

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

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

**Ysgol Y Berwyn  
Heol Ffrydan  
Y Bala  
Gwynedd  
LL23 7RU**

**School Number: 6614033**

**Date of Inspection: 12 November 2007**

**by**

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Ysgol Y Berwyn 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 Y Berwyn took place between 12/11/07 and 15/11/07. An independent team of inspectors, led by William Gwyn Thomas 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 **standard** inspection.

## Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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## Context

### The nature of the provider

1. Ysgol Y Berwyn is an 11-18 mixed, naturally bilingual community school, situated in the small town of Bala and maintained by Gwynedd Unitary Authority (UA). There are 428 pupils on roll, compared to 435 at the time of the last inspection in March 2002. Of these, about 70 form a small sixth form.
2. The school serves a wide, sparsely populated area. The majority of pupils comes from the seven primary feeder schools situated within Gwynedd. The surrounding catchment includes pockets of deprivation. Six percent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, a figure which is below the national average.
3. Pupils represent the full range of ability. Twelve pupils have a statement of special educational need (SEN) and a further 74 have been identified as needing some support. Six pupils have national curriculum (NC) disapplications.
4. Forty per cent of the pupils come from homes where the predominant language spoken is English. Sixty per cent come from Welsh-speaking homes. Ninety-three per cent of the pupils speak Welsh as a first language or to an equivalent standard. Only one pupil receives support teaching in English as an additional language.
5. The headteacher was appointed to the post in April 2004. The leadership team consists of the headteacher and two assistant headteachers who were appointed in September 2004.

### The school's priorities and targets

6. The school has prepared a three-year development and action plan for 2007-2010. These priorities identify areas for development which encompass standards, teaching and assessment, bilingualism, the curriculum, pastoral care and guidance, management, self-evaluation, the learning environment and community development.
7. The school also sets numerical targets for success at the end of key stage (KS) 3 and KS4 that, in 2008:
  - at least 60% of pupils should reach at least level five, in teachers' assessments in all core subjects combined, at the end of KS3 (English 77%, Welsh 75%, mathematics 70%, science 70%); and
  - in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations, 60% of pupils should gain at least five grades A\*-C, 82% gain at least five grades, A\*-G, and 55% gain at least a GCSE grade at A\*-C in the core subjects.

## Summary

8. Ysgol y Berwyn has shortcomings in important areas, in leadership and management and standards of achievement. They relate specifically to:
  - how leaders and managers provide clear direction and promote high standards;
  - how well leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards, and
  - standards of achievement in French in KS3.
9. Two of these identified areas were highlighted in the previous inspection in 2002. Heads of departments' involvement in monitoring of subject provision and its influence on standards has remained underdeveloped from the inspection in 2002.
10. The use of data and self-evaluation systems had been selected as whole-school priorities for the 2001-2004 development plans. The school has made some progress, but not at an appropriate rate to eliminate these important shortcomings.
11. In accordance with the Education Act 2005, I am of the opinion, and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) agrees, that this school is in need of significant improvement in the above areas.
12. However, the school has a number of good features. These include:
  - pupils' good personal and social skills;
  - good standards of behaviour, and
  - the quality of care and guidance for learners.

### Table of grades awarded

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

13. These grades match those of the school's self-evaluation report in key questions 3 and 4. They are lower than those which the school awarded itself, in its self-evaluation report, in key questions 1,2,5,6 and 7 by one or two grades.

### How well learners achieve

14. Key stage 3 results in each of the core subjects, including Welsh first language, have fluctuated between 2004 and 2007. During this same period, the core subject indicator (CSI) also fluctuated. In 2006, the results in each of the core subjects were below the national average. In comparison with schools of a similar intake, results have been mainly below the average between 2004 and 2006.
15. Results in the GCSE examinations have also fluctuated between 2004 and 2006. Compared with local and national averages, in 2006, pupils' achievement was below

the average and in the lowest quartile compared to similar schools. GCSE results in 2007 were better than the 2006 results.

16. In 2006 and 2007, the percentage of pupils entered for five or more GCSEs or equivalent has continued to be below local authority and national entry rates. In both these years, the difference between the entry rates of girls and boys is significant.
17. In 2007, girls substantially outperformed boys in all key indicators at KS4.
18. Advanced (A) level results at grades A-C were slightly above local and national averages in 2004 and 2005 but well below local and national averages in 2006.
19. In the six subjects inspected, the following grades were awarded:

	<b>KS3</b>	<b>KS4</b>	<b>Sixth Form</b>
Welsh First Language	2	2	1
Mathematics	2	2	2
Science	2	3	2
Modern Foreign Languages	4	3	-
History	2	2	2
Music	3	2	2

20. In the sixth form, there are no courses leading to Advanced Subsidiary (AS) or A level examinations in French.
21. In the 72 lessons observed in these subjects, the following grades were awarded for standards of achievement:

<b>Key Stage</b>	<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
KS3	3%	50%	41%	3%	3%
KS4	0%	64%	36%	0%	0%
Sixth form	19%	75%	6%	0%	0%
Total	6%	60%	32%	1%	1%

22. The sample of lessons seen in the sixth form was very small and therefore comparisons between key stages are not reliable.
23. Overall, the percentage of lessons graded 1, 2 and 3 meet the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) (Vision into Action 2010 target) of standards in 98% of classes being graded 3 and above. However, there were shortcomings in about a third of the lessons.
24. There has been no improvement at KS4 in science or French since the last inspection. Standards in music now have good features outweighing shortcomings in KS3, and no important shortcomings in KS4 and the sixth form. There has been a decline in the standards of music in the sixth form. Key stage 3 French has some good features, but shortcomings in important areas. This represents a decline in standards compared with the previous inspection.
25. Whilst standards in communication and numeracy have good features and no important shortcomings, pupils' standards in the key skills of information and communications (ICT) and improving one's own learning have good features outweighing shortcomings throughout the school. There is no tracking of ICT skills in KS4. Bilingual standards are very well developed. However, key skills are currently not accredited in KS3/4.

26. Pupils of middle and lower abilities underachieve. Staff are unaware of the extent of this underachievement. Pupils are not fully aware of what they have to do to improve in many areas of the curriculum.

### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

27. The school has developed pupils' personal skills. The good features include:

- the behaviour of pupils within the school community and on cultural visits;
- respect for staff, visitors and peers, and
- the leadership skills demonstrated by the sixth-form students.

28. Assemblies and form-tutor periods are contributors in raising these standards, especially when pupils are involved in the preparation and delivery of these activities.

29. The annual attendance rate has fallen from 93.1% during the previous inspection to 91.7%. This figure is just below the WAG target of 93%.

30. The focus on preparing pupils for the work place and further or higher education begins in KS3. By the end of KS4 or the sixth form, pupils and students are in a position to make informed choices about their futures.

### **The effectiveness of teaching, training and assessment**

31. Good features of teaching are:

- the quality of relationships between staff and pupils, and
- the bilingual opportunities offered to pupils.

32. The following grades were awarded for the 72 lessons observed in the six subjects inspected and the 14 lessons observed in other subjects.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
6 subjects	8%	52%	38%	1%	1%
Other subjects	0%	79%	14%	7%	0%
Total	7%	56%	34%	2%	1%

33. The size and nature of this sample differ from the last inspection. However, the percentage of lessons graded 1 and 2 in this inspection (63%) is below the all-Wales figures in the latest Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training report for 2005-06 of 69%. The figure is also lower than that achieved in the last inspection and well below the WAG (Vision into Action 2010) target of 80%.

34. Where teaching is good, there is appropriate pace and challenge. The vast majority of lessons observed in Welsh first language is good or very good. Some outstanding features were evident in lessons in Welsh and history.

35. There are shortcomings in the quality of teaching in a substantial number of subjects. Inconsistencies exist both within and between subjects.

36. Where assessment practices are consistent, rigorous and accurate, departments are able to monitor pupils' progress and pupils are clear on how well they are doing. This is evident in a minority of subjects. At whole-school level, pupils' targets are not monitored nor set rigorously. Neither are the targets sufficiently challenging.

### **The extent to which learning experiences meets learners' needs and interests**

37. The school's curriculum offers a range of subject options to its pupils in KS4. Links with the college and vocational courses run jointly with Coleg Meirion Dwyfor are beginning to extend the 14-19 option menu at this key stage. The school's development plan outlines that additional vocational courses are being considered for introduction in the near future in KS4 and the sixth form. The expansion of sixth-form vocational provision is a priority for the school. It is currently underdeveloped.
38. Extra-curricular activities provided by the school are good. These include sporting activities. Pupils also benefit from the wide range of cultural activities available, including musical activities and participating in the Urdd eisteddfodau.
39. Pupils' entrepreneurial skills are developed well through activities involving business and team-building events. This is a good feature in KS4 and the sixth form. Pupils' active participation in the promotion of education for sustainable development has involved them in a wide variety of activities.

### **How well learners are cared for guided and supported**

40. The quality of the pastoral liaison between the school and its primary feeder schools is very good. This close link enables pupils to enter the secondary school with confidence and settle in quickly.
41. The very caring nature of the school is recognised by pupils and parents. It is regarded by all as a strength of the school. Pupils feel that there is always someone there to help.
42. Monitoring of pupils' attendance lacks rigour and there is no first-day call procedure to discover why pupils are absent. This is left until the third day.
43. The quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) is good, particularly for those pupils who are withdrawn for specialist teaching. However, the support for these pupils in mainstream classes is inconsistent in terms of the quality of teaching and planning to meet their needs.
44. Overall, the school's provision for equal opportunities is developing. Currently, in KS4, too many pupils follow entry level courses and they are not sufficiently stretched. There is insufficient emphasis on combatting boys' underachievement.
45. The school has effective procedures to deal with incidents of bullying.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and strategic management**

46. Communication between the headteacher, middle management and staff is ineffective. There is no common sense of purpose regarding the implementation of whole-school strategies. Expectations of staff and managers are not clear enough and there is no consistency of practice.
47. Policies and systems are not having sufficient impact on practice. Insufficient attention has been given to rectifying the shortcomings of the previous inspection. Items which were identified as needing action in the 2001-2004 school development plans have not been resolved following on from the last inspection.
48. There are also inconsistencies in the quality of middle management as well as a lack of clarity in relation to their roles and responsibilities. Managers do not monitor rigorously enough those priorities which impact upon standards.

49. The roles of individuals in the senior management team (SMT) are not clearly defined and neither is the degree of accountability. The team's effectiveness is restricted by lack of time for management. They do not have the time to improve teaching and learning through monitoring and the sharing of good practice.
50. There is good practice evident with some middle managers, where departmental monitoring and target-setting procedures are rigorous. However, these practices are not applied consistently across the majority of departments.
51. Governors are beginning to develop their role as critical friends of the school.

### **How well leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards**

52. The school has no whole-school self-evaluation policy. Consequently, there is insufficient clear guidance or criteria for effective implementation of self-evaluation procedures. The absence of a self-critical culture prevents management teams from identifying where they are now, and implementing appropriate strategies to move forward.
53. At present, the self-evaluation process does not impact fully on standards nor teaching and learning within or across departments. There are no rigorous and consistent procedures for undertaking lesson observations and there is little accountability.
54. The current self-evaluation processes are not sufficiently robust to contribute significantly to the school's development planning processes.

### **The efficiency of leaders and managers in using resources**

55. The school employs suitably-qualified and experienced staff. Some teachers teach outside their main specialist areas. Because there are several small teaching groups, staff are not always utilised economically.
56. The school manages its budget allocation effectively, through the headteacher and administrative officer. The governing body monitors spending appropriately. However, resources, human, time and finance, are not always utilised effectively to support learning improvements in the classroom.

### **Progress since the last inspection**

57. With regard to the key issues from the previous inspection, the school has made some progress in:
- maintaining and raising standards in some subjects where they were satisfactory;
  - raising standards in ICT across the curriculum, and
  - complying with the statutory requirements for daily acts of collective worship.
58. However, insufficient progress has been made in:
- formalising and strengthening the link between the SMT and individual departments;
  - building on the good assessment procedures and self-evaluation procedures that existed in some departments, and
  - disseminating the good practice across the school.

## Recommendations

The school is in need of significant improvement in specific areas. In order to achieve its objectives the school should focus on the following priorities.

- R1. Define more clearly the roles and responsibilities of the SMT to ensure that there is greater:
- focus on monitoring standards, teaching and learning, and
  - consistency and rigour in the quality of line-management of faculties, departments and year teams.
- R2. Increase the management time of the SMT and develop this role to:
- co-ordinate assessment for learning and embed key skills in the curriculum, and
  - promote good features to all departments by sharing best practice.
- R3. Re-define the current middle management structure and develop the role and accountability of middle managers.
- R4. Revise the current assessment policies and procedures to ensure that all staff use assessment diagnostically to improve pupils' performance.
- \*R5. Raise standards and examination results by extending the range of teaching and learning strategies to meet the needs of all pupils and in particular:
- substantially reduce the levels of underachievement identified in middle and lower ability boys, and
  - raise standards in French and music in KS3, science in KS4, and ICT across the school.
- R6. Raise pupils' expectations by developing a rigorous process of target-setting procedures to ensure that:
- pupils have an input to their own targets and understand how to achieve them;
  - all available performance data are used effectively to establish appropriate challenge in each pupil's individual target, and
  - staff are pro-active in the process.
- R7. Improve the processes of self-evaluation and planning for improvement at all levels across the school to ensure that developments are effectively prioritised, monitored, evaluated and supported.
- \*R8. Improve curricular provision in KS4 and the sixth form by introducing a wider range of vocational and other courses to meet WAG's 14-19 Learning Pathways agenda.

\* The school development plan addresses several of these recommendations.

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

## Standards

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

#### Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

59. The school awarded itself a Grade 2 in its self-evaluation report. The grade awarded by the inspection team is one grade lower because good features outweigh shortcomings. The shortcomings relate to inconsistencies in:

- standards achieved in lessons observed;
- trends in performance, and
- results compared with benchmarking figures.

#### KS3 and KS4

##### Pupils' success in attaining agreed learning goals

60. The following grades were awarded for standards of achievement at KS3 and KS4 in the 56 lessons observed in the six subjects inspected:

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
<b>KS3</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>KS4</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>KS3+KS4</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>2%</b>

61. In 57% of the lessons observed, pupils achieved standards that have good features and no important shortcomings. In 96% of lessons, good features outweighed shortcomings. Shortcomings in important areas were in work observed in French.
62. Standards are below the 2010 WAG target. The school grades are below the required target that 65% of lessons are to be grade one or two and below the national target of 98% for standards to be graded 1, 2 or 3.
63. In the six subjects inspected, standards in Welsh first language, mathematics and history at KS3 and KS4 are good with no important shortcomings. They are also good with no important shortcomings in music in KS4 and science in KS3. Good features outweigh shortcomings in science and modern foreign languages in KS4, and in music in KS3. There are good features, but shortcomings in important areas in modern foreign languages in KS3.
64. Overall standards are better in KS4 than they are in KS3.
65. Results in teachers' assessments at the end of KS3 have varied considerably over the last three years. Overall, attainment in 2006 was below the average for similar schools where less than 10% of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals. The school was placed in the bottom 25% of schools with a similar intake. Teachers' assessments in English, mathematics and science and the three core subjects combined were below national averages. Between 2004 and 2006 overall results fluctuated with 2005 being the best year when English, science and the CSI were above the average for schools with similar free school meal figures.
66. At KS4, in 2006, the percentage of pupils achieving five A\*-C grades, five A\*-G grades and the CSI are below local authority averages but in line with or better than national averages. However, when compared with similar schools in Wales, the school is in the bottom 25% of schools with similar free school meal entitlement in the above three categories. Results in 2007 are better than those of 2006.

67. Between 2004 and 2006 the percentage of pupils achieving a grade C or above in the core subjects varied, with the greatest consistency being in English. In 2006, girls significantly outperformed boys in all the core subjects and the CSI. However, in 2005 boys outperformed girls in mathematics and science.
68. In KS4, middle and lower ability boys underachieve. This is particularly evident in the core subjects.
69. Overall, pupils' standards in key skills have improved since the previous inspection. However, ICT skills have shortcomings.
70. Pupils' speaking skills in Welsh first language and English have improved and now have good features and no important shortcomings. Their bilingual skills are strong as is evidenced by their use of both languages confidently in all activities.
71. Pupils' listening, reading and writing skills in Welsh first language and English have good features and no important shortcomings. This also applies to problem-solving skills and working with others.
72. At both key stages, the standards that pupils achieve in all their key skills, including numeracy skills, are good with no important shortcomings. The exception is ICT throughout both key stages and improving one's own learning where standards have good features outweighing shortcomings. Some progress has been made to develop pupils' ICT skills although no audit has been undertaken of standards in KS4. Access to ICT rooms is difficult and this restricts the cross-curricular development of the skill. However, there is good practice in some subjects, but it is inconsistent.
73. The school has not, to date, accredited the good standards in key skills in KS3 or KS4.
74. Standards have improved because pupils:
- listen attentively;
  - speak confidently and provide extended answers that demonstrate knowledge and understanding of their work, and
  - write accurately and present their work well.

### **Their progress in learning**

75. Pupils' overall ability varies from year to year. When there is an imbalance of boys, the year group does not perform as well.
76. Relative to their prior attainment and ability on entry to the school, pupils in KS3 in 2006 performed below what was expected. With few exceptions, girls attained better than boys and the difference between their levels of attainment was greatest in English and Welsh.
77. Compared with their performance in KS3, pupils did not achieve as well as was expected at the end of KS4 in 2006 in one third of their GCSE subjects. Underachievement was also evident in the core GCSE subjects.
78. Too many pupils are entered for entry level qualifications when some are capable of being entered for GCSE examinations. In 2006, 78% of the cohort was entered for five GCSE subjects (85% in 2007). These figures are well below the local and national entry averages for 2006.

79. One hundred per cent of the cohort was entered for one or more entry level, GCSE short course, GCSE or equivalent in 2006 and 2007. No pupil left the school without a recognised qualification during these two years.
80. The extent to which pupils make progress varies between subjects and between different key stages.
81. Pupils acquire new knowledge and skills, but the process of assessing how well they have achieved is substantially underdeveloped. Pupils are not fully aware of what they have to do to improve. There is inconsistency across the curriculum in procedures of how pupils need to improve. Written and oral feedback is variable in quality and, in books examined, the advice varied from poor to good. Targets for improvement are not given consistently and neither are they focused. They are not always subject-specific.
82. The introduction of vocational courses in KS4 has raised the degree of appropriate challenge for lower and middle ability pupils to achieve their potential. However, an element of underachievement continues. There are no catch-up sessions for those who miss other subjects to attend these vocational courses and this leads to disaffection. There is insufficient attention being given to tackle boys' underachievement in both key stages.
83. The majority of pupils' key skills are developing to a good standard. These are contributing to preparing them for the expectations of life long learning.
84. Pupils with additional learning needs achieve standards that are matched to their ability or better when they are supported in mainstream classes. Where the support in mainstream classes is limited, pupils do not progress as expected.

### **The development of their personal, social and learning skills**

85. A major strength of the school is the development of pupils' personal skills. The pupils' moral, spiritual, social and cultural developments are good.
86. Pupils work well in lessons, both individually and collaboratively. They show interest and enthusiasm in their work. Most pupils demonstrate a high level of maturity and use these personal skills effectively.
87. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in most instances, both within the classroom and around the school. They show respect and behave responsibly towards one another, to members of staff and to visitors. The atmosphere within the school community is very calm and orderly. This contributes positively to pupils' learning.
88. The attendance level for 2006-2007 was 91.7%. However, this is below the WAG target of 93%. The majority of pupils is punctual to lessons. During the inspection, pupils' attendance was good. However, there were two or three pupils missing from many lessons.
89. During the last academic year, no pupil was permanently excluded.
90. Assemblies and form-tutor periods, where pupils have opportunities to reflect on moral, spiritual and religious topics, make important contributions to pupils' development.
91. Pupils demonstrate a sound awareness of equal opportunities issues and show great respect for diversity, both within school and in society. There are strong links with the community and local businesses. Through these, and values promoted by

the school, pupils are prepared well for participation in the workplace and community.

## Sixth form

### Students' success in attaining agreed learning goals

92. In the six subjects inspected, standards in Welsh first language are good with outstanding features; good features and no important shortcomings prevail in mathematics, science, history. Standards in music have declined. French is currently not taught in the sixth form.
93. The following grades were awarded for standards of achievement in the sixth form in the 16 lessons observed in the six subjects inspected:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
19%	75%	6%	0%	0%

94. Although the sample is small, these figures indicate that students achieve standards that have good features and no important shortcomings in 94% of the lessons.
95. In 2006 the percentage of students gaining two or more A levels or equivalent at grades A-C and at grades A-E declined on the previous two years. The A-C pass rate in 2006 was below that of the local authority and national average by 11 percentage points. The 2007 figures are above both local authority and national figures.
96. The average A level points' score per student between 2004 and 2006 has been consistently close to local authority and national averages. Girls' average points' scores were better than those of boys'. Girls outperformed boys during this period at grades A-C in A level examinations. In 2007 the gap between the average points' score of boys and girls was reduced to one percentage point.
97. Students achieve good standards in all their key skills except ICT. Here, their skills are underdeveloped. In the six subjects inspected, ICT skills have good features and no important shortcomings in only Welsh first language and history.
98. Good levels of communication in both English and Welsh are evident in class discussion. They are outstanding in Welsh first language where the target language only is used. Some students use complex subject-specific terminology in discussions with one another and with the teachers. Group work is well developed in most subject areas but is outstanding in Welsh first language.
99. These qualities assist students to enhance their good problem-solving skills and also enable them to improve their own learning.

### Their progress in learning

100. Students study from within a limited range of AS and A2 courses. In 2006, 93% of students achieved at least A-E passes in two or more subjects. In 2007, this had risen to 100%. Completion rates exceed local authority and national average figures.
101. Retention rate of 44% to the sixth form is relatively low. Most students enjoy the challenges of the sixth form and appreciate that they are able to study the subjects of their choice, in their own school. Many of those who return proceed to higher

education on completion of their courses. Their mature attitude to work prepares them well for progression to university or the world of work.

102. Students have a clear understanding of their levels of achievement. They are monitored closely, receive guidance from staff, and are aware of what they need to do to improve. Targets for improvement are clearly set.

### **The development of their personal, social and learning skills**

103. Students have well-developed personal and social skills. They gain in maturity during their period of study in the sixth form. Their leadership skills are very good and this has enabled them to strengthen the relationships between senior and junior pupils.
104. The students prove to be very good role models to the remainder of the school.
105. They display very positive attitudes to learning and these are reflected in the quality of relationships which are evident between the students and their teachers. Students are well supported by staff and they show appreciation of the opportunities made available to them.
106. Not all students are punctual to lessons.
107. Students gain much from their sixth-form experiences, in their academic, personal, social, moral and wider development.

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

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

#### **Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

108. The school awarded itself a Grade 2 in its self-evaluation report. The grade awarded by the inspection team is one grade lower because good features outweigh shortcomings. The shortcomings relate to:
- an insufficient range of teaching strategies to meet the needs of all learners; and
  - insufficient progress in developing assessment policies and procedures since the last inspection.

### **How well teaching and training meet learners' needs and the curricular or course requirements**

#### **KS3 and KS4**

109. In the 56 lessons in the six subjects inspected, the grades awarded for teaching at KS3 and KS4 were:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
7%	50%	39%	2%	2%

110. Overall grades for the quality of teaching in the 66 lessons observed at KS3 and KS4 were:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
6%	55%	36%	1.5%	1.5%

111. Teaching has good features and no important shortcomings in 57% of all lessons in the six subjects inspected. This is significantly below the figure for all-Wales

inspections for 2005-06 when 69% of lessons were judged to be a Grade 1 or 2. It is well below WAG's vision into Action target for 2010 that the quality of teaching assessed by Estyn be graded 2 or better in 80% of classes.

112. In the subjects inspected, some outstanding features were observed in the teaching of history and Welsh first language. Pupils participated fully in all learning tasks and activities. Teachers' expectations were high and there was an ethos of effective co-operation within the groups.
113. In slightly over 50% of the lessons, teaching has good features and these include:
- good subject knowledge and recent teaching and learning expertise;
  - a good range of structured activities and teaching techniques which engage all pupils, and
  - suitably differentiated tasks promote active learning across the ability range.
114. Many of these lessons develop pupils' previous knowledge, skills and understanding and ensure good progression.
115. There are shortcomings in the quality of teaching in a substantial number of subjects. These shortcomings include:
- pupils not given sufficient opportunities to be actively involved in their learning;
  - insufficient use made of ICT to enhance pupils' learning across both key stages;
  - pupils not informed of how they are progressing, and
  - underdevelopment of key skills in teachers' planning and classroom activities.
116. In several lessons pupils are supported sensitively and effectively.
117. Good opportunities are provided to develop pupils' awareness of the culture of Wales and pupils' age-related bilingual competence is developing well. The development of pupils' bilingual skills at KS3 is an outstanding feature.

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

118. Statutory requirements for the assessment and reporting of NC attainment and the regulations of examination boards are met in full.
119. In many cases pupils' progress files contain some relevant and recent information regarding their achievements and pupils set their own general improvement targets.
120. There is good practice in a minority of departments. This includes consistent, diagnostic feedback to pupils on specific assessment tasks and on-going, challenging advice on how to improve.
121. In many departments, however, the inconsistencies in the grades, levels and marks used do not provide pupils with a clear picture of their achievements nor how to improve.
122. Baseline information is mainly derived from KS2 assessments and Y7 standardised tests. This information is not currently used rigorously enough to provide challenging targets for pupils.

123. Assessment for learning policies and practices, including pupil and peer-assessment are underdeveloped across the school. There are a few examples of good practice
124. The revised whole-school assessment policy is not currently embedded, and is inconsistently used by subject departments.

### Sixth form

125. In the six subjects inspected, the grades awarded for teaching in the sixth form were:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
13%	56%	31%	-	-

126. In the six subjects inspected, teaching was at least good with no important shortcomings in 69% of the 16 lessons observed.
127. Overall grades for the quality of teaching in all 20 lessons observed in the sixth form were:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
10%	60%	25%	5%	0%

128. Teaching in 5% of lessons has shortcomings in important areas. The above percentages need to be analysed with caution as they represent a very small sample.
129. An outstanding feature of teaching in a minority of subjects is the thorough knowledge teachers have of their subjects. The planning and delivery of lessons take full account of individual students' needs and individuals' research skills are rigorously promoted. Many outstanding features were observed in Welsh first language lessons.
130. Many of the shortcomings identified at KS3 and KS4 are also present in a significant minority of lessons in the sixth form. These shortcomings include:
- long teacher introductions with little involvement by students;
  - a slow pace to the students' activities, and
  - insufficient opportunities for students to develop as independent learners.
131. The use of formal and informal assessment is more effective in the sixth form than at KS3 or KS4 and there is less variation in procedures and practices.
132. Teachers have a good knowledge of the assessment requirements of examination boards.
133. Much of the marking is detailed and some of the feedback identifies strengths and weaknesses and shows how improvements can be made. However, rigorous assessments based on shared criteria are inconsistent across the school.
134. In most cases, recording of progress is clear and accurate and reports to parents are detailed and informative.

**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**

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

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

136. The school delivers a series of well-structured programmes designed to allow pupils to achieve their academic and social potential. The school is successful with the majority of its pupils in this objective. Pupils are not encouraged sufficiently to make academic improvements in their performance year on year. Pupils gain in confidence as they progress through the school. Not all have the opportunity to gain appropriate qualifications in external examinations.

137. A broad, balanced and flexible curriculum is provided for pupils in KS3 and KS4. The time allocation for each subject is appropriate. There is a degree of liaison with the feeder primary schools but curricular links are being developed. National and local employers are used to good effect to enrich pupils' experiences.

138. At KS4, the range of subject options is good. These are further increased by courses run jointly with Coleg Meirion Dwyfor or, off-site, at the college. These courses include hairdressing and building and they provide pupils with more flexibility in their studies. All courses lead to external accreditation. Insufficient support, in the form of catch-up lessons, is given to these pupils when they return from their college course to school.

139. The curriculum covers basic and key skills. These are included in schemes of work, but are underdeveloped in the planning process. In Welsh first language, these skills are developing well and form an integral part of the lesson. The school is developing these aspects in other curricular areas.

140. The school provides extra-curricular activities in many areas such as physical education, games and music. These experiences assist in raising pupils' standards and make valid contributions to their personal and social development. The formation of the school orchestra has improved the playing skills of the pupils involved. Many pupils are involved annually with the alternating music show or Christmas concert. The school enters pupils for competitions in the Urdd eisteddfodau. Successes are achieved up to and including national standards. Pupils' experiences are further enhanced by visits within the United Kingdom and Europe. During the week of the inspection the French Y10 group had a successful video conferencing session with a school in Australia.

141. The school successfully promotes pupils' personal development by placing a strong emphasis on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Elements of these permeate all lessons. In music, there is a unit in Y8 on world music and time is also spent on Welsh music. Welsh culture is promoted in Welsh, religious education, geography and history.

142. Learning experiences are enriched by effective partnerships. Parental and community links are good as are links with other schools and colleges. In previous years, the school has been involved with initial teacher training institutions.

143. The curriculum provides good progression between KS3 and KS4. Progression to the sixth form is dependent on pupils' option choices which, at present, focus predominantly on academic studies.

144. The school meets its legal and course requirements, including provision for a daily act of worship. Assemblies are an integral part of the curriculum and are enriched by presenters from the community such as the police liaison officer. Religious education is now provided in the sixth form and this meets statutory requirements.
145. Careers education is taught successfully within the personal and social education (PSE) programme and is an embedded feature of the curriculum. Lessons provide good support for pupils and further their opportunities to meet employers' needs. There is good support for the school from Careers Wales. Enterprise and Young Enterprise activities are wide ranging and very beneficial to the pupils. Individual pupils have received grant support to establish their own businesses, including breeding pigs, chickens, selling motor bikes and jewellery.

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

146. Pupils' work-experience opportunities are relevant to future aspirations. Employers' detailed written reports have been complimentary, especially of the ways in which pupils have behaved during this period. Sixth-form students receive interview experiences, visit universities and attend careers' fairs.
147. The school addresses social disadvantage and stereotyping in a positive way. Teaching and support programmes encourage all pupils to receive the full benefit from their studies. Equal opportunities exist, but not for all pupils, especially those that are restricted to entry-level examinations in some subjects.
148. Bilingualism is a strong aspect of the school and the majority of the teaching is conducted through the medium of Welsh which is the predominant language of the school. English-speaking pupils who attend the school are soon conversant in Welsh and understand all the aspects covered. Opportunities exist for children to enhance further their linguistic skills through the numerous clubs and activities provided.
149. Pupils are aware of sustainable development and global citizenship issues. There is a paper-recycling bin in every classroom and the school used to recycle cans. Pupils' understanding of sustainable issues is widened through coverage in some other curricular areas. They have been involved in several sustainable projects in recent years.
150. The school reflects national priorities for lifelong learning. The school is developing the Learning Pathways provision for 14–19 year olds in conjunction with the local network. The school has developed vocational provision in KS4.

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

<b>Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
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151. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.

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

152. The school is a caring community with a close-knit family ethos where teachers and pupils know each other well. This is a strength of the school. Parents, carers and employers confirm that they appreciate the constructive and respectful relationships they have with the school staff. Their views are sought and considered.

153. Planning and management of care arrangements and support services are efficient and effectively support the pupils in school.
154. Pupils are given clear guidance and support of good quality when they make choices at the end of Y9 and Y11. Comprehensive information is produced in booklet form and is accessible to all concerned.
155. Pastoral liaison of high quality between the school and feeder primary schools is an outstanding feature. Year 6 pupils visit the school on a number of well-planned occasions throughout the year. The head of Y7 regularly consults primary headteachers and visits the schools frequently to address the pupils. However, curricular links are less well developed.
156. New pupils enter the school with confidence and settle in quickly and happily. They are very well prepared for the pastoral and curricular opportunities available to them.
157. The guidance programme that includes health education, PSE, and careers education is well structured. This programme is well prepared and implemented by the co-ordinator.
158. The PSE programme is being developed successfully throughout the school and takes account of the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) Frameworks for PSE and careers education and guidance. However, the delivery of the programme is not monitored closely to ensure that the good quality of PSE taught in some classes is consistent throughout the school.
159. Pupils with SEN are well supported by outside agencies.
160. The local youth service and community police force provide good support to staff.
161. Procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance lack rigour. Procedures for monitoring classroom attendance are inconsistent. Heads of year do not play a leading role in following up absences and visits from the education welfare officer (EWO) are inadequate. Intervention regarding pupils' absence occurs on the third day. There is no first-day call system. Pupils' punctuality is monitored more closely.
162. Pupils with behavioural problems are carefully tracked by tutors and heads of year.
163. The school's reward system is applied effectively and parents are informed of good effort and achievement.
164. The partnership between the school careers department and external careers agencies is very productive. At the end of KS4, pupils are given good careers' advice.
165. The school participates in the Healthy School's initiative. Pupils are fully aware of what is required for healthy eating and the need to be responsible for their own physical well-being.
166. Safety checks are carried out regularly and many opportunities are taken, especially within PSE lessons, to raise safety issues for discussion.
167. All members of staff have received some first-aid training. Currently, three teachers possess additional first-aid qualifications.
168. The quality of the pupils' experiences and awareness of the need for personal safety are enriched by inputs from outside agencies. These include the police, health care professionals, the business community, Rotary Club and local clergy.

169. Procedures for the protection of pupils and students and for dealing with appeals and complaints are in place, effective and followed correctly by staff. The named person with overall responsibility is a member of the SMT.
170. The school council's role is underdeveloped and is ineffective. Pupils' and students' views are not taken into consideration.
171. The school complies with the requirements of Child Protection procedures.

### **The quality of provision for additional learning needs**

172. The quality of provision for additional learning needs is good for those pupils who are withdrawn for specialist teaching. However, the support for pupils with additional needs in the mainstream classes is inconsistent in its quality of planning and teaching for pupils of differing abilities. In some subjects such as history and Welsh first language, there are examples of good practice. Learning assistants are employed to work with individual pupils in accordance with the pupils' statements.
173. Those pupils with additional learning needs who are disapplied from French follow an Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) course or lessons which concentrate on raising their language and mathematical skills.
174. The SEN department's response to the Code of Practice is good. The SEN register is regularly reviewed. Each pupil with SEN has an individual education plan (IEP) that relates to his or her individual needs. IEP targets are shared with pupils and their parents. These are reviewed regularly. Statements of SEN are reviewed annually.
175. The special educational needs' co-ordinator (SENCO) provides subject departments with comprehensive individual learning targets and updates on pupils with SEN.
176. The SENCO has thorough and regular contact with partner primary schools prior to transfer and is involved in the continuous assessment. As a result the planning for accurate individual provision is good.
177. There is a definite whole-school strategy to improve pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties.
178. Clear and well-applied procedures succeed in dealing with pupils with behavioural difficulties. The colour coded card system is tiered and works well; it is consistently applied by staff and has high credibility among pupils. Parents are involved if initial sanctions do not succeed in raising the level of individual behaviour.
179. The school is adequately adapted to meet the needs of disabled pupils and staff. Although there is no lift to the first floor there are reciprocal facilities on the ground floor and video-conferencing has been made available.

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

180. The quality of the school's provision for equal opportunities is developing.
181. The school's policies and support systems respond sensitively to the diversity of pupils' social, cultural and educational needs.
182. In most cases, in KS3, the school promotes equality of access to the whole curriculum. The sixth-form curriculum is limited. In KS4, in science and English, some pupils are restricted to entry-level examinations.

183. There is some monitoring of the discrepancy between the assessment results of boys and girls but not enough is done to tackle boys' underachievement.
184. All subject options are available to boys and girls and the school carefully avoids stereotyping when advising pupils on their options at the end of KS3 and KS4.
185. There are policies and procedures to promote an understanding and tolerance of cultural differences. There is a good understanding of different faiths in the religious education department. More attention is now being given to multicultural awareness throughout the school.
186. The school has effective measures to deal with bullying and racial discrimination and the pupils have responded positively and constructively.
187. The school has undertaken measures to comply with the Disability Equality scheme.
188. The educational and social needs of looked-after children are well met.

## **Leadership and management**

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

#### **Grade 4: Some good features, but shortcomings in important areas**

189. The school awarded itself a Grade 3 in its self-evaluation report. The inspection team disagrees because there are shortcomings in important areas. These are:
  - ineffective communication between the headteacher and staff in fostering a sense of common purpose;
  - insufficient progress in aspects of senior management since the last inspection;
  - inconsistencies and shortcomings at middle management level;
  - insufficient progress in the key issues for action since the last inspection, and
  - inadequate self-evaluation and appropriate early forward-planning.

#### **How well leaders and managers provide clear direction and promote high standards**

190. Communication between the headteacher, middle management and staff is ineffective. Staff are unclear about the vision for and the development of the school. Neither is there consistency in fostering a common sense of purpose regarding strategies.
191. Staff and managers are unclear of expectations. Consequently, expectations are inconsistently applied. Monitoring of practice is not sufficiently rigorous. The extent of the shortcomings has not been adequately addressed by senior and middle managers.
192. Policies have been written and systems have been established to bring about consistency. These are not being monitored rigorously and they are not being implemented consistently. They are currently only having a limited impact on practice. There is no whole-school policy for teaching and learning. There is no specific person with the overall responsibility for ensuring consistency for whole-school assessment including the target-setting processes across the school.

193. Generic job descriptions exist, but staff with management responsibilities are unsure of their accountability and what exactly is expected of them. There is lack of clarity especially in relation to the role of heads of faculty and heads of year.
194. The standards which pupils achieve in subjects across the curriculum are variable. There is insufficient progress in pupils' attainment in KS3/4 and there are inconsistencies in the management of teaching, learning and assessment across the curriculum. Strategic monitoring of these managerial aspects by senior managers and curriculum leaders is variable.
195. Senior and middle managers, heads of year, form tutors and teaching staff do not monitor pupils' academic progress rigorously. They do not have access to Welsh Examination Database (WED) data to recognise underachievement. There are significant issues in the way in which data are used to identify underachievement and monitor pupils' progress.
196. There has been insufficient progress in the key issues since the last inspection. These issues have been identified in the school's self-evaluation report and have been incorporated in the 2007-10 school development plans. These issues include:
  - having consistent standards across all subjects;
  - closing the gap between boys' and girls' achievements;
  - strengthening the link between the SMT and individual departments, and
  - building on the good assessment procedures and self-evaluation practices that existed and disseminating good practice.
197. The school has given insufficient attention to prioritising and monitoring initiatives which have a direct impact on standards and teaching and learning. There is some very good and good practice evident in the Welsh, history and geography departments, but this has not been shared with all staff.
198. Each member of the SMT has specific roles which involve teaching and managerial responsibilities. In spite of their drive and enthusiasm, managers do not focus enough on managerial issues to raise standards.
199. Each member of the SMT has a high teaching commitment; one person has responsibility for careers, and is also head of Y11. Another has responsibilities as head of sixth form. The work-load agreement has only had a limited impact on the work-life balance of the SMT. There are indications that some initiatives are progressing, but appropriate support to individuals and departments is lacking.
200. These senior managers do not have clear managerial lines of responsibility for which they are accountable
201. Links between senior leaders and the faculties, departments and teams which they line manage, vary in their effectiveness. There is inconsistency in the degree of rigour with which the SMT assures quality and reviews the work of individual subject departments and teams.
202. Due to the variable quality of the heads of faculty, there is no consistency in driving forward collaboratively the agenda for school improvement.
203. The quality of leadership of middle managers is variable. In the six subjects inspected, there is very good practice in Welsh and good practice in history. In science and mathematics, good features outweigh shortcomings; in music and

modern foreign languages, there are good features but shortcomings in important areas.

204. The continuing professional development of middle managers is limited to attending conferences or courses run by examination boards. An assistant headteacher has received no staff development on management training despite being keen to do so. The quality of whole-school and middle management self-evaluation is developing, but currently, there is not a sufficiently robust self-critical culture. Monitoring is not rigorous and does not contribute sufficiently to planning for improvement.
205. The school actively promotes equality of opportunity for all, regardless of linguistic, cultural or social background. However, too many pupils are entered for Entry-level qualifications. Very few departments have a double entry policy where pupils may achieve a GCSE and or entry qualification.
206. The school has an established system of performance management. Targets are set for each individual teacher's professional development and one target for the whole-school development. However, there is no clear method for meeting the training needs of staff identified through performance management.
207. Outside of this process, heads of department do not formally monitor teaching and learning rigorously enough. Neither do they formalise nor record departmental meetings sufficiently. Strategic issues are not discussed in sufficient depth.
208. Heads of department are not involved in formal discussions with other managers from other faculties. Cross-fertilisation of ideas on a formal basis does not occur. The current management structure inhibits effective communication and a collegiate approach to strategic decision-making.
209. The school has incorporated several national priorities into its agenda for improvement. There are good features in the development of work-related education, healthy eating and lifestyles; very good entrepreneurial skills are developed. Sustainable issues are currently developing. Vocational pathways are established in KS4 but are in their infancy in the sixth form. The pastoral links with primary schools are good but curricular links are not.
210. The school's target-setting processes are insufficiently developed and inconsistent. Pupils are unaware of their targets and in many cases are not sufficiently clear on how to improve.

#### **How well governors or other supervisory bodies meet their responsibilities**

211. The expertise of governors is used effectively to some extent. They are aware of what is going on but are not acting objectively enough as critical friends of the school in addressing its shortcomings in important areas.
212. They see that self-evaluation is becoming more structured and is involved with the strategic development of the school. A member of the governing body links directly with the SEN department. Here, good working relationships have been developed.
213. Currently, governors are not involved with departmental monitoring nor with the self-evaluation processes.
214. Governors are provided with information by the headteacher and SMT. Departmental reports are not challenged rigorously.
215. All regulatory requirements are met.

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

### **Grade 4: Some good features, but shortcomings in important areas**

216. The school awarded itself a Grade 2 in its self-evaluation report. The inspection team disagrees because there are shortcomings in important areas. These relate specifically to:

- self-evaluation practices which are not yet sufficiently developed across the school, and
- insufficient progress in sharing the good self-evaluation practices identified at the last inspection.

### **How effectively the school's performance is monitored and evaluated**

217. The school's self-evaluation report is a detailed document, outlining strengths and areas for development. However, it lacks evidence drawn from robust self-evaluation procedures. Its grades differ from those awarded by the inspection team in five of the seven key questions by one or two grades.

218. There is no whole-school self-evaluation policy. Consequently, there is no common understanding of the procedures for self-evaluation within the school. The school has no timetable to signpost the self-evaluation cycle. A common format for presenting self-evaluation documentation, lesson observation and scrutiny of work is lacking.

219. Self-evaluation processes in a minority of faculties and departments are well established and robust. However, in the majority of cases, self-evaluation is not fully informed from a rigorous system which includes regular lesson observations, scrutiny of work and interviews with pupils. There is inconsistency and a lack of understanding at both faculty and department levels in self-evaluation procedures.

220. Self-evaluation at whole-school, department and faculty level, is based on assertions rather than on hard evidence in the majority of cases. Generally, a self-critical culture is not well established across the school as a whole.

221. Pupils are consulted on a number of issues through the school council. However, the process of consultation is not yet sufficiently developed to include pupils' views on wider school policy and they do not inform the self-evaluation process in a formal way. Similarly, the views of parents and other contributors to the school are not formally elicited nor formally channelled into the self-evaluation process.

222. There is a lack of rigour, common understanding and ownership in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance. The faculty structure is relatively new and there is a lack of clarity between the original departmental structure and the faculty system in the self-evaluation and monitoring process.

### **The effectiveness of planning for improvement**

223. The school's development plan set out its aims and priorities over the next three years. These priorities and targets are not based on the results of robust self-evaluation procedures drawn from faculty and departmental reviews.

224. Departmental and faculty development plans exist, but in the majority of instances, these are of inconsistent quality and are not informed closely enough by the self-evaluation process.

225. The setting of targets for pupils is inconsistent between departments and faculties. Targets are not made clear enough to pupils and are not monitored systematically.
226. Financial resources are planned for the continuing professional development of staff. Some priorities within the school development plans are fully costed.
227. Self-evaluation procedures and development planning do not impact significantly on teaching and learning within the school.
228. The school has made some progress in the key issues of the last inspection in:
- raising the standards of achievement at KS3 in ICT and history, mathematics in KS4 and history in the sixth form, and
  - ensuring that the statutory requirements for daily corporate worship are satisfied.
229. There are important shortcomings in the progress made in the following areas:
- formalising and strengthening the link between the SMT and individual departments;
  - building on the good assessment procedures and self-evaluation procedures that existed in some departments;
  - disseminating the good practice across the school;
  - improving the standards of achievement in modern foreign languages at KS3, and
  - closing the gap between boys' and girls' results in the external assessments and examinations.

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

#### **Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

230. The school awarded itself a Grade 2 in its self-evaluation report. The inspection team disagrees because good features outweigh shortcomings. The shortcomings include:
- inadequate resources to departments, and
  - inefficient use of staff time and inadequate training.

#### **The adequacy, suitability and use made of staffing, learning resources and accommodation**

231. The school employs sufficient suitably-qualified and experienced teachers to teach all aspects of the curriculum. Due to the small size of the school, some teachers work outside their main subject specialisms.
232. There is sufficient administrative and technical staff to enable the school to function effectively. However, the school does not employ sufficient learning support staff for pupils with ALN taught in the mainstream.
233. The school allocates one-point-one percent of its budget for the purchase of classroom resources. This allocation is based on the number of pupils taught and the nature of the subject. It is distributed fairly. Nevertheless, at less than £50 per pupil per year, it represents the barest minimum of spending, and in several subject areas, books or other resources are insufficient or dated.

234. The school does not maintain its own library, or resource centre. This limits pupils' ability to carry out research tasks. The use of the community's library that is situated on the premises is limited to the loan of library books. There are insufficient computers and other ICT resources for general class use.
235. The school buildings and grounds form an adequate environment for learning. There are sufficient, suitably-sized classrooms and other specialist areas. The exterior is well maintained, but internally the buildings are dated. In some areas, they do not form a stimulating learning environment. Access for persons with disabilities is good. This is because the ground floor has been suitably adapted and specialist facilities on the first floor have been duplicated at ground level.

### **How efficiently resources are managed to provide value for money**

236. The school prides itself on employing the highest number of teachers possible. It bases the number of teachers employed on the numbers used in previous years, rather than on an annual calculation of need. The current pupil teacher ratio at 14.7:1 is much lower than the national average and this is reflected in a significant number of small classes. Consequently, staff are not always deployed economically and the school has insufficient money available to spend on resources, such as computers, a library of its own and books to support the curriculum.
237. The school has met the workload agreement and teachers have sufficient time for planning and preparation. However, members of the SMT carry significant teaching responsibilities. This restricts their ability to undertake their management roles effectively.
238. The school has consulted appropriately and developed plans for re-modelling the staffing structure for teaching and learning responsibilities. These plans propose an unnecessarily complex middle management structure that does not deploy staff effectively.
239. There are procedures to identify staff development needs. However, there is no clear and transparent policy for meeting these needs. Most individual training is to keep staff up-to-date with examination requirements. The funds available are very limited and not enough use has been made of grants available from the General Teaching Council for Wales (GTCW). The induction of newly-qualified teachers is managed correctly.
240. Criminal Records Bureau checks are carried out in accordance with UA policy.
241. Maintaining the sixth form is an important priority for the school. Post-16 provision is cost-effective; the allocation of staff and other resources to this area does not detract from the provision for KS3 and KS4 pupils.
242. The financial management of the school is good. The headteacher and the administrative officer oversee the school expenditure in a careful and methodical way. The governing body monitors spending appropriately. The most recent auditors' report was favourable and the few, minor shortcomings that it identified have been addressed.
243. Given the standards that pupils achieve and the shortcomings in strategic management the school does not, at present, offer good value for money.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

### Welsh first language

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

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

**Sixth form: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features**

244. Examination results at GCSE in 2005 in both language and literature were well above national and local averages for passes at grades A\*-C and A\*/A. In 2006, examination results at GCSE in both language and literature were well below national and local averages for passes at grades A\*-C and A\*/A.

245. Examination results at A level in 2005 were well above the national and local averages for passes at grades A/B. In 2006 examination results were below national and local averages for passes at grades A/B.

### KS3 and KS4

#### Good features

246. In KS3 and KS4, standards of listening across the ability range are good, and the vast majority of pupils responds clearly to the teachers' questions and the remarks of their peers.

247. The majority of pupils in both key stages provides good and confident oral responses, with the most able offering extended responses in an appropriate language and register.

248. Increasingly through the key stages, standards are good when the pupils co-operate enthusiastically in pairs and groups to solve problems, present and exchange information, reason and express an opinion. In impromptu role-play, they respond with confidence to questions from their peers.

249. In KS3 and KS4, the more able succeed in maintaining a lively scene of oral activity in a disciplined manner. The standard is very good when the comments are progressive and extended and have a firm grasp of syntax.

250. Reading standards are good in both key stages. The majority of pupils, across the ability range, shows an increasing ability to read aloud clearly and purposefully.

251. In KS3, many enjoy reading for pleasure and they can exhibit a meaningful understanding of events and characters in a text which matches their ability. Their ability to succeed in collecting information from various sources is good and they present it in an orderly manner. By using information technology skills, they show a good understanding of the needs of an audience and this promotes standards. By the end of the key stage, pupils' ability to analyse and compare texts has developed well.

252. In KS4, pupils respond intelligently to literature. When discussing novels and poetry, standards are good when there is detailed evidence quoted and appropriate terminology. The most able pupils in Y11 demonstrate maturity when developing their analytical thinking and responding creatively to literary materials.

253. All the pupils write in a range of linguistic genders and for different purposes in KS3 and KS4 and standards are good. The standard of work improves in terms of length, content and expression from year to year with the good practice of

purposeful planning and model examples increasing their understanding of the genders and contributing to raising standards.

254. Throughout KS3, individuals achieve very good standards when expressing views and writing creatively. By KS4, the standard of writing at length, by the more able, is very good and the concepts expressed are mature with a varied use of language to create effects.
255. Pupils' ability to evaluate their own work and that of their peers against specific criteria, both orally and in writing, contributes to raising standards and to refining their learning skills.
256. Pupils with SEN achieve good standards across the skills appropriate for their abilities.

### **Shortcomings**

257. In KS3, the extended oral skills of some pupils are not sufficiently developed. In these instances, some pupils have difficulties in holding a co-ordinated group discussion, and extending their responses to express their ideas in detail.
258. In both key stages, mutations, spelling and verb endings cause problems and impair on the correctness and the fluency of written expression of many average ability pupils.
259. In KS4, a small minority of pupils works in too leisurely a fashion and achieves less than expected within the specified time. In these examples, the work is less developed and less detailed.

### **Sixth form**

#### **Outstanding features**

260. The ability of all the students, across the range, to respond orally at length when working in pairs and groups using relevant vocabulary and terms appropriate to the task is outstanding. They successfully develop and change the direction of the discussion, reason intelligently and hone each others' discussion skills. Another outstanding feature is the original and progressive remarks they offer when challenged.
261. The wide range of background reading in Y12 and Y13 supports and extends the students' understanding of the texts studied. In Y13, whilst discussing novel themes, they can enhance their responses by introducing detailed evidence of a variety of literary works with purposeful cross-referencing.
262. Students, across the ability range, develop their critical skills throughout the sixth form. The outstanding feature is their ability to analyse intelligently challenging texts from different periods, whilst understanding what is implied in the text. In Y12, when they respond to drama, students succeed in thinking independently with an in-depth understanding of characters, with appropriate interpretation and quotations. In Y13, when interpreting Middle Welsh text, they succeed in displaying a firm understanding of the concepts and summarize complicated facts clearly when discussing the significance of themes.

#### **Good features**

263. Students in Y12 and Y13 possess good awareness of the requirements of different linguistic registers and much of the work has been thoughtfully produced. The majority structures literary essays and presents the information cohesively,

interpreting effectively, making meaningful use of quotations that have been woven appropriately into the structure of their essays and displaying good linguistic resources.

264. Year 12 students' understanding of the essentials of grammar is developing well and Y13 students successfully apply their grammatical knowledge intelligently as they translate naturally.
265. The students' creative work is of a good standard. The content is original, full of imagination and purposely planned with praiseworthy linguistic expression and variations in the styles.

### **Shortcomings**

266. There are no significant short comings.

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

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

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

267. Examination results at GCSE in 2006 were above national and local averages for passes at grades A\*-C but below both at grades A\*/A. These results represent good achievement for a considerable number of pupils.

268. Examination results at A level in 2006 were below the national and the local authority averages at grades A/B but for the small cohort involved, true comparisons are difficult to make.

### **KS3 and KS4**

#### **Good features**

269. At KS3, pupils develop their understanding of the subject throughout the key stage. The pupils with SEN are successful in this subject.

270. The work the pupils complete is generally accurate. They deal effectively with numbers, decimals and fractions and classify them appropriately. They understand the properties of prime, square and triangular numbers according to their ability and they can estimate answers.

271. They can name different shapes and find their area and volume successfully. They apply various formulae appropriately. Good work is completed in the practical work (Ma1) covered and this assists in their understanding of the topic being considered.

272. Pupils of middle to higher ability deal effectively with Pythagoras' theorem and can apply this to find the size of angles and lengths of sides. Work on simplifying expressions in algebra is accurate.

273. Pupils understand the meaning of mean, median and mode and they deal correctly with probability. They can find locus of a point and apply this to solve problems. Their ability to find the axis of symmetry of a given shape is good and they can also determine the ratio between two numbers and express this in lowest terms.

274. The most able pupils complete a substantial amount of work with good examples seen of Ma1 work. The most able pupils can solve complex problems.

275. Pupils deal effectively with gradient and can find its value between two given co-ordinates and can find the gradients on quadratic graphs.
276. The higher sets deal effectively with surds and can simplify such expressions. Work completed on circle theorems is used to determine missing angles in relevant shapes.
277. Work is completed on algebraic fractional statements and equations and they can reduce these to lowest terms. Pupils are confident in dealing with simultaneous and quadratic equations and can find algebraic factors.
278. In trigonometry, pupils can use the ratios of sine, cosine and tangent in right-angle triangles and can apply these. Pupils of lower ability successfully complete the course and have an acceptable mathematical ability.

### **Shortcomings**

279. There are examples of incomplete or missing work in some books.
280. Some pupils are slow to recall work covered previously. In some cases, work that is presented is untidy. Both of these shortcomings can affect their ability to revise their work for tests or external examinations.

### **Sixth form**

#### **Good features**

281. In pure mathematics, students are able to differentiate and integrate correctly and apply these techniques to determine the gradient at a given point in a curve or to determine the area under a curve.
282. They are equally able to apply correct methods to determine the co-ordinates of stationary points on a graph or to determine the mid-point of straight lines. They can solve cubic equations and deal correctly with surds.
283. In statistics students deal effectively with probability, using formulae to solve problems. They are able to use the binomial theorem in this context. They understand averages and can find values for the interquartile range and standard deviation by using the standard formula.
284. In mechanics, they can apply the equations of motion in a different context. They understand the work covered on moments and can determine the centre of gravity. Work is covered on the co-efficient of resolution.

### **Shortcomings**

285. There are no significant shortcomings.

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

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

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

286. Examination results at GCSE in 2006 were below local and equal to national averages for passes at grades A\*-C. The data suggest that several pupils obtaining C or D grades are capable of higher grades.
287. Examination results at A level in 2006 and 2007 were well above the national and local averages for passes at grades A/B in biology and physics, above in 2006 but

below in 2007 in chemistry. The results represent good achievement in biology and physics and are inconsistent in chemistry.

### **KS3**

#### **Good features**

288. Pupils have sound knowledge and understanding of scientific processes. They can recall and describe aspects of life processes, materials and their properties and physical processes.
289. Most pupils are good, and in some cases very good at reasoning and applying previously learnt knowledge to explaining new situations. They also make links between science and its application to technology, industry and the environment.
290. Pupils are learning key scientific terms and use them accurately to describe and explain what they know, both orally and in writing. They are able to calculate well, which supports their progress in science.
291. They carry out practical work to a very high standard. They are highly organised and work with confidence and care, paying very good attention to health and safety procedures. They know how to use equipment and apparatus and observe and measure accurately, using appropriate units. The standard of scientific drawing is good.
292. They record and analyse data in tables and use it to plot graphs. The standard of graphicacy is high. Most pupils can plan a scientific investigation and understand about a 'fair test', and can draw conclusions from their results.
293. Pupils with SEN make good progress.

#### **Shortcomings**

294. Some of the more able pupils do not make enough progress in the time available.
295. Some pupils are not able to extract information from text

### **KS4**

#### **Good features**

296. Pupils show confident, secure recall of aspects of biology, chemistry and physics and good understanding of scientific processes. The more able pupils can explain, both orally and in writing, complex and abstract scientific concepts.
297. Pupils are good, and in some cases very good at reasoning and applying previously learned knowledge to predict and explain new facts and ideas.
298. They use scientific terminology appropriately, both orally and in writing. They know that science contributes to society in a wide variety of contexts and have an awareness of its impact on industry and the environment.
299. Their practical work is good. They are highly organised and work with confidence and care, paying very good attention to health and safety procedures. They use equipment and apparatus correctly and observe and measure accurately, using appropriate units. The standard of scientific drawing is good.
300. They can construct tables for recording data, and use this data to present the appropriate graph from which to draw conclusions. Pupils understand the need for and the concept of reliability when collecting results. Their skills of data analysis and deduction are good. Numeracy skills are good and this supports progress in science.

301. Pupils with SEN make good progress.

### **Shortcomings**

302. In some classes, pupils do not reach their potential in their acquisition of knowledge and understanding and are underachieving. This applies in particular to the middle and less able pupils.

303. Too many pupils are entered for Entry-level examinations when they are capable of sitting GCSE examinations.

304. In some classes, pupils do not make adequate progress in the time given. Time is wasted on low-level activities. The standards of pupils' work are low.

305. Pupils are not developing adequately the terms and skills, such as evaluating, required for the 'how science works' aspect of the new GCSE specifications.

306. Some pupils' progress is hindered by lack of feedback, by not knowing how well they are doing or how to improve.

### **Sixth form**

#### **Good features**

307. Students show good understanding and recall of previously acquired knowledge. They use scientific terminology correctly, both orally and in writing.

308. They are able to integrate and apply current learning to previous work, which promotes their overall understanding of the subject. They understand the significance of key scientific ideas.

309. Practical work is considered, accurate and precise. Due attention is paid to health and safety protocols. Scientific drawing and the use of diagrams to communicate is good. Students are able to link observations from practical work to the underlying theory.

310. Numeracy and mathematical skills are very competent and support all aspects of biology, chemistry and physics. Extended written work is fluent, showing students' ability to express and explain complex and abstract scientific ideas and models.

#### **Shortcomings**

311. Students' progress in understanding is occasionally hindered by a lack of confidence in group discussion.

312. The rate of progress in chemistry is slow and students' Knowledge is insecure.

### **Modern foreign languages**

**Key Stage 3: Grade 4 - Some good features but shortcomings in important areas**

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

313. GCSE results have been good over the past few years. They compare favourably with local and national figures but these data do not give significant information about the subject as the percentage of pupils continuing their studies in KS4 remains well below the national average.

### **KS3**

#### **Good features**

314. The most able pupils work at appropriate NC levels in attainment targets 1, 3 and 4.

315. All pupils show an increasing awareness of the grammar of the target language and many are able to:
- identify and use different tenses (past, present and future), and
  - understand gender and agreement.
316. Most pupils throughout the key stage are able to produce extended writing using support materials and tightly-structured writing frames.
317. Pupils are able to read and identify key points from short passages in the target language.
318. A minority of pupils in each year group initiates exchanges in the target language by recycling previously-acquired words and phrases.

### **Shortcomings**

319. Pupil behaviour impacts negatively on standards of achievement. Pupils in these classes:
- do not work at appropriate NC levels, nor
  - make satisfactory progress.
320. Pupils do not have enough opportunity to hear the target language in lessons and this impacts negatively on listening and speaking skills in all year groups.
321. Pupils do not make sufficient progress in speaking. Their pronunciation is poor and they continue to make basic errors throughout the key stage. Many are barely intelligible and struggle to produce dialogues of two or three exchanges.
322. Many pupils struggle to recall individual words and phrases from previous lessons and topics.
323. Pupils do not show initiative in using the target language or use the target language spontaneously. They often respond to questions with single words or short phrases.

## **KS4**

### **Good features**

324. Pupils' written course work is of a good standard in both communication and quality. Pupils show increasing awareness of the grammar of the target language. In their written work they are able to:
- use past, present, future and conditional tenses appropriately;
  - extend sentences by using link words, and
  - justify opinions.
325. Pupils are able to read and understand passages of authentic French and pick out the main points.
326. Pupils in Y10 are able, with support, to prepare and present extended speech. The use of the ICT video conferencing facility has impacted positively on pupils' speaking skills.

### **Shortcomings**

327. Inadequate use of the target language results in a negative impact on standards in:
- listening skills, and

- pupils' ability to deal with unpredictable language.
328. Pupils in both Y10 and Y11 continue to make some basic mistakes in pronunciation and intonation.
329. Pupils do not show initiative in using the target language and some struggle to recall and recycle key words and phrases.

## History

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

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

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

330. Examination results at GCSE in the last two years have been above the national average for passes at grades A\* - C and A\*/A. These results represent good achievement for these pupils.
331. Examination results at AS and A level in the last two years have been above the national average for passes at grades A/B. These results represent good achievement for these pupils.

### KS3

#### Good features

332. Pupils' work demonstrates that they are aware of chronology, and the majority of them can place the events within the correct historical time scale and are aware of the importance of chronology in discussing important developments.
333. The majority of pupils across the ability range shows sound knowledge and understanding of the period studied and many are able to recall previous knowledge to reinforce their understanding. They are able to make comparisons and connections between the main events and developments studied and assess their importance.
334. With very few exceptions, all pupils across the key stage are aware of the importance of evidence and its reliability. Many are able to recognise and justify the validity and value of different types of evidence. They are also aware that there are different interpretations and representations of past events in history.
335. Pupils with SEN work at the correct level.
336. Pupils demonstrate a sound knowledge of historical terminology and concept and discuss historical concepts confidently. The majority of learners can communicate effectively, according to age and ability, using a variety of genres, in both oral and written work.

#### Shortcomings

337. The lack of concentration by a very few pupils affects the standard of work achieved.

### KS4

338. Pupils demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding of the period studied. Most are confident in placing complex events, issues and ideas within a chronological framework, and are aware of how events in the past have helped frame the present.

339. Pupils are able to understand how various events in the past have effected change, with many able to distinguish between long-term and short-term causal factors. They can present the factors in order of importance and can recall knowledge and understanding gained previously.
340. Pupils demonstrate skill in being able to extract accurate and relevant information from a variety of historical sources. They are able to communicate their findings in the appropriate depth and in a variety of ways, to the relevant audience, both orally and in written tasks.
341. With very few exceptions, pupils deal with historical set tasks in a well-informed way and are confident in their use of historical terminology and concepts. They produce good written work, in line with their age and ability.

### **Shortcomings**

342. The lack of concentration of a very few pupils affects the standard of work achieved.

### **Sixth form**

343. Students in Y13 demonstrate impressive depth of knowledge and understanding of the personalities and the issues being studied. They present well-researched historical argument confidently in oral presentations. They are confident in effectively challenging various historical perspectives and can provide a range of alternative perspectives.
344. Students in Y12 and Y13 are able to extrapolate, analyse and evaluate a range of historical interpretations, and are able to pass judgement on the strengths and weaknesses of the proposition under discussion using their depth of knowledge. They are comfortable in their use of historical terms and concepts.
345. Essay work and course work show that students are able to synthesize historical articles and documents and, using various sources, can construct sound historical arguments. Many students provide examples of well-constructed, well-balanced and well-argued answers. They deal with set tasks in a well-informed way, and are confident in their use of historical terminology and concepts.

### **Shortcomings**

346. There are no significant shortcomings.

<b>Music</b>
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### **Key Stage 3: Grade 3 - Good features outweigh shortcomings**

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

### **Sixth Form: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings**

347. Examination results at GCSE in 2005 and in 2006 were broadly in line with local averages for grades A\*-C and A\*/A passes, but above national averages.
348. Examination results at A level in 2005 were broadly in line with local averages for passes at grades A/B and above national averages whilst in 2006 they were below local and national averages for grades A/B.

### **KS3**

#### **Good features**

349. Pupils sing with confidence, with good tone and clear diction when singing in unison. Most pupils can perform melodies on a number of different instruments

displaying accuracy and some expression. Some are able to perform with awareness of others or with a backing track in a class performance.

350. When composing, pupils can create interesting rhythmic ostinati on untuned percussion or compose melodic ostinati in groups.

351. Pupils appraise and evaluate music from a range of different music showing awareness of the instruments played and musical elements used.

### **Shortcomings**

352. Pupils are less confident singing in parts.

353. A number of pupils find difficulty in performing accurately and in time against a backing track or with awareness of others in a group performance.

354. Standards in composing generally are underdeveloped. The range of composing tasks is too narrow as there is limited use of music technology.

## **KS4**

### **Good features**

355. Pupils perform both vocally and instrumentally to a good standard showing expression and sensitivity.

356. In their compositions, pupils show imagination and a good understanding of harmony and structure. Many of these compositions are well supported by music technology.

357. Pupils are able to comment on style, composers and distinguishing features of twentieth-century music.

### **Shortcomings**

358. Not all pupils are confident discussing stylistic elements drawn from a wide range of music.

## **Sixth form**

### **Good features**

359. Students are able to perform to good, often very good, standards showing awareness of style and a sense of occasion.

360. In their compositions, students demonstrate imagination and a range of techniques, often enhanced by the use of music technology.

361. Students can discuss stylistic features of the Baroque period confidently and show a thorough understanding of the set work and background information.

### **Shortcomings**

362. A few students are less confident when discussing the music styles of the twentieth century and find difficulty with aspects of aural work.

## School's response to the inspection

The school is pleased with the positive findings by the inspectors, including the following:

- the pupils' good personal and social skills and their promotion;
- the high standards of behaviour;
- the good quality of care and support given to learners;
- that the school provides a broad, balanced and flexible curriculum for the majority of pupils which allow them to achieve their academic and social potential;
- the sixth form's academic and social successes and its cost-effectiveness;
- pupils' bilingual skills;
- the excellent features referred to in subject standards.

The staff and governors will respond, in detail to the recommendations for improvement, soon and form an action plan to include the following matters:

- leaders and managers to set a clearer direction for the school to raise standards and give learning and teaching skills the highest priority;
- evaluate standards and quality more thoroughly, including the effective use of data to raise expectations and standards and monitor work and observe lessons methodically and regularly;
- raise standards in French at KS3;
- spread good practice that already exists throughout the school to rationalise procedures and standards;
- respond to inspectors' recommendations to maintain good standards demonstrated in subjects and to get rid of the shortcomings made apparent.

The recommendations will be included in the school's development plan and we will proceed energetically, on the basis of a specific timetable, soon, to endeavour to make significant and substantial improvements in the matters referred to.

Because a number of the shortcomings have already been identified in the school's self-evaluation report and its development plan, some of the work has begun already.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Y Berwyn
School type	Secondary
Age range of pupils	11-18
Address of school	Heol Ffrydan Y Bala Gwynedd
Postcode	LL23 7RU
Telephone number	01678 520259
Headteacher	Mr Dewi Davies
Date of appointment	May 2004
Chair of governors	Mr Gwion Lynch
Reporting inspector	Mr W Gwyn Thomas
Dates of inspection	12-15 November 2007

## Appendix 2

### School data and indicators

Year group	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Total
Number of pupils	59	70	75	76	82	36	30	428

Total number of teachers			
Number of teachers	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
	28	4	30.7

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	13.9
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	-
Average teaching group size	24.4
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	81.2

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole school
Term 1	96.6	94.0	92.3	94.7	97.7	92.8	91.0	94.2
Term 2	90.9	92.9	89.5	89.6	91.5	89.4	90.7	90.6
Term 3	90.3	88.1	86.0	87.6	93.3	87.3	86.2	88.4

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	6.6
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

## Appendix 3

### National Curriculum Assessment Results

#### End of key stage 3:

National Curriculum Assessment KS3 results 2006																
Total number of pupils in Y9: 83																
Percentage of pupils at each level																
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	EP	
English	Teacher assessment	School	2.4	0	0	0	0	0	7.2	26.5	27.7	24.1	12.	0	0	
		National	0	1	0	0	0	1	7	22	36	24	8	0	0	
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	24	16	33.3	13.3	1.3	0	
		National	1	1	0	1	0	1	5	20	37	27	9	0	0	
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	2.4	0	0	0	2.4	30.1	16.9	27.7	20.5	0	0	
		National	0	1	0	0	0	1	7	18	25	30	16	1	0	
Science	Teacher assessment	School	2.4	0	0	0	0	0	4.8	30.1	32.5	24.1	6.0	0	0	
		National	0	1	0	0	0	1	6	19	34	28	11	0	0	

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

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 5 in mathematics, science and either English or Welsh (first language) by teacher assessment			
In the school	53	In Wales	58

#### Public Examination Results:

For pupils aged 15, results in GCSE, Entry Level Qualification, GNVQ and NVQ	
Number of pupils aged 15 on the school roll in January 2006	82
Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil	39.7

The percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2006:	School	UA	Wales
entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent	78	91	88
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	54	60	54
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	78	90	86
attained GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator)	44	47	40
entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or GCSE	100	100	98
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification equivalent	79	84	77
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G or the vocational qualification equivalent	98	98	93
attained no graded GCSE or the vocational qualification equivalent	2	2	7
attained one or more Entry level qualification only	0	2	3
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Foundation level or NVQ level 1	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	30
Number of pupils entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations or equivalent in 2006	29
Number of pupils entered for fewer than 2 GCE A levels or equivalent in 2006	1

	<b>School</b>	<b>UA</b>	<b>Wales</b>
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-C	77.4	74.4	68
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-E	100	87.7	94
Average points score per candidate entering 2 or more subjects	210.3	223.1	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		

## **Appendix 4**

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

Eleven Inspectors, including the school's nominee, spent a total of 37 days in the school and met as a team before the inspection.

These inspectors visited:

- 86 lessons or part lessons taught by teachers in all subjects;
- acts of collective worship;
- registration and form-tutor periods, and
- a few extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team met with:

- staff, governors and parents before the inspection began;
- senior managers, middle managers, teachers, support assistants and administrative staff;
- representatives of the community and other partners, and
- groups of pupils and students.

The team also considered:

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- 53 replies to the parents' questionnaire;
- comprehensive documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection, and
- a range of pupils' work in all subjects across the curriculum from Y7 to Y13.

After the inspection, inspectors held meetings with departments, senior managers and governors.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

<b>Team member</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
W Gwyn Thomas Registered Inspector	Key questions 1 and 5, Context, Summary, Recommendations, Appendix
Gwynoro Jones Lay Inspector	Second part of key question 3
Zac Davies	Key question 2
Peredur Francis	Mathematics and first part of key question 3
Meiriol Meredith Jones	Key question 4
Dylan Gwyer Roberts	Music and key question 6
David Hughes	Key question 7
Manon Sion	Welsh first language
Delyth Williams	Science
Bethan Whittall	History
Lynne Meiring	Modern foreign languages
Andrew Roberts	Nominee

### ***Acknowledgement***

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

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