

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

**Ysgol David Hughes
Menai Bridge, Anglesey LL59 5SS**

School Number: 660 - 4028

Date of Inspection: March 2006

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and
Training in Wales**

Date of Publication: May 2006



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales



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- ▲ further education;
- ▲ adult community-based learning;
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- ▲ LEAs;
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Ysgol David Hughes was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspections. 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 David Hughes took place between 06/03/06 and 10/03/06. An independent team of inspectors led by Steffan James undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body which is independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a short 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	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y 7	Y 8	Y9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y 13	Y14
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19

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

Nature of the provider

Ysgol David Hughes is a bilingual comprehensive school with about 1250 pupils aged between 11-18. It serves the south-east Anglesey catchment area, a mainly agricultural area but with some light industry which is characteristic of the area. Seven percent of the pupils are registered as entitled to free school meals. This is significantly lower than the national percentage (15.7%). Nevertheless, the school states that the school catchment area encompasses a variety of areas, with a high number of disadvantaged pupils in some of them.

Just over 2% of the pupils have statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) and about 13% of other pupils are registered for school action and school action plus. These figures are slightly below the national percentages but are higher than the county average.

Welsh-medium courses are available for Years 7 to 13, and emphasis is placed on developing linguistic skills and abilities amongst Welsh learners. Extra-curricular activities play an important role in the life of the school.

The school places great emphasis on maintaining close contact between staff and parents and parents' evenings are held regularly. If any problems arise concerning a pupil's behaviour or development, the school contacts the parents personally. Pupils are given the opportunity to contribute to decision-making by means of the Pupils' Council and the Charities' Committee.

The school was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Schools Curriculum Award, the Investors in People Award and a Recognition Award for the Quality of Work Experience (North Wales and Powys).

The school's priorities and targets

The aim of the school, in partnership with pupils, parents and governors, is to create an atmosphere which allows pupils to develop to their full potential, and to be able to face confidently the requirements of our modern, bilingual society. The school also has a number of specific objectives, as follows:

- To seek to nurture a civilized society which emphasises moral and human values by giving specific attention to tolerance and caring for others, especially those who are less fortunate in life;
- To develop a foundation of literacy and mathematical, scientific and technical knowledge to enable pupils to learn basic work and leisure skills for today and the technological era which will face them in the future;
- To prepare the pupil to make a full contribution to the life of the society of which he/she is part. In the case of Anglesey, it is a bilingual society, so it must be

ensured that every pupil has the opportunity to becoming bilingual if he/she wishes to achieve this aim;

- To teach the pupil about the feats and aspirations of man in the arts, sciences and religion and the search for a just society;
- To seek to assist the pupil to develop an inquisitive, lively mind to enquire and reason logically and then to apply himself/herself to specific tasks;
- To seek to assist the pupil to understand how the country attains and maintains its standard of living by paying particular attention to the importance of industry and the world of work; and
- To prepare a curriculum that is extensive, balanced, relevant and differentiated.

These are the main priorities of this year's school development plan:

Management

- Funding and resources;
- Restructuring the workforce and the structure of responsibilities; and
- Accommodation.

Curriculum

- Learning pathways 14-19;
- Review of the post-16 provision; and
- Develop basic skills and key skills.

Whole School

- Pupils' standards and achievement;
- Care and support for pupils;
- Teaching and assessment; and
- Pupils' personal development.

Summary

Table of grades awarded

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

This is a very good school with many outstanding features. The senior management team and all the staff succeed in creating a happy and active atmosphere into which pupils settle extremely well.

Standards

Standards are good. The school's pupils, whatever their ability, succeed well in assessments and public examinations at Key Stage (KS) 4 and the 6th form, where results are consistently much higher than those for the county and for the rest of Wales.

In order to compare the performance of similar schools, the Welsh Assembly Government has placed them in benchmarking groups according to the percentage of entitlement to free school meals. This school is in group 1, namely schools in which between 0% and 10% of pupils have free school meals. In KS4, the performance of the school in the four main indicators is near to the median in the benchmarking group. In KS3, the performance has not been as good, but in 2005, there was a significant improvement in the results so that they were much higher than the results for the rest of the county and for Wales, though they were still below the median for the benchmarking group.

The pupils achieve good standards in key skills. Standards of listening and reading are very good. Oracy standards are good although a few pupils were unwilling to make extended contributions. Writing standards are generally good. Numeracy standards are good and computer skills are very good. The pupils' bilingual skills are very good and this is an outstanding feature.

Pupils, including those pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN), make good progress in learning. On occasion, some pupils make less progress than they could where they have to deal with work that has not adapted sufficiently for their level of ability.

Pupils' personal, social and learning skills are developing very well. Pupils work hard, are very well behaved and show respect to others and to diversity in society. The attendance level is above the average for Wales but very slightly below the Welsh Assembly Government's target.

The quality of education and training

The expertise of teachers and the quality of teaching is good. In the lessons observed, the percentages of grades 1 and 2 exceeded the expectations of the Welsh Assembly Government. The team judged that the quality of teaching was as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
28%	49%	23%	0%	0%

The teachers plan very carefully and organise a range of appropriate activities but in a small number of classes, especially those of mixed ability, they did not present sufficient challenge to pupils by giving them work which is suited to their ability.

There are a number of good aspects in the assessment arrangements, performance monitoring and the setting of targets. The marking is generally good but is superficial in a few departments or classes. The use of information about past performance and potential, in order to set targets and to track pupils' progress is good in KS4 and the 6th form. In KS3, where there is not as much detailed understanding about pupils' ability and potential, the organisation is not as effective.

The arrangements for presenting information about the attainment and effort to pupils and their parents are good.

Learning experiences

There are many good features in the school curriculum. Full access and equal opportunity is afforded to every pupil to secure appropriate qualifications. The curriculum develops key and basic skills and promotes learners' personal development well. The quality of the provision for promoting learners' bilingual skills is an outstanding feature.

The school responds well to the needs of employers and the wider community and to deprivation in society.

The school continues to develop the curriculum to meet the needs of some learners who have difficulties in dealing with an academic curriculum. This provision needs to be expanded.

The care, guidance and support to learners

The headteacher shows particular respect and care for pupils and staff. These values are reflected in the life of the school and ensure that the school is a happy and caring community. The care, guidance and support to learners is good and has a number of outstanding features. These include:

- pastoral support programmes and arrangements and careers guidance;
- the leadership of heads of year;
- methods of monitoring attendance and punctuality;
- communication and contact with parents;
- the inclusion of SEN pupils within all school activities; and
- the quality of the provision for equal opportunities.

Leadership and management

The effectiveness of the leadership and the strategic management, and the way in which leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards and make effective use of resources, are all good with outstanding features. These include:

- a strong and inclusive atmosphere and team spirit;
- the very high level of commitment and expectations of the senior management team;
- the work of middle managers, including subject and pastoral leaders;
- the school's self-evaluation arrangements;
- the school's planning cycle structure, including the very detailed work that links the staffing budget with curricular needs;
- the effective management, co-ordination and procedures to support the professional development of staff; and
- the quality of ICT resources, which includes 70 interactive white boards and over 300 computers on the network.

Other good aspects include:

- the process of setting and appraising targets for pupils in KS4 and the 6th form, and for form and departmental teachers;

- the number of experienced teachers that have appropriate qualifications, and the support staff and learning assistants that work effectively with the teachers;
- the range of various resources and the good use made of the resources centre;
- the good condition of the school's buildings and the attractive learning environments to maintain the ethos of effective learning;
- very effective budget management and the close relationship between the budget and the priorities the school and departmental development schemes; and
- the significant contribution of the governing body which is very aware of its responsibility and which contributes significantly, for example, to budget management.

Notwithstanding this very positive picture, there are some aspects to be improved. They are:

- as the information about pupils' potential in KS3 is insufficient, the targets for National Curriculum levels are too imprecise and are not sufficiently challenging;
- teachers do not observe departmental colleagues' lessons sufficiently in order to share good practice;
- the arrangements for monitoring pupils' work within departments and at a school level or the school's methods for ascertaining pupils' opinions are not sufficiently structured or formal;
- the condition of the fields is deficient for teaching physical education effectively, especially during periods of wet weather, and the condition of some of the toilets is poor; and
- there is no easy access for disabled pupils or disabled people to some parts of the building.

The school has made good progress on the key issues from the previous inspection, except for the condition of the fields. The school has worked hard with the appropriate authorities to seek to ensure improvements in this matter.

Considering the curricular and pastoral provision, the pupils' standards of achievement and attainment and the quality of the teaching, the school offers good value for money.

Recommendations

The school needs to:

- R1 strengthen the existing arrangements to raise standards, by giving more attention to:
- providing work that is relevant to pupils' ability, especially in some mixed ability classes;
 - improving the information about past performance, the ability and potential of pupils in KS3, and on the basis of this, set more challenging targets and monitor pupils' progress in attaining them; and
 - improving the quality of marking* in some departments;
- R2 extend the range of vocational courses provided in order to offer a better choice of 14-19 learning pathways*;
- R3 arrange more observation by teachers within departments and monitor pupils' work within departments more consistently; and
- R4 work with the LEA to improve the condition of the sports fields and access to the building for disabled pupils or disabled people.*

* The school has identified the need to improve arrangements for these issues in its 2006-2007 school development plan.

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action points in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of the receipt of the report, and to show what the school is doing about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be distributed to every parent in the school.

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

The findings of the inspection team correspond with the school's self-evaluation.

KS3 & KS4

The school's examination results are good. There are many good features, as follows:

- A high number (over 70%) obtain Welsh first language qualifications in Key Stage (KS) 3 and at GCSE, although approximately three-quarters of the pupils speak English as the first language in the home;
- In 2005, there was an improvement in the National Curriculum results in KS3 so that they were well above those for the county and Wales. In the benchmarking group, the 2005 results were only slightly below the median;
- In KS4, the results are consistently above those for the county and for Wales. In the benchmarking group, the average points score is consistently above the median. Other indicators are close to the median, in the upper half or above the lowest 25%;
- Statistical analyses show added value, in particular in KS4, where pupils perform better than expected in almost every subject; and
- The very low number who leave school without qualifications reflect the success of the school in making effective provision for all pupils, whatever their ability. The achievements of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are good.

There are some shortcomings in terms of examination results, as follows:

- In KS3, before 2005, pupils' results in every indicator in the National Curriculum tests were consistently in the lowest 25% of the benchmarking group. Although the results improved significantly in 2005, they still remain below the median;
- In KS4, performance in some indicators is below the median compared with schools in the benchmarking group; and
- In KS3 and KS4, boys' attainment is much lower than that of girls, although the gap in performance is no greater than it is for the whole of Wales.

Standards in key skills are good. The following are a list of the good features:

- Listening standards are good. Pupils concentrate and listen attentively to the teachers or their peers, and as a result provide intelligent responses;
- Standards of oracy are good. Pupils can describe in detail, express opinions and reason and reach conclusions;
- Reading standards are very good. Increasingly, the significant majority of pupils can read fluently and aloud. In KS4, a good number of pupils can respond well orally, and in writing, to various literary and non-literary reading texts;
- The standard of writing is generally good. A significant cohort of higher-ability pupils can express a considered opinion. Pupils can produce interesting extended pieces of good quality;
- Standards of numeracy are good. Pupils work at an appropriate level and respond enthusiastically to challenging work. Computer skills are often very good. Very good work was seen in the information technology lessons. Pupils use computers well to improve their work, and they produce a good range of work over the year in the different subjects; and
- Bilingual and translingual skills are very good, for example, pupils can read a book in English and discuss it in Welsh. Large numbers of pupils who are not fluent in Welsh are able to understand well what they hear before expressing an opinion in English. Their bilingualism improves as they progress through the key stages. Bilingual development and an awareness of Welshness is a distinctive feature.

There are some shortcomings in the key skills, as follows:

- A few of the pupils, especially in KS3, but sometimes in KS4 and in the 6th form, are reluctant to contribute orally, and respond briefly, especially when they are not challenged sufficiently by direct questions;
- Some pupils, in particular less able pupils, including some with SEN, fail to focus closely on detail when reading written text, and generalise rather than read in detail; and
- Standard of writing, though generally good, vary in terms of length, content, style and accuracy. In some lessons, the writing is too mechanical, and some pupils in KS3 are unable to plan and write extendedly well enough in a variety of forms.

Pupils make good progress in their learning. In many lessons, the pupils:

- reinforce knowledge, understanding and skills and develop their skills well;
- use their knowledge of other units of work to complete tasks on new topics;

- concentrate and strive well, for example, when facing new demands; and
- are willing to adapt and redraft on the basis of guidance from teachers.

Pupils with SEN achieve good standards and:

- contribute extensively to class activities;
- achieve small steps appropriately;
- see the close connection between one follow-up step and the other; and
- make good efforts, and benefit from the provision, in the additional lessons during lunch time or before the start of the school day.

Less able pupils who do not receive additional attention, and also able children, sometimes make less progress than they could. This occurs when they are given work that has not been adapted in order to fully extend them.

Personal, social and learning skills are, on the whole, are developing very well. In the main, pupils:

- show motivation by persistence, showing interest, working productively and by using their time effectively;
- respond well to stimulating work on the interactive white board;
- behave very well, with only a few behaving in an unacceptable manner;
- improve their learning well, for example, by using 'mind maps' effectively to organise reviews and planning or, in some lessons, such as religious education, by appraising their own work in order to develop it further;
- work well independently;
- arrive at lessons promptly, although the school site is scattered;
- solve problems well, by discussing and sharing tasks when completing practical work; and
- explain and understand concepts, especially in the 6th form.

In a few classes, especially in KS4, some pupils:

- do not work independently in an effective way;
- talk across the teacher for long periods; and
- are reluctant to work orally.

The school attendance level for the three full terms in 2005 was over 91%, which is slightly below the Welsh Assembly Government's target of 92%. Attendance increased to 93% in the Autumn term of 2005.

Sixth form

In the sixth form, standards of attainment are good. The examination results are well above those for the LEA and for Wales. In almost every subject, students perform better than expected when considering their previous performance. In 2005, the Advanced Supplementary (AS) scores were better than ever and were higher than the corresponding scores for the whole of Wales. A large number of students went on to follow a university course of their choice after A Levels.

Standards in key skills are good. Students often have a good grasp of language and syntax in both languages. They use an extensive vocabulary confidently when presenting information and expressing an opinion. A few of them are reluctant to contribute orally and they respond briefly.

Students' progress through learning is good, and their personal, social and learning skills are developing very well. A distinctive feature is the way in which they solve problems well by discussing and sharing tasks when completing practical work. Attendance is good.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

The findings of the inspection team correspond with the school's self-evaluation.

In the lessons that were inspected, the percentage of grades 1 and 2 were above the Welsh Assembly Government's targets. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
28%	49%	23%	-	-

The school has a specific and clear teaching policy. In most lessons, the teachers:

- present learning objectives clearly and reinforce the main points at the end of the lesson;
- plan their lessons effectively and carefully in accordance with the principles of the school's Learning and Teaching Cycle, by establishing an appropriate pace and using a variety of teaching methods;
- use extended and effective questions which encourage pupils to think hard;
- use different relevant resources effectively, including information technology and interactive white boards, in order to enrich the pupils' experiences and to include them in problem-solving activities;
- use different structures to help pupils who have learning difficulties;
- consider and include Individual Education Plans (IEP) targets for pupils with SEN when planning lessons and refer assistants to support them in classes; and
- provide work which corresponds to pupils' level of attainment.

Throughout the school, there is a good relationship between pupils and their teachers. The teachers know their pupils well and are willing to provide guidance, support and praise by nurturing a healthy and positive approach to learning.

Some shortcomings were seen in the lessons judged to be grade 3, and to a certain extent also in grade 2 lessons, namely:

- the uniformity of tasks in some mixed ability groups, and pupils not being challenged by work which is suitable to their previous performance or to their ability;

- teachers asking closed questions, which do not encourage pupils to reflect and think of extended answers;
- insufficient opportunities to talk and discuss;
- insufficient opportunities for pupils to take an active role when using interactive white boards; and
- class assistants not being used efficiently enough.

Teachers' expertise is very good. A number of departments share good practice in preparing units of work together, in order to ensure consistency of standards and effective progression steps within lessons.

The organisation for key skills is good. Good features include:

- introducing spelling, reading and numeracy skills within the context of subjects, including promoting discussion and expressing opinions;
- creating situations in which there are opportunities for pupils to work together and use research methods;
- creating tasks to enable pupils to develop new concepts when solving problems; and
- developing bilingualism by giving consistent opportunities to every pupil to use Welsh and English.

On the whole, homework is set appropriately. Teachers and assistants provide effective individual support to pupils in the homework club, by:

- helping pupils to better understand specific aspects of work; and
- encouraging the pupils to use information technology resources to present their work in an attractive way.

Nevertheless, in some classes, the pattern for setting homework is inconsistent, with too much being set on some days and not enough on others.

The school meets the statutory requirements with regard to assessing and reporting pupils' achievements. Departments have detailed assessment policies which are based on the school's assessment, recording and reporting policy.

There are good aspects to the school's assessment and target-setting arrangements, including:

- good examples of marking pupils' work, particularly at KS4 and the 6th form with the best marking including constructive feedback on how to improve;

- good systems in some departments to encourage pupils to assess their own work;
- the awareness of class teachers in KS3 of the potential of every pupil because of information and assessments which come from the primary schools;
- the use of assessment results at the end of KS3 and KS4 to determine the target grades for every pupil in KS4 or the 6th form;
- presenting information about the attainment and effort to pupils and their parents regularly, through the use of term by assessment cards and reports;
- regular discussion between class tutors or heads of year and the pupils about their assessments, as well as consistent communication among teachers, which helps the school to identify pupils who are underachieving and to prepare improvement plans for them; and
- effective support and pastoral programmes.

There are also some shortcomings in the quality of assessment. They are as follows:

- The marking in a minority of classes does not provide enough comments to help pupils to improve their work, and there are a small number of examples of work which has not been marked; and
- In KS3, the assessment procedure is less effective than in KS4 and in the 6th form. Although some of the above good features exist, the school does not have enough information on pupils' past performance and potential. The targets are not effective enough, and teachers do not have sufficient understanding of the level at which pupils can work.

As a result, teachers are unable to track pupils and identify those who are working slightly below their potential but without underachieving in a very obvious manner. This, linked to the tendency to give the same activities to every child in mixed ability classes, possibly contributes to some of the underachievement in the National Curriculum assessments at the end of KS3.

The school has identified the need to develop the assessment arrangements as a priority in its 2006-2007 school development plan.

The annual reports respond to statutory requirements and include good aspects such as:

- attainment and effort grades and specific comments on every subject;
- suggestions on how to improve; and
- opportunities for parents' comments.

Sixth form

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. The same features exist as in the rest of the school. In the lessons inspected, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
36%	36%	27%	0%	0%

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

The findings of the inspection team correspond with the school's self-evaluation.

The quality of the provision to promote learners' bilingual skills is very good and learners benefit greatly from it. This provision has increased the number of pupils who are pursuing the Welsh first language course. In addition, by meeting the requirements of the Cwricwlwm Cymreig, the school gives them a good awareness of civilised Welshness. All of this is a particular asset for the pupils.

The school succeeded by:

- separating the learners in KS3 into two cohorts, one which had Welsh as first language, the other with Welsh as a second language, and categorising learners in the second language cohort according to their linguistic ability;
- providing opportunities for learners to follow the Welsh first language course and other subjects either through the medium of Welsh or English;
- providing opportunities for learners of Welsh as a second language to transfer to the first language band at the end of KS3; and
- giving the choice of both languages as a medium for subjects that are options in KS4.

Another very good feature of the curriculum in KS4 is the high numbers who follow a foreign language course and a good number who are studying two foreign languages.

In addition, there are many good features. These include the following:

- an extensive and balanced curriculum which meets the needs and interests of learners, provides an opportunity for everyone to ensure suitable qualifications, and which responds to statutory requirements;

- in the sixth form, the opportunity to gain Advanced Supplementary and Advanced level qualifications across a good range of subjects, including vocational courses (some of these are offered jointly with other schools);
- arrangements to ensure full access and equal opportunities to every pupil, including pupils with physical needs and pupils with SEN; and
- appropriate time for every subject within the key stages.

The curriculum develops the key and basic skills well by integrating them across the curriculum. The school:

- has raised departmental awareness by undertaking an audit of the contribution of every department to key skills;
- holds additional lessons in numeracy and literacy for Year 7 pupils, in order to target that which is necessary for further development and to help pupils to cope with the requirements of KS3 subjects;
- supports groups of pupils who require additional support by providing reading, spelling, handwriting, homework and dyslexia clubs; and
- has introduced information technology in a range of appropriate lessons.

The school promotes learners' personal development well by:

- a combination of PSE lessons which respond appropriately to the requirements of the PSE framework;
- a wide variety of educational visits and extra-curricular activities which include foreign trips, sports, choirs, an orchestra, a brass band and the Urdd;
- opportunities to nurture a spiritual, moral and social awareness in a number of subjects and in morning assemblies and tutorial periods;
- ensuring that every learner in KS4 follows a high quality religious education course;
- ensuring that pupils are very aware of other cultures, whilst at the same time, being proud of their Welshness; and
- introduce an ethos in which pupils respect each other, the staff and the environment.

There are good partnerships with other providers. The school has developed:

- good contacts with feeder primary schools, including a beneficial curricular contact with a number of departments, and a range of activities such as Welsh, English, mathematics and physical education projects;

- good contacts with parents based on an open-door policy, including the Friends Society, which is extremely active and supportive;
- strong links with local industry, businesses and employers in order to broaden and extend pupils' experiences; and
- contacts with other schools and Coleg Menai to provide different post-14 courses.

The learning experiences offered respond well to the needs of employers and the wider community. The school:

- has planned a comprehensive programme for careers education and guidance and work-related education, and works closely with Careers Wales in order to ensure enterprise activities in Y9 and Y10;
- has won the "Anglesey Business Challenge" competition with Y12 learners;
- offers vocational courses in KS4 and Y12/13; and
- gives good attention to sustainable development and promotes the Green Schools and Healthy Schools schemes by adopting energy saving measures, recycling, tree planting and healthy eating.

The school deals with deprivation in society by:

- supporting learners with serious social problems, for example, through strategies to work with other agencies for the benefit of learners; and
- encouraging learners to continue in either part-time or full-time education.

Although the school's provision is good, there are some aspects that need to be further developed, as follows.

- There is a need to expand the provision for co-ordinating key skills across the curriculum.
- Although the school complies with the requirements on joint worship, the quality of pupils' experiences during some of the tutorial periods or registration are varied and are sometimes low.
- There is a need to expand the provision to improve the choice of 14-19 learning pathways for some pupils.
- Although the curricular contact between the school and primary schools in the catchment area is good in a number of subjects, not enough of them provide bridging projects.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
--

The findings of the inspection team correspond with the school's self-evaluation.

The outstanding features of the school include the following.

- The headteacher shows particular respect for pupils and staff. These values are reflected in the life of the school and ensure that the school is a happy and caring community;
- There is very good and varied communication and contacts with the parents. These include a regular, personal clinic with the headteacher and formal and informal opportunities through the Friends Society to discuss and strengthen the partnership;
- Very effective guidance is provided by the heads of year;
- There are meticulous methods for monitoring attendance and punctuality in the school, with an immediate and appropriate response. The rewards regime is strongly reinforced by the 'Pupils' Bulletin' which gives publicity to successes by motivating and encouraging attendance and good effort;
- Effective pastoral support programmes and arrangements are prepared for pupils who are in danger of being excluded;
- The quality of careers education and guidance is outstanding. Through very effective partnerships with the Careers Company and with local businesses, the school prepares its pupils and students very thoroughly for choices, the next steps in their educational career and the world of work;
- As well as the community nurse's office being located in the building, there is a weekly health clinic for older pupils and students during lunch time;
- Staff ensure that pupils with SEN are included in all school activities and they have a very detailed knowledge of their needs. The guidance and support provided by the SEN co-ordinator and the teaching staff and the support at all levels ensures that the pupils have the self-respect and the resources that they require to make good progress whilst learning;
- There is a particular quality to the equal opportunities provision. The school creates, intentionally, a climate and ethos in which there is no place for discrimination or harassment;
- PSE, religious education and foreign language courses, as well as joint worship, promote and encourage racial and social equality. This is reinforced by clear procedures which deal firmly with any racial incidents; and

- There is an effective and swift response to any incident of bullying or unfairness, which is appreciated by parents and pupils.

Outstanding practice

Heads of year lead their pastoral teams very effectively in order to ensure particular support for pupils.

Clear and simple lines of communication ensure effective and prompt support, with the emphasis on early intervention and swift resolution. The team of form teachers stay with the head of year from one year to the next. As a result, there is a good, close relationship between them, and teachers specialise in the fields which are most pertinent to their year, such as settling into the school in year 7 and providing help with making choices in year 9.

Following careful monitoring of effort and performance assessments, the head of year or a member of the senior management team will interview, in the presence of the parents, any pupil who shows signs of underachieving, and keeps a close eye on future performance.

The pastoral team plays an important role in supporting and monitoring learners, ensuring that new pupils settle in quickly and happily, and creating a climate which promotes diversity and equal opportunity.

The work of the team is reflected in the happy and safe atmosphere of the school. The ethos of tolerance, friendship and kindness is a feature of the school.

There are also many good features. These include:

- the effective and appropriate use the school makes of support services;
- the information and detailed advice that pupils and parents receive about the opportunities and choices which are open to them, by means of handbooks, meetings and support on a personal level;
- the strong partnership between the school and the primary schools in the catchment area, which ensures that new pupils settle in quickly and happily;
- the means in which the school's health and safety policy is reviewed and presented regularly to the governing body;
- the effective policy and arrangements for child protection which comply fully with statutory requirements;
- visits by the SEN co-ordinator to the primary schools in the catchment in order to ensure adequate provision for pupils who are transferring to the school;
- the way in which the school co-operates fully with parents when reviewing and supporting their children's special needs;

- the appropriate arrangements for meeting the needs of pupils from different linguistic backgrounds, in accordance with Anglesey LEA's language policy; and
- the way in which the school responds sensitively and supportively to pupils with physical disabilities.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

In its self-evaluation report, the school judged this key question to be grade 2. The findings of the inspection team correspond with the statements of the self-evaluation report but the team has judged this aspect to be grade 1 because of the significance of the outstanding features.

Outstanding practice

The headteacher, through his leadership and management of people and procedures, has contributed significantly to the development of Ysgol David Hughes as a, bilingual and inclusive community school.

The headteacher places importance on excellence and by introducing an open door ethos, puts value on listening, consultation, support and appreciating everyone's contribution.

It is obvious that all middle managers respond positively to the headteacher's commitment, his vision and the sensitive and supportive way in which he treats them as leaders and managers and as individuals.

Other outstanding features in terms of leadership and management include:

- a clear strategic direction which promotes the aim of reaching high standards;
- a strong and inclusive atmosphere and team spirit;
- the high expectations of the senior management team in terms of pupils' and students' achievement, behaviour, Welshness and commitment;
- the way in which the senior management team, through their role as line managers, set clear and specific expectations to middle managers;
- the way in which middle managers, including subject and pastoral leaders, work together purposefully and manage their teams very well;
- the transparent and detailed school development plan which identifies appropriate priorities on the basis of the school's self-evaluation findings and priorities; and
- the outstanding response to national and local priorities in terms of promoting bilingualism.

In addition, there are a number of good aspects to the school's provision. These include:

- the process of setting and reviewing targets for pupils in KS4 and the 6th form, and for class teachers and departments, by using data on past performance and added value and comparing them with those of other schools;
- the performance management procedures which correspond with the planning cycle, and the way in which the targets that arise from them lead to professional development;
- the systems for training which have a significant influence on the quality of teaching;
- the appropriate risk assessments; and
- the information which is given to the governing body to assist it in understanding the school's needs and priorities, and the organisation which enables governors to contribute beneficially and actively to the school's strategy, including budgetary matters and the self-evaluation process.

There is one weakness in terms of setting targets. As the information about pupil's potential in KS3 is inadequate, the targets for National Curriculum levels are not sufficiently specific or challenging.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
--

In its self-evaluation report, the school judged this key question to be grade 2. The findings of the inspection team correspond with the statements of the self-evaluation report but the team has judged this aspect to be grade 1 because of the significance of the outstanding features.

The outstanding features include:

- a self-evaluation culture which is very well-rooted in the school, and very good quality self-evaluation arrangements;
- the very good knowledge that the headteacher and the senior management team have about the school and its departments, including the quality of learning and teaching across the school and the standards of work and potential of the older pupils;
- a comprehensive, thorough, honest self-evaluation report of a very high standard: the findings of the inspection team correspond very closely with the findings of the report on every question, except for key questions 5 and 6, where the inspection team awarded higher grades; and

- a very good structure to the school planning cycle, including processes to evaluate and review progress and standards which are a very good foundation for planning on how to improve.

There are also many good features. These include:

- a self-evaluation regime that is clear and comprehensible to everyone, including a good departmental self-evaluation which gives appropriate attention to standards in lessons and the quality of teaching, and direct evidence from observing lessons by the senior management team;
- the focus on class work which is beginning to have a good influence on standards and the quality of teaching;
- detailed analyses of external test and examination results, which provide good information on the quality of learning and teaching across the school; and
- the link between the planning cycle, the self-evaluation process and the arrangements for performance management and continuous professional development.

However, despite this very positive picture, there are some shortcomings, because:

- teachers do not observe their colleagues' lessons within departments on a regular enough basis in order to share good practices;
- the procedure for monitoring pupils' work within departments and at a whole school level are not sufficiently structured or formal; and
- the school's methods to ascertain pupils' opinions, have not been sufficiently developed yet.

The school has made good progress on all points of the previous report's key issues, except for the condition of the fields and the dining provision in the school. The school has worked hard with the appropriate authorities to seek to secure improvements in these matters.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
--

The findings of the inspection team correspond with the school's self-evaluation.

The outstanding features are:

- the very detailed work that links the staffing budget with curricular needs;
- the high and effective priority to secure teaching staff levels and to increase support staff in order to provide the curriculum effectively to every pupil;

- the very sensitive and careful planning to reorganise the staffing structure which has led to maintaining the morale of all the staff during the process;
- the representation of teachers, support staff and governors in discussions and planning; and
- the effective management, co-ordination and procedures to support the staff's professional development, including relevant internal and external INSET programmes, and early professional development programmes for new teachers until their third year.

Outstanding practice

The quality of learning resources across all subjects, after the purchase of new ICT equipment, is an outstanding feature. The school has 70 interactive white boards and more than 300 PCs on the network, and all of them have fast internet access. The majority of staff have laptops for their own personal use. Teachers use these resources increasingly effectively for stimulating lessons to generate pupils' interest and to maintain their motivation in these lessons.

Following a detailed analysis by every teacher of their teaching methods, the school organised a comprehensive programme of internal and external training to prepare the teaching staff for the latest developments. Internal working groups were established to share good practice amongst staff and to take advantage of the enthusiasm and expertise of individuals.

The school evaluated the effect of the investment in interactive white boards on standards of learning and teaching, by considering the opinions of pupils.

In the wake of the success of the development of learning and teaching methods, the school set up a fund to purchase additional resources to improve departmental provision.

In addition, there are a number of good features on the management and use of school resources. These include:

- the number of experienced teachers, who have appropriate expertise and qualifications to meet the needs of the curriculum, or who have received appropriate training to undertake learning duties outside their departments;
- support staff and learning assistants who work effectively with the teachers, and provide appropriate attention to pupils and adapt work as required;
- exemplary use of the resource centre;
- the good condition of the school's buildings, although they are a mix of old and new buildings, and the standard of cleanliness;

- the planning to improve building facilities, for example, the new sports centre on the school site which is half built;
- attractive learning environments, which include colourful displays of pupils' work, in order to maintain the ethos of effective learning;
- very effective budget management by the headteacher and the systems officer, and the close link between the budget and the priorities in the school and departmental development plans;
- a clear awareness of their duties and responsibilities by members of the finance and priorities subcommittee, who contribute significantly to the effective budgetary management; and
- efficient arrangements for budget allocation to departments according to a formula.

When considering the curricular and pastoral provision, pupils' standards of achievement and attainment and the quality of teaching, the school provides good value for money.

In spite of this positive picture, some shortcomings remain, because:

- the condition of the fields is deficient for teaching physical education effectively, especially during periods of wet weather;
- some of the assistants sometimes work inefficiently, especially when there are two assistants in one class;
- of the difficulty for disabled pupils and disabled people to gain access to parts of the building, although the school has done its best to deal with this; and
- the condition of some of the toilets is unacceptable.

The school's response to the inspection

We, as a school, take pride in this report which notes that Ysgol David Hughes is “a very good school with many outstanding features”.

The report refers to a substantial number of strengths as well as noting matters which need to be developed further. To a great extent, the findings reflect what was noted in our comprehensive self-evaluation report.

The school has strategies in place in order to respond to the main recommendations and the action plan will be an integral part of the school development plan. We will continue to strive for excellence in every aspect of the school's work.

The experience of being inspected was a valuable one for the whole school. The inspection provides a firm foundation to further develop the school.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol David Hughes
School type	Secondary
Age-range of pupils	11-18
Address of school	Lôn Pentraeth, Menai Bridge, Anglesey
Post code	LL59 5SS
Telephone number	01248 712287

Headteacher	Dr Brian Jones
Date of appointment	1 September 1995
Chair of governors / Appropriate authority	Rev Harri O Jones
Reporting inspector	Mr Steffan James
Dates of inspection	6-10 March, 2006

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

Year group	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Total
Number of pupils	185	177	208	209	237	118	111	1245

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	72	16	81.16

Staffing informations	
Pupil: teacher ratio (fte) (excluding special classes)	15.3 : 1
Pupil: adult ratio (fte) in special classes	-
Average teaching group size	20.6
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	74.5%

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole School
Term 1	91	91	90	89	89	94	97	91
Term 2	93	91	90	91	91	89	98	91
Term 3	96	94	93	92	91	95	91	93

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	7.3%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to the inspection	18 temporary 2 permanently

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment KS3 results 2005 (national figures for 2004)																
Total number of pupils in Y9: 209																
Percentage of pupils at each level																
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	EP	
English	Teacher assessment	School						1	4	12	38	33	12			
		National		1	1			2	8	21	34	24	9			
	Test	School		1					8	18	34	25	14			
		National		4	2				8	20	33	23	10			
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School							4	16	29	14	6			
		National							6	20	34	29	10			
	Test	School							4	11	32	15	7			
		National		2	1				5	19	35	28	10			
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School						1	5	15	22	39	18			
		National		1	1			1	7	19	26	32	14			
	Test	School							4	14	13	41	25			
		National		5	2				5	17	20	36	15			
Science	Teacher assessment	School						1	7	18	31	27	15			
		National		1	1				6	20	33	27	12			
	Test	School							1	13	29	29	25			
		National		4	1				5	17	33	28	13			

- D Pupils excepted under statutory arrangements from all or 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 in Key Stage 3 perform above level 8

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 5 in mathematics, science and either English or Welsh (first language) (all figures 2005)			
by Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school	67%	In the school	69%
In Wales	58%	In Wales	57%

Public Examination Results:

For pupils aged 15, results in GCSE, Entry Level Qualification, GNVQ and NVQ	
Number of pupils aged 15 on the school roll in January 2005	233
Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil	50

The percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2005:	School	UA	Wales
entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent	94	90	87
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	64	53	52
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	94	88	85
attained GCSE grades A*-C in mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator)	50	42	38
entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or GCSE	99	98	97
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification equivalent	91	79	76
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G or the vocational qualification equivalent	98	95	93
did not attain any GCSE grade or the vocational qualification equivalent	2	5	7
attained one or more Entry level qualification only	1	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	-	-	-

For pupils aged 17 and 18, results in A/AS, GNVQs and NVQs	
Number of pupils aged 16, 17 and 18 in January 2005	111
Number of pupils entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations or equivalent in 2005	99
Number of pupils who sat fewer than 2 GCE A level examinations or equivalent in 2005	12

	School	UA	Wales
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-C	80	68	68
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-E	96	93	94
Average points score per candidate entering 2 or more subjects	23	21	20
Number of pupils who achieved GNVQ Intermediate or NVQ level 2	-	-	-
Number of pupils who achieved GNVQ Advanced or NVQ level 3	-	-	-

UA - Unitary Authority

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Prior to the inspection, the inspectors held meetings with:

- the senior management team;
- all staff at the school;
- the governing body; and
- parents.

The team read:

- responses to the questionnaire which was sent to all parents; and
- an extensive number of documents from the school.

During the inspection, the inspectors observed:

- every teacher teaching, observing 90 lessons;
- samples of pupils' work;
- files, policies and departmental schemes of work; and
- additional documents from the school.

In addition, interviews were conducted with:

- every member of the senior management team;
- heads of year and departments;
- other teaching staff;
- administrative and support staff;
- groups representing pupils of each year group; and
- members of the governing body.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Steffan James	Reporting inspector and Key question 1
Glyn Griffiths	Key question 2
Rhodri Jones	Key question 3
Neil Trefor Jones	Key question 4
Colin Rees	Key question 5
Dylan Gwyer-Roberts	Key question 6
Gwyn Griffiths	Key question 7
William Owen	Lay inspector
Julie Griffiths	Peer assessor
Alan Jones	Nominee

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

**Ysgol David Hughes
Menai Bridge, Anglesey LL59 5SS**

A Summary Report for Parents

School Number: 660 - 4028

Date of Inspection: March 2006

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and
Training in Wales**

Date of Publication: May 2006



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales



**BUDDSODDWR MEWN POBL.
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE**

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

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

Estyn also:

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

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Basic information about the school

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Age-range of pupils	11-18
Address of school	Lôn Pentraeth, Menai Bridge, Anglesey
Post code	LL59 5SS
Telephone number	01248 712287
Headteacher	Dr Brian Jones
Date of appointment	1 September 1995
Chair of governors / Appropriate authority	Rev Harri O Jones
Reporting inspector	Mr Steffan James
Dates of inspection	6-10 March, 2006

The inspection

Ysgol David Hughes was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspections. 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.

A copy of this summary will be sent to every family and child in the school. A full copy of the report may be obtained from the school.

The inspection of Ysgol David Hughes took place between 06/03/06 and 10/03/06. An independent team of inspectors led by Steffan James undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body which is independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

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	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y 7	Y 8	Y9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y 13	Y14
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19

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

Context

Nature of the provider

Ysgol David Hughes is a bilingual comprehensive school with about 1250 pupils aged between 11-18. It serves the south-east Anglesey catchment area, a mainly agricultural area but with some light industry which is characteristic of the area. Seven percent of the pupils are registered as entitled to free school meals. This is significantly lower than the national percentage (15.7%). Nevertheless, the school states that the school catchment area encompasses a variety of areas, with a high number of disadvantaged pupils in some of them.

Just over 2% of the pupils have statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) and about 13% of other pupils are registered for school action and school action plus. These figures are slightly below the national percentages but are higher than the county average.

Welsh-medium courses are available for Years 7 to 13, and emphasis is placed on developing linguistic skills and abilities amongst Welsh learners. Extra-curricular activities play an important role in the life of the school.

The school places great emphasis on maintaining close contact between staff and parents and parents' evenings are held regularly. If any problems arise concerning a pupil's behaviour or development, the school contacts the parents personally. Pupils are given the opportunity to contribute to decision-making by means of the Pupils' Council and the Charities' Committee.

The school was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Schools Curriculum Award, the Investors in People Award and a Recognition Award for the Quality of Work Experience (North Wales and Powys).

The school's priorities and targets

The aim of the school, in partnership with pupils, parents and governors, is to create an atmosphere which allows pupils to develop to their full potential, and to be able to face confidently the requirements of our modern, bilingual society. The school also has a number of specific objectives, as follows:

- To seek to nurture a civilized society which emphasises moral and human values by giving specific attention to tolerance and caring for others, especially those who are less fortunate in life;
- To develop a foundation of literacy and mathematical, scientific and technical knowledge to enable pupils to learn basic work and leisure skills for today and the technological era which will face them in the future;
- To prepare the pupil to make a full contribution to the life of the society of which he/she is part. In the case of Anglesey, it is a bilingual society, so it must be

ensured that every pupil has the opportunity to becoming bilingual if he/she wishes to achieve this aim;

- To teach the pupil about the feats and aspirations of man in the arts, sciences and religion and the search for a just society;
- To seek to assist the pupil to develop an inquisitive, lively mind to enquire and reason logically and then to apply himself/herself to specific tasks;
- To seek to assist the pupil to understand how the country attains and maintains its standard of living by paying particular attention to the importance of industry and the world of work; and
- To prepare a curriculum that is extensive, balanced, relevant and differentiated.

These are the main priorities of this year's school development plan:

Management

- Funding and resources;
- Restructuring the workforce and the structure of responsibilities; and
- Accommodation.

Curriculum

- Learning pathways 14-19;
- Review of the post-16 provision; and
- Develop basic skills and key skills.

Whole School

- Pupils' standards and achievement;
- Care and support for pupils;
- Teaching and assessment; and
- Pupils' personal development.

Summary

Table of grades awarded

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

This is a very good school with many outstanding features. The senior management team and all the staff succeed in creating a happy and active atmosphere into which pupils settle extremely well.

Standards

Standards are good. The school's pupils, whatever their ability, succeed well in assessments and public examinations at Key Stage (KS) 4 and the 6th form, where results are consistently much higher than those for the county and for the rest of Wales.

In order to compare the performance of similar schools, the Welsh Assembly Government has placed them in benchmarking groups according to the percentage of entitlement to free school meals. This school is in group 1, namely schools in which between 0% and 10% of pupils have free school meals. In KS4, the performance of the school in the four main indicators is near to the median in the benchmarking group. In KS3, the performance has not been as good, but in 2005, there was a significant improvement in the results so that they were much higher than the results for the rest of the county and for Wales, though they were still below the median for the benchmarking group.

The pupils achieve good standards in key skills. Standards of listening and reading are very good. Oracy standards are good although a few pupils were unwilling to make extended contributions. Writing standards are generally good. Numeracy standards are good and computer skills are very good. The pupils' bilingual skills are very good and this is an outstanding feature.

Pupils, including those pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN), make good progress in learning. On occasion, some pupils make less progress than they could

where they have to deal with work that has not adapted sufficiently for their level of ability.

Pupils' personal, social and learning skills are developing very well. Pupils work hard, are very well behaved and show respect to others and to diversity in society. The attendance level is above the average for Wales but very slightly below the Welsh Assembly Government's target.

The quality of education and training

The expertise of teachers and the quality of teaching is good. In the lessons observed, the percentages of grades 1 and 2 exceeded the expectations of the Welsh Assembly Government. The team judged that the quality of teaching was as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
28%	49%	23%	0%	0%

The teachers plan very carefully and organise a range of appropriate activities but in a small number of classes, especially those of mixed ability, they did not present sufficient challenge to pupils by giving them work which is suited to their ability.

There are a number of good aspects in the assessment arrangements, performance monitoring and the setting of targets. The marking is generally good but is superficial in a few departments or classes. The use of information about past performance and potential, in order to set targets and to track pupils' progress is good in KS4 and the 6th form. In KS3, where there is not as much detailed understanding about pupils' ability and potential, the organisation is not as effective.

The arrangements for presenting information about the attainment and effort to pupils and their parents are good.

Learning experiences

There are many good features in the school curriculum. Full access and equal opportunity is afforded to every pupil to secure appropriate qualifications. The curriculum develops key and basic skills and promotes learners' personal development well. The quality of the provision for promoting learners' bilingual skills is an outstanding feature.

The school responds well to the needs of employers and the wider community and to deprivation in society.

The school continues to develop the curriculum to meet the needs of some learners who have difficulties in dealing with an academic curriculum. This provision needs to be expanded.

The care, guidance and support to learners

The headteacher shows particular respect and care for pupils and staff. These values are reflected in the life of the school and ensure that the school is a happy and caring community. The care, guidance and support to learners is good and has a number of outstanding features. These include:

- pastoral support programmes and arrangements and careers guidance;
- the leadership of heads of year;
- methods of monitoring attendance and punctuality;
- communication and contact with parents;
- the inclusion of SEN pupils within all school activities; and
- the quality of the provision for equal opportunities.

Leadership and management

The effectiveness of the leadership and the strategic management, and the way in which leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards and make effective use of resources, are all good with outstanding features. These include:

- a strong and inclusive atmosphere and team spirit;
- the very high level of commitment and expectations of the senior management team;
- the work of middle managers, including subject and pastoral leaders;
- the school's self-evaluation arrangements;
- the school's planning cycle structure, including the very detailed work that links the staffing budget with curricular needs;
- the effective management, co-ordination and procedures to support the professional development of staff; and
- the quality of ICT resources, which includes 70 interactive white boards and over 300 computers on the network.

Other good aspects include:

- the process of setting and appraising targets for pupils in KS4 and the 6th form, and for form and departmental teachers;

- the number of experienced teachers that have appropriate qualifications, and the support staff and learning assistants that work effectively with the teachers;
- the range of various resources and the good use made of the resources centre;
- the good condition of the school's buildings and the attractive learning environments to maintain the ethos of effective learning;
- very effective budget management and the close relationship between the budget and the priorities the school and departmental development schemes; and
- the significant contribution of the governing body which is very aware of its responsibility and which contributes significantly, for example, to budget management.

Notwithstanding this very positive picture, there are some aspects to be improved. They are:

- as the information about pupils' potential in KS3 is insufficient, the targets for National Curriculum levels are too imprecise and are not sufficiently challenging;
- teachers do not observe departmental colleagues' lessons sufficiently in order to share good practice;
- the arrangements for monitoring pupils' work within departments and at a school level or the school's methods for ascertaining pupils' opinions are not sufficiently structured or formal;
- the condition of the fields is deficient for teaching physical education effectively, especially during periods of wet weather, and the condition of some of the toilets is poor; and
- there is no easy access for disabled pupils or disabled people to some parts of the building.

The school has made good progress on the key issues from the previous inspection, except for the condition of the fields. The school has worked hard with the appropriate authorities to seek to ensure improvements in this matter.

Considering the curricular and pastoral provision, the pupils' standards of achievement and attainment and the quality of the teaching, the school offers good value for money.

Recommendations

The school needs to:

- R2 strengthen the existing arrangements to raise standards, by giving more attention to:
- providing work that is relevant to pupils' ability, especially in some mixed ability classes;
 - improving the information about past performance, the ability and potential of pupils in KS3, and on the basis of this, set more challenging targets and monitor pupils' progress in attaining them; and
 - improving the quality of marking* in some departments;
- R5 extend the range of vocational courses provided in order to offer a better choice of 14-19 learning pathways*;
- R6 arrange more observation by teachers within departments and monitor pupils' work within departments more consistently; and
- R7 work with the LEA to improve the condition of the sports fields and access to the building for disabled pupils or disabled people.*

*The school has identified the need to improve arrangements for these issues in its 2006-2007 school development plan.

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action points in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of the receipt of the report, and to show what the school is doing about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be distributed to every parent in the school.