

**Inspection under Section 28 of the  
Education Act 2005**

**A Report on the Quality of Education in**

**Ysgol Tryfan  
Lon Powys  
BANGOR  
Gwynedd  
LL57 2TU**

**School Number: 6614037**

**Date of Inspection: 08/05/07**

**by**

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

The inspection of Ysgol Tryfan took place between 08/05/07 and 11/05/07. An independent team of inspectors, led by Gareth Wyn Roberts undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **short** inspection.

## Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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## Context

### The nature of the provider

1. Ysgol Tryfan, Bangor is a designated bilingual comprehensive community school for pupils and students aged 11-18. It is maintained by Gwynedd Unitary Authority's Local Education Authority. A total of 300 pupils from Y7 to Y11, and 70 students in Y12 and Y13 (sixth form) are on roll. The number of pupils is lower than it was at the time of the last inspection for mainly demographic reasons. It is envisaged that in future numbers will remain fairly constant or there will be a slight, gradual increase.
2. The school is on the former site of Bangor Grammar School for Girls in Upper Bangor. It is one of two secondary schools in the city and they share the same primary school catchment area.
3. Around 60% of pupils are from Bangor itself and its periphery and the other 40% live in the surrounding villages and rural areas. The pupils come from a variety of social backgrounds and include those who are privileged and underprivileged.
4. This year, 8.4% of the pupils are registered as being entitled to free school meals. This is lower than the percentage for 2006 (13.6%) and for previous years. Twenty three per cent (23%) of sixth form students receive a maintenance grant. Almost all the pupils and students belong to the white ethnic group. No pupil is receiving support to learn English as an additional language. There are no pupils in local authority care.
5. The school admits pupils from the full ability range. Ten pupils (3%) have a statement of additional learning needs. This is quite similar to the national percentage. The National Curriculum has been modified for two pupils with a statement of additional learning needs. Two pupils have been disapplied from the requirements of the National Curriculum. In addition, 43 pupils (11.6%) are on 'school action' and 'school action plus' stages of the code of practice for pupils with additional learning needs. This is significantly lower than the national percentage.
6. Forty six per cent [46%] of pupils come from homes in which Welsh is the main language and 25% from homes in which English is the main language. Twenty nine per cent [29%] come from 'bilingual' homes. The vast majority have received a considerable proportion of their primary education through the medium of Welsh. Ninety six per cent [96%] of pupils speak Welsh as their first language or to a corresponding standard. All pupils have Welsh first language lessons. Welsh is the main medium of education in the school.
7. The school was previously inspected during the autumn term, 2001. The school received a 'short' inspection in May 2007. The standards in the individual subjects are not inspected in this type of inspection.

8. The current head teacher was appointed to his post in September 2004 and was previously a deputy head teacher at the school.
9. The school is a member of the consortium of Arfon secondary schools and the local further education college. Coleg Menai, the local further education college, offers a car maintenance course for three pupils in Y11 and a Basic Award construction course for one Y10 pupil and five pupils in Y11. Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen in Caernarfon provides a level 1 NVQ hairdressing course for three pupils in Y10 and another three in Y11. The Arfon consortium provides Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Level courses in physical education, electronics, drama, psychology and sociology. These courses are held in individual schools or, in the case of electronics, at Bangor University. Ysgol Tryfan provides the physical education course for either Y12 or Y13 consortium students on a two year rota basis. Ysgol Tryfan also teaches the sociology course to members of the consortium by means of video-conferencing. Over half the school's students follow one of the above courses which are co-ordinated with other members of the consortium.

<b>The school's priorities and targets</b>
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10. The School Improvement Plan's main priorities for 2006-2009 are as follows:
  - i) establishing and further developing the 'Immersion Course' (for Y7 pupils who lack sufficient confidence in Welsh);
  - ii) enhancing the assessment system;
  - iii) reinforcing the primary/ secondary transition arrangements;
  - iv) continuing to develop initiatives linked to post-16 education;
  - v) developing aspects of the Learning Core.
11. The school's quantitative targets for 2007 are as follows:

<b>Key Stage 3 indicators</b>	<b>% level 5 or above in the school</b>
Welsh	68
English	65
Mathematics	75
Science	70
Core Subject Indicator	Boys 66, girls 70

<b>Key Stage 4 indicators</b>	<b>% gaining qualification</b>
5 GCSE subjects at grades A*-C	64
5 GCSE subjects at grades A*-G	95
Core Subject Indicator	Boys 47, girls 45
% leaving without a qualification	0
% unauthorised absences	0.1

## Summary

12. This is a very good school. There have been outstanding features in the quality of its external GCSE and Advanced Level examination results for the past three years and it provides outstanding quality of care and guidance for its pupils and students.
13. This school is a safe, close knit community with a sense of 'family'. It reflects the local community's values and traditions in terms of language, and culture. Its expectations as regards behaviour are high.

### A. Table of the grades awarded

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

14. The grades awarded by the inspection team for the seven key questions as outlined above are similar to the grades the school awarded itself in six out of the seven key questions. The inspection team awarded one higher grade, namely Grade 1, for Key Question 4.

### B. Standards

15. As the school received a short inspection, no individual subjects were inspected. Therefore, no opinion is expressed on standards of achievement in individual subjects.
16. The inspection team looked at standards in the key skills and the wider key skills. The team's findings are recorded in the following table.

<b>Key Skill (including bilingual proficiency)</b>	<b>Key Stage 3</b>	<b>Key Stage 4</b>	<b>Sixth Form</b>
Speaking	1	1	1
Listening	1	1	1
Reading	2	2	1
Writing	2	2	1
Numeracy / Application of number	2	2	2
Information and Communication Technology	2	2	2
Bilingual proficiency	1	1	1
<b>Wider key skill</b>			
Problem solving	2	2	2
Improving own learning and performance	2	2	2
Working with others	2	2	2

17. The table above shows that pupils' and students' bilingual proficiency and the standards of their speaking and listening in both languages are outstanding. Pupils' standards in reading and writing across the curriculum are good. Students' standards of reading and writing in their subjects are outstanding. The standards in the remainder of the key skills and wider key skills are good.

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

18. The quality of KS3 test and assessment results is good. Over recent years , results have either been comparable with or better than those of the county and those for the whole of Wales during the 2004 - 2006 period.
19. The school's GCSE results over the same period are good with outstanding features. They compare very favourably with the results of schools in the whole of Wales and those within the county. Likewise, they compare very well with the results of schools which are similar from the point of view of pupils entitled to claim free school meals (10%-15%).
20. Advanced Level results are also good with outstanding features and have been for a number of years from the point of view of students' average points' score and also the percentage of students achieving an A grade in three Advance Level subjects.

### **Pupils' and students' progress in learning**

21. Pupils at KS3 make good progress in their learning, understanding and new skills in Y7–Y9 regardless of social, ethnic or linguistic background.
22. Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress.

23. The pupils make very good progress between KS3 and KS4 and sixth form students also make very good progress.
24. The pupils are aware of their levels of achievement in the subjects. They are frequently given targets for improving their work despite some variation in their type and frequency within and across subjects. The pupils also set their own personal targets but this practice is not wholly consistent.

### **The development of pupils' and students' personal, social and learning skills**

25. There are a good number of strengths evident in the development of pupils' and students personal, social and learning skills, particularly in their creative, cultural, social and community values. Pupils' and students' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is very good.
26. Pupils are very well-behaved in the classroom and this creates very good learning conditions. The pupils and students respect each other, their teachers and visitors.
27. The school's level of attendance has reached the target of 92% set by the Welsh Assembly Government for schools in Wales.

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

28. The following table shows the distribution of grades awarded for the quality of teaching in the lessons observed throughout the school.

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

29. The table shows that there are outstanding or good features and no important shortcomings in all the 53 lessons observed. This compares very favourably with the national picture that Her Majesty's Chief Inspector reported on in her annual report for 2005-2006. Nationally, the quality of the teaching is good or better (Grade 1 and 2) in 69% of lessons.
30. The outstanding features of the teaching include the following:
  - very high expectations in terms of standards of work and behaviour that motivate and challenge individual pupils according to their age, ability and understanding;
  - deliberately targeted, very incisive questioning;
  - the teachers' very thorough knowledge and expertise, and
  - a very constructive working relationship with pupils and students and every individual without exception being shown respect.
31. In addition, there are many good features which include:
  - detailed planning and good preparation for individual lessons and those in a series;

- the clear lesson objectives being shared with pupils and students and used by them;
  - effective use of pair and group work;
  - firm and constructive class management;
  - appropriate and frequent encouragement and praise for individuals, and
  - problem solving arising naturally as an aspect of the teaching in the vast majority of lessons.
32. In a few lessons, some of the following minor shortcomings were observed:
- few opportunities for pupils and students to work independently;
  - long lesson introductions, and
  - no lesson plenary as a result of poor timing.
33. The school's assessment system displays good features and no important shortcomings.
34. The school satisfies the statutory requirements for the assessment of the National Curriculum at KS3, as well as the regulations of the examination boards at KS4 and in the sixth form. The school conforms to the assessment requirements for pupils and students with additional learning needs.

**D) The extent to which the education fulfils the needs of the range of pupils**

35. The education satisfies the needs of the school's range of pupils and students well. It also complies with all statutory requirements.
36. The school's curriculum offers good breadth, balance, flexibility, cohesion and progression by:
- offering a wide range of courses, including vocational courses in the alternative curriculum at KS4;
  - providing opportunities to gain appropriate qualifications, and
  - ensuring that pupils with additional learning needs, including dyslexic pupils, are given good support.
37. The learning experiences meet sixth form students' wishes well. By co-operating particularly well with a good number of partners, the school offers a very good range of Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Level courses in which students can gain accreditation.
38. Learning experiences broaden and enrich pupils' experience through a wide and very good variety of activities, including provision out of school hours and off-site.
39. Learning experiences respond well to the needs of employers and the wider community. There are outstanding features in some aspects of this provision.
40. The school has outstanding success in promoting the bilingual skills of all the pupils.

41. There is outstanding emphasis on developing entrepreneurial skills and other skills that pupils need in order to sustain economic development.

**E) The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils and students**

42. The school's care arrangements are planned and managed in detail and very effectively. The caring, friendly and supportive ethos permeates throughout the school.
43. The school's procedures for monitoring attendance, punctuality and behaviour are good. The procedures for monitoring pupil performance are very good. Heads of year monitor and track pupil performance very effectively and note underachievers.
44. The school provides well for pupils with additional learning needs. Transition arrangements from primary to secondary school are very effective and enable the school to recognise pupils' needs at an early stage.
45. The school's system ensures that there is no discrimination against any member of its community. The school's current equal opportunities' policy emphasises each pupil's right to have access to all aspects of the school's life and work. The school's robust pastoral programme is an important element in promoting equal opportunity.

**F) Leadership and management**

46. The head teacher is a successful leader and manager and has a clear vision for implementing the school's aims and objectives.
47. The Senior Management Team (SMT) shares the main aim of 'excellence' with staff, pupils, parents and governors and, as a result, the school's work has a clear direction.
48. There is a clear link between the departmental improvement plans and the School Improvement Plan. Planning for improvement is outstanding in a number of departments and there are good features in the majority of the other areas of the curriculum. However, a small minority of departments have not dealt fully with all the school's priorities nor used the planning procedure to its full potential.
49. Many teachers with middle management responsibilities undertake their subject specific responsibilities well. In some departments, the self evaluation process is not sufficiently incisive in order to move the department on to achieve higher standards.
50. The governing body has members with broad experience within the world of education and beyond. They possess good knowledge of educational matters and thorough knowledge of all aspects of the school's work. They are also aware of the local community's requirements. They provide sound guidance and outstanding support for the head teacher and the school's other leaders.
51. The governors have ensured that the school meets all legal and course requirements.

**G) Effective and efficient use of school resources and value for money**

52. The school has appropriate staff to meet its curricular requirements and the vast majority have qualifications corresponding to the areas they teach.
53. There are sufficient learning resources across the subjects and good use is made of them.
54. On the whole, the condition of the majority of buildings is good inside and out.
55. Managers use resources efficiently. The budget reflects the school's educational priorities. The school lives within its budget.
56. The school provides very good value for money by:
  - supporting pupils and students in achieving outstanding standards;
  - providing outstanding care and support for pupils and students;
  - providing effective induction arrangements for newly qualified teachers and recognising the professional development needs of every member of staff;
  - making financial decisions that concentrate on educational priorities, and
  - offering a good quality curriculum for the school's population.

**H) How well the school has responded to the issues noted in the previous inspection.**

57. The school has responded well to all the key issues noted in the previous inspection report.

## Recommendations

The school needs to maintain and extend the outstanding and good standards by:

- R1 Disseminating the outstanding and very good teaching practices across all subjects;\*
- R2 Building upon the outstanding assessment practices observed in some departments where pupils are given challenging subject specific targets; \*
- R3 Sharing good and very good managerial practice across the school, and \*
- R4 Building upon the perceptive self evaluation practice observed at whole school level and within a number of departments\*.

\* The school has noted all the recommendations above as matters to be addressed either in its self-evaluation document or in its school improvement plan.

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

## Standards

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

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

58. The inspection team has awarded the same grade for this key question as that the school awarded itself in its self evaluation report. The team agrees that there are outstanding features in the quality of external GCSE results when they are compared with those of similar schools (that is in the same school group (10%-15%) over the 2004 - 2006 period from the point of view of pupils entitled to free school meals, and in the school's Advanced Level results over a number of years.
59. As the school had a short inspection, subject standards were not inspected and there are no subject reports.

#### A) Success in attaining agreed learning goals - pupils

#### Standards in the key skills and wider key skills at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4

60. The following table shows pupils' standards in the key skills and wider key skills. Standards are similar in both key stages. Pupils' standards in language skills in Welsh and English are similar.

Key Skills (and bilingual proficiency)	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
Speaking	1	1
Listening	1	1
Reading	2	2
Writing	2	2
Numeracy / Application of number	2	2
Information and Communication Technology	2	2
Bilingual proficiency	1	1
<b>Wider key skill</b>		
Problem solving	2	2
Improving own learning and performance	2	2
Working with others	2	2

61. The table above shows that the standards of pupils' oral language skills are outstanding in both Welsh and English. When they are given opportunities, the pupils speak very confidently; they question skilfully and provide extended oral responses. Pupils listen to their teachers and to each other in an outstanding

manner and their oral and written responses are evidence of this. Reading standards are good. Reading aloud is often of a very good standard. Standards in writing are good in both languages. The pupils write at length expressing and justifying opinions. Occasionally, there are some grammatical errors in written work in both languages at both key stages.

62. Pupils have good numeracy skills. They are able to use number rules effectively, deal with statistical facts, draw and interpret graphs well, measure correctly, design to scale and create 3D images.
63. The standards of information presentation by means of information technology, information handling and computer modelling across the curriculum are good. Research work on the Internet and CAD (Computer Aided Design) and CAM (Computer Aided Manufacture) work are also good.
64. The pupils' standards in problem solving and in their ability to work together are also good. They have a good understanding of how to improve their own learning and performance. This is reflected in the quality of results and external assessments, mainly at KS4.
65. Pupils' bilingual proficiency is outstanding. Although Welsh is the main medium of lessons, pupils can switch seamlessly from one language to the other, and they are fully conversant with specialist terms in both languages.

### **KS3 and KS4 external examination and test results**

#### **Key Stage 3**

66. KS3 results are good. During the 2004 – 2006 period, results at KS3 have either been very similar to or better than those of the county and those for the whole of Wales.
67. In 2005, results in Welsh (teacher assessment) were lower than those of the county; results in science were fairly similar and mathematics' results slightly better than those of the county. In 2006, however, the percentage of pupils gaining level 5 or above was 6% higher than those of the county in English, science and mathematics. The percentage in Welsh was similar to the county percentage.
68. When comparisons are made between KS3 results for the 2004 – 2006 period and those of schools belonging to the same group as regards free school meals (10% - 15%), the school's performance is variable. The variation in the school's quartile placement reflects this. In nine out of the 15 indicators over this period, the school is either above the median or in the highest quartile but in the other six instances the school is below the median of similar schools.
69. When the results are compared with those of similar schools, using the same relevant benchmarks, it is evident that results in English have changed quartiles every year between 2004 and 2006. The indicators for 2004 and 2005 are task or test results. From 2006 onwards they are the results of teacher

assessments. In the optional national English test 89% of pupils reached level 5 or above in 2006. There is no valid national comparison as the test was optional in Wales in that year. According to teacher assessment, 72.5% had attained the same level. In 2004 the school was in the highest quartile; in 2005 it was above the median but in 2006 it was below the median.

70. Over the same period, there was a comparative improvement in mathematics' results. In 2004 and 2005, the school was below the median; in 2006, the school was above the median.
71. Results in science were somewhat variable. In 2004, the results placed the school above the median; in 2005 the results placed the school below the median; in 2006, the school was above the median once more.
72. Between 2004 and 2006, there were comparative improvements in results in Welsh. In 2004 and 2005 the results placed the school below the median for 'Welsh' schools; in 2006 the school was above the median.
73. The percentage of pupils attaining the core subject indicator, that is attaining a level 5 in a combination of Welsh (first language) or English, mathematics and science, has placed the school in the highest quartile of similar schools in 2004 and 2006; in 2005 the school was still above the median for these schools.

#### **Key Stage 4**

74. Results at KS4 are good with some outstanding features.
75. The school's GCSE results compare very favourably with those of schools in the county and in the whole of Wales. Likewise, they compare very well with the results of schools with similar percentages of pupils entitled to free school meals.
76. Results for 2006 are superior to the 2005 results. In 2005, the boys' results were better than those of the girls. In 2006, the more usual pattern occurred with boys outperforming girls in science and mathematics and girls performing better in Welsh and English.
77. The percentage of pupils attaining 5 or more GCSE grades A\* - C has placed the school in the highest quartile of similar schools in two out of the last three years, namely 2004 and 2006. In 2005 the school was above the median.
78. In this school, the number of pupils gaining 5 or more A\* - G grades is affected by the number of pupils opting for the 'alternative' curriculum. These pupils gain qualifications or experiences that are not necessarily reflected in the school's GCSE results. However, there has been an increase in the percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more GCSE grades A\* - G. In 2004 and 2005, the school was below the median. In 2006, it was above the median.

79. The percentage of pupils attaining the core subject indicator at KS4, that is GCSE grades A\* - C in either Welsh or English, science and mathematics, has been in the highest quartile of similar schools consistently over the 2004 – 2006 period and this is obviously an outstanding feature.
80. The pupils' average GCSE points' score (which reflects a pupil's performance across a range of subjects) has also improved during the 2004 – 2006 period. In 2004 and 2005 the school was above the median of similar schools. In 2006, the school was in the highest quartile of similar schools.

## **B) Pupils' progress in learning**

81. Pupils at KS3 make good progress in their knowledge, understanding and new skills in Y7-Y9, regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background.
82. Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress.
83. Despite the fact that standards of achievement in individual subjects were not inspected, the key skills' table at the beginning of this section shows the progress KS3 pupils make in the key skills and wider key skills.
84. An analysis of added value (when a comparison is made based on pupils' previous performances over a period of time in statutory tests and assessments) between KS2 and KS3 for 2004 – 2005 shows good progress. The picture reflected by a similar analysis for 2005 – 2006 is not quite as positive.
85. Pupils make very good progress between KS3 and KS4.
86. The table at the beginning of the section also notes the progress made by KS4 pupils in their key skills. The same grade has been awarded for standards of achievement in the key skills at KS3 and KS4. This means that pupils make the expected progress in their standards of key skills between one key stage and the next.
87. The WED analyses (Welsh examination results data base) shows positive residuals between KS3 and KS4 in almost every subject in 2006 and 2005. This very positive picture is also evident in the value-added analysis between KS3 and KS4 and between KS2 and KS4 for 2005 -2006.
88. The pupils are aware of their levels of achievement in the subjects. As a result of the teacher assessments, pupils have a good understanding of their achievements and they are aware of assessment criteria and external examination requirements. The pupils are often set targets to improve their work but these vary in type and frequency within and across subjects. The pupils also set their own personal targets. However, this practice is not invariably consistent.

89. Pupils in Y11 achieve sufficiently well either to obtain a job or to continue with their education or training course either in this school or in another educational establishment. The retention rate, that is the percentage of Y11 pupils returning as sixth form students, averaging just over 50% between 2004 and 2006, reflects students' desire to continue with their studies through the medium of Welsh at the same school they attended when 11-16 years old.

**C) Students' success in attaining agreed learning aims**

**Standards in the sixth form**

90. The following table shows students' standards in the key skills and wider key skills.

<b>Key Skills (and bilingual proficiency)</b>	<b>Sixth Form</b>
Speaking	1
Listening	1
Reading	1
Writing	1
Numeracy / Application of number	2
Information and Communication Technology	2
Bilingual proficiency	1
<b>Wider key skill</b>	
Problem solving	2
Improving own learning	2
Working together	2

91. The table above shows that students' oral proficiency is outstanding in both Welsh and English. Likewise, the standards of listening, writing and reading are outstanding. Every aspect of their language work displays accuracy, maturity, a wide vocabulary and a natural ease of expression.
92. Students measure, calculate, handle data and apply mathematics well. Good standards in numeracy are reflected in the students' coursework.
93. Within information technology, standards of conveying and handling information and modelling are good. Research work on the Internet is also a strong feature.
94. The standards of students' problem solving skills and also their ability to work together are good. By the sixth form, students have a very good understanding of how to improve their own learning. The high standards in the three wider key skills contribute significantly to the skills students will need throughout their lives.
95. Students' bilingual proficiency is outstanding. Although Welsh is the main medium of the education, students can switch from one language to the other effectively and without hesitation. This is evident in the students' practical work and also as they carry out individual investigations or discuss topical questions.

## **Y12 and Y13 students' results in external examinations**

### **Advanced Subsidiary**

96. The average points score based on the Advanced Subsidiary results shows that students are outperforming the LEA and the whole of Wales. In a good number of subjects also, 80% or more of the students gain grades A – C.

### **Advanced Level**

97. The school's Advanced Level results are good with outstanding features.
98. Although results vary from one year to the next and from one subject to another and there is some variation between boys' and girls' attainment, Advanced Level results have been particularly good over recent years and the candidates average points score over the past three years (24) has been substantially higher than the figure for Wales (20) and higher than the average (21) for schools in the county.
99. In 2006, the percentage of students gaining grades A – C (85%) was substantially higher than the percentage for LEA schools and Wales (68%). In 2006, all the students sitting Advanced Level examinations in two or more subjects gained at least a grade E. Between 2004 and 2006, 99% of students taking two or more advanced level subjects were successful in gaining at least a grade E.

### **D) Students' progress in learning**

100. Students' progress in their learning is good with outstanding features. Students of all abilities acquire new knowledge and skills. They have a very good understanding of what they need to do in order to improve and develop a very high level of independence in their work. They develop outstanding creative, personal, social and learning skills.
101. The students are aware of their levels of achievement in the subjects. As a result of teacher assessments, students have a very good understanding of their achievements and they are well aware of assessment criteria and external examination requirements. The students are often set targets to improve their work. They also set their own challenging personal targets.
102. Students achieve sufficiently well to leave school with the qualifications they need either to secure a job at 18 years old or to access further or higher education. Hardly any students fail to complete the course they have started. Almost invariably, the students leaving school after completing an Advanced Level course are accepted at the college or university of their choice.

**E) Pupils' and students' personal, social and learning skills' development**

103. Sixth form students display positive attitudes towards learning; they concentrate well and persevere very well with their work. This is also true of the vast majority of Y7-Y11 pupils. Pupils at KS3 and KS4 are usually very positive learners. Pupils' and students' are highly motivated to succeed.
104. Usually, pupils' and students' behaviour in class is good or outstanding. As a result, the learning climate and conditions in class are very good. The pupils and students respect each other, their teachers and visitors. Pupils' and students' behaviour around the school is also very good. There were ten temporary exclusions in the year preceding the inspection and the guidelines were followed very carefully. During the same period, there were no permanent exclusions.
105. The school admits a small number of pupils excluded from other schools. Their behaviour and attitude improve in this school as a result of the caring atmosphere.
106. The attendance level in the three terms prior to the inspection was 92.2%. This figure is similar to the figure during the last inspection and is on a par with current county and national averages. There are no significant differences in attendance from one year to the next. The number of unauthorised absences are low. With a few exceptions, punctuality in the morning and during the school day is good.
107. Pupils' and students' creative standards are outstanding. This is evident not only in their art work but also within subjects such as design and technology, Welsh, English, music and physical education. Pupils' creative successes are reflected in individual and group achievements at local and national eisteddfodau.
108. Pupils' and students' ability to work independently is good. By the sixth form, students display maturity and very good ability to work independently. These students use problem solving skills and research skills as tools for effective independent work.
109. Pupils' and students' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is very good.
110. Pupils and students work very well together and show respect, care and concern for others in the local and wider community. They are willing to take responsibility for their actions and their work. They show honesty and fairness in their involvement with others. Members of the sixth form work very well as 'friends' for younger pupils.
111. Pupils and students respect each other's opinions and beliefs and the views held by people who are different to them. They respect the diversity of social and cultural beliefs, attitudes and traditions. This is often reflected in their charity work.

112. The school prepares its pupils and students in an outstanding manner to participate effectively in the community and workplace.
113. It nurtures a strong awareness of community pride and avails itself of local resources and visitors to extend the pupils' experiences. More than half the pupils participated in a popular production of a musical performed on stage at a local professional theatre in the city. This is outstanding.
114. PSE lessons, work experience and a robust partnership with Careers Wales locally provide a very effective introduction to the world of work.

## The quality of education and training

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

#### Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

115. The inspection team has awarded the same grade for this key question as that the school awarded itself in its self evaluation report. The inspection team agrees with the school's judgement.

#### A) How well does the teaching and training meet the needs of learners and curricular and course requirements?

116. The following table shows the distribution of grades awarded for the quality of teaching in the lessons observed throughout the school.

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
21%	79%	0%	0%	0%

117. This table shows that there are outstanding or good features and no important shortcomings in all the 53 lessons observed. One hundred percent (100%) of lessons are of Grade 2 or Grade 1 quality. This compares very favourably with the national picture that Her Majesty's Chief Inspector reported on in her annual report for 2005-2006. Nationally, the quality of the teaching is good or better (Grade 1 and 2) in 69% of lessons.

118. There are good and outstanding features in 21% of lessons and good features and no important shortcomings in the remainder of lessons observed (79%). This shows that the quality of teaching is consistently good or better. There are no significant shortcomings in any aspect of teaching.

119. The following table shows the distribution of grades awarded for the quality of teaching in lessons at KS3 and KS4.

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3	28%	72%	0%	0%	0%
KS4	24%	76%	0%	0%	0%

120. The outstanding features of the teaching include:

- very high expectations in terms of standards of work and behaviour that motivate and challenge individual pupils according to their age, ability and understanding;
- deliberately targeted, very incisive questioning;
- a very constructive working relationship with pupils and every individual without exception being shown respect, and
- the teachers' very thorough subject knowledge and expertise.

121. In addition, there are many good features which include:
- detailed planning and good preparation for individual lessons and those in a series;
  - clear lesson objectives being shared with pupils and used by them;
  - effective use of pair and group work;
  - firm and constructive class management;
  - appropriate and constant encouragement and praise for individuals, and
  - problem solving arising naturally as an aspect of the teaching in the vast majority of lessons.
122. In a few lessons some of the following minor shortcomings were observed:
- few opportunities for pupils to work independently;
  - long lesson introductions, and
  - no lesson plenary because of poor timing.
123. Pupils with additional learning needs are well taught. The vast majority of teachers have thorough knowledge of these pupils and prepare appropriately for them.
124. The official medium of lessons is Welsh. The school ensures that there are outstanding opportunities to develop bilingualism throughout the school. The teachers plan appropriate opportunities to develop and use the pupils' bilingual skills through specific activities, formal lessons and individual feedback.

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

125. The school's assessment system has good features and no important shortcomings.
126. The school has a clear assessment policy and departments are given firm guidance how to develop their own assessment policies. However, every department has not yet responded fully to the SMT's requirements. In some departments, there are relatively few opportunities for pupils and students to carry out self and peer assessment and the guidance they are given is sketchy.
127. Assessment practices within and across subjects at KS3 and KS4 are somewhat variable. The work is regularly marked but there is an element of inconsistency in the methods used in a small minority of departments.
128. There is slight variation also in the standard of comments suggesting how to improve work with some teachers providing very clear and definite feedback and others providing more generalised comments.
129. The SMT makes good use of data and they analyse in detail in order to recognise and target any underachievement. As a result, pupils who are deemed to be underachieving are individually mentored by class tutors and heads of year.

130. The school satisfies the statutory requirements for assessing the National Curriculum at KS3 and the examination boards' regulations at KS4 and in the sixth form. The school complies with the assessment requirements of pupils and students with additional learning needs.
131. Parents and carers receive three reports a year, comprising two interim reports and one full report. The interim reports utilise the updated computerised system that tracks pupils' and students' progress as regards effort and achievement throughout the year.
132. The full annual report is comprehensive and treats all pupils and students as individuals and offers valuable comments on how to improve. Pupils are given opportunities to report on their own work and a space is provided for parents to respond. The school extends an invitation to parents to discuss any aspect of the report.

### **The Sixth Form (teaching and assessment)**

133. The following table shows the distribution of grades awarded for the quality of teaching in the lessons observed in the sixth form.

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
0%	100%	0%	0%	0%

134. There are good features and no important shortcomings in all the lessons(100%) observed.
135. The good features of the teaching are:
- high expectations where students are encouraged to become independent learners;
  - a constructive working relationship between teachers and students;
  - opportunities for students to evaluate their own work and that of their peers in a constructive manner;
  - effective support and thorough and detailed preparation of students for external examination requirements;
  - well planned lessons with clear aims and continuity maintained from one lesson to the next;
  - incisive questioning and an opportunity for every one to respond;
  - good use of a range of teaching techniques and of varied tasks which guide students to persevere and study their work in more depth, and
  - good lesson pace and activity timing.
136. The formal and informal assessment of sixth form students' work is constructive. Teachers provide students with clear guidance as to how to improve their work and achieve their potential.
137. The parents receive good quality information about the students' progress in the reports.

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

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

138. The inspection team has awarded the same grade for this key question as that the school awarded itself in its self evaluation report. The inspection team agrees with the school's judgement.

**A) The extent to which the education fulfils the needs of the range of pupils**

139. The school satisfies the needs and interests of its range of pupils and students well, and there are no important shortcomings.

140. The school's curriculum offers good breadth, balance, flexibility, cohesion and progression by:

- offering a wide range of courses, including vocational courses in the alternative curriculum at KS4;
- providing opportunities to gain appropriate qualifications, and
- ensuring that pupils with additional learning needs, including dyslexic pupils, are given good support.

141. The learning experiences meet sixth form students' wishes well. By co-operating particularly well with a good number of partners, the school offers a very good range of Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Level courses in which students can gain accreditation.

142. The learning experiences develop pupils' basic and key skills well.

143. The school achieves this by:

- establishing working parties to develop strategies to promote these skills;
- ensuring that the schemes of work and handbooks appertaining to a number of departments note clearly how the particular department intends to promote the basic and key skills;
- giving prominence to the basic and key skills throughout the school e.g. on Tuesday mornings during the registration period every single pupil in Y8 spends time on number work, and
- arranging that members of the sixth form help the school's younger pupils to improve their reading skills and number work.

144. Learning experiences broaden and enrich pupils' experience through a very good and wide variety of activities, including provision out of school hours and off-site. These include:

- the contributions made by a large number of pupils to the school's musical activities and very good successes at the Urdd's National Eisteddfodau over the years;

- a very good variety of sports' practices and competitions within the school and some fixtures with other schools held during the lunchtime and at the end of the school day;
  - arranging a number of charity campaigns that kindle pupils' awareness of people less fortunate than themselves and, as a result, collecting substantial sums of money each year, and
  - arranging varied visits for pupils during the school year.
145. The school has a comprehensive and very effective personal and social education programme. In their 'Gorwelion' (Horizons) lessons, acts of communal worship and extra-curricular activities, the school's arrangements ensure that every pupil has outstanding opportunities to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. The materials that the school prepares for acts of communal worship are of a high standard. There are also very effective arrangements for developing the Welsh Curriculum.
146. The school makes arrangements to significantly enrich the learning experiences through effective partnerships with other providers and interested parties. These partnerships include:
- good and friendly relationships with parents that include parents' evenings, a monthly bulletin and opportunities for the parents to support the school by arranging fund raising and other activities to support the pupils e.g. by helping at sports' events and with arrangements to stage shows and so forth;
  - inviting visitors from the community, such as those employed by the emergency services, on a regular basis to discuss their work;
  - close curricular and pastoral links with primary schools in the catchment area which help ease pupils' transition to secondary school;
  - occasionally allowing the school's facilities to be used by external bodies and establishments;
  - co-operating in a 'school- community' venture by opening the new fitness room to the public outside school hours;
  - very effective links with the LEA's support services and other external agencies such as the 'Urdd' ( Welsh League of Youth) and theatre in education companies, and
  - offering trainee teachers from Bangor University valuable practical placements in school.
147. The school conforms fully with the statutory requirements and those of the examination boards.
148. In addition, it complies fully with expectations as regards:
- the personal and social education framework;
  - the work related education framework, and
  - the careers' education and guidance framework.

**B) The extent to which learning experiences meet the needs of employers and the wider community**

149. Learning experiences respond well to the needs of employers and the wider community. There are outstanding features in some aspects of this provision.
150. The school has outstanding success in promoting the bilingual skills of all the pupils.
151. There is outstanding emphasis on developing entrepreneurial skills and other skills that pupils need in order to sustain economic development. The school accomplishes this by:
- arranging popular workshops for KS3 and KS4 pupils and for sixth form students that provide them with opportunities for role play, working together in teams and practising entrepreneurial skills, and
  - giving pupils and students the opportunity to show initiative in arranging fundraising events for charities.
152. The learning experiences provide good quality work related education.
153. The school does this by:
- promoting key skills;
  - nurturing strong links with local employers and the community;
  - arranging work experience for pupils and students;
  - arranging for interviews to be conducted by members of the business community;
  - presenting relevant units within the PSE course, and
  - co-operating with Careers Wales to help pupils in Y9 to make appropriate choices for their GCSE examinations.
154. The learning experiences deal well with social deprivation and stereotyping. The school ensures good access and equal opportunity for each learner by:
- giving pupils the opportunity to participate in every activity;
  - encouraging boys and girls to follow courses traditionally linked with the other sex;
  - making additional arrangements to extend the skills of more gifted and talented pupils, and
  - being flexible when offering options at the end of Y9, making arrangements to teach during lunchtime and outside school hours when the need arises.
155. The school is paying increasing attention to sustainability and has attained the bronze award in the Green Schools' Initiative. The geography department received a special grant in order to develop a series of lessons on climate change and individual pupils showed initiative in arranging a public meeting to discuss the implications of global warming. The School Council is keen to see further steps being taken to recycle.
156. The learning experiences reflect lifelong learning priorities and community regeneration well by:

- making arrangements for the local community to make increasing use of facilities on the school site;
- kindling pupils' interest in the democratic process by electing a School Council;
- conducting a mock election in the school to coincide with the Welsh National Assembly elections;
- placing particular emphasis on developing the wider key skills required by employers, and
- promoting the pupils' confident bilingualism so that in due course they will be an asset in the workplace.

157. The school has not formally sought employers' opinions as to the relevance of its curriculum to the requirements of the world of work or mapped the contribution made by different departments to this aspect.

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

### **Grade 1: Good with outstanding features.**

158. In its self evaluation report the school awarded this key question a Grade 2. The inspection team awarded the question a Grade 1 and this reflects the number of outstanding features in the care, guidance and support that the school provides for pupils and students.

#### **A) The quality of care, support and guidance to learners**

159. The school's care arrangements are detailed and very effectively planned and managed. The caring, friendly and supportive ethos permeates throughout the school. Class tutors take an interest in their pupils and the pupils are happy to turn to their teachers if the need arises. As a result of the heads of year's effective monitoring, the pastoral and tutorial periods are successful and reinforce the relationship and the care. The close co-operation between the heads of year and the class tutors sets a firm basis for the pastoral arrangements. The sensitive, extra, pastoral support provided by 'Clwb Nia' for individual pupils with problems also reinforces the care. All this provides an outstanding quality of care.

160. The open door policy for parents creates a good relationship. There is no Parent Teacher Association but parents are very supportive of the school's activities. There is also a good relationship with the community and its members visit the school. The school's representatives regularly participate in the life of the community.

161. In Y9 and Y11, the school provides unbiased guidance. This provides good quality assistance to pupils when they choose appropriate courses at KS4 and in the sixth form. Modules within the PSE programme (Gorwelion) and tutorial periods reinforce the guidance. The presentation of this programme is consistently good. Its content from the point of view of subjects such as health and careers and the whole range of topics required under the Personal and Social Education Framework are varied and relevant. The school has planned and structured it well. Teachers are experienced in this area and ensure that the teaching is interesting and appropriate. The input made by Careers Wales to the 'Gorwelion' programme is an outstanding feature. This provision enables pupils to plan for the future and prepare themselves for the world of work. A member of the school's staff is responsible for monitoring and co-ordinating the vocational provision and he completes that task very effectively. The school has received the Careers' Wales' quality award in recognition of the thoroughness of the work.

162. After forging early links with the primary schools, and as a result of the robust induction programme, pupils transfer with ease and settle down quickly at Ysgol Tryfan. The head teacher visits every primary school within its wide catchment area. The thorough pastoral links, the robust induction programme and the wide curricular links ensure the seamless transition. This is an outstanding feature of the care, the guidance and support.

163. The school's procedures for monitoring attendance, punctuality and behaviour are good. The procedures for monitoring pupil performance are very good and as a result of this heads of year monitor and track pupils' performance very effectively and note underachievers. Staff provide very good support and guidance in order to raise expectations and standards. The school's administrative staff help to record attendance effectively and get in touch with the homes without delay. The school co-operates very well with the school welfare officer and the county youth worker to provide support for those who require help and support.
164. The school has detailed procedures to ensure pupils' and students' health and safety. The head teacher oversees this aspect. The school follows the detailed, county Health and Safety Policy. The school fabric and equipment are inspected regularly by appropriate inspectors. Five members of the school's staff hold a full, current, first aid qualification. There is appropriate supervision during break and lunch times and also as pupils arrive in the morning and leave at the end of the day. The attention of the LEA was drawn to concerns regarding the parking position of one school bus on a busy road a short distance from the school.
165. The school has adopted a Child Protection Policy that incorporates county procedures. In line with requirements, a designated member of the governors and a senior member of staff have been selected to be responsible for this aspect. The senior member of staff disseminates information to the rest of the staff and there is a summary of guidelines and protocols included in the staff handbook. When the need arises, the school works closely with the appropriate external agencies.

#### **B) The quality of the provision for additional learning needs**

166. The school provides well for pupils with additional learning needs. Transition arrangements from primary to secondary school are very effective and enable the school to recognise pupils' needs at an early stage. The range of screening tests at the beginning of Y7 enable the school to make suitable and appropriate arrangements to support them.
167. There is flexible provision in small groups at KS3 and KS4 in the core subjects and this ensures that the pupils' weaknesses and strengths are recognised. The pupils' behaviour in these groups is very good and they enjoy their experiences. The teaching is consistently good. The department's expectations are high and the majority of the pupils make good progress.
168. A small team of enthusiastic learning support assistants support the department. There is good co-operation between the assistants and the subject teachers and there is a good relationship with pupils. Effective use is also made of sixth form students in lessons to support the pupils' reading skills in Welsh and English. This regular practice is an important factor in the progress these pupils make in their reading skills.

169. Despite the fact that every one of the school's departments has a current AEN policy, there is inconsistency in the differentiation strategies for these pupils. However, an awareness of pupils' needs is apparent in the lesson plans.
170. The individual plans for each pupil on the AEN Register are very detailed with appropriate targets and strategies that respond to the Code of Practice. Extensive use is made of the school's intranet in order to share AEN information. The procedures for monitoring the IEPs (Individual Education Plans) have not been fully developed in order to ensure that pupils' individual targets are met consistently.
171. The school offers a range of appropriate courses for pupils with additional learning needs at KS4. These include appropriate GCSE and Entrance Level courses in school and vocational courses in conjunction with a further education college and a school a few miles away and a 'Project Success' Open College Network accreditation. These pupils make good progress and every pupil on the AEN Register last year left school with an acknowledged accreditation.
172. The experienced head of department has nurtured a close relationship with the support services and multi agency meetings are held regularly. There is also a close link with the Dyslexia Unit at Bangor University and its expertise is utilised effectively to support those pupils with specific learning difficulties. Arrangements for two pupils who have been disapplied from National Curriculum requirements are appropriate.
173. The arrangements for pupils with behavioural problems are very effective. The special support for pupils who come to this school after being excluded permanently from other schools enables them to complete their education in this school and gain qualifications. This pastoral support enables the pupils to reintegrate successfully and is an outstanding aspect of the school's care.

**C) The quality of the provision for equal opportunities**

174. The school's system ensures that there is no discrimination against any member of its community. The school's current equal opportunities' policy emphasises each pupil's right to access to all aspects of the school's life and work. The school's robust pastoral programme is an important element in promoting equal opportunity. Each individual pupil receives sensitive and effective support and care according to need and there is strong emphasis on developing self discipline. The school makes every effort to support less able pupils and makes special language improvement arrangements for those pupils who have difficulties with either Welsh or English. The school's ethos ensures that there is no discrimination and that there is fair play for every pupil and student.
175. The school's curriculum and extra curricular activities are open to all, and every effort is made to ensure that every pupil and student is given an opportunity to participate. The school strives to challenge stereotyping in advising pupils about choices at KS4 and in the sixth form. The school has the same high expectations of boys and girls.

176. The school's strong values and friendly nature nurture tolerance and offer a safety net against harassment and bullying. The pupils are confident in seeking help from adults or their peers.
177. The school does everything within its ability to ensure equal access and treatment for all. An accessibility plan has been prepared. It recognises that there is no wheelchair access to classrooms upstairs. The school is bringing pressure to bear on the Unitary Authority to ensure access.
178. The high quality acts of communal worship and those in class also, and appropriate modules within 'Gorwelion', promote racial equality and relationships and respect towards others. Visits from bodies such as Christian Aid draw attention to what countries of the world have in common and at the same time they recognise and respect diversity.

## Leadership and management

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

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

179. The inspection team has awarded the same grade for this key question as that the school awarded itself in its self evaluation report. The team agrees with the school's judgement. The Grade 2 differs from the Grade 1 awarded for Key Question 1 because although there are outstanding features in the leadership of a small number of departments, there are also shortcomings in a few curricular areas.

#### A) How well do leaders and managers provide clear direction and promote high standards?

180. The headteacher is a successful leader and manager and has a clear vision for achieving the school's aims and objectives.

181. The SMT clearly shares the main aim of 'excellence' with staff, pupils, parents and governors so that the school has a clear direction.

182. The recently drawn up, new School Improvement Plan has a number of appropriate priorities which reflect the focus of the SMT and governors, the outcomes of the self-evaluation processes and county and national priorities. The full potential of the School Improvement Plan is yet to be fully realised, because the annual cycle has not been completed.

183. Departmental improvement plans are closely linked to the School Improvement Plan. The planning for improvement is outstanding in a small number of departments, with good features in most other curriculum areas. However, a small minority of departments have not fully addressed all the school's priorities and used the planning structure to its full potential.

184. The school has been very successful in promoting equality for all. This success is to be seen in:

- the outstanding systems for support and guidance that give all pupils the best opportunities to succeed;
- the availability of a broad and appropriate curriculum for all pupils of all abilities;
- the wide range of extra-curricular activities which are available for all pupils and students, and
- the special arrangements made for pupils with a range of additional learning needs.

185. The school has fully considered the priorities of the Wales Assembly Government. The school is outstanding in its efforts to promote pupils' bilingualism. There are good features in the development of pupils' basic and key skills, the primary/ secondary transition arrangements and links with the community, work-related education and awareness of sustainable development.
186. The school has made good progress in considering the 'Pathways for Learning' associated with the education of 14-19 year olds. This is particularly true in the sixth form curriculum and in the work-related opportunities offered.
187. The school has developed many strong links with other organisations that include primary and secondary schools, colleges of further and higher education, businesses and many other support agencies. These partnerships and links provide many very good opportunities to enrich the curriculum and provide a greater breadth in the experiences gained by pupils and students.
188. The school has an effective process for setting targets based on individual pupil data. Most targets are challenging and realistic and are set on previous performance and regular assessments of pupils' progress.
189. Targets are used effectively in many departments to monitor progress and raise standards. In a minority of departments, there is insufficient focus in using data and targets identified to ensure continuous progress. In many subjects, pupils use their targets effectively to evaluate their progress; this good practice is not apparent in all subjects,
190. The head teacher and heads of year identify pupils who are underachieving in internal assessments. There are effective strategies in place for heads of year to address these issues and provide structured support for individual pupils.
191. Members of the SMT work effectively with departments. Each year, they work together to evaluate examination results in depth and they set targets for the coming year. The SMT's supporting role has been effective in developing the skills of self-evaluation to inform departmental improvement plans. The evaluation of whole-school issues by the SMT is good practice as it is followed up by detailed feedback and discussion.
192. Many teachers with middle management responsibilities manage their subject-specific responsibilities well. In particular, inspectors noted that many managers:
  - have a clear vision of where the department is heading;
  - make school and departmental aims and objectives clear to teachers within the department;
  - set meaningful but challenging targets to raise standards, based on a range of available data;
  - make good use of the capitation allowances available to them, and
  - work well with the relevant line management member of the SMT.

193. There are a few shortcomings. In a small number of departments, the focus in the targets set is not obvious, and there is insufficient rigour in the process of self-evaluation to move the department forward to achieve higher standards.
194. There are suitable procedures for managing teachers' performance and recognising the staff's development and training needs. A number of teachers have benefited professionally by acting as team leaders in the Performance Management Process.
195. The school provides adequate training for all its staff. Teaching staff have benefited from the input of external providers on a number of occasions. With the support of General Teaching Council for Wales' bursaries and a modest training budget, the majority of teachers can attend appropriate courses to support their work in the classroom and develop professionally.
196. The quality of induction for newly qualified teachers and teachers new to the school is good.
197. The training needs of support staff and classroom assistants are also carefully evaluated. With recent changes made by the provider, the quality of the training provision is now good.

**B) The extent to which governors and other supervisory bodies meet their responsibilities**

198. The governing body is made up of a good cross-section of members with considerable experience within and outside education. They are well - informed about educational issues and have a thorough knowledge of every aspect of the school's work and are also aware of the needs of the local community. They give a strong lead and outstanding support to the head teacher and SMT.
199. Governors make a very substantial contribution to strategic planning. They contribute to the School Improvement Plan and closely monitor the progress of the school towards the goals set out in the plan.
200. Governors thoroughly monitor the work of the school through their involvement on the various governing body committees. They have a good understanding of data and critically analyse examination results against unitary authority figures and national benchmarks. They carefully oversee the allocation of the school's budget and make sure that money is spent in pursuit of the school's priorities for development. Although each head of department reports on the department's progress and developments on a regular basis to the governing body, governors are not individually linked to departments.
201. The governors have ensured that the school meets all legal and course requirements.

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

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

202. The inspection team has awarded the same grade for this key question as that the school awarded itself in its self evaluation report. The inspection team agrees with the school's judgement.

**A) How effectively is the school's performance monitored and evaluated?**

203. The school's self-evaluation report correctly and thoroughly analyses its strengths and shortcomings. It is based on the managers' very good knowledge of the school.

204. The inspection team's findings correspond very closely to the school's findings in its self evaluation report but the inspection team has awarded one of ESTYN's seven key questions a higher grade, namely Key Question 4.

205. There is no direct link between the findings of the school's self-evaluation report and its School Improvement Plan for 2006-2007 as the school has not completed a full cycle of its new self evaluation process. However, there is a clearer link in the projected priorities of the School Improvement Plan for 2007 – 2008.

206. There are strengths in the school's senior managers' knowledge of performance in areas for which they are responsible. However, the level of knowledge shown by middle managers about their areas of responsibility is variable. This is evident in the written self evaluations. A large number of departments carry out thorough self evaluations and continue to do so but the self evaluations of a small minority of departments are more superficial. Likewise, the follow-up to self evaluation is variable. At whole school level and in a good number of departments the follow-up to the evaluations is good and gives rise to quantifiable improvements in the standards or the provision. In a small minority of cases, nevertheless, these subject evaluations have not lead sufficiently to the expected improvements.

207. The school has established an outstanding system of self evaluation. It is comprehensive, systematic and based on direct evidence of pupils' work, lesson observation and external test, examination and assessment data analysis. This data analysis is a strong feature at both whole school and departmental level. A member of the SMT verifies the departmental self evaluation system in an effective manner and evaluates to what extent strategies arising out of the self evaluation are appropriate.

208. By means of the School Council and the 'open door' policy, the school considers pupils' points of view well. Also, all members of the staff are given the opportunity to express their views by means of the whole school and departmental self evaluations. The school consults fully with parents on some aspects of its work. However, there is no system for obtaining parents' views and those of interested parties on a regular basis.

209. The school based training on self evaluation processes and data analysis has enhanced the staff's awareness of the self evaluation process. The outcome of this training and support is more evident in some departments than others.

**B) The effectiveness of planning for improvement**

210. Although there is no direct link between the whole school's self evaluation drawn up for this inspection and the current School Improvement Plan, the school does use information from the self evaluation process as an aspect of its system for drawing up the School Improvement Plan. This plan notes specific targets, responsibilities and a timetable for action and notes criteria to be used to evaluate the improvement strategies. It pays sufficient attention to aspects linked to learning and teaching but does not go into great detail about costing. The school sets challenging targets based on the data of pupils' attainments.

211. The school's arrangements for Performance Management and continuous professional development have been interwoven well with the improvement plans at departmental level as well as whole school level.

212. The school ensures that there are sufficient resources to support its main priorities and objectives. Each project is very carefully selected. Each project or initiative is very carefully costed and the school evaluates the effectiveness and efficiency of any project.

213. The school is able to demonstrate that a number of steps taken have resulted in improvements in standards or provision.

214. The school has responded well to every one of the key issues noted at the last inspection. It was not possible to evaluate subject standards of achievement during this short inspection but the school has maintained good or improved standards of attainment in external results. It has also continued to ensure good standards in the key skills. The quality of self evaluation at departmental level has also improved since the last inspection but expectations in this area of education have also risen. The school has ensured that it provides experiences of a consistently high standard for pupils in the tutorial period and it has obtained more technical assistance to support the learning.

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

### **Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

215. The inspection team has awarded the same grade for this key question as that the school awarded itself in its self evaluation report. The inspection team agrees with the school's judgement.

#### **A) The adequacy, suitability and use made of staff, learning resources and accommodation**

216. The school has appropriate staff to meet its curricular requirements and the vast majority of the teachers have qualifications that correspond to the areas they teach.

217. In the exceptional cases of teachers teaching outside their area of expertise, they are given effective support by heads of department and pupils' attainments in the subject are not affected.

218. The school provides good support for new and temporary staff. The induction programme works very well for newly qualified teachers and they are regularly supported by heads of department and the SMT.

219. The pupil teacher ratio is very good. Each teacher is given the specified time for planning, preparation and assessment according to statutory requirements but the school has not formally evaluated its impact. The head teacher has planned effective use of 'gained time,' namely time that would previously have been spent invigilating examinations, during the summer term. The requirements of Learning and Teaching Responsibilities have been established and each teacher has a new job description.

220. The school is dedicated to its staff's professional development and has been successful in achieving the 'Investors in People' award three times. There are effective procedures in place to recognise the staff's professional development needs.

221. INSET requirements are noted and linked effectively with priorities in departmental improvement plans and in the School Improvement Plan. Good use is made of training within the school and on county and national courses.

222. The school effectively evaluates the usefulness of training and there are appropriate opportunities to disseminate training to other teachers.

223. Non-teaching staff provide very good support across a range of duties and responsibilities including:

- the very effective support provided by learning support assistants for pupils with additional learning needs in the classes, and
- the thorough support that technicians and administrative and ancillary staff provide.

224. There are sufficient learning resources across the subjects and good use is made of them. Effective use is made of worksheets that are of good quality as regards presentation and content.
225. Computer stations are provided for pupils and students but the demand often outstrips the supply. A number of departments and students make good use of the library and some lessons are timetabled in the library in order to promote the use of books.
226. The internal and external condition of most of the buildings is good on the whole. The site is clear of graffiti and rubbish. Standards of cleanliness are good despite the fact that some pupils expressed concern about the cleanliness of some of the toilets during the school day.
227. The rooms and corridors are full of interesting displays of pupils' work or illustrations and charts conveying subject information.
228. The majority of departments are in suites. However, some subjects are taught in rooms that lack appropriate facilities and subject ambience. In science, four laboratories are used to meet the teaching requirements. Some of them are old.
229. The sixth form environment is conducive to carrying out independent work or social activities.
230. There is no wheelchair access to all parts of the building and there are no playing fields large enough for competitive sports.

**B) How efficiently resources are managed to achieve value for money.**

231. Managers use resources efficiently. The administrative officer, the head teacher and the governing body's finance committee manage the budget very well. The budget reflects the school's educational priorities. The school lives within its budgetary means.
232. The sum carried over from last year's budget is large. This is the result of planned budgeting as there is some uncertainty as regards the number of Y7 pupils who will attend the school in September. The finance committee estimates that over half the sum will have been used before the end of this financial year. A little over 5% only will be carried over to next year's finance. That will be in line with the Audit Commission's guidelines and those of the Welsh Assembly Government.
233. The school has heeded appropriately the minor points raised in this year's Audit Report.
234. The school's arrangements for allocating monies to departments is open and fair. Also, managers and subject teachers are successful when they bid for finance or grants that are available.

235. The administrative officer supplies financial information on a monthly basis to heads of department. She is also effective in overseeing procedures carefully and thoroughly in order to obtain the best value for money from suppliers and contractors.

236. The school provides very good value for money by:

- supporting pupils and students to attain outstanding standards;
- providing outstanding care and support for pupils and students;
- making effective arrangements for the induction of newly qualified teachers and recognising the professional development needs of every member of staff;
- making financial decisions that concentrate on educational priorities, and
- offering a good quality curriculum for the school's population.

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

The school wishes to thank the inspection team for its sensitivity and professionalism during its visit to the school.

The grades awarded every one of the seven key questions are confirmation that the school is moving in the right direction ensuring quality in the teaching and high standards in the pupils' work.

Attention is drawn to the large number of positive aspects observed during the inspection and very high praise was afforded the quality of teaching with 100% of lessons observed obtaining a Grade 1 or 2.

The pupils' standards were also praised and it was noted that the key skills and wider key skills were a Grade 1 or 2 in all key stages.

It is also pleasing to see that the hard work undertaken to ensure the highest standards of care, welfare and support for pupils is recognised. It is noted that expectations as regards behaviour are high here and that this reflects the emphasis the school places on respect and self respect.

The word 'outstanding' is used regularly throughout the report and this is encouraging for the staff, the Governors and pupils and serves to confirm the work that is done within the school and outside its confines.

However, the recommendations for improvement noted in the report will be the foundation for creating strategies that will be included in the School Improvement Plan and, in due course, will lead to further improvements in standards.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Tryfan
School type	Secondary
Age range of pupils	11-18+
Address of school	Lon Powys BANGOR Gwynedd
Postcode	LL57 2TU
Telephone number	01248 352633

  

Headteacher	Mr Gareth Isfryn Hughes
Date of appointment	01/09/04
Chair of governors / Appropriate authority	Mr Gwynn Lloyd Jones, (Care of the School) Gwynedd Education Authority Council Offices CAERNARFON LL55 1SH
Reporting inspector	Gareth Wyn Roberts
Dates of inspection	08/05/07 – 11/05/07

## Appendix 2

### School data and indicators

Year group	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Total
Number of pupils	52	58	51	76	63	43	27	370

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	24	8	28.1

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	13.3:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	-
Average teaching size group	16.04
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	81.8%

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole school (statutory age)
Summer 2006	89.4	90.9	89.3	90	98.1	93.1	91.6	91.8
Autumn 2006	96.4	91.7	92.9	92.4	93	91.1	90	92.7
Spring 2007	94.6	91.2	93	92	90.2	85.5	85.7	92.1

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	8.4 (13.6 yn 2006)
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to the inspection	14 temporary, 0 permanent, 2 from ethnic minorities

## Appendix 3

### National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 3:

National Curriculum KS3 Assessment Results 2006															
Total number of pupils in Y9: 72															
Percentage of pupils at each level															
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	EP
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	19	35	17	21	0	0
		National	0	1	1	0	0	2	8	21	35	24	8	0	0
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	32	24	18	0	0
		National	0	1	1	0	0	1	4	19	35	30	11	0	0
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	3	4	13	13	35	32	0	0
		National	0	1	1	0	0	1	6	18	25	33	15	0	0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	13	22	25	32	0	0
		National	0	1	1	0	0	1	6	19	33	27	12	0	0

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

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 5 in mathematics, science and either English or Welsh (first language)			
according to teacher assessment		according to test	
In the school	73.6	In the school	73.6
In Wales	58	In Wales	*

\*These tests were optional in Wales in 2006.

**Public Examination Results:**

<b>For pupils aged 15, results in GCSE, Entry Level Qualification, GNVQ and NVQ</b>	
Number of pupils aged 15 on the school roll in January 2006	69
Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil	49

<b>Percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2006:</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>UA</b>	<b>Wales</b>
entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent	91	91	88
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	74	60	54
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	91	90	86
attained GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator)	58	47	40
entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or GCSE	99	100	98
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification equivalent	83	84	77
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G or the vocational qualification equivalent	96	98	93
attained no graded GCSE or the vocational qualification equivalent	4	2	7
attained one or more Entry level qualification only	3	2	3
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Foundation level or NVQ level 1	0	-	-
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Intermediate level or NVQ level 2	0	-	-

<b>For pupils aged 17, results in A/AS, GNVQs and NVQs</b>	
Number of pupils aged 17 in January 2006	35
Number of pupils entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations or equivalent in 2006	33
Number of pupils entered for fewer than 2 GCE A levels or equivalent in 2006	2

	<b>School</b>	<b>UA</b>	<b>Wales</b>
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-C	85	68	68
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-E	100	96	94
Average points score per candidate entering 2 or more subjects	25	21	20
Number of pupils who achieved a GNVQ Intermediate or NVQ at level 2	0	-	-
Number of pupils who achieved a GNVQ Advanced or NVQ at level 3	0	-	-

UA Unitary Authority

## Appendix 4

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

Seven inspectors spent a total of 26 inspection days at the school and 53 lessons were observed, including a range of PSE lessons. In addition, inspectors visited a cross section of registration periods, extra curricular activities during the lunch hour and morning acts of communal worship. Interviews were arranged with members of the Senior Management Team, heads of department, heads of year and class tutors, as well as other members of staff, including ancillary staff, with specific responsibilities.

A cross section of the work of able, average and low ability pupils from Y7 to Y11 and a cross section of Y12 and Y13 students' work was inspected. In addition, more examples of pupils' work were seen when inspectors visited classes, workshops and laboratories. Regular discussions were held with pupils about their work and formal interviews were held with pupils and students selected to represent their different school years, including members of the School Council.

Every document the school presented before and during the inspection was analysed. Pre-inspection meetings were held with members of the Senior Management Team, the staff, the governing body and parents. Twenty one parents attended the parents' meeting and 83 questionnaires were returned. Nine letters (including one after the parents' meeting) and nine comments on questionnaires were received from parents.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Gareth Wyn Roberts (Registered Inspector)	The school and its priorities, summary, key question 1 and 6, appendix.
John Roberts (Lay Inspector)	Contribution to key question 1,3,4,7
Trefor Lewis (Team Inspector)	Key question 2
Emrys Price Roberts (Team Inspector)	Key question 3
Gwyn Griffiths (Team Inspector)	Key question 4
Stephen Glyn Davies (Team Inspector)	Key question 5
Heddwyn Evans (Team Inspector)	Key question 7
Nesta Lloyd Jones	School nominee

There was no peer assessor on the team.

**Contractor:** Cwmni CYNNAL  
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### Acknowledgement

The inspection team wishes to convey its gratitude to Ysgol Tryfan's governors, staff, pupils and students for their co-operation during the inspection.