Inspection under Section 28 of the Education Act 2005

A Report on the Quality of Education in

Penybryn Senior Special School
Glasbury Road, Morriston,
Swansea. SA6 7PA

School Number: 6707000

Date of Inspection: 17/09/07

by

Jim Phillips
16227

Date of Publication: 19/11/07

Under Estyn contract number: 1300107
Penybryn Senior Special School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents information about the performance of their child’s school.

The inspection of Penybryn Senior Special School took place between 17/09/07 and 21/09/07. An independent team of inspectors, led by Jim Phillips undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **full** inspection.
Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key stage 1</th>
<th>Year 1 and Year 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key stage 2</td>
<td>Year 3 to Year 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key stage 3</td>
<td>Year 7 to Year 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key stage 4</td>
<td>Year 10 and Year 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The nature of the provider

1. Penybryn Senior Special School is a Community Day and Residential School located on a well-established small ‘campus’ site in the district of Clase, near Morriston, Swansea, about 2 kilometres from the M4 motorway. On the campus is the main school (Penybryn) for day pupils with moderate to severe learning difficulties (MLD / SLD) aged 11 to 19, and an adjoining specialised unit (Maytree), for pupils aged 3-19 with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) and includes a residential hostel. The school was last inspected in October 2001.

2. Most pupils come from the City of Swansea with a small number of pupils from outside the Swansea Authority who attend the Maytree Unit because of its regional residential facility. Almost all pupils come from English speaking backgrounds with less than 5% coming from Welsh speaking or ethnic backgrounds.

3. The Maytree Unit does not follow the traditional times for school terms because it opens for two weeks in August and closes for two weeks at other times of the year.

4. All pupils travel to and from the school on special transport arranged by the local education authority (LEA).

5. All pupils attending the school have Statements of Special Educational Needs and are admitted to the school after referral to the Swansea Education Department for consideration by its Special Educational Needs Panel. The school has a designated number of planned places for the admission of pupils. As part of the statementing process, some pupils are disapplied from some subjects of the National Curriculum. All pupils attending the Maytree Unit together with 24 pupils at Penybryn have been disapplied from Welsh Second Language. Additionally, pupils at Maytree are disapplied from history and a modern foreign language at Key Stage 3 (KS3) and some pupils with speech and language difficulties at Penybryn are disapplied from a modern foreign language at KS3.

6. At the time of the inspection, there were 109 pupils (33 girls and 76 Boys) attending the school, 78 pupils aged 11 to 19 attending nine classes at Penybryn and 31 pupils aged 5 to 19 attending the six classes at Maytree. Up to 10 places are available in the Maytree residential hostel and pupils may be in residence from Monday to Friday. Eight pupils were in residence at the time of the inspection.

7. In both Penybryn and Maytree, pupils are allocated to classes mainly on the basis of age and they progress chronologically through the school.

The school’s priorities and targets

8. Both Penybryn and the Maytree Unit aim to implement equality of opportunity for social inclusion, disability and racial equality for all the pupils in the school.
9. The stated vision for the school is to: ‘help the children learn as many life, social and significant living skills as possible in order that they can enjoy a quality of life and become independent as far as possible within the technological world in which they live’.

10. In its Action Plan for School Improvement, targets include:

- evaluation of the accredited courses for physical education and food technology and the Learning Pathways 14 to 19 systems in place;
- evaluation of new work experience placements and improve the quality of Careers Educational Guidance;
- increasing the number of available accredited courses at KS 4;
- extend use of Information Technology (IT) in Maytree;
- improving provision in the residential hostel for small group work;
- improving the physical environment and resources for senior classes in Maytree;
- enabling residential support staff to set clear targets for pupils to achieve in residence.

Summary

11. Penybryn Senior Special School incorporating its adjoining specialised residential unit, Maytree, is a very good school with many outstanding features in the ways it meets the needs of all its pupils.

12. For all the Key Questions, grade 1 was awarded because the school’s provision in each aspect was found to be consistently good with outstanding features.

Table of grades awarded

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

13. The inspection team awarded grades that match those in the school’s thorough self-evaluation report in all the Key Questions of the inspection framework except for the judgements for Key Questions 1 and 2 in relation to provision at the Maytree Unit. These were judged by the school to be Grade 2 but, at Maytree, the inspection team found that there were a similar high proportion (approximately one third) of lessons with outstanding features and no significant shortcomings were identified.
Accordingly, since pupils’ achievement and the quality of teaching were good or better in 100% of lessons Grade 1 was awarded for the whole school.

### Standards of achievement

14. Throughout this inspection, the standards that pupils achieve were judged in relation to their individual needs and abilities and not in comparison to those expected of pupils who do not have special educational needs.

15. During the inspection 107 lessons or part-lessons were observed and pupils’ standards of achievement in lessons were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 1</th>
<th>Grade 2</th>
<th>Grade 3</th>
<th>Grade 4</th>
<th>Grade 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. Overall, the 100% of grades for the standards of achievement in lessons being Grade 2 or better far exceeds the all-Wales target of 65 per cent for 2007 that was set by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG). This is an outstanding feature.

### Grades for standards in subjects inspected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inspection Area</th>
<th>KS2</th>
<th>KS3</th>
<th>KS4</th>
<th>Post-16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh second language</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information technology</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design technology</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modern foreign languages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical education</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious education (including religious studies)</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. It is evident from the above table that there is very good consistency throughout the school in terms of pupils’ achievements across the range of curriculum subjects.

18. At KS 4 and Post-16, pupils gain appropriate accreditation for their achievements through the Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examination (OCR) awards. Pupils’ and students often make outstanding progress, particularly in their use of key skills of numeracy, communication and literacy, Information Technology (IT) and in the development of their personal skills throughout the curriculum. Most pupils make good progress in developing bilingual skills but, for those pupils disappplied from Welsh lessons, their progress is restricted to responding positively to the use of Welsh incidentally at times such as registration or during assembly.
19. Pupils make good progress in developing creative and problem solving skills through the many real and practical activities provided. Younger and less-able pupils gain significantly in their self-help skills and older, more-able pupils achieve high levels of independence by the time they leave school resulting in them being very well prepared for transition to adult life.

20. Despite their learning difficulties, pupils’ attitude to learning, the interest they show in their work and their ability to sustain concentration is again a strong feature across the school. Pupils’ behaviour is outstanding. They enjoy coming to school and although several pupils have absences because of the need for medical treatment, overall attendance rates are good.

The quality of education and training

21. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 1</th>
<th>Grade 2</th>
<th>Grade 3</th>
<th>Grade 4</th>
<th>Grade 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22. The quality of teaching is a major strength of the school with good and outstanding features (grade 1) including:
- excellent relationships with, and extensive and detailed knowledge of the needs of, individual pupils;
- very well planned lessons with clear objectives;
- the effective promotion of key skills across the curriculum with particular emphasis on communication;
- a wide range of strategies and activities to motivate and engage the pupils;
- very effective behaviour management with quiet and sensitive but firm expectations;
- outstanding team work between teachers and support staff to ensure that all pupils receive appropriate support, encouragement and praise for their efforts.

23. Very good use is made of assessment to plan future learning experiences matched to individual needs and ensure that pupils make good progress. Pupils’ progress is effectively reported to parents through annual reviews and reports. Pupils are being more actively involved in the setting and monitoring of their individual targets. The system for recording pupils’ progress is particular strength and for younger and less-able pupils it is very effective. However, for older and more-able pupils in KS3, the target descriptors are often too broad to provide a clear picture of the progress these pupils make.

24. The school curriculum is broad, balanced and suitably adapted to meet the range of pupils’ needs and comply with the requirements of the national curriculum. Several outstanding features enhance pupils’ learning experiences. These include:
- a very good range of visits, offsite activities and other activities that is offered to all pupils irrespective of their complex and differing needs that significantly enhance the curriculum;
- the wide range of accredited qualifications available to students at KS 4 and at Post-16;
- the strong positive ethos for learning created throughout the school for promoting pupils independence which effectively enhances the pupils’ personal and social development;
very good provision for pupil’s personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
a very good programme of work related education, careers guidance and work experience;
the school’s excellent partnerships with parents, other agencies and services, and the local community that enrich the life and work of the school.

25. Provision for Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is good and the school has a good Welsh ethos. Pupils throughout the school receive good opportunities to gain an awareness of national identity and a sense of heritage.

26. Some pupils have a restricted curriculum experience because they are disapplied from the subjects of Welsh 2nd language, a modern foreign language and history. This is part of their statement of special educational needs and is aimed to enable more time to be given to developing their basic communication skills in English. However, the school makes outstanding provision to develop pupils’ communication skills throughout daily activities and other pupils with similar learning difficulties benefit from inclusion in these curriculum experiences and make good progress. The appropriateness of some of these disapplications needs to be reviewed.

27. The school's policies and procedures to promote equal opportunities and to tackle social disadvantage and stereotyping are very successful, and pupils succeed regardless of their ability, gender, race or backgrounds. However, for a small minority of pupils who have a language other than English or Welsh as their first language, provision to meet their language needs is variable. Some have good provision made for enabling them to learn English with suitable resources and the support of a trained learning support assistant. However, not all the pupils with such needs benefit from this level of support.

28. The school responds well to Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and local initiatives such as pupils’ awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship. The school’s eco code is clearly understood by pupils and is prominently displayed throughout the school. Through a range of curriculum experiences pupils develop an understanding of global citizenship.

29. The school makes very good provision for the promotion of entrepreneurial skills with regular opportunities to take part in enterprise activities.

30. The quality of the care, support and guidance offered to all pupils is outstanding. Outstanding features include:
- the headteacher and staff work in close partnerships with a range of external welfare agencies to secure the best possible support for children and their families;
- the excellent relationships and the mutual warmth and respect between staff and pupils ensure that all pupils have access to high quality personal support and guidance;
- very good induction programmes are in place to ensure learners, including residential learners, settle in quickly and confidently to the school;
• sensitive guidance and advice ensures the courses pupils follow are best suited for them to achieve accreditation and receive good careers advice to help them to make important decisions about their future.

31. A very good quality personal and social education (PSE) programme supports pupils’ development with many rich learning experiences. Health education, sex education and drugs awareness are given appropriate attention and the school makes every effort to promote healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle. Provision for careers education and guidance is outstanding.

32. The school council provides a good opportunity for pupils with ASD, MLD and SLD to work together. Councillors feel they can make a real difference to their school. However, insufficient use is made of appropriate opportunities for pupils with ASD to benefit from educational and social experiences with other pupils of similar age, particularly as they approach school leaving age.

33. Very effective procedures are in place to monitor pupils’ behaviour, performance, attendance and punctuality and early intervention ensures that any individual concerns are dealt with quickly and efficiently.

34. The quality of academic support and guidance based on individual assessment and linked to high but realistic expectations of pupils, is well established and very effective.

35. The school has clear, well-documented policies and procedures for assuring pupils’ health, safety and well-being, which are implemented carefully by staff and the governing body within the school and within the residential facility.

Leadership and management

36. Good progress has been made in addressing the key issues for action identified in the last inspection. The headteacher, staff with leadership responsibilities and school governors have used and developed effective procedures for reviewing and evaluating provision, deciding priorities for improvement and successfully implementing well-considered plans to bring about improvements. This is an outstanding feature and very good progress has been achieved in the strategic development of the school which incorporates relevant national priorities. The current Outreach Project through the national initiative for ‘unlocking the potential of special schools’ is a good example.

37. Values, aims, objectives and targets are regularly updated and are shared by all staff so that through outstanding teamwork there is strong ethos for learning throughout the school and a real sense of achievement and job satisfaction.

38. The skills of staff have been continually monitored and developed over time and partnerships with other providers, parents and community groups make a significant and valued contribution to overall provision.

39. The school governors meet all legal and regulatory requirements and closely monitor provision and progress towards achieving the targets for school improvement.
40. All staff, and governors contribute to self-evaluation and this is firmly based on direct evidence of pupils’ work. Good account is taken of parents’ and pupils’ views as well as all other partners and professionals that are involved in supporting provision to meet pupils’ needs. The very good balanced first-hand information and data collected is analysed thoroughly and accurately, clearly identifying the school’s strengths and shortcomings. As a result, realistic priorities and appropriately challenging targets are set for school improvement. The self-evaluation reports for Penybryn and Maytree are of very good quality.

41. Staff are very effectively deployed to make best use of the expertise and interests of staff so that pupils’ needs are effectively met. Resources for learning throughout the school are of very high quality and are readily available. They are managed effectively to provide pupil access to the curriculum and to meet the varying needs of the pupils. However, the excellent use of pictures and symbols to develop pupils’ communication skills is not sufficiently extended to the use of electronic communication devices such as touch-talkers. For those pupils who are unable to communicate by speech, the present range of resources are insufficient to provide them with a progressive programme towards effective use of suitable communication aids.

42. The ongoing whole-school approach to self-evaluation of the outcomes of spending ensures effective use of finances. Overall, the school makes very good use of all its available resources and achieves very good value for money.

**Recommendations**

43. In order to improve provision and raise standards, the school needs to:

- **R1** improve and refine the learning targets for older and more-able pupils so that their progress may be more clearly recorded and demonstrated;

- **R2** more consistently meet the language needs of pupils with English as an additional language;

- **R3** further develop the use of technology to meet the severe communication needs of pupils;

- **R4** plan and extend opportunities for pupils with ASD to benefit from social and educational experiences alongside and together with other pupils at the school;

- **R5** review and re-consider the appropriateness of pupils’ disapplications from elements of the national curriculum.

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 the 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 1: good with outstanding features

44. The findings of the inspection team agree with the grade awarded in its self evaluation report relating to standards in the Penybryn section but do not agree with the grade 2 awarded in the self evaluation for the Maytree centre. The inspection team found no significant difference between the centres in relation to the progress and standards achieved by pupils according to their individual needs and learning difficulties and consequently the grade 1 is appropriate for both.

45. It is inappropriate to compare the pupils’ achievements to national averages or benchmarks and pupils are disapplied from the end of key stage national curriculum assessments. Throughout this inspection, pupils’ standards of achievement are judged in relation to their prior attainments and their achievement of the learning targets set for them in their statements of special educational need and individual education plans (IEPs). No significant difference was evident between the standards achieved by boys or girls.

46. Overall, pupils’ progress and achievement is consistently good and often outstanding. Pupils’ achievement was judged to be at least good in all of the 107 lessons observed throughout the school and, in approximately one third of these, outstanding progress and attainment was recorded.

47. Outstanding features in pupils’ progress and achievement include:
   a. their sustained engagement in learning tasks and achievement of the lesson objectives set for them, steadily increasing their knowledge, skills and understanding;
   b. their development and use of the key skills of communication, numeracy, information technology and personal/social skills through all school activities and subjects of the curriculum;
   c. the success pupils in KS4 and students at Post-16 have in achieving a range of appropriate accredited qualifications and certificates, making very good progress towards fulfilling their potential;
   d. the very good progress pupils make in their personal and social competences and their ability to use these within the school and the community so that they are well prepared for leaving school.

48. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, pupils, across the range of special needs, make consistently good progress at most age levels. Some outstanding progress and standards of achievement are made by pupils in KS4 in science and by students in Post-16 in English and mathematics.

49. The subjects of music and physical education make a significant contribution to pupils’ achievement of communication skills and personal skills, with pupils developing confidence and self-esteem. Pupils often make outstanding progress and achieve high standards in both these subject areas.
50. Pupil throughout the school make very good progress in their use of information technology and this make an outstanding contribution to their learning in many curriculum areas, particularly their increasing competence in using the internet in support of their studies for their accredited courses and work related education.

51. Younger pupils make consistently good progress in religious education, geography, design technology and art. Older pupils, particularly students at Post-16, often make outstanding progress and achieve their potential in design technology and art.

52. Pupils with MLD and SLD in Key Stages 3 and 4 (KS3 and 4) make very good progress in history and their achievements are often outstanding. However, pupils with ASD are disapplied from history and consequently do not have the opportunity to benefit from these curriculum opportunities. This is a shortcoming.

53. The consistent and progressive way that pupils improve their learning skills is an outstanding feature of the school. They gain confidence and independence through learning to use their key skills in real, practical and meaningful experiences, steadily increasing their knowledge, skills and understanding and making good progress in developing creative and problem solving skills. They increasingly know and understand their learning objectives and make good progress towards knowing what they need to do to improve.

54. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes towards learning are outstanding features of the school and contribute significantly to the standards pupils achieve, to their personal and social development and to the quality of life in the school. The headteacher, teaching and support staff have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils respond positively to their calm, supportive and consistent approach.

55. Pupils are well motivated and enjoy their learning. They listen very carefully to their teachers, co-operate well with adults and their peers and settle quickly to their tasks. They persevere with their work and take delight in their achievements, which they readily share with others.

56. When making external educational visits, the behaviour of pupils with ASD, MLD and SLD is exemplary. They understand how they should behave in social settings away from school and within their individual capability, demonstrate politeness, courtesy and good manners towards others. This is an outstanding achievement and parents are very pleased with the personal and social skills their children develop at the school.

57. Attendance rates for the past three terms average 91.6% and unauthorised absence is minimal. Given the complex medical circumstances of a significant number of pupils, these rates are good.

58. Pupils arrive punctually, approach school with confidence and settle quickly into their class routines. Registration is conducted efficiently and the school complies with all attendance requirements set out in the National Assembly for Wales Circular 3/99, Pupil Support and Social Inclusion.
59. Within their individual capability and with very good adult support, pupils are developing the capacity to work more independently and acquire skills to improve their own learning. When working in pairs or small groups, they organise themselves fairly and ensure everyone contributes. The mutual help and support they offer to each other through work and play are outstanding features of the school.

60. Within lessons and in their involvement in the school council and eco committee, pupils have good opportunities to enhance their problem-solving skills and contribute to decision-making within the school.

61. Pupils’ personal, moral and social development is an outstanding feature of the school. The excellent relationships between staff and pupils underpin this development, and pupils are confident in expressing their ideas and opinions because they know their contributions are valued and respected by staff. The supportive ethos of the school, the sensitive moral and spiritual elements of collective worship and the high priority given to personal and social education (PSE) enable pupils to achieve a secure set of values to guide them through life. Pupils are tolerant and show great respect, care and concern for others.

62. Pupils demonstrate a clear awareness of equal opportunities issues and understand that everyone should be treated fairly and without favouritism. They appreciate the inclusive nature of their school and value the way their teachers treat all pupils with care and respect.

63. Through the work undertaken in RE, PSE and in global citizenship, pupils recognise and respect the diversity of other peoples’ beliefs, attitudes and cultural traditions within their own community and the wider world.

64. Pupils successfully gain the skills for effective participation in the work place and the community. Overall, pupils across the range of learning needs and difficulties, make outstanding progress towards fulfilling their potential and are well prepared for moving on to appropriate placements on leaving school.
The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1 - good with outstanding features

65. The findings of the inspection team agree with the grade awarded in its self evaluation report relating to the quality of teaching in the Penybryn section but do not agree with the grade 2 awarded in the self evaluation for the Maytree centre. The inspection team found no significant difference between the centres in relation to the effectiveness of teaching and assessment and consequently the grade 1 is appropriate for both.

66. In the 107 lessons or part lessons observed, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 1</th>
<th>Grade 2</th>
<th>Grade 3</th>
<th>Grade 4</th>
<th>Grade 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

67. The total of 100% of teaching in lessons to be graded good or better substantially exceeds the national averages for the quality of teaching which were judged as 81% for secondary schools and 79% in primary schools in HMCI’s Annual Report 2005.

68. A high percentage of the lessons observed contained outstanding features which include:
- extensive and detailed knowledge of the needs of individual pupils that enable staff to meet the range of learning needs;
- very well planned lessons with clear objectives and preparation of resources to facilitate optimum learning for all pupils;
- the effective promotion of key skills across the curriculum with particular emphasis on communication;
- a wide range of strategies and activities to motivate and engage pupils in their own learning;
- excellent relationships with all pupils to encourage and support them in all steps of learning;
- very effective behaviour management with quiet and sensitive but firm expectations;
- outstanding team work between teachers and support staff to ensure that all pupils receive appropriate support, encouragement and praise for their efforts.

Good features in the lessons observed included:
- target setting within lessons based on pupils’ individual education plans;
- skilful questioning to establish understanding and encourage extended responses;
- the use of Total Communication including signing, symbols and the picture exchange system to aid communication and include all pupils;
- the effective use of interactive whiteboards to enhance and extend learning;
- good pace and variety of activities to maintain interest;
- the use of humour to create a warm and friendly atmosphere;
- reinforcement of earlier learning through different activities;
• appropriate structure within lessons and the consistency of classroom routines.

69. The school's systems for assessing, recording and reporting pupils' progress are sound overall and fully meet statutory requirements. There are examples of very good practice within the school.

70. On entry into school pupils are assessed by the class teacher to provide a baseline against which to track progress. The contributions of previous schools, parents and carers and other professionals such as educational psychologists and speech and language therapists contribute to providing a rounded picture of the pupil's strengths and areas for development.

71. For pupils with MLD and SLD, the school's Red Book provides the basis of all teaching and assessment. This has been developed and refined over many years and is used effectively as a skills based curriculum map to ensure continuity and progression in learning across the school. Levels of achievement begin at pre Level 1 of the National Curriculum, including the Early Years Desirable Outcomes for Learning, and progress to Levels 1 and 2 of the National Curriculum with some elements of Levels 3 and 4.

72. Targets for each pupil's Individual Education Plan (IEP) are drawn from a bank of targets linked to the Red Book. These are reviewed every half term and new targets set where appropriate. Staff make ongoing written comments about the pupils' progress on their IEPs that are helpful and often insightful.

73. Pupils' progress is recorded in bar charts creating individual Pupil Profiles of achievement which clearly show when targets are fully achieved. These are used effectively to follow the pupils through from class to class with examples of the pupil's work and progress over time, promoting good continuity and progression in pupils' learning. However, for older pupils with MLD working towards targets within levels 2 or 3 of the National Curriculum, the broader steps for learning are often insufficiently graduated or specific for progress towards attaining the target to be measured, recorded and reported.

74. Pupils with ASD follow programmes of learning based on their needs for experiential learning. Targets in their IEPs are highly relevant to the needs of each individual and are specific and measurable. Progress towards attaining the targets are recorded in the pupil's Record of Achievement file in four stages from 'experienced' to 'fully achieved'. These targets form part of a 24-hour social learning curriculum when they are in residence in the hostel. This is very good practice which clearly shows the rate of learning and pupil's strengths and difficulties.

75. Pupils and students at Post-16 are encouraged to evaluate their own key skills and learning targets and suggest areas for improvement. Less-able pupils and those with little or no spoken language are effectively supported in this process by use of pictures and symbols.

76. Behaviour is carefully monitored and recorded each week using a colour code system which ensures that appropriate strategies are put into place if behaviour is seen to change or deteriorate.
77. Annual Reviews of pupils’ statements of special educational needs are very thorough with valuable contributions from parents and all agencies involved with the pupil. The reports are detailed and helpful in planning for future progress. Transitional Reviews at aged 14 examine all the options open to the student and are detailed and constructive. Pupils are included to their own Reviews and encouraged and supported to contribute wherever possible. This is a very good feature that helps to build pupils’ confidence and self esteem.

78. End of year reports to parents are positive and provide good quality of information on what each pupil has experienced and achieved.

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

Grade 1 - good with outstanding features

79. The findings of the inspection team agree with the school’s grade in its self evaluation report.

The outstanding features include:

- the extensive, appropriate curricular experiences that are offered to all pupils irrespective of their complex and differing needs;
- the wide range of accredited qualifications available to students at KS 4 and at Post-16;
- the opportunities that are provided for all pupils to participate in beneficial out of school and offsite activities;
- the strong positive ethos for learning created throughout the school for promoting pupils independence which effectively enhances the pupils’ personal and social development, underpinned by the very good teamwork between teaching and support staff.

80. The school offers a broad, balanced and especially relevant curriculum that is well matched to the interests, needs and abilities of the pupils. This is very evident in lessons for pupils with ASD where communication needs are the main focus of teaching and learning.

81. The curriculum meets the requirements of current legislation and is very effective in terms of providing differentiated learning experiences to meet the needs of individual pupils. Pupils with ASD are routinely disapplied from lessons in Welsh 2nd language, a modern foreign language and history. However, these subjects are successfully and appropriately studied by other pupils with similar learning needs and difficulties and the appropriateness of these disapplications for some pupils should be re-considered since the breadth of their curriculum entitlement is significantly restricted.

82. Pupils’ basic skills are well promoted. In all subjects the schemes of work provide a clear framework for developing their key skills. Inconsistencies exist however in provision for the development of pupils’ bilingual skills. In some classes and subject
areas opportunities to use Welsh incidentally to support pupils understanding are missed.

83. The school enriches pupils’ experiences by offering a wide variety of off site activities. Pupils are taken on visits to local sites of interest, including shops, farms, libraries and museums in connection with projects in a range of subjects. Very good use is made of frequent visitors to the school to make the learning experiences richer for pupils. The school’s extra-curricular programme develops pupils and students social and independence skills as well as promoting their community awareness.

84. The school very effectively promotes the pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through its P.S.E. programme, curriculum subjects and school assemblies. Religious education, which follows the agreed syllabus, contributes to the pupils’ spiritual development as do the very good school assemblies which the school provides. The school fully meets the statutory requirements for the daily act of collective worship. Local Ministers of religion visit the school on a regular basis and participate in its religious life.

85. Opportunities to develop and encourage pupils’ social development are carefully planned and well used. The well established school council promotes the school ethos well. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on and discuss ways in which school life could be improved. For pupils with ASD in weekly residence the curriculum is further enhanced and extended. A very well planned and delivered programme of activities supports the development of pupils’ communication skills, social skills and their ability to function in the wider community. These activities are closely linked to the educational programme on offer to pupils during the school day.

86. The provision for moral development is very good. There is a clear moral purpose underpinning relationships and issues of “right” and “wrong” are regularly addressed. Pupils take part in a variety of fund-raising activities for charity.

87. The provision for cultural development is good. Pupils develop awareness of the culture of Wales and its place within the United Kingdom as a result of curriculum experiences and the range of visits and visitors. This is further enhanced by celebrations such as St. David’s Day.

88. The school’s partnerships with parents, the local community, other schools and higher education institutions are highly successful and have outstanding features that enrich the life and work of the school and enhance pupils’ learning experiences.

89. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and express very high levels of satisfaction with the education their children receive within a caring and supportive environment. Parents value greatly the sense of community fostered by the school, the commitment of the headteacher and staff and the willingness of the school to listen to parents.

90. Parents, carers and friends make an excellent contribution to the school and are very supportive of school activities, events and initiatives. The Parent and Teacher Association (PTA) and League of Friends work very hard to raise funds to support the school. They organise many social and fund raising activities which enrich the
home/school partnership and provide the school with a valuable source of additional income. Funds raised are used purposefully to enhance learning resources for all pupils.

91. Communication with parents is well established and effective. A constructive home/school agreement is in place that has been readily accepted by parents. Parents feel well informed about the life of the school and their children’s work and progress.

92. The school has excellent links with other schools and colleges that are beneficial to pupils. The school’s programme for receiving and transferring pupils is very successful and pupils settle quickly and confidently into their new environments with minimal disruption to their education and emotional well-being.

93. Students from local colleges and initial teacher training institutions regularly undertake placements at the school. They are very well supported by staff and make a positive contribution to the life and work of the school.

94. The school’s partnership with the local community is outstanding. Staff take full advantage of all that the community has to offer to broaden and extend the learning experiences of pupils. (Staff, governors and pupils are highly committed to the local community and the school supports many community initiatives. Exemplary use is made of the locality as a learning resource, and educational visits enhance pupils’ learning in many curriculum areas, particularly in the work-related curriculum.)

95. The school’s commitment to work-related education is outstanding and pupils’ learning has been enriched by a range of very good partnerships with local employers and agencies. The school takes very good account of the Framework for Work-Related Education and the vocational aspects of the PSE programme are well addressed by teachers. The school understands the local community well and takes account of the needs of local businesses and industry.

96. The school enjoys a highly productive partnership with Careers Wales (West) and works closely with personnel from the Welsh Initiative for Supported Employment (WISE) to secure meaningful and appropriate work-experience placements for students. Arrangements are very well organised and managed and provide pupils with practical understanding of the world of work, as well as enhancing their personal sense of responsibility and self-worth. The success of the programme is evident in the positive response of many students who view their placements as good preparation for life outside school.

97. Pupils with ASD undertake their work experience placements within the school where they are secure and well supported. Staff make every effort to ensure their work experience in the bakery and in the concrete moulding workshop reflects the demands of the outside world. These placements give students very good practical experience of the world of work. However, insufficient use is made of appropriate opportunities for pupils with ASD to benefit from educational and social experiences with other pupils at the school, particularly as they approach school leaving age.
98. Local employers in industry, business and commerce are very supportive of the school and significant sponsorship is received. Several teachers have undertaken relevant industrial placements, which have contributed to their professional development and enhanced curriculum provision for pupils.

99. The school’s policies and procedures to promote equal opportunities and to tackle social disadvantage and stereotyping are very successful, and pupils succeed regardless of their ability, gender, race or backgrounds. The headteacher and staff work in close partnerships with a range of external welfare agencies to secure the best possible support for children and their families. The school’s commitment to social inclusion is exemplary.

100. The school responds well to Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and local initiatives such as pupils’ awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship. Pupils are actively involved in a range of re-cycling schemes and know that they must try to conserve energy and water consumption in the school and in understanding how different sources of energy impact on the planet. The school’s eco code is clearly understood by pupils and is prominently displayed throughout the school.

101. Pupils have been actively involved in developing the external environment of their school, and gardening and horticulture are integral aspects of the life and work of the school. The whole school community is justly proud of the recognition it has received for its commitment to the local environment through its many successes in the Swansea in Bloom and Wales in Bloom initiatives. As part of the eco-schools award scheme, the school has received bronze and silver awards in recognition of its commitment to conservation and the environment.

102. Pupils’ understanding of global citizenship is developing well. Through their work in geography, RE and PSE, pupils are beginning to understand how global forces influence the lives of people in different countries.

103. The school makes very good provision for the promotion of entrepreneurial skills. Pupils have regular opportunities to take part in enterprise activities and are involved in the design, manufacture and sale of their products.

104. In lessons pupils are encouraged to work with more independence at a level appropriate to their development and capabilities and they have regular opportunities to enhance their problem-solving and decision-making skills as they contribute to the school council and eco committee.

105. Pupils throughout the school receive opportunities to gain an awareness of national identity, a sense of heritage and Welsh ethos. Younger pupils with ASD sing simple Welsh songs, make Welsh food and undertake visits to St Fagan’s Museum of Welsh life. Older pupils continue in the same vein within a thematic approach. Post-16 students make a variety of concrete garden ornaments, some of which have a Welsh theme (croeso stones, dragons, Welsh lady). Also Welsh greetings cards for Christmas and birthdays and Welsh foods (bara brith, leek soup and Welsh cakes) feature in cookery sessions. Students also visit local places of interest including rugby matches at the Millennium Stadium.
106. For pupils with MLD/SLD, a strong Welsh ethos is created and encouraged in most areas of the curriculum. The numerous displays, photographs and awards in all areas of the school depict the high standard and quality of work undertaken by pupils in art, design technology, history, geography, sport, educational visits and local community links. Although provision and pupil progress in Welsh as a subject are good, some inconsistencies are observed in the use of incidental Welsh throughout the school.

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

**Grade 1 - good with outstanding features**

107. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report. There are many outstanding features within this Key Question.

108. The school places a high priority on pastoral care throughout the school and outstanding care, guidance and support are provided for pupils. The governors, headteacher, teaching and support staff are highly successful in creating a calm, caring and supportive environment where pupils feel safe, secure and respected.

109. The excellent relationships and the mutual warmth and respect between staff and pupils are outstanding features and enable pupils to make very good progress in their academic, social and personal development.

110. The school works in full and productive partnership with a range of agencies and support services to ensure pupils’ needs are carefully assessed and provided for. Parents and carers are encouraged to become fully involved; the school listens carefully to them and their views are well considered and acted upon.

111. The school has very good induction programmes in place to ensure learners, including residential learners, settle in quickly and confidently to the school. As they move classes through the school and as they prepare to leave for college or employment, learners are very well supported at all times.

112. Pupils benefit from the sensitive guidance and advice they receive from teachers with regard to ensuring the courses they follow are best suited to them and they are able to achieve accreditation. For older students, the impartial and well focussed guidance received from the careers teacher and careers adviser help them to make important decisions about their future.

113. All pupils have access to high quality personal support and guidance. The headteacher and staff successfully establish a climate where adults and pupils exhibit mutual respect and where the uniqueness of the individual is valued and nurtured.
114. The very good quality personal and social education (PSE) programme, drawn up in line with national recommendations, permeates the life of the school and supports pupils’ development with many rich learning experiences. Health education, careers guidance, sex education and drugs awareness are given appropriate attention and good support is provided by outside agencies to deliver the programme. The school’s use of specialist agencies including health professionals, welfare agencies, psychological and social services is exemplary.

115. The school council is a very good forum for the development of pupils’ personal and social skills and provides a good opportunity for pupils with ASD, MLD and SLD to work together. Councillors undertake their duties conscientiously and feel they can make a real difference to their school. They are very proud of the improvements they have secured and have an agenda of further enhancements they would like to make to the school.

116. Very effective procedures are in place to monitor pupils’ behaviour, performance, attendance and punctuality and early intervention ensures that any individual concerns are dealt with quickly and efficiently.

117. The school’s policies and procedures to promote good behaviour are very effective and teachers are skilled at implementing a range of effective strategies to secure positive behaviour and attitudes.

118. The headteacher monitors attendance and punctuality carefully, and effective follow-up procedures are in place, including regular liaison with the education welfare service.

119. The quality of academic support and guidance based on individual assessment and linked to high but realistic expectations of pupils, is well established and very effective. Pupils are beginning to take a more active role in the setting and monitoring of their individual targets.

120. The school provides outstanding careers education and guidance to pupils. Staff take very good account of the Framework for Careers Education and Guidance and work closely with Careers Wales (West) to provide relevant, personalised and impartial advice for pupils. Careers education receives due attention throughout the PSE programme and pupils benefit from the ready access they have to relevant computer software relating to careers advice. In particular, the Job Explorer Database (JED) programme, which is specifically aimed at pupils in special schools, is very well utilised by pupils.

121. The school has clear, well-documented policies and procedures for assuring pupils’ health, safety and well-being, which are implemented carefully by staff and the governing body within the school and within the residential facility. Arrangements for dealing with accidents, emergencies and medical needs are well established and effective, and pupils are well supervised at all times.

122. The school makes every effort to promote healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthy snacks and fresh water is readily available. Within the residential facility, nutritious and healthy food is supplied and
pupils take an active role in the purchase, preparation and cooking of healthy food for themselves.

123. The duty of care is fundamental to the school’s ethos and consequently the school works in children’s best interests to nurture their welfare and to protect them. The school’s policy and procedures to deal with child protection issues are clearly understood by all staff and training is regularly updated. Good working partnerships have been developed with social services and a range of other external welfare agencies.

124. All pupils have statements of Special Educational Needs on entry to Pen-y-Bryn and Maytree. All the pupils in Maytree and 22 pupils in Pen-y-Bryn are disapplied from French and Welsh to receive additional help in Speech and Language. In addition all pupils in Maytree have been disapplied from History.

125. On entry to the school, pupils in Maytree and Pen-y-Bryn are thoroughly assessed to achieve a baseline for setting learning targets. Speech and Language Therapist and Occupational Therapist also contribute towards forming the pupils’ Individual Education Plans (IEPs), which are of a high standard. Visiting specialists provide valuable input and guidance for the IEPs of pupils with hearing, visual, or communication difficulties.

126. Termly reviews of IEPs and annual reviews of pupils’ statements are a strong foundation for promoting progress. Parents and relevant other professionals are fully involved and where possible pupils are able to contribute. This is very good practice and the principles of the SEN Code of Practice are suitably implemented. This well-managed process ensures that the wide range of pupils’ additional learning needs are met, progress identified and relevant future targets set.

127. In Maytree and Pen-y-Bryn the support and guidance offered by the learning support assistants and the residential care staff in Maytree is highly skilled. The teamwork and commitment is an outstanding feature in both establishments and enables pupils to settle into their daily routines quickly.

128. High expectations together with an ethos of calmness enable both establishments to create an atmosphere where pupils and students with challenging behaviour can flourish. Staff are skilled in identifying early any problems and consequently interruptions to other pupils’ learning are rare. This is an outstanding feature.

129. Both establishments are very well resourced to meet the needs of all the pupils and parents are very much involved in the education of the pupils.

130. Overall, the quality of provision for equal opportunities is outstanding. The school has very effective policies and procedures in place to promote good race relations, equal opportunities and diversity across the school. Equality for all is firmly embedded in the school’s ethos and pupils value and respect the contribution of others regardless of their ability, gender or race.
131. The school recognises the diversity of pupils’ backgrounds and all pupils are treated equally and with dignity and respect. The school ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities to participate in lessons and school activities, and stereotypical views are challenged.

132. Several pupils attending the school come from ethnic minority backgrounds and have other languages as their first language and need to learn English. Provision of appropriate learning support to meet this range of needs is variable. Although in some cases good support is available through well-structured resources and experienced learning support assistants, not all such pupils benefit from this degree of appropriate provision.

133. The school makes all reasonable efforts to secure the equal treatment and inclusion of disabled pupils. An accessibility audit has been undertaken and a plan put into place to demonstrate how staff will make improvements in access to the curriculum, physical access and in the provision of information for disabled pupils.

134. The measures taken by the school to eliminate oppressive behaviour including racial discrimination, bullying and all other forms of harassment are very effective. Such incidents are almost unknown and the school functions well as an inclusive, harmonious and happy community where all pupils are valued equally.
Leadership and management

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

Grade 1 - good with outstanding features

135. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation reports.

Outstanding features
136. The headteacher, senior staff and governors have well-established systems for school management that have been regularly evaluated and improved over time so that:
- overall values, aims, objectives and targets continue to be appropriate, clear and shared by all involved in meeting the pupils' needs;
- the changing and increasing range of pupils’ special educational needs are effectively addressed;
- partnerships with other providers, parents and community groups are very effective and make a significant and valued contribution to overall provision;
- the skills of staff have been continually monitored and developed over time to achieve a consistently high quality of teaching and learning at the school and good arrangements are in place to share this pool of expertise with colleagues in mainstream schools;
- the school governors are very well informed and play their part very well in monitoring the quality of provision, and deciding and supporting initiatives for school improvement and strategic development.

138. The values, aims and objectives of the school are fully understood and shared by all and this has resulted in staff having high levels of commitment and expectation for pupils to achieve and a well-established positive ethos for learning. The level of teamwork among the staff as a whole is very high. Aspects such as improving pupils’ behaviour and their personal, social and emotional development are consistently very well managed and, in classrooms, high levels of engagement in well-planned learning activities ensure pupils’ educational progress.

139. Very good arrangements are in place for the appraisal of staff and agreeing and meeting priorities for their professional development. These have effectively improved the performance of staff individually and as part of staff teams in meeting pupils’ needs.

140. The school has been actively involved in national priorities and is effectively addressing issues such as care of the environment, recycling, healthy life-styles and life-long learning as pupils are prepared for moving on into the adult world. The school is fully committed to the national initiative to 'unlock the potential' of special schools by working in partnership with the LEA and mainstream schools in sharing and developing expertise in meeting pupils’ special educational needs.

141. The school governors are very committed and supportive of the school and make a full contribution to setting the strategic direction for school development and
ensuring that initiatives are effectively managed within the school’s budget. They meet all legal and regulatory requirements and closely monitor provision and progress towards achieving the targets for school improvement.

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

**Grade 1 - good with outstanding features**

142. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by both establishments in the self-evaluation reports.

**Outstanding features** include:
- a well established and effective cycle of appropriate self-evaluation procedures;
- effective analysis of information in setting targets for improvement;
- strong teamwork in planning for and achieving school improvement.

143. The Penybryn and Maytree self-evaluation strategy is well established and firmly based on direct evidence of pupils’ work, lesson observation and discussion with all staff. These processes are used effectively to identify training needs and inform the planning of targets in the School Development Plan.

144. Penybryn and Maytree’s self-evaluation reports are of very good quality and analyse thoroughly and correctly their own strengths and shortcomings. All matters requiring attention in both establishments’ self-evaluation document are directly linked to their development plan. They have analysed the different aspects incisively and fairly.

145. There are very clear expectations for every member of staff’s self-evaluation arrangements. All staff respond in detail to matters requiring attention in their class and to aspects of school life that they are responsible for.

146. Learners’ points of view are carefully considered in various ways. The involvement of the School Council in choosing an alternative uniform for the Sixth Form and the special strategies reflecting the ability of the learners are used to collect and analyse their views about their day-to-day learning experience are good examples. The views of parents and outside support agencies are valued, collected and integrated successfully into the system.

147. The management team thoroughly analyses all the extensive information collected including pupil achievement in external tests and examinations. The progress pupils make is carefully and regularly monitored, and new targets are set for individual pupils based on the information. This ensures that pupils successfully progress to the next stage of their learning.

148. Both establishments have a long-standing tradition of self-evaluation which was recently acknowledged by an LEA quality award. Those issues for improvement raised in the last inspection report have been effectively addressed.
149. The school governors, headteacher and staff set clear, realistic priorities and appropriately challenging targets for school improvement. The self-evaluation process is reviewed regularly. Both teaching and learning are monitored by rigorous evaluation procedures. This has a positive effect on staff development priorities which impact on pupil achievement.

150. Staff work closely together in planning, monitoring, assessing and recording pupils' work. The 11–16 Curriculum Assessment book is used effectively with planning for continued progress. Staff are currently engaged on computerising this information and data so that school improvement initiatives may be more clearly evaluated in relation to the outcomes for pupils. The established collegiate approach to school improvement has resulted in a prevailing strong sense of teamwork amongst all members of staff and an overall positive ethos for learning, behaviour and achievement.

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

**Grade 1: good with outstanding features**

151. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school in the self-evaluation reports.

152. **Outstanding features** include-

- the efficient and effective use of staff, learning resources and accommodation;
- the very good quality and range of appropriate learning resources that match the needs of all pupils;
- effective ongoing procedures for improving staff expertise and the quality of resources;
- provision of outstanding resources suitable to meet the learning needs of the pupils.

153. There are sufficient well-qualified and experienced staff within Penybryn and Maytree to meet the needs of the pupils. The headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher who oversees Maytree and the residential facility. Curriculum leaders make an important contribution to the development of their subject areas and ensure monitoring of teachers’ planning and pupils’ standards of work.

154. Very good use is made of teachers and LSAs in the Outreach Project as part of the national initiative for ‘Unlocking the Potential of Special Schools’. Mainstream schools highly value the supportive links that are being developed and pupils with special needs in the mainstream schools benefit from the schools sharing their expertise.

155. The school has very good arrangements in place for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time that is informally monitored by senior members of staff.

156. The quality of teaching and learning is highly strengthened by a team of committed and enthusiastic learning support staff (LSAs). They are effectively deployed within the school and make a valuable contribution to provision and
standards. They receive appropriate training and gain qualifications in manual handling, administration of drugs and medicines. Very good use is made of the expertise of individuals by them taking responsibility for induction of non-teaching staff, pupil admissions, ICT software and hardware.

157. Very good links and co-operation exist between day and residential staff in Maytree. Care staff work closely with teachers in planning, teaching and recording pupils’ progress and setting targets for pupils in residence.

158. Administrative staff provide very efficient and effective administrative support. The caretaker and cleaners maintain a high standard of cleanliness within the buildings and the kitchen staff prepare healthy and nutritious meals at lunchtime and for the residential pupils. Such provision is an important feature of the daily life of the school in functioning as an effective and caring community.

159. Resources within the school and unit are of very high quality and are readily available. They are audited effectively to provide pupil access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum to meet the varying needs of the pupils. Careful and prioritised planning assures the quality of the range of resources for staffing, learning and accommodation including the residential provision. Grants and funding from different sources are obtained to supplement the school’s allocated budget.

160. Classrooms areas contain age appropriate books and materials which enhance and support the curriculum. The provision of ICT equipment and software which enhances all aspects of the curriculum is a strong feature of the school and has a positive impact on raising standards of pupil achievement. For pupils with severe communication difficulties, the Picture Exchange Communication (PECs) system and Makaton signing are used as an alternative and augmentative communication system. However, a significant number of these pupils do not have access to electronic equipment which would enable them to become more effective communicators.

161. Very good use is made of community facilities in support of pupils’ learning. The school makes weekly use of the local swimming pool; visits are arranged to places of interest and sporting events. The residential unit provides very good opportunities for pupils’ leisure and extra-curricular experiences.

162. Accommodation is very good at Penybryn and adequate at Maytree for the number of pupils attending. Internally both buildings are bright, clean and well cared for. Fixtures and furniture are in good condition. Walls are decorated with displays that celebrate pupils’ achievement both in their work and at play. There are specialist rooms which enhance the diverse teaching and learning needs of the pupils. However, the library at Penybryn is restricted by being housed in a small room.

163. The external areas of the school are secure and provide suitable learning environments for the pupils. The play areas are well-maintained with soft playing surfaces and very good play equipment. However, the condition of the surface by the entrance area to Maytree is poor and the steps do not have a safety handrail. The provision of day and residential toilet facilities are in accordance with regulations and
there are changing facilities for those pupils who require assistance. Accommodation and facilities in the residential unit are very good.

164. The school makes outstanding use of its resources. Staff are very effectively deployed to take account of pupils’ needs and groups are carefully selected to make optimum use of staff skills. Good systems are in place for identifying resources required and these are well organised to be accessible to pupils at both Pen y Bryn and Maytree. The headteacher, LEA finance officer and curriculum leaders ensure the school makes efficient use of resources. When determining expenditure the GB consider cost-effectiveness issues and have a clear idea of the intended benefits of any spending decisions.

165. There are outstanding effective staff development procedures in order to improve standards and the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers attend relevant courses and arrange in-house training to disseminate good practice and share experiences. Learning support and child-care staff receive appropriate training as part of their professional development - designated staff also provide valuable INSET for their colleagues.

166. The headteacher, LEA finance officer and governors ensure that spending decisions are related to priorities for improvement in the teaching and learning. Good progress has been made in addressing the key issues for action outlined in the last inspection report. The allocated school budget, grants obtained and audited fund-raising projects are managed prudently. The school’s spending decisions focus on priorities for improvement and the benefit of its pupils.

167. The finance sub-committee of the GB meets regularly to manage and monitor financial expenditure. The ongoing whole-school approach to self-evaluation of the outcomes of spending ensures effective use of finances. Overall, the school makes very good use of all its available resources and achieves very good value for money.
Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

English

Key Stages 2, 3 and 4: Grade 2 - good features and no important shortcomings
Post 16: Grade 1 - good with outstanding features

Outstanding features
168. At Post-16, many students make increasingly very good progress and achieve National Skills Profile accreditation for their achievements.

Good features
169. All pupils, including those with severe and complex learning difficulties and those with autistic spectrum disorders, make at least, good progress in listening, speaking and communicating, reading and writing.

170. Throughout the school, pupils use their developing speech and language skills, signing skills and the picture exchange system to communicate effectively through speech, vocalisations, gestures, signs and symbols. They are confident communicating in both small groups and large groups such as assembly.

171. KS 2 pupils with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) make very good progress in learning to listen. They respond well to skilful teaching and support, and demonstrate good awareness and developing understanding. They participate in directed activities, for example selecting colours to make patterns on the interactive whiteboard and taking part in small group activities to choose the day of the week and describe the weather. More-able pupils demonstrate good understanding when anticipating what will come next. Less-able pupils make choices and indicate preferences when asked which toy they would like to play with.

172. They also make steady progress in developing pre-reading and early reading and writing skills. Less-able pupils tolerate a range of objects, feeling and exploring different textures and shapes. They are developing increased control in handling small objects such as crayons, pencils, scissors and glue and paintbrushes. Pupils recognise and select pictures and signs and are learning to use these effectively to communicate understanding. With varying degrees of support, they can sort and match objects and pictures. More-able pupils trace over shapes, patterns and words and are beginning to write independently.

173. KS 3 and 4 pupils with ASD make very good progress in looking and listening. They tolerate the presence of others and engage in fleeting eye contact with staff and other pupils when clapping and singing greetings every morning. They participate well in selecting activities on a visual time line to structure their day. Pupils with spoken language respond to questions with appropriate single word answers demonstrating understanding. Pupils with limited or no spoken language are making steady progress in using the picture exchange system to communicate understanding and express their preferences. This is having a very positive effect on behaviour and their progress in learning.
174. They identify the activities of the day by reference to pictures and they are learning to place them in order to represent the daily timetable. They select picture cards of familiar objects to assemble their own shopping lists and, with support, more-able pupils copy-type their own shopping list on the computer.

175. Post-16 students with ASD look and listen well, sitting together and making choices by pointing and gestures or by using simple speech. They are making very good progress in learning to communicate appropriately in social situations. Within the school curriculum and the 24-hour residential curriculum, they communicate their preferences and exercise choice. Students demonstrate good understanding when following instructions, for example in a cookery lesson they selected the correct equipment with the help of pictures paired with words.

176. Their reading is good with students recognising and reading familiar words which are part of their social vocabulary and 24 hour curriculum. More-able students read simple phrases and sentences in the Accreditation for Life and Living (ALL) modules and they show good comprehension of what they have read. They record their learning by overwriting their answers to questions. More-able students make a good effort at writing independently.

177. KS 3, 4 and Post-16 pupils with severe learning difficulties listen very well to their teacher. They respond to spoken and sung directions and persevere in their learning tasks showing good understanding. Pupils with speech answer questions and participate with enthusiasm. They participate in role-play such as answering the telephone with evident delight. Pupils without spoken language use vocalisations, pointing and gestures to show understanding and express preference, for example telling their classmates what they had enjoyed most about their trip to the city farm. They select words to complete a sentence with varying degrees of support and trace or over-write words. The appreciation they show of the contributions of their classmates is an outstanding feature of their learning.

178. In KS 3, pupils with MLD listen very well. They sustain good concentration when the teacher is explaining and most respond promptly to questions showing good understanding. Younger pupils have a good vocabulary which enables them to express themselves clearly. They recall an impressive range of words beginning with different letters from a story they have heard. By the end of the key stage, more-able pupils respond to stories and questions with very good understanding. They listen to the contributions of others and show appreciation of humour and make up interesting sentences using new describing words. Less-able pupils listen well and, with support, make good oral contributions, answering questions confidently.

179. KS 4 pupils with MLD have developed good concentration and listen carefully to staff and to each other. More-able pupils show good understanding and follow directions independently so that they settle to tasks quickly. With support, they make up sentences orally using new words effectively. They participate in oral activities with confidence, waiting their turn and listening to the contributions of others. They use an extended vocabulary and humour to express themselves, for example in talking about what they like to do out of school. Less-able pupils also participate well with higher levels of support. They respond to questions with one or two word answers and enjoy their success.
180. KS 3 pupils with MLD make good progress in reading. They read familiar words and simple sentences which they have helped to compose. They participate in shared reading with confidence and enthusiasm. When reading an extract from James and the Giant Peach, pupils demonstrated good understanding by matching adjectives to different characters. As they progress through the key stage, the most able pupils begin to write independently. They have clear handwriting with good letter formation and spacing and join the letters appropriately. The majority know that a sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop and when prompted, they can correct their own mistakes. Less-able pupils place pictures in sequence and overwrite sentences which they have helped to compose. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a good understanding of the use of adjectives in making sentences more interesting and are able to identify and suggest a range of describing words. The most-able pupils can look up the meaning of a word in a dictionary and write the meaning in their book.

181. The reading skills of KS 4 pupils with MLD are developing well. They can read common words with confidence and sound out new words with a good degree of success. They copy their spelling words from the board into their books accurately and look up the meaning in a dictionary. More-able pupils make up their own sentences using the new words. Pupils’ handwriting and spelling are developing well. More-able pupils write clearly with good letter formation and spacing. Spelling of common words is sound. Less-able pupils overwrite sentences which they have composed.

182. Post-16 students with MLD achieve excellent standards of careful listening. They are attentive and respond promptly to questions showing very good understanding for their ability. They listen to each other’s contributions, demonstrating courtesy and maturity. They speak with confidence within the class group, introducing themselves and the person sitting next to them. They follow a story about bullying with interest and, with varying levels of support, describe different features about the character.

183. They read very well and write well. They demonstrate outstanding progress over their time in school. Students read confidently in shared group reading and individually. More-able students demonstrate the ability to ‘read between the lines’ in deciding whether a statement about a character in a story is true or false. Less-able students describe the characters literally, using words from the story. The most-able students write independently for a range of purposes across the accredited OCR modules which they undertake. Less-able students are enabled to record their learning with varying degrees of support by overwriting and copy writing on paper and on the computer.

**Shortcomings**
Pupils who are not able to speak do not make sufficient progress in the use of communication aids since there is insufficient access to or training for the use of electronic touch-talkers.
Some pupils for whom English is an additional language make slow progress in achieving their potential to communicate in English as a result of insufficient, appropriate resources.

**Welsh second language**

**Key Stage 3 and 4:** Grade 2 - good features and no important shortcomings  
**Post 16:** Grade 2 - good features and no important shortcomings

184. All pupils attending the Maytree Autistic unit together with 24 pupils at Pen y Bryn have been disapplied from Welsh Second Language. However, many of these pupils make good progress in understanding and using Welsh greetings and respond well to Welsh when it is used incidentally such as in assemblies, registration and during the school day.

**Good features**

185. Pupils at the beginning of KS 3 display good oral skills in Welsh. They can name a range of colours in Welsh, respond correctly to the question “Beth wyt ti’n hoffi?” and make good use of the vocabulary acquired. They also follow simple commands and extend their vocabulary with correct pronunciation.

186. As pupils progress through KS3, they can greet/respond correctly to a greeting, answer the register (yma/dim yma) and read the days of the week. Using flash cards, they select and read the day’s weather condition e.g. “mae hi’n gymylog”. They respond correctly to simple questioning - “Pwy wyt ti?, Beth yw dy enw?” and most pupils can recite and pronounce the Welsh alphabet correctly.

187. At the end of KS 3, pupils show good progress in their acquisition of language and formation of sentence patterns. They extend their vocabulary (clothes, people, and family) and can respond in the positive/negative to questions beginning with “Oes?”. Most pupils speak correctly and are able to write phrases and simple sentences.

188. Pupils at KS 4 continue to build on acquired sentence patterns with very good recapitulation of key words and phrases. They remain totally engaged with group activities, can read individual sentences and work well in pairs. They are enthusiastic learners and enjoy speaking/responding in Welsh.

189. By the end of KS4, pupils show an increasing confidence when speaking. They can give information and respond correctly to instructions and questioning. They can read printed texts and their own work aloud. Pupils complete written exercises and read their worksheets correctly.

190. Post-16 students enjoy activities that reinforce acquired language patterns. They have a sound vocabulary and most are able to combine nouns, adjectives and verbs. A few students can hold a short conversation either in pairs or with an adult. They are keen to participate and show a high level of correct responses.
191. In all lesson observations, constant use is made of Interactive Whiteboard activities and computer-based programmes. These enhance pupils’ interest, efforts and acquisition of the Welsh language and contribute substantially to standards of learning.

192. Pupils’ understanding and use of Welsh is significantly enhanced where Welsh is used incidentally throughout the school day.

**Mathematics**

**Key Stages 2, 3 and 4:** Grade 2 good features and no important shortcomings

**Post 16:** Grade 1 good with outstanding features

193. Overall, pupils make consistently good progress in mathematics as they pass through the age groups.

**Outstanding features**

194. At Post-16, students make very good progress in appropriate modules related to the application of mathematics to every-day life and outstandingly achieve accreditation for their achievements through the OCR National Skills Profile (NSP) or Accreditation for Life and Living (ALL) modules of study.

**Good features**

195. Pupils in KS2 develop good concepts of the passage of time through the regular use of the daily timelines of pictures and symbols showing their sequence of timetabled activities. They learn to identify the start and end of each activity. They make good progress in counting skills and develop their understanding of ‘one more’ being added to small groups of objects. They learn to identify the numerals 0 to 9 and progress from over-writing them to independently writing numbers correctly. Their skills with shape and colour improve steadily and the older, more-able pupils correctly identify and match colours, collect the correct number of items to 10 and complete jigsaw puzzles with up to 48 pieces. They respond correctly to positional instructions involving ‘in, on and in front of’. Most-able pupils become competent with basic addition and subtraction up to 20, counting on or back correctly using a number ladder.

196. In KS3, pupils with ASD identify and match basic colours correctly and more-able pupils recognise and sequence numbers up to 10 and correctly count the number of items in a given group. Less-able pupils make steady progress with recognising and matching numbers up to 20 and more-able pupils competently identify and match numbers to 100 on a 100 square.

197. Pupils in KS4 with ASD develop a good concept of number, add small amounts together and record the number statement correctly. They match, sort and recognise coins and progress to matching coin value to the price of simulated shopping items. They gain confidence in counting and place number cards in the correct order to 20, identifying missing numbers in a given sequence. More-able pupils identify the
number before a given number and the next number in the sequence and make repeating sequences with different shapes.

198. Pupils in KS3 with MLD make good progress in numeracy and develop their understanding of place value. Less-able pupils match, count, order and record numbers of items to 20. More-able pupils recognise the highest and lowest numbers in a given sequence and become increasingly confident in simple addition of hundreds, tens and units. By Y9, they achieve a good understanding of block graphs and more-able pupils can explain the meaning of the graph that represents the data that they have collected.

199. Pupils with MLD in KS4 become competent in adding two numbers in a dice game, record these correctly and understand key mathematical terms such as double, highest, lowest, most and average. They achieve a sound knowledge of basic place value for tens and units. Good progress is made in mental arithmetic with more-able pupils correctly adding three small amounts of money up to 20p.

200. By the end of KS4, some pupils with SLD become competent in counting forwards and backwards up to 20 whilst others are more secure with numbers to 10. They correctly identify and single digit numbers and more-able pupils can find the correct number card missing from a given sequence. They match colours and basic geometric shapes confidently. Good progress is made in recording simple number sentences. Most-able pupils make realistic estimates about the distance a robot needs to travel to reach a given point on a floor-map.

201. At Post-16, students make outstanding progress in their knowledge and understanding of mathematics. They apply their learning to real and meaningful situations. Their success is evident in the increasing number of certificates achieved within the appropriate accredited courses followed.

202. Students with ASD develop their mathematical skills very well through the Accreditation for Life and Living (ALL) modules of study. They gain skills in the use of number in everyday situations such as the addition and subtraction of small sums of money with more-able students managing money confidently up to £10. They use appropriate measures effectively such as the number of containers-full of ingredients for following a recipe or making concrete for moulded garden ornaments.

203. Students with MLD make very good progress as they achieve success in the programmes of study for accreditation within OCR National Skills Profile. They develop good skills with money including shopping lists and basic budgeting. They become competent in the use of analogue time to half and quarter past/to the hour, know and record the date correctly and estimate how long a familiar journey would take. They become competent in the use of a range of standard and non-standard measures including their own personal weight, height and clothes sizes.
Science

Key stages 2 and 3: Grade 2  good features and no important shortcomings
Key Stage 4:   Grade 1  good with outstanding features
Post 16:     Grade 2   good features and no important shortcomings

Outstanding features
204. When studying solids liquids and gases pupils at KS 4 describe accurately and confidently the way materials change when exposed to heating and cooling.

Good features
205. Pupils with autism at KS 2 when using switches to activate and deactivate light sources in the sensory room demonstrate good understanding of cause and effect. They respond well to sensory experiences in their immediate environment.

206. In KS 3 pupils with MLD show good understanding of simple electrical circuits. More-able pupils can accurately predict which materials will conduct electricity and which will not. They use appropriate scientific language and record their results with care. Pupils can manipulate simple apparatus and work effectively as individuals and in small groups.

207. At KS 4, through practical work as part of their EdExcel accredited course, pupils understand the principles of a fair test. They make sensible predictions and more-able pupils can apply their findings to new situations. They can identify key features that are different in humans and that these differences can be inherited or affected by the environment they live in. Pupils collaborate well when carrying out investigations. They measure accurately and use graphs to record their data. Pupils have a positive attitude to work and maintain concentration throughout the lesson.

208. In their life skills programme at Post-16, students extend their scientific knowledge and understanding. Good cross-curricular links are made with design technology. In food technology lessons students understand the difference between healthy and unhealthy foods. More-able students confidently discuss the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Good standards are also achieved in other science related activities. In horticulture lessons for example, students achieve a good understanding of what plants need to be able to grow.

209. Pupils throughout the school gain a good basic knowledge of the environment and the relevance of science to life outside of school. Pupils’ understanding of their work in science is extended by good use of real experiences in the local community and, as a result, progress is promoted. They demonstrate good understanding of the effects of pollution and sources of renewable energy.

210. In all key stages pupils make good use of interactive whiteboards to support their learning. They are highly motivated, make good use of resources and actively participate in lessons.
Information technology

**Key Stage 2:** Grade 2  good features and no important shortcomings  
**Key Stages 3 and 4:** Grade 1  good with outstanding features  
**Post-16:** Grade 1  good with outstanding features

**Outstanding features**

211. Information and Communications Technology (ICT) features as an integral key skill in all curricular subjects. Pupils have access in the classrooms to interactive whiteboards (IWB), digital cameras, personal computers, touch screens, software and CD Roms. The confidence and progress observed in the participation and use made of ICT by the pupils is outstanding.

212. Pupils use ICT to increase their understanding of previous learning. Prior to visiting the local supermarket, a group of pupils with ASD at KS 3 prepare a shopping list. Working on the computer they key in an item and price. Using a Boardmaker symbol finder, they select, drag and drop the appropriate symbol/picture onto the screen and print the list.

213. KS 4 pupils with SLD practice and develop the use of ICT tool skills. Working on an IWB and computers, they practice the drag and drop technique selecting objects and animals to create a picture. They also colour appropriately the locations and objects in the picture before printing their work.

214. Outstanding progress is also observed in ICT skills when pupils use the Logo robot. They know how to activate and provide input to the robot. Pupils enjoy using Logo – they maintain a high level of interest and older pupils enter instructions successfully.

215. Students at Post-16 follow accredited courses with a heavy emphasis on ICT. They continue to make sound progress and achieve very good ICT skills within a range of modules. They identify key parts of a computer accurately and make very good use of their knowledge and skills in word processing activities. Using a Compose World 2 programme, students develop their creative understanding of ICT. They locate and load the required programme, can run a music package and arrange a group of musical phrases to form a tune. Working individually, students use headphones to produce and listen to their compositions. They also work effectively in a group such as when using a program on the IWB to produce a picture of a small cottage suggesting features of the building and appropriate colours.

216. In Food Technology, students use relevant software to design and print kitchen layouts and produce bar graphs of food surveys undertaken. Visiting a local supermarket, students select and photograph foods suitable for a party. During an IWB introduction to cooking vegetables, students are fully engaged and respond with eagerness and interest.

**Good features**

217. At KS 2 pupils with ASD become familiar with ICT hardware and software. Based on IEP targets, they learn to sit and show an interest in activities on the Interactive Whiteboard (IAW). They use a light-pen on the whiteboard to obtain a
response and can operate a mouse to create an effect on the computer screen such as drawing and colouring facial features. More-able pupils can also import and enlarge pictures and enjoy playing a favourite computer game.

218. KS 3 pupils with MLD use their ICT skills during a mathematics lesson. They enjoy money problem-solving activities on the IWB (matching prices to items). Working in pairs, most pupils can access a coin recognition exercise on the computer whilst a less-able group, with support, follow an IWB activity.

219. Year 11 pupils with MLD develop their keyboard skills. They discuss the various uses of the computer and consider safety rules. Working in pairs, they choose a font to key in and save their personal details. Most pupils complete such tasks correctly and with minimal assistance.

220. Post-16 students use their ICT skills to access database information to explore careers of interest to themselves. Working on an IWB, pupils select, drag and drop the necessary skills required for certain jobs.

221. Students with ASD reinforce their computer keyboard skills by keying in a short description of an undertaken activity. They use correct spelling and spacing. Good progress is observed and the recorded information provides evidence for an accredited module.

### Design technology

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<td>Key Stages 3 and 4:</td>
<td>Good with outstanding features</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post 16:</td>
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### Outstanding features

222. An outstanding feature in Key Stages 3, 4 and Post 16 is the care, precision and application to work which pupils and students adopt when approaching their work.

223. Post-16 students produce work of outstanding quality as part of their extensive accredited course programme. They produce a range of saleable items, including bird tales and bird feeders. These activities make a very effective contribution to the development of their independence skills.

224. In food technology pupils at KS 3 compare and contrast the quality, cost and presentation of products they have made themselves and those purchased at a local supermarket. They do this with confidence and make informed decisions.

225. The food technology skills of pupils at KSs 3, 4 and Post-16 are significantly enhanced by the input of a chef from a local hotel who supports teaching on a regular basis.
Good features
226. In all key stages pupils make increasingly effective use of a wide range of tools. They develop skills in designing and making as a result of working through a very well planned series of activities carefully structured to meet their individual needs.

227. In KS 2, pupils with ASD explore and experience different materials when involved in cross-curricular activities. They make a variety of two and three-dimensional models using card, paper and clay. They demonstrate a good range of skills and they become fully engaged in the tasks they are undertaking.

228. When making scones in food technology, pupils at KS 3 show good awareness of hygiene and health issues. They work very carefully and take pride in what they have made. They respond well to instruction and work well with others.

229. In KS 4, pupils use a range of equipment with confidence. They can identify materials, cut, shape and drill resistant materials using a variety of tools. They can apply a range of finishes and evaluate their designs and finished products. When joining two pieces of metal together using rivets pupils use tools safely and with care to produce work of high quality.

230. Students at Post-16 continue to develop their design and making skills as they undertake a wide range of practical projects. They successfully prepare their own meals and make saleable items for their young enterprise company. Students design and make good quality wheelbarrow planters from soft wood. They research their design on the Internet and record the design processes used. In food technology lessons they extend their cooking skills and can use a range of hand tools. They evaluate their own work and make suggestions on how to improve it quality.

Modern foreign language - French

Key Stage 3: Grade 2 - good with no important shortcomings.

Overall, pupils in KS3 make good, steady progress in learning French through the appropriate termly modules of study that have an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils’ French vocabulary and basic conversational skills. Pupils with ASD are disapproved from lessons in French.

Good features
231. Pupils in Y7 make good progress in basic vocabulary relating to everyday life situations such as food items and in simple conversational skills such as greetings and responding to questions such as Comment s’appelle tu? They use computer programs and Lotto games to practise their French vocabulary and reinforce their learning by writing the words in their books.

232. In Y8, pupils continue to make good progress by extending their vocabulary and conversational skills to situations relating to French culture and learning to follow instructions. By Y9 they achieve good basic conversation skills and can ask each other and answer a range of questions such as Quel age a tu? and Ou habit tu? and
order food items in a shop or a meal in a restaurant. Writing and spelling skills develop steadily as the pupils complete appropriate worksheets. Their knowledge of French culture is extended effectively as they sing French songs and sample French foods. They gain a good understanding of the requirements of travelling to France through interacting with a computer program about a trip to Paris.

**History**

**Key Stages 3 and 4: Grade 1 - good with outstanding features**

**Outstanding features**
233. In KSs 3 and 4, pupils combine evidence from eye-witness sources, text books and the Internet to gain outstanding knowledge and understanding of how people lived in Swansea during the Second World War.

234. They can identify changes in how schools were run in Victorian times and the more-able are beginning to understand the factors affecting the process of change in schools.

235. Pupils are beginning to apply their historical skills to evaluate evidence from a limited number of sources, for example they gather evidence from library books, local people and the Internet in their project work about the life of the children who moved to Swansea during the war.

**Good features**
236. Pupils have good knowledge of the lifestyle of the people who first lived in the Swansea area. Visits to the local museum and information from the Internet enhance their knowledge and interest.

237. Pupils are able to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of different types of sources. They use vocabulary of historical times in the context of their family or the local environment.

238. They are beginning to make inferences from visual sources and artefacts. They know about the contribution of women to the Second World War and successfully compare that work with the tasks women do today.

**Geography**

**Key Stages 2, 3 and 4: Grade 2 - good with no important shortcomings.**

**Good features**
239. Pupils in KS 2 are able to navigate independently within their own classrooms. The more-able have good knowledge of the Maytree site and can take messages to different classrooms or collect registers. They are developing an understanding of directional language and some simple geographical terms.
240. Pupils in KS 3 recall simple geographical information accurately. Through practical work they are developing good mapping skills and successfully apply them when studying maps of the areas surrounding the school on the interactive white board. They can plot successfully different routes they have taken, for example to the shops or the Church, and identify different types of houses on the route.

241. Pupils know about physical and human processes and are beginning to understand the impact it has on our environment. They can name places and features on local maps such as villages, towns, rivers, lakes and forests. Outside visits to these places enhance pupils’ understanding and strengthens their directional skills.

242. The majority of pupils in KS 4 have a good appreciation of simple environmental issues. They further develop their knowledge and understanding of the impact people have on the environment. They make good use of their surveys of vehicles on different roads to discuss environmental issues. They are gaining good knowledge about human and physical factors. They are able to distinguish between the two features and can accurately identify them with local examples.

243. Throughout KS 3 and KS 4, pupils increase their subject vocabulary and develop their knowledge and understanding of appropriate terminology in context.

### Art

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#### Outstanding features

244. The very good displays of art work around school and the extensive portfolios of evidence provide many examples of work produced to a very high standard. Pupils in KS3 in particular make very good progress.

245. At Post-16, students are successful a wide range of accredited courses in Art. Students as part of an OCR Manufacturing and Retail Module produce very high quality resin models of traditional Welsh cottages which are sold at the St Fagans Museum of Welsh Life.

#### Good Features

246. At KS 2, more-able pupils with ASD use paintbrushes skilfully to produce self-portraits. Pupils experience simple colour mixing and express their preference when exploring the use of different colours. Less-able pupils use a tactile approach to produce simple but none-the-less colourful pictures of themselves.

247. Pupils at Key 3 use a wide range of tools, materials and techniques to produce work of a very good standard. They apply their knowledge well in helping to refine their work. They display good observational skills and there are many examples of work on display showing good attention to detail and effective use of shading.
248. In KS 4, pupils with ASD make prints with confidence. They produce a variety of
different paintings using sponges and poster paint. They respond well to guidance
and work purposefully to produce work of a creditable standard. Pupils with learning
difficulties, as part of their accredited examination work, use ICT competently to
research and develop their artwork. The level of commitment and interest from the
pupils is evidenced by the high quality of work in their personal portfolios.

249. The work of students at Post-16 is strongly linked to work related education.
Models produced by the students of historic industrial buildings are on display in local
museums. Work at all levels is accredited and students have gained many successes
in local and national art competitions.

250. Pupils in all Key Stages and at Post-16 study the work of Welsh artists. Visits to
museums, art galleries and input from local artists result in pupils producing work of a
very good standard.

Music

Key Stages 2, 3, and 4:  Grade 1 - good with outstanding features
Post 16:    Grade 1 - good with outstanding features

Outstanding features
251. Throughout the school, pupils’ involvement and responses to the wide and
stimulating variety of musical experiences demonstrate enjoyment and very good
progress in learning.
• Pupils’ listening skills are extended and they show appreciation of many different
  kinds of music.
• They make significant progress in composing and performing simple musical
  patterns.
• Pupils sing with enthusiasm and all pupils who are able, learn to play a musical
  instrument. Music enriches and enhances the life of the school.

252. In KS 2, pupils with ASD are learning to listen for extended periods of time.
They identify familiar routines through sound and they participate in singing greetings
and clapping a beat. More-able pupils join in the singing of familiar songs and less-
able pupils make different sound patterns with support. They respond to different
kinds of music using movement and untuned instruments. Music is used effectively
with the younger pupils to help them to achieve periods of calm and enjoyment.

253. In KSs 3 and 4, pupils with ASD and SLD sing familiar songs and clap in time to
the beat to communicate greetings and feelings. They respond to changes in
dynamics and tempo with enjoyment. Less-able pupils identify different instruments
by pointing and more-able pupils select preferred instruments to participate in group
activities. Pupils with SLD compose different rhythms using an animated computer
programme and show understanding of cause and effect by changing instruments to
achieve variations in sound and pitch. When making music together, pupils show
very good awareness and control in following the conductor. This is excellent
achievement for their ability.
254. KS 3 pupils with MLD listen very well and follow the teachers’ directions carefully. They are able to follow simplified musical notation and identify correctly the length of each note. They follow the colour-coded notation successfully and are making good progress in learning to play different tunes on a melodica. By KS 4, pupils successfully copy patterns of music, varying duration, tempo and dynamics using a variety of tuned and untuned instruments. They achieve increased dexterity and control of sound.

255. Post-16 students use creative software programs effectively to compose individual musical phrases using different rhythms and instruments. They discuss which pieces they prefer and say why they like them. They show a developing appreciation of the principles of harmony.

256. Senior pupils play the melodica with confidence and perform well to large groups such as in assemblies and public concerts. The contribution of the school orchestra to pupils’ achievement and the life and culture of the school is outstanding.

Physical education

Key Stages 2, 3 and 4: Grade 1 - good with outstanding features
Post 16: Grade 1 - good with outstanding features

Outstanding features
257. At all stages, pupils make consistently very good progress and enjoy the real sense of achievement they get in their lessons as they respond to the very well structured challenges across the range of elements of physical education.

258. Pupils’ personal/social development and key skills in communication and numeracy are significantly improved through working closely with adults and in pairs and small groups. This is particularly evident in dance and games lessons where pupils consistently use and apply these key skills.

259. For all pupils, outstanding progress is made in swimming and many pupils achieve high levels of competence within the Amateur Swimming Association Award Scheme.

260. Students at Post-16 achieve nationally recognised standards for Boccia, Football, Swimming and Gymnastics through the OCR accreditation scheme. They achieve certificates at Levels 1 to 3 according to ability.

Good features
261. Pupils in KS2 learn to follow instruction well and become confident users of soft-play and gymnastic apparatus to improve their balancing, climbing, sliding, rolling and jumping skills. With appropriate support, they successfully learn to travel on the floor and on apparatus in different ways and make good progress in developing movement sequences. Very good progress is made in swimming with pupils improving arm and leg movements and becoming confident in the water. More-able pupils become competent swimmers.
262. In KS3, pupils with MLD develop a very good range of movement skills, stepping, jumping and landing, transfer of balance using different parts of the body, rolling, turning and changing direction. They become creative in devising movement sequences and enjoy performing in front of a group. They learn to thoughtfully evaluate each-others’ movements and more-able pupils suggest how movements may be improved. When playing a bowling game, pupils make very good progress in control of direction and pace to achieve accuracy. They understand the rules of competition and how to judge nearest to the target and the scoring of points for their team. They understand about how exercise makes the heart beat faster and that it is an important part of being healthy.

263. In KS4, pupils continue to make very good progress and develop their movement skills well. They demonstrate increasing control in a range of travelling, devising well thought out movement sequences ending with good, balanced positions. They appreciate each-others’ efforts and routines and make positive comments about ways of improvement.

264. Pupils in KS3 and KS4 with ASD also make very good progress across the range of elements of physical education. In gymnastic lessons at a local specialist facility they achieve very good balancing and movement skills using mats, beam and parallel bars with increasing confidence and skill. Body awareness is significantly improved along with spatial ability as they use the apparatus with appropriate adult support which promotes independence. As a result of teachers and assistants working alongside sports coaches and dance instructors, the pupils rapidly gain ball skills and learn dance routines. In football sessions, good close ball control is achieved and in dance sessions pupils achieve good rhythmic movements of arms and walk, skip and run to the beat of the music. They enjoy working together with adults and classmates to learn a group dance (Farendol) in which they sustain concentration to achieve a flowing performance.

265. Pupils with SLD make good progress and significantly improve their movement skills, body awareness and self-confidence through their programmes of physical activity. Much confidence is gained through appropriate challenges in the use of the specially designed soft-play area, developing balancing, sliding, climbing, swinging, bouncing, jumping, rolling and throwing movements through close support and instruction. They use their bodies well to make different shapes. In swimming they progress though basic water confidence skills to using floats and effective arm and leg movements to move through the water. More-able pupils make good progress and join the ‘improvers’ group to become competent swimmers.

266. At Post-16, students become more aware of their targets for achievement towards accreditation. They make very good use of video film to record their performances at the end of a module, evaluating their own achievements and setting themselves targets to improve before final assessment. They continue to improve their skills and performances across the range of activities including gymnastics, dance, games, athletics, and swimming. Their accredited achievements in these areas are supplemented by following programmes of activity for the Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Award, which includes outdoor and adventurous activities, and an accredited module for ‘Leisure’. As part of the latter course pupils attend regular
sessions at a local sports club and significantly improve as a result of the coaching they receive. They also gain important social skills that will enable them to integrate into the community when they leave school. As part of the DofE activities pupils successfully undertake a series of training walks and two overnight expeditions.

### Religious education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Stages 2, 3 and 4:</th>
<th>Grade 2 - good features and no major shortcomings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post 16:</td>
<td>Grade 2 - good features and no major shortcomings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Good features

267. In KS 2, pupils know that it is important to care for other people. The more-able can relate this to the stories about Jesus and how he helped people who were in need.

268. Pupils in KS 3 are developing a secure knowledge of the main features of Christianity, Islam and Judaism. They know that they all have special buildings for worship, and that the basis of their beliefs is in their sacred books. Visits to religious buildings help them to understand how believers worship. Pupils are able to identify key features in the Church, Synagogue and Mosque and the more-able are successful in comparing different aspects of the worship.

269. As pupils progress through KS 3 they acquire good knowledge of Biblical stories and have some understanding of the main features of Christian festivals.

270. In KS 4, pupils develop further their knowledge of religious festivals such as Easter and Devali. They know why believers celebrate, and know that they are important times in a religion’s calendar. Many of the pupils are able to give a thoughtful response in relation to moral and social issues, and the more-able reflect well on values in their own community.

271. Students at Post-16 acquire a framework which helps them to relate to contemporary issues in their community. They successfully compare parables from the Bible with modern situations. The less-able students know the Biblical stories and can relate them to their own lifestyles in terms of relationships, and what is right and wrong.

### School's response to the inspection

The school is very pleased with the way the inspection was conducted and gained a great deal from the process. The inspection was carried out in a collaborative manner where members of the inspection team made excellent relationships with all staff which assisted the process of school evaluation. The dialogue between the inspection team, nominee and members of staff supported the many judgements arrived at by the inspection team in a secure and consistent framework. The school is very pleased with the outcome of the inspection which confirms it is a very good school and intends to take on board the recommendations in order to raise standards and continue school improvement.
Appendix 1

A. Basic Information About the School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of School</th>
<th>Penybryn Senior Special School (and Maytree Autistic Unit - Residential)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School type</td>
<td>Special</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age-range of pupils</td>
<td>5-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address of school</td>
<td>Glasbury Road Morriston Swansea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Code</td>
<td>SA6 7PA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone Number</td>
<td>01792 771760 Fax: 01792794792</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Headteacher             | Mr. Adrian G. Williams                                                  |
| Date of appointment     | January 1985                                                            |
| Chair of Appropriate Authority | D Cox                                                              |
| Registered Inspector   | Mr H. J. Phillips                                                       |
| Dates of inspection     | 17\textsuperscript{th} to 21\textsuperscript{st} September 2007        |

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year group</th>
<th>N (fte)</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>Y1</th>
<th>Y2</th>
<th>Y3</th>
<th>Y4</th>
<th>Y5</th>
<th>Y6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of pupils</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year group</th>
<th>Y7</th>
<th>Y8</th>
<th>Y9</th>
<th>Y10</th>
<th>Y11</th>
<th>Y12</th>
<th>Y13</th>
<th>Y 14</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of pupils</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staffing information

| Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery) | 5.2 : 1 |
| Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes   | 2.4 : 1 |
| Average class size, excluding nursery classes | 8     |
| Teacher (fte): class ratio                    | 0.7    |

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KS1</th>
<th>KS2</th>
<th>KS3</th>
<th>KS4</th>
<th>Post-16</th>
<th>Whole School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autumn 2006</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>89.5</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2007</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2007</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals | 45 |
| Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection | 1 |
Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results
Pupils do not take part in National Curriculum assessments.

Public Examination Results:
In 2007 pupils in KS 4 and students at Post-16 were entered for accreditation in modules of study in a range of subject areas within the Oxford and Cambridge Registered (OCR) National Skills Profile. The results were as follows.

Year 10 pupils achieved:
- Number - 10 passes.
- Communication - 10 passes.
- Information Technology - 10 passes.

Year 11 pupils achieved:
- Number - 5 passes.
- Communication - 5 passes.
- Information Technology - 5 Passes.

Students at Post-16 achieved:
- Number - 5 Grade 1, 7 Grade 2.
- Communication - 8 Grade 1, 7 Grade 2.
- Personal Skills - 6 Grade 1, 9 Grade 2.
- Information Technology - 10 Grade 1, 17 Grade 2, 8 Grade 3.
- Horticulture Third Grade - 7 passes.
- Manufacturing Third Grade - 8 passes.

The above results represent an 80% increase over the previous year's results in the same range of accredited courses.

In the recent past, individual pupils have gained passes at WJEC GCSE and Entry Level Certificate in Art and Art and Design. At the time of the inspection 19 pupils were following these courses.

Additionally, 15 pupils with ASD were working towards modules of Accreditation for Life and Living (A.L.L.); 10 pupils in Y11 were working towards Edexcel Entry Level 3 in Design and Technology and Science; and 7 students were working towards the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award.
Evidence base of the inspection

A team of six inspectors spent a total of twenty-five inspector days in the school and met as a team before the inspection started.

The inspectors recorded observations on:

- 107 lessons or parts of lessons including those off-site and in the community;
- all classes;
- periods of registration, acts of collective worship, lunchtime and playtime sessions;
- pupils’ arrival and departure on transport;
- sessions of supported integration and outreach support in mainstream schools; and
- a range of extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- staff, governors and parents before the inspection began;
- supporting professionals; and
- senior managers, an LEA adviser, teachers, support and administrative staff and groups of pupils, including the school council, during the inspection.

The team considered:

- the school’s self-evaluation report;
- responses to a questionnaire from parents;
- documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection; and
- a wide range of pupils’ past and present work.

Members of the inspection team also held post-inspection meetings with the staff and governors.
## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inspector</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Aspect Responsibilities</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr. H. J. Phillips</td>
<td>Rgl</td>
<td>Context, Summary, Key Questions 1 and 5</td>
<td>Mathematics, MFL, Physical education,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Janet Warr</td>
<td>Lay</td>
<td>Contributions to Key Questions 1, 3, 4, and 7</td>
<td>PSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Brian Brayford</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Contributions to Key Questions 3 and 6</td>
<td>Science, Design and technology, Art, FE/Voc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. I. Glyn Jones</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Key Question 7 and contributions to Key question 6</td>
<td>Welsh 2nd Language, Information Technology, Personal and social education (Support JW)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Heddwyn Evans</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Contributions to Key Question 4</td>
<td>History, Geography, Religious Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Arlene Thomas-Ramasut</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Key Question 2</td>
<td>English, Music</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Inspection Contractor:** Baker-Phillips Educational Communications Ltd.  
**Address:** Oaks Lea, Higher Knolton, Overton, Wrexham. LL13 0LF

**Acknowledgement**

The inspection team would like to thank the governors, headteacher, staff and pupils for their co-operation and courtesy throughout the inspection.