a chronological framework.
250. Pupils are able to understand how various events in the past have effected change, with many able to distinguish between long term and short term causal factors; they can explain how events in the past have helped fashion the present.
251. Pupils demonstrate skill in being able to extract accurate and relevant information from a variety of historical sources through independent investigation. They are able to communicate their findings in the appropriate depth and in a variety of ways, to the relevant audience, both orally and in written tasks.
252. They are able to evaluate the importance to historians of different sources, and are confident in detecting bias and propaganda, and are able to make informed judgements on the basis of the historical evidence before them.
253. Pupils deal with historical set tasks in a well informed way and are confident in their use of historical terminology and concepts. They produce good written work containing sound and well reasoned historical argument.

### **Shortcomings**

254. There are no important shortcomings.

## **The Sixth Form**

### **Outstanding features**

255. Students demonstrate very impressive depth of knowledge and understanding of the personalities and the issues being studied.
256. Students are able to extrapolate, analyse and evaluate a range of historical interpretations, and demonstrate their ability to pass judgement on the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments of professional historians using their depth of knowledge. Whilst doing so they are comfortable in their use of historical terms and concepts. They can present the arguments in the required language register, as exemplified in their outstanding oral presentations.

### **Good features**

257. Essay work shows that students are able to synthesize historical articles and documents and, using various sources, can construct sound historical arguments. Many students provide examples of very well constructed, well balanced and well argued answers in the written work presented.
258. They deal with set historical tasks in a well informed way, and are confident in their use of historical terminology and concepts, and address questions purposefully.

### **Shortcomings**

259. There are no significant shortcomings

## Physical education

**Key Stage 3: Grade 3:** good features outweigh shortcomings

**Key Stage 4: Grade 3:** good features outweigh shortcomings

**Sixth Form: Grade 2:** good features and no important shortcomings

### Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4

#### Good features

- 260. Pupils across the ability range display a positive attitude to physical activity, and are able to sustain their efforts over significant periods of time.
- 261. Pupils understand the benefits of an active lifestyle and the importance of exercise.
- 262. Pupils are able to lead whole group warm ups in preparation for further activity, and they display an accurate knowledge of what constitutes safe and relevant warm up activities.
- 263. The majority of pupils demonstrate satisfactory techniques when throwing or running.
- 264. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of safety across a wide range of activities.
- 265. The more able pupils are able to assess their own performance and that of their peers accurately, and can offer their peers good advice on how to improve.

#### Shortcomings

- 266. Some of the more able pupils underachieve across a range of activities.
- 267. A minority of less motivated pupils disrupts some activities, and has a detrimental effect on the standards achieved.
- 268. The performance, technique and effort of a significant number of girls are inconsistent.

### Sixth Form

#### Good features

- 269. Students are able to work independently and research topics in depth.
- 270. Students have a very good understanding of what is required to achieve their expected grades at advanced level.

- 271. Students contribute well in discussion groups and are able to analyse examination questions accurately.
- 272. The more able students consistently ask searching questions and are able to maintain a dialogue of high standard.

**Shortcomings**

- 273. There are no significant shortcomings.

<b>Drama</b>
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**Key stage 4 – Grade 3:** good features outweigh shortcomings

**Good features**

- 274. The more able pupils develop good acting techniques, such as those involved in method acting. They develop and sustain their characters convincingly, use the stage well, and collaborate skillfully with each other in scripted and improvisational work. They show clarity of diction, good voice projection and a sense of timing.
- 275. More able pupils engage in sustained performances and are immersed in their characters in ensemble pieces.
- 276. Most pupils evaluate their own work honestly and are involved to a degree in setting targets for their own improvement.
- 277. Most pupils have a good knowledge of theatrical terminology.

**Shortcomings**

- 278. Less able pupils have difficulty with written or text-based aspects of drama.
- 279. Most pupils have a very limited knowledge of stage structure, apart from that of the proscenium arch.
- 280. Overall, boys achieve less well than girls in the subject.

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

The School welcomes the report of the Inspection undertaken in May 2006 and the School appreciates the professionalism and courtesy of the Inspection team.

It is pleasing to note that the Inspection Team judged that the School has made very good progress in dealing with the key issues for action emanating from the last report. We are pleased that the Inspection Team found that the School Self-evaluation Report correctly recognises the School's strengths and shortcomings and deals honestly with the seven key questions of the Inspection Framework. It was recognised that measures have already been taken to address issues for improvement identified by the Inspection Team, and had been highlighted in the self-evaluation report and in the school development plan. An action plan will now be put in place to address the recommendations in the report.

We are pleased that the Inspectors confirmed that: pupils of all abilities achieve good standards regardless of gender, social or linguistic background; standards achieved by pupils with special educational needs are good; gifted and talented pupils become high achievers; and, that the School's results in external tests, statutory assessments and examinations are very good. We appreciate that the report notes that the School, according to many of the Welsh Assembly Government indicators, adds significant value to pupil achievement. Comments about the high standards achieved by our pupils in so many areas reflect the staff's commitment to the School and we are very pleased that an outstanding feature of the teaching was judged to be the teachers' very thorough subject knowledge and understanding.

The Inspectors' confirmation that the School plans and manages pupils' care guidance and support effectively is welcomed. The Inspection Team observed that the pastoral teams and outside agencies work well together, and that these arrangements are complemented by the effective support provided by subject teachers and a well coordinated team of learning support assistants. We believe this reflects the School's commitment to creating a happy and caring environment within which our pupils can succeed.

It is pleasing that the good behaviour and politeness displayed by the majority of our pupils have been praised. The School accepts that the behaviour of a minority of pupils is unsatisfactory, and our commitment to and strategies for remedying this have been highlighted as good practice by the Inspection team.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Bro Gwaun, Fishguard
School type	Comprehensive, community, naturally bilingual
Age-range of pupils	11 – 18 years
Address of school	Heol Dyfed, Fishguard, Pembrokeshire
Postcode	SA65 9DT
Telephone number	01348 872268

Headteacher	Ms. Christine Wright
Date of appointment	September 2000
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr Eifion Griffiths/ Pembrokeshire Education Authority
Reporting inspector	Dr. Neil T. Jones
Dates of inspection	8 – 12 May, 2006

## Appendix 2

### School data and indicators

Year group	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y13	Total
Number of pupils	109	112	127	113	111	58	57	687

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	47	3	49.2

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	13.9:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	-
Average teaching group size	18.3
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	76.1%

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole School
Term 1	94	93	93	91	90	96.1	99.7	93.1
Term 2	93	92	87	91	90	89.7	97.4	92.9
Term 3	92.9	90	92	90	85.6	90	97.6	90.8

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	18%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	86 temporary, including 2 from an ethnic minority group, 0 permanent

## Appendix 3

### National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 3:

National Curriculum Assessment KS3 results: 2005 (national figures – 2004)															
Total number of pupils in Y9:															
Percentage of pupils at each level															
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	EP
English	Teacher assessment	School			1			2	5	35	24	29	14		
		National		1	1			2	8	21	34	24	9		
	Test	School	3	4	1				5	23	33	23	8		
		National		4	2				8	20	33	23	10		
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School								12	65	19	4		
		National						6	20	34	29	10			
	Test	School							19	54	19	4			
		National		2	1				5	19	35	28	10		
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School			1			3	5	15	36	22	19		
		National		1	1			1	7	19	26	32	14		
	Test	School	2	4	0				5	14	16	42	15		
		National		5	2				5	17	20	36	15		
Science	Teacher assessment	School			1			1	5	15	32	31	14		
		National		1	1				6	20	33	27	12		
	Test	School	3	4	0					18	27	28	21		
		National		4	1				5	17	33	28	13		

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

**Public Examination Results:**

<b>For pupils aged 15, results in GCSE, Entry Level Qualification, GNVQ and NVQ</b>	
Number of pupils aged 15 on the school roll in January 2005	110
Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil	42

<b>The percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2005:</b>	School	UA	Wales
entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent	91	87	87
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	57	53	52
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	90	86	85
attained GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator)	45	41	38
entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or GCSE	96	99	97
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification equivalent	83	77	76
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G or the vocational qualification equivalent	95	95	93
attained no graded GCSE or the vocational qualification equivalent	5	5	7
attained one or more Entry level qualification only	0	2	3
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Foundation level or NVQ level 1	-	-	-
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Intermediate level or NVQ level 2	-	-	-

<b>For pupils aged 16, 17 and 18, results in A/AS, GNVQs and NVQs</b>	
Number of pupils aged 16, 17 and 18 in January 2005	
Number of pupils entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations or equivalent	41
Number of pupils entered for fewer than 2 GCE A levels or equivalent in	7

	School	UA	Wales
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-C	80	67	68
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-E	95	95	94
Average points score per candidate entering 2 or more subjects	23	20	20
Number of pupils who achieved a GNVQ Intermediate or NVQ at level 2	-	-	-
Number of pupils who achieved a GNVQ Advanced or NVQ at level 3	-	-	-

UA Unitary Authority

## Appendix 4

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

Eleven inspectors spent a total of 40 inspection days at the school and 110 lessons or part lessons were observed. In addition, inspectors visited a cross-section of registration periods, extra-curricular activities during the lunch hour and after school and acts of communal worship. Interviews were held with members of the management team, heads of department and year tutors, as well as members of staff, including ancillary staff with specific responsibilities.

The work of a cross-section of able, average and lower ability pupils from year 7 to year 11 and of students in years 12 and 13 was inspected. In addition, further work completed by pupils was seen when visiting classrooms, workshops and laboratories. Regular discussions were held with pupils about their work and formal interviews were held with pupils and students selected to represent their different school years, including members of the School Council.

Every document the school presented before and during the inspection was analysed. Pre-inspection meetings were held with members of the management team, the staff, the governing body and parents. Thirty eight parents attended the parents' meeting and 72 questionnaires were returned. Eight letters were received and there were eleven comments on questionnaires received from parents.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team Member	Responsibilities
Dr. Neil Trevor Jones Registered Inspector	Context; Summary; Recommendations Responsible for key question 5 Contribution to key question 7 Science
Gareth Wyn Roberts Team Inspector	Responsible for key question 1 Contribution to key question 4
Gwilym Davies Lay Inspector	Contribution to key questions 1, 3 and 7
Beryl Portlock Team Inspector	Responsible for key question 2
Bethan Cartwright Team Inspector	Responsible for key question 3 Mathematics
Gloria Davies Team Inspector	Responsible for key question 4 Welsh (first language)
Haydn Davies Team Inspector	Responsible for key question 6 Physical Education
Susan Edwards Team Inspector	Contribution to key questions 3, 4 and 7 Leader of science team
Bethan Whittall Team Inspector	History
Rob Isaac Team Inspector	Drama
Dr. Keith Davies Team Inspector	Science
The school's nominee was Ms. Sian Bowen, assistant headteacher at the school. There was no peer assessor.	

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### Acknowledgements

The visiting inspectors wish to thank the governors, head, staff, pupils and parents of the school for their willing cooperation during the inspection.