Inspection under Section 28 of the Education Act 2005

A Report on the Quality of Education in

Ysgol Rhydygors
Llansteffan Road
Johnstown
Carmarthen
SA31 3NQ

School Number: 6697010

Date of Inspection: 15 September 2008

by

Glyn Griffiths
79321

Date of Publication: 17 November 2008

Under Estyn contract number: 1300108
Ysgol Rhydygors 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 Rhydygors took place between 15/09/08 and 18/09/08. An independent team of inspectors, led by Glyn Griffiths 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 1</th>
<th>good with outstanding features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>good features and no important shortcomings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>good features outweigh shortcomings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>some good features, but shortcomings in important areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>many important shortcomings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are three types of inspection.

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

For short inspections, there are no subject reports.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key stage 1</th>
<th>Year 1 and Year 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key stage 2</td>
<td>Year 3 to Year 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key stage 3</td>
<td>Year 7 to Year 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key stage 4</td>
<td>Year 10 and Year 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contents</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The quality of education and training</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interests of learners and the wider community?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership and management</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quality and standards?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resources?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh second language</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information technology</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design technology</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern foreign languages</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical education</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious education (including religious studies)</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School's response to the inspection</strong></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appendices</strong></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1  Basic information about the school</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  School data and indicators</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  National Curriculum assessments results</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  Evidence base of the inspection</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The nature of the provider

1. Ysgol Rhydygors is situated on the outskirts of the town of Carmarthen. The school serves the Carmarthenshire Education Authority (LEA) and some neighbouring authorities. It is a residential school for up to 54 boys and girls between the ages of eight and 16 years, formally identified as having significant emotional and behavioural difficulties. Although most of the pupils fall within the normal range of intellectual ability, many of them have experienced disruption in their earlier school years and may have fallen short of their true potential. All have statements of special educational needs. All of the pupils speak English as a first language.

2. Five pupils are ‘looked after’ by a local authority and two pupils come from out of county.

3. At the time of the inspection, there were 33 pupils on roll (30 boys and 3 girls), 16 in key stage 3, 15 in key stage 4 and two pupils in key stage 2. Pupils are split into six classes and the school provides for all of the subjects of the National Curriculum (NC). The school provides college-link courses for pupils in Y10 and work experience opportunities for those pupils in Y11.

4. There are 10 full-time teachers, including the headteacher, and three learning support assistants. There is a head of care and 11 residential staff who are split into four teams. A staff roster provides night supervision on a sleep-in basis.

5. There are no disapplications from any part of the NC and no pupils withdrawn from collective worship. A number of pupils are enabled to have integrated experiences in their local mainstream school. At the time of the inspection there were six pupils attending mainstream schools or colleges for part of each week as part of the school’s partnership with other providers.

6. The LEA Behaviour Support Service is housed on the school’s campus. This service is managed by the headteacher with the support of an additional deputy headteacher. The service provides behavioural intervention throughout the schools within the local authority area and is part of their continuum of support for pupils with significant emotional and behavioural difficulties. This service was not inspected as part of the school’s provision.

7. Entry to the school is governed by an LEA admissions panel, which meets regularly. This panel consists of the Director of Education or his representative and the headteacher of the school. All pupils will have been assessed by the LEA under the procedures established by the 1981 Education Act and subsequent guidance.

8. The headteacher and deputy headteacher were in post at the time of the last inspection. Three senior teachers have been appointed since the last inspection.

The school’s priorities and targets

9. The school’s aims are to:
   • provide a warm, stable and caring environment in which all children are afforded the opportunity to develop as individuals;
• enable children to gain a fuller understanding and realistic image of themselves;
• encourage children to build a trusting, stable relationship with others;
• engage children in a programme which ensures the fulfilment of their true potential and assist them towards a process of lifelong learning; and
• provide the children with skills and experiences which will prepare them for future success as mature and well balanced citizens.

10. The school development plan (SDP) for 2008/9 contains objectives to improve:
• academic improvement in Entry Level and General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) courses;
• strategies of assessment, recording and reporting;
• aspects of the Cwricwlwm Cymreig and bilingualism;
• opportunities to develop independent, social and vocational skills;
• school/parent partnership;
• enterprise and entrepreneurship opportunities; and
• awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship issues.

11. The school was previously inspected in December 2002.

**Summary**

12. Ysgol Rhydygors is a very good school with many outstanding features. It is a beacon of excellence which successfully reflects its values and ethos in all aspects of its activities. The care provided for pupils and the progress pupils make in their personal development are great strengths. Most pupils achieve well above expectations. There has been outstanding progress since the last inspection. All key issues have been very well addressed and the school has identified further improvements as priorities for development planning. The inspection team agrees with all the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and direction, and is well supported by a very effective deputy headteacher and a team of dedicated staff who strive to achieve excellence in all that they do. As a result, all pupils make outstanding progress, both socially and academically.

**Table of grades awarded**

13. The inspection team judged the school's work as follows:

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

14. The pupils’ standards of achievement were judged by the progress they make in relation to their previous attainments and the targets set for them in their individual development.

15. Pupils’ standards of achievement based on observations of 43 lessons in key stage 3 and 4 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 1</th>
<th>Grade 2</th>
<th>Grade 3</th>
<th>Grade 4</th>
<th>Grade 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. Pupils achieved standards, which have good features, and no important shortcomings in all lessons observed. There were outstanding features in nearly a third of these lessons.

17. The figures in the above table are based on observations of 43 lessons and exceed the national averages presented by Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector for Education and Training in Wales (HMCI) in his latest report.

18. It is not appropriate to compare the levels of pupils’ attainment in end of key stage tests and examinations with local or national averages, since the school caters for pupils whose ability and particular special educational needs are not easily comparable.

19. Results of pupils in GCSE and GCSE Entry Level courses and examinations are an outstanding feature. The pupils show outstanding improvements in their achievements as they progress through the key stages.

20. Standards of achievement are good in all subjects, with around half being judged as having outstanding features.

Grade for standards in subjects inspected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inspection area</th>
<th>KS2¹</th>
<th>KS3</th>
<th>KS4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh second language</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information technology</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design technology</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern foreign languages</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N/A²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical education</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious education (including religious studies)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ The inspection team did not award grades for subjects, as there were only two pupils in key stage 2.
² Modern foreign languages are not taught in key stage 4

21. Pupils make significant improvement in developing their basic skills. The progress pupils make in their basic skills during their first year at the school is outstanding and serves as a solid basis for future progress.
22. Although a few pupils use appropriate bilingual phrases in relevant contexts, most do not show sufficient confidence to use their bilingual skills regularly on an incidental basis.

23. Pupils with additional learning needs and those pupils who receive extra numeracy and literacy support make very good progress.

24. All the pupils show great respect to all members of staff. Their behaviour in classes and around the school is exemplary. They have positive attitudes towards learning and concentrate well on their tasks. All these strengths contribute well towards pupils’ ability to work independently as well as with others.

25. Nearly all pupils make outstanding progress in their personal, social and moral development. The improvement in pupils’ behavioural achievement, confidence and self-esteem is exceptional. Attendance is good overall.

**The quality of education and training**

26. The quality of teaching based on the observations of 45 lessons is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 1</th>
<th>Grade 2</th>
<th>Grade 3</th>
<th>Grade 4</th>
<th>Grade 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27. Teaching had good features and no important shortcomings in all lessons observed. There were outstanding features in over a third of these lessons.

28. The figures in the above table exceed the national averages presented by HMCI in his latest report.

29. Teaching is good and often outstanding. The teachers plan their lessons well and ensure that the work they set matches the pupils’ ability, and offers an appropriate degree of challenge. The relationships between all members of staff and the pupils are outstanding.

30. In nearly all lessons, teachers encourage pupils to assess their own strengths and identify areas for development. The teachers develop pupils’ key skills, as well as social skills, well, and help them understand how they can apply them to further their learning as they progress through the school and beyond.

31. The quality of marking pupils’ work is very good. The systems for checking pupils’ progress are very well organised and provide good information, which is used effectively to plan further work and set new targets. Pupils take an important part in evaluating their own progress. This is highly effective and a strength of the school.

32. The curriculum fully addresses the needs of the pupils and meets statutory requirements. There are outstanding opportunities for the pupils to gain accredited qualifications at the end of KS4, including GCSE Entry Level as well as GCSE courses and examinations.

33. The 24-hour curriculum enhances pupils’ experiences well through the development of independent living skills. The range of subjects and opportunities offered at both key stages greatly enhances and enriches pupils’ experiences. The partnerships with other providers serve pupils well and form a solid basis for their continued learning in further education or in the work place. This is an outstanding feature of the school’s provision.
34. The quality of care, support and guidance is an outstanding feature of the life and work of the school. The school is fully inclusive and ensures that all pupils have full access to the curriculum and become fully immersed in all aspects of community and work-related experiences.

35. There are outstanding opportunities for all pupils to become fit and healthy and the school places a strong emphasis on each pupil’s physical and emotional well-being.

36. The school has effective measures to ensure that the behaviour of pupils does not adversely affect the progress of others. The school is successful in ensuring that all pupils can expect to be free from any form of harassment and discrimination. The school successfully ensures equality of opportunity for all of its pupils.

37. The school has very successfully promoted an ethos of healthy lifestyle. A wide range of extra-curricular physical activities supports the pupils well to become fit and healthy.

38. Raising pupils’ understanding of the world of work, the development of their entrepreneurial skills, the promotion of sustainable development and tackling social disadvantage and stereotyping are outstanding features of the school’s provision.

Leadership and management

39. The headteacher provides committed, outstanding leadership and direction. His clear vision ensures that the school successfully reflects its values and ethos in all aspects of its activities.

40. Staff have a clear understanding of their duties. They are fully empowered to play an important part in ensuring that priorities are identified and suitable targets for improvement are set.

41. The school governors make a full and valuable contribution to setting the strategic direction for school development. The governors have good knowledge of the school and have a positive influence. They regularly review aspects of the school’s provision and standards through discussions with staff and support the school effectively.

42. The school has an open and self-critical culture. The staff and curriculum leaders play a leading role in evaluating progress and identifying need.

43. The school has established a highly effective and comprehensive performance management structure, which is strongly embedded in its outstanding and well-established self-evaluation process.

44. The school’s excellent review procedures have identified measurable improvement since the last inspection in that standards have steadily risen with a greater concentration on life skills; the participation of pupils in setting targets for their own improvement; and the establishing of an engaging, investigative and varied curriculum. Effective partnerships with other interested parties have greatly improved.

45. Procedures for staff development in the school are of a very high quality and are a strength of the school.
46. Learning resources are well used and easily accessible to all pupils, they match the demands of their learning experiences well.

47. Overall the school provides outstanding value for money.

**Recommendations**

In order to improve the school further, the governors and staff need:

R1. To raise standards of pupils’ bilingual skills through:

- making wider use of incidental Welsh across all areas and activities of the school, and
- adopting the best practice which already exists among certain staff members to develop the bilingual competence of all pupils.

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

**Standards**

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

**Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

48. In its self-evaluation report, the school awarded this key question grade 1. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school.

49. Pupils make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding in all subjects across the curriculum.

50. Pupils’ standards of achievement based on observations of 43 lessons are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 1</th>
<th>Grade 2</th>
<th>Grade 3</th>
<th>Grade 4</th>
<th>Grade 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

51. Pupils achieved standards, which have good features, and no important shortcomings in all lessons observed. There were outstanding features in nearly a third of these lessons.

52. The figures in the above table are based on observations of 43 lessons and exceed the national averages presented by HMCI in his latest report.

53. Nearly all pupils make outstanding progress. 46% of the pupils gained five or more GCSE passes at grades A-G in 2008. Results at GCSE entry level are very good with 72% of pupils gaining a distinction in 2008.

54. An increasing number of pupils enter GCSE courses, which they are successfully converting into passes. In 2007, 87% of pupils entered for GCSE examinations received a pass grade. The performance of the pupils in GCSE and entry level examinations shows a continuous improvement over a period of three years.

55. It is not appropriate to compare the levels of pupils’ attainment in end of key stage tests and examinations with local or national averages, since the school caters for pupils whose ability and particular special educational needs are not
easily comparable. As there are only three girls registered at the school, the inspection did not compare their relative performances against that of the boys.

56. Most pupils gain vocational accreditation at the end of KS4 through work related courses run in conjunction with a local college of further education.

57. The performance of looked-after children at GCSE is well above the Welsh averages. Their achievement is generally beyond what is predicted for them based on their level of attainment when they arrive at the school.

58. Most pupils raise the level of their achievements well above the realm of their expectations. The majority of pupils achieve greater than expected of them by the end of key stage 3 and many pupils achieve well above expectations by the end of key stage 4.

59. Standards of achievement are good in all subjects, with around half being judged as having outstanding features.

**Grades for standards in subjects inspected**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inspection area</th>
<th>KS2¹</th>
<th>KS3</th>
<th>KS4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh second language</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information technology</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design technology</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern foreign languages</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N/A²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical education</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious education (including religious studies)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ The inspection team did not award grades for subjects, as there were only two pupils in KS2.
² Modern foreign languages are not taught in KS4.

60. Pupils make significant improvement in developing their basic skills. The progress pupils make in their basic skills during their first year at the school is outstanding and serves as a solid basis for future progress.

61. Pupils achieve good standards in speaking and the development of their listening skills is outstanding. They are attentive and readily contribute to discussions on a wide range of topics. Good standards were observed in pupils’ use of reading and writing skills across all areas of the curriculum.

62. Many pupils use their numeracy skills competently to further develop their ability in mathematics. Many show confidence when using a wide range of information and communication technology (ICT) to support their learning effectively.

63. The school was been awarded the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark for the third time in 2007.

64. Although a few pupils use appropriate phrases in relevant contexts, most do not show sufficient confidence to use their bilingual skills regularly on an incidental basis.
65. Nearly all pupils make outstanding progress in their personal, social and moral development. The improvement in pupils’ behavioural achievement, confidence and self-esteem is exceptional. This is a major strength and the pupils’ conduct both within the school and in the wider community is a credit to themselves and an example for others to follow.

66. All pupils make very good progress in meeting targets set for them in their individual development plans (IDPs), and in many cases they exceed expectations. All pupils with a differing range of additional learning needs make very good progress.

67. The pupils are fully aware of how well they are doing and use their Life Skills Passport booklets regularly to good effect to monitor their own development, both educationally and in behavioural terms. They clearly know what they need to do to improve.

68. When pupils first come to school, many have very low self-esteem and show low achievement levels. With help of the staff, they become more confident and take pride in the progress they make. The pupils treasure the support they receive, and are eager to participate and respond enthusiastically in all activities.

69. All pupils work diligently during lessons where they focus well on their tasks, persevere with commitment and are keen to achieve the best they can. They show an outstanding attitude towards learning.

70. Most pupils show good independent learning skills and many work well in small groups or in pairs. They make outstanding use of their thinking skills to discuss, compare and investigate topics. These contribute well to the development of pupils’ problem-solving and creative skills, which are an outstanding feature. The pupils contribute well to the school council where they demonstrate excellent team work.

71. The pupils contribute positively towards establishing a caring and stable environment where each person’s values are respected. The pupils’ exemplary behaviour is reflected in a high standard of social interaction, which greatly enriches relationships across the school. They show good awareness of diversity and equal opportunity issues and a good understanding of other people’s values and beliefs.

72. Many older pupils show a good understanding of personal hygiene and the importance of a healthy and balanced diet.

73. The average rate of attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection was 93.1%. This is above the target set by the Welsh Assembly Government.

74. The extent of pupils’ preparation for active participation in the world of work and the community is an outstanding feature. All pupils respond positively to their work experience placements and earn high praise from employers and members of the local community. They demonstrate effective team-work, independent and self-reliance skills in the work situation. This serves many of the pupils well as many of them take up employment within their localities after leaving school.
The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

75. In its self-evaluation report, the school awarded this key question grade 1. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school.

76. The quality of teaching based on the observations of 45 lessons is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 1</th>
<th>Grade 2</th>
<th>Grade 3</th>
<th>Grade 4</th>
<th>Grade 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

77. Teaching had good features and no important shortcomings in all lessons observed. There were outstanding features in over a third of these lessons.

78. The figures in the above table exceed the national averages presented by HMCI in his latest report.

79. Where teaching was judged to have outstanding features these included:
   - excellent relationships between pupils and teachers and support staff;
   - teachers’ expert knowledge of their pupils’ needs and detailed and effective planning adapted appropriately in order to meet those needs;
   - the very wide range of methods and resources and their application within the classroom;
   - teachers’ high expectation of pupils’ achievement combined with the pace of lessons and degrees of challenge; and
   - the development of pupils’ thinking and problem-solving skills.

80. Most teaching is stimulating and sustains pupils’ attention throughout the lesson. Most teachers use skilful questioning and elicit good, detailed responses from pupils. Explanations are clear and concise and demonstrations and modelling of what is required of pupils are extremely effective.

81. The outstanding relationships between teachers, learning support assistants (LSA) and pupils are a major strength of the school. Members of staff have created a caring ethos, which is very evident throughout. This is built upon mutual care and respect and enables pupils to learn in an orderly manner and also develop outstanding relationships among themselves.

82. All teachers plan effectively; objectives are relevant and demonstrate what pupils will be able to do, know or understand by the end of the lesson. Learning objectives are shared with pupils and reviewed appropriately in plenary sessions at the end of lessons. Where teaching is outstanding, lessons are carefully structured to promote active learning; the pace of lessons is brisk, and there is a good degree of challenge.

83. Teachers employ a wide range of appropriate teaching methods, which include the very good use of information and communications technology, circle-time type activities within lessons and role play. They ensure that pupils plan, carry out and evaluate their activities. These make a significant impact upon the exceptional quality of teaching.

84. Teaching succeeds in promoting equality of opportunity. This is particularly evident in personal and social education (PSE), and religious education lessons
where issues of inclusion are discussed sensibly and addressed through a range of appropriate activities.

85. Withdrawal sessions provide outstanding support for developing pupils' receptive and expressive language. Pupils' language needs are carefully diagnosed to ensure that appropriate methods and resources are used resulting in outstanding progress, often from a very low baseline.

86. The use of Welsh, outside of discrete Welsh lessons, does not provide consistent opportunities for pupils to develop bilingual skills across the subjects of the curriculum.

87. All teachers plan effectively to meet individual needs. Pupils' targets in their IDPs are taken into account and teachers ensure that activities and tasks meet individual needs.

88. The school’s procedures for assessing, recording and reporting on pupils’ progress are a major strength of the school. On entry, pupils are carefully assessed to establish a clear baseline against which future progress can be measured. The views of parents, carers, schools and other agencies are sought. This information forms the basis on which to plan to meet pupils' needs.

89. The school makes effective use of various tests, which identify and summarise pupils’ attainment and highlight their progress. The information gathered from these tests is used appropriately to plan each individual pupil's IDP, set targets and provide termly reports to parents/carers.

90. The school meets all statutory requirements for assessing and reporting pupils’ achievements at the end of key stage 3 and key stage 4. At the end of key stage 3 pupils' work is assessed, levelled and moderated to ensure consistency of teacher assessment. At the end of key stage 4 the school satisfies the assessment requirement of examination boards.

91. Assessment for learning is firmly established and consistently applied across the subjects of the curriculum. On-going assessment of pupils' work not only provides data on which to plan further activities and record achievement in lessons but also informs teachers of the rate of pupils’ progress. Self and peer assessment are important components of this and help pupils understand how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. Annual reviews of statements and transition meetings are very well planned. Parents/carers and relevant professionals supported meetings very well and their contributions are welcomed.

92. Termly reports to parents are extremely detailed and informative. They include sections for pupils to assess their own progress and contribute to their own target setting and for parents to comment on the report.

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

**Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

93. In its self-evaluation report, the school awarded this key question grade 1. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school.

94. The quality and range of educational experiences are outstanding. Pupils often arrive at school with negative attitudes to learning, which the school quickly
turns around. The school has cultivated an ethos which celebrates learning and is developing an effective curriculum to meet the Welsh Assembly Government's priority for 14-19 Learning Pathways.

95. In both key stages, there is a broad and balanced curriculum that has been carefully planned to ensure continuity and progression. The curriculum, described by the school as a motivating curriculum, is highly relevant to the individual needs of pupils and is accessible to all.

96. In key stage 3, Y7 pupils experience a thematic approach across the curriculum. This is highly effective in ensuring the curriculum fully meets their needs and incorporates elements of the new Skills Framework appropriately into their work.

97. Partnerships with the local high school and with colleges are particularly strong. A wide range of courses is offered at key stage 4, these include arrangements with Coleg Sir Gâr for pupils to follow vocational courses at the college.

98. Each pupil has two key workers assigned, one from the teaching staff and one from the care staff. These help the pupils very effectively in identifying appropriate ways of learning. In addition to this, the learning core within the school enables pupils to obtain accredited qualifications at both Entry and GCSE level.

99. The school provides opportunities for pupils to obtain Entry Level qualifications in Y10. This is a major strength of the school and provides pupils with extended opportunities to attain higher-level qualifications. Careful consideration is given to the courses available in order to meet pupils' interests and abilities.

100. In order to allow pupils access to as wide a range of opportunities as possible at key stage 4, careful consideration has been given to the time allocation of particular subjects. History and geography for example are taught under the banner of humanities.

101. There is outstanding provision for developing pupils' basic and key skills. Pupils are withdrawn for literacy and language development where their needs are fully identified and met, enabling them to make exceptional progress. In Y9 and Y11, pupils have a discrete key skills lesson and are able to attain accredited qualifications in key skills. The key skills components are interwoven with subjects so that some pupils are attaining communication qualifications through art, whilst others are attaining ICT and working with others through a range of subjects.

102. The quality and range of activities experienced by the pupils during the social hours are exceptional. The 24-hour curriculum organised by both teaching and care staff in the residential setting is outstanding. Pupils may choose from an exceptionally wide range of sporting and cultural activities in the evening, for example archery, golf and fishing. These are well organised and exceptionally well supervised. Many activities make use of resources within the local community and pupils' attitudes and motivation are such that they are welcomed into the community.

103. The curriculum is further enhanced by the range of educational trips and visits, which include fieldwork, visits to sites of geographical and historical interest, and visits to theatres, art galleries and places of worship. Residential experiences also enhance the curriculum.
104. Older pupils learn to develop independent living skills at the school’s purposely-designed training flat. They have to budget, shop, cook and clean for themselves whilst ensuring they are punctual and correctly dressed for school in the morning.

105. Provision for pupils’ spiritual, moral social and cultural development is also outstanding. Spiritual themes are addressed through religious education, PSE, and art. The daily assemblies make a significant contribution to pupils’ spiritual development, and fully comply with statutory requirements. They are of a broadly Christian nature based on Bible stories, there is an atmosphere of reverence, and music is used particularly well, both to set the scene and for hymn singing. Pupils have ample opportunity to participate and also to reflect; there is also a prayer.

106. Provision for PSE is outstanding and as well as in discrete lessons, aspects are taught across the curriculum. It makes for very good provision for moral and social development. The new framework has been fully incorporated into the programme. The school makes good use of the community in delivering the programme, for example, pupils engaged on the RAPTOR programme visit the local fire station for courses where they learn about the work undertaken by the fire and rescue service.

107. Aspects of the PSE programme are very effectively delivered by professionals such as the local community police and the school nurse. Appropriate consideration is given to sex education and alcohol and substance misuse.

108. The exceptionally good relationships between all adults, in both the residential and teaching settings, contribute significantly to the social development of pupils.

109. Cultural development is well supported through lessons and through the extended curriculum. Aspects of modern life-culture are explored in PSE and cultural beliefs examined in religious education lessons. There is biannual joint hosting, with the local high school, of terminally-ill pupils from Belarus.

110. Partnerships with parents and carers are very strong and the parents are highly supportive of the school. Nearly all parents express very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the school’s provision and communication. Parents receive regular newsletters produced by the pupils and detailed termly reports. In addition they know that they are welcomed at the school at any time and for whatever reason.

111. Partnerships with other elements of the community are well established and valued by both sides. This is evident from the many letters of support the school has received from these partners, which include schools, colleges, police, health authority and the local county council.

112. Raising pupils’ understanding of the world of work, the development of their entrepreneurial skills, the promotion of sustainable development and tackling social disadvantage and stereotyping are outstanding features of the school’s provision.

113. There is an effective strategy in place for broadening pupils’ experiences, awareness and understanding of the world of work and every pupil, when he/she leaves the school, enters either employment, training or further
education. Pupils benefit from a range of work-related activities and visits and there are good examples of many local businesses and organisations supporting these activities.

114. The work experience programme is of very good quality with a wide range of placements available. In addition to participating in catering and engineering competitions pupils benefit from the activities related to the Industry Week held at the school.

115. The school is involved in the Carmarthenshire Enterprise scheme and all staff have been trained to operate the scheme in the school. Opportunities for learners to develop their entrepreneurial skills occur in every year group. These include initiatives such as setting up a school restaurant, designing and selling Christmas gifts, running the school tuck shop and organising charity days and collections.

116. The use of incidental Welsh is not sufficiently developed across the school. The school does not make the best use of the expertise of Welsh speakers amongst the staff. This is a shortcoming, which impacts adversely on the promotion of pupils’ bilingual skills.

117. The culture of Wales is reflected well in the provision for Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig. This is evident and planned well across all the subjects of the curriculum.

118. The school is perceptibly an equal opportunity establishment and it carefully designs a programme of study and activities which ensure access for all. It is an inclusive community which successfully challenges stereotyping. A well-planned personal and educational programme contributes significantly to raising pupils’ awareness of equality, diversity and tackling social disadvantage issues.

119. The provision to promote pupils’ awareness of the need for sustainable development and global citizenship is a considerable strength. The school has achieved the Eco-Schools bronze and silver awards. The school enhances pupils’ understanding of global citizenship issues through discussing ways in which people in Wales can help Third World countries and through discussion of concepts such as Fair Trade.

120. The curriculum and the wide range of school activities take very good account of Welsh Assembly Government priorities and initiatives. The outstanding feature is the holistic and inter-related approach used based on the PSE programme to promote a wide range of initiatives.

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

**Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

121. In its self-evaluation report, the school awarded this key question grade 1. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school.

122. The school’s provision in this key question includes a significant number of outstanding features in particular:

- the planning and managing of care arrangements;
- working in partnership with parents and other stakeholders and taking account of their views;
• personal support and guidance of high quality;
• the healthy development and well-being of learners;
• the quality of provision for additional learning needs;
• promoting equality and recognising and respecting diversity; and
• monitoring of pupils’ attendance, behaviour and performance.

123. The quality of care, support and guidance is an outstanding feature of the life and work of the school. The pupils say that they feel confident and supported by all school staff who know them very well as individuals. This fosters a happy caring ethos where every pupil comes to terms with their difficulties and develops very high levels of self-esteem.

124. Another outstanding feature is the way in which the school actively promotes the involvement of pupils, local employers and external agencies in the consultation and decision-making processes. All these stakeholders participate in questionnaires that inform the self-evaluation process and the SDP. The role of the school and eco-councils ensure that learners believe that they are listened to and that, where possible, appropriate action will be taken. This is the view of all stakeholders.

125. The pupils receive very good advice and guidance as they progress through the school. Positive working relationships with support agencies help to address pupils’ needs and aspirations. The school is successful in preparing a learning pathway focusing on the needs of pupils and also contributing to their taking a positive and active role in the community.

126. The school has established extremely effective induction arrangements to familiarise new pupils and parents with the school. The school link officer ensures that parents provide detailed information about their child in order to assist the school in creating an IDP. All documentation to support the induction programme is appropriate, thorough, and motivational. The staff offer appropriate strategies to ensure seamless transition from home to school. A pupil booklet is provided to every child on entry, outlining the basic organisations and routines of school life. These strategies ensure that pupils settle quickly and happily into the life of the school.

127. The PSE programme is a strength of the school and permeates the school’s life, providing the pupils with many rich experiences. The school pays due attention to health education, sex education and drug awareness. The staff make very effective use of external agencies and whole-school initiatives to deliver the programme.

128. The monitoring of pupils’ attendance, behaviour and performance is outstanding. This contributes greatly towards the high standards of commitment and conduct adopted by all pupils. Registration is carried out at the start of both sessions and meets the Welsh Assembly Government requirements.

129. The school is a recipient for the second time of the Careers Wales Quality Award. It has created a range of experiences that provide a very good knowledge base and skills portfolio for the pupils. Careers is a cross-curricular theme at the school and all teachers participate effectively in its delivery. A notable feature is the role of the independent living programme used within the
school to provide pupils with opportunities to learn about life skills and a realistic idea of what the future holds for them.

130. This is a very close partnership working with Careers Wales and the local college. Progress Files are used extensively throughout the school and are a model of best practice.

131. The school has very successfully promoted an ethos of healthy lifestyle. All pupils are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities and the physical education curriculum offers a wide range of physical activities. Pupils are encouraged to attend local sports clubs and represent sports teams in their local communities. This enables them to continue friendships and make healthy lifestyle choices. Healthy eating features regularly in school council meetings and the school participates in the Healthy Schools’ scheme with a view to achieving the full award.

132. The school has clear policies and practices in place to promote health and safety, including risk assessment procedures. Every reasonable measure is taken to ensure staff and pupils work in a safe and secure environment. There is a designated member of staff to oversee medication issues who is very experienced and carries out her role in a very professional manner. The school has the active support of a range of health services, who contribute greatly to the promotion of pupils’ healthy development.

133. There are robust child protection arrangements in place. The headteacher is the designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection issues and he has a caring and sensitive approach to his duties. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher and the designated governor. There is a well-documented policy and procedures for child protection, which are fully understood by staff. All staff have received appropriate and comprehensive training. The school has an ethos in which children feel secure and their viewpoints are listened to and valued. A ‘Pupil Booklet’ contains specific information regarding where to seek external support and guidance from appropriate support agencies.

134. Systems for the early identification of pupils with additional learning needs are extremely thorough. Teachers, LSAs and care support staff are a very effective team providing continuity and support and assessment of individual needs. They use IDPs and Transfer Files very effectively to monitor pupils’ performance. Pupils and their parents/carers know the targets and these are regularly reviewed. The school carefully examines each pupil’s statements of special educational needs on entry to school and these are reviewed annually.

135. Two key workers (one childcare, one teacher) are allocated to all pupils throughout their time at the school. They provide support and guidance of the highest standard. Three LSAs provide outstanding support in close collaboration with teaching and care staff. This support is prioritised and targeted at those with additional learning needs. The development of social and communication skills underpins all the work in the school and lessons are planned to help pupils to make progress in these areas.

136. Pupils’ behaviour is exceptionally good. The school’s system of recording pupils’ behaviour throughout the 24-hour curriculum on a daily basis is very effective. The school’s ethos is an outstanding feature, which ensures positive attitudes and teaches and instils self-discipline. Pupils respond very well to this system
and are involved in the decision-making process in relation to appropriate rewards and sanctions.

137. The school recognises the diversity of pupils’ backgrounds and ensures that support systems are responsive to particular social, cultural and educational needs. All pupils are encouraged to have high aspirations. Pupils state that the school encourages them to feel confident as learners, and this impacts positively on their achievement. The school works very closely with social services to ensure that the needs of ‘looked-after’ children are well met and supported with relevant education and social plans.

138. The quality of provision for equal opportunities is an outstanding feature and the commitment to social inclusion permeates the school’s ethos. Very good quality documentation underpins exemplary practice.

139. Whilst the school does not presently provide for any pupils from ethnic minorities, it promotes positive racial harmony and tolerance across all activities and school assemblies. Pupils are sensitive to issues raised. Respecting diversity in the community and within life in general is a very strong feature of the work of the school.

140. The school has very effective measures to eliminate any oppressive behaviour through its policies and practices. Discussions with pupils indicate that any incidents of unacceptable or anti-social behaviour are not tolerated and that the school deals very swiftly with any concerns. Positive behaviour policy and practice are very strong features of the school’s work. Pupils and parents/carers are able to discuss any concerns with the staff at the school.

141. The school has a well-developed accessibility plan and although all areas of the school are not accessible to pupils or adults in wheelchairs there is a special toilet facility and all of the ground floor has wheelchair access. The school fully meets the requirements of the Disability Equality Scheme.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

142. In its self-evaluation report, the school awarded this key question grade 1. The findings of the inspection team match the judgments made by the school.

143. The headteacher provides committed, outstanding leadership. He holds a clear vision and provides exceptional direction to all members of staff. This is a major strength of a school, and successfully contributes towards raising pupils’ standards of achievement as well as their self-esteem.

144. Through the total dedication and commitment of its staff, the school has ensured the highest standards in its provision for the pupils, and provides emotional security and stability in their daily life. This has dramatically increased pupils’ confidence and personal development to high standards.

145. The headteacher is well-supported by the deputy headteacher who plays a crucial role in the leadership of the school and ensures that the values, aims, objectives and targets of the school are fully understood and shared by all. All
members of staff work together as an effective team to ensure that aspects such as improving pupils' behaviour and their personal, social and emotional development are well managed. There are high expectations and commitment to pupils’ achievement in all areas of school life. Together with the highly effective and committed members of the school governing body, the school successfully strives to provide a secure and supportive environment for the pupils.

146. Staff have a clear understanding of their duties. Subject leaders are fully empowered to play an important part in ensuring that priorities are identified and suitable targets for improvement are set. These targets are reviewed regularly.

147. The school has established a long-standing culture of performance management and evaluation, aimed towards supporting and improving the work of all members of staff. The school has been awarded the Investors in People award for the third time. This is highly effective in ensuring that the school meets the identified needs of all pupils in the school. Priorities identified are included appropriately in the school’s development plan. This ensures cohesion throughout the school based on first-hand evidence, and successfully impacts upon future planning and delivery.

148. The school has established sound procedures to support and evaluate the performance of newly-qualified teachers.

149. The school has very good policies and strategies to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils. All pupils are encouraged to take an active part in the life of the school.

150. The school takes good account of both national and local priorities. It ensures that all pupils become fit and healthy and become fully aware of contemporary social and environmental issues such as sustainable development.

151. All staff, governors, parents and partners demonstrate a unity of purpose towards establishing a feeling of belonging. The school governors make a full and valuable contribution to setting the strategic direction for school development. They visit the school regularly to monitor the quality of education and support the school to ensure that initiatives are effectively managed within the school budget.

152. The headteacher keeps the governors very well informed through regular termly reports. Other staff also keep the governors up to date on particular developments, and pupils also give their own presentations to the governing body.

153. The governors have a positive influence and are fully aware of the school’s priorities for further development and regularly review progress against these targets. The school’s direction is laid out clearly in its prospectus and through the governors’ annual report to parents. The governing body have also ensured that the school’s complaints policy and procedures are known to all.

154. The governing body fully meets its regulatory and legal requirements.
Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?

**Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

155. In its self-evaluation report, the school awarded this key question grade 1. The findings of the inspection team match the judgments made by the school.

156. The school has produced a self-evaluation document that is comprehensive and evaluative, identifying the school’s strengths and the areas of provision that it believes require further development. The staff are very well informed about individual, departmental and whole-school performance.

157. The school’s outstanding self-evaluation processes include an excellent self-evaluation policy, documentation and practices involving a shared approach to all aspects.

158. The school’s high levels of consistency to the approaches adopted, the way classroom observations are carried out and the rigorous use of data to set departmental and other targets are outstanding features.

159. There is a well planned, inclusive, rigorous and time-tabled annual cycle of evaluation enabling all staff to be aware of issues, developments and progress. Targets and priorities are regularly reviewed, refined and this is a continuous process.

160. The school has ensured that staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities regarding self-evaluation. This is achieved through the establishment of an outstanding, open and self-critical culture where the senior team, curriculum leaders, middle managers and other staff members have detailed knowledge of the school. This process is highly effective in ensuring that decisions are based on first hand evidence.

161. The school encourages all stakeholders to participate in the self-evaluation process and cycle of audits. Pupils are also directly and regularly involved in the reviews of their own performance. There is a very strong understanding and ownership of the self-evaluation process by staff, governors and other stakeholders of the priorities, targets and outcomes where identified priorities are backed up with a very specific action plan. This ensures that outcomes are based on a comprehensive process of assessment and reporting.

162. Whole-school and departmental reviews along with other self-evaluation findings are effectively incorporated into whole-school, departmental and individual priorities. The process is supported by effective support from external agencies and all relevant stakeholders. At all stages the evaluation and judgements made are closely related to measurable performance outcomes against priorities and targets set.

163. The school uses a broad range of evidence, including classroom observations, curriculum leaders evaluating progress and identifying need, pupils’ performance data, stakeholders’ questionnaires and evidence from a range of external perspectives, to ensure accurate identification of areas of strength and further development.

164. Senior managers attach considerable importance to the views of parents/carers and pupils, as well as the wider community, and their views are sought on many issues relating to the school.
165. The school’s planning for improvement has many good features with outstanding features being the rigour of the planning for improvement at all levels and the inextricably close linkages between self-review, evaluation and school development planning.

166. The school’s strategic planning processes are very well implemented, involving all staff and this ensures effective outcomes. The focus is always on improving performance, standards, providing a widely-based curriculum and ensuring a high level of care.

167. There is comprehensive and well-established feedback at all levels as to how performance can be improved. The priorities identified at whole-school and curricular levels are based on first-hand evidence of need and are always relevant to the fulfilment of the aims, objectives and vision of the school. The other strength of the process is that action plans have realistic and achievable timescales.

168. Governors, senior managers and curriculum leaders have worked well together to ensure that the school is very well endowed with resources to ensure that priorities and objectives are met.

169. Extensive use is made of a range of data to set whole-school, departmental, individual staff and pupils’ targets. There is regular review of progress at all levels and revised targets are then established in line with the progress being made.

170. By establishing clear success criteria and regular review of targets significant progress has been made on a continuous basis. There have been significant and measurable improvements in addressing the key issues identified in the last inspection. These include:
   - improving standards and ensuring greater concentration on developing pupils’ life skills;
   - developing targets within pupils’ IEPs to take account of NC level descriptors;
   - using data gained from various assessment procedures to identify progress and to promote higher standards;
   - the participation of pupils in setting their targets and assessing progress on a very regular basis; and
   - building on the very good partnerships that exist to extend the use of the school as a resource base for local schools, parents and the community.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

171. In its self-evaluation report, the school awarded this key question grade 1. The findings of the inspection team match the judgments made by the school.

172. Teachers are appropriately well qualified and there is a balance between experienced teachers and those new to the profession or school within the last six years. The organisation of teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time is implemented effectively and this has a highly positive effect on teaching and learning.
173. There is a small number of learning support assistants of high calibre who provide outstanding support for individual and groups of pupils across the curriculum.

174. The administrative staff ensure that the office and reception areas function effectively within a welcoming atmosphere. The site manager and domestic staff contribute effectively to the daily routines of the school. The canteen staff provide a variety of healthy food and provide an efficient service as part of the team. They make a valuable contribution towards the promotion of healthy eating.

175. Information and communications technology resources are outstanding and teachers make extensive use of them to promote learning. There are interactive whiteboards in all classrooms. The school has a good range of high quality resources. Resources outside the school are extremely well used to offer pupils a wide range of opportunities and interests which include academic, sporting, social and cultural experiences. Attractive displays reflect the work of pupils throughout the school and greatly enhance the learning environment.

176. Generally accommodation provides a good setting for learning and teaching. In the absence of a music suite the subject has to be taught in the school hall and this has implications for the movement of the equipment. There are specialist rooms for science and technology and there is a continuous programme of upgrading of furniture, fittings and decoration.

177. The school has extensive grounds, which are very well used for physical activities. The school building does not provide easy access for some pupils with disabilities. Currently, however, there are no pupils or adults with a physical disability attending the school. Access to all ground floor accommodation does not present a problem.

178. The school has rigorous and very effective systems in place to ensure that it makes best use of resources. The finance officer works very effectively alongside the head-teacher to monitor and review the school budget accurately and regularly. Efficient and effective use is made of available resources. Funds are targeted appropriately and effectively at priorities of the school improvement plan. The finance committee of the governing body keeps a watchful eye to ensure best value for money is achieved. The governing body is fully involved in major financial decisions.

179. Procedures for staff development in the school are outstanding, and are a strength of the school. The school provides all staff teaching and non-teaching with opportunities for enhancing their expertise. Deployment of staff ensures that pupils benefit considerably from various activities and initiatives. Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks have been completed for all members of staff.

180. Suitable arrangements have been made to address workload and workforce remodelling issues. The exceptional commitment of staff has resulted in significant savings in the cost of sickness absence and supply cover. This has enabled the school to provide a range of additional resources and activities. This is an outstanding feature.

181. The school fully meets its aims to provide the pupils with skills and experiences which will prepare them for future success as mature and well balanced citizens. This ensures that the school provides outstanding value for money.
Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

English

Key stage 3: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings  
Key stage 4: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features
182. All pupils, at both key stages, make good progress in listening, speaking, reading and writing.
183. In both key stages pupils’ listening skills are exceptionally well developed. This is evident from the quality of responses made to open-ended questioning. Pupils make good progress in developing speaking skills. As pupils progress through the school they speak more fluently, clearly and at length, particularly during class discussion.
184. In key stage 3, pupils make good progress in their reading. They use a variety of strategies effectively. As they progress through the school they also make good progress in reading for understanding. Whilst using the class reader they show a good understanding of character and developing empathetic skills.
185. When pupils read out loud, most read accurately and clearly whilst a few read with good expression. The more able pupils take good account of punctuation in their reading and this helps considerably with both verbal expression and understanding.
186. Most pupils understand the features of a letter and accurately use a letter template as a writing frame to produce finished letters of good quality.
187. Older key stage 3 pupils show a good understanding of the elements of persuasive writing. They analyse brochures and pamphlets and distinguish between persuasive and informative styles. They create attractive brochures using persuasive language accurately and effectively.
188. In key stage 4 most pupils make very good progress in their reading and a few have made exceptional progress. Most reading is fluent and articulate with good enunciation. Most read with very good expression.
189. Younger key stage 4 pupils have a very good understanding of the components of a letter. Most are able to use a spider diagram to plan and organise a letter to the headteacher. All make a good attempt at writing the letter. A few more able pupils redraft their letters improving spelling and grammar.
190. Older key stage 4 pupils studying Shakespeare’s ‘Romeo and Juliet’ demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the plot. They are familiar with, and they all show a good understanding of the characteristics of the main characters. They also understand the social conditions and conventions prevailing in medieval Italy and how these impact upon the plot.
191. Most key stage 4 pupils sustain their writing and produce good examples of extended writing. These are often enhanced by careful redrafting and word processing to improve spelling, grammar and presentation.

Shortcomings
192. Errors in spelling and punctuation and paragraphing affect the overall quality of written work of a minority of pupils in key stage 4.
Welsh second language

Key stage 3: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings
Key stage 4: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

193. In both key stages, pupils of all levels of ability:
   - listen very well and make appropriate response to a variety of questions;
   - speak fluently with good pronunciation;
   - make good progress in reading skills and use these with increasing confidence in a variety of contexts; and
   - show a basic understanding of the structure of Welsh, and write a sentence, or phrases correctly.

194. Nearly all of the younger pupils recognise and recite correctly numbers from one to ten.

195. Many younger pupils write clear self-descriptions using appropriate words to identify parts of the body.

196. Many pupils label parts of a flower correctly.

197. Most pupils write their school timetable using correct Welsh vocabulary, and correctly identify the various lessons they attend.

198. Many pupils write personal details accurately on a form, such as a passport, and provide relevant personal details appropriately.

199. Older pupils in key stage 3 use specific adjectives correctly to describe parts of the face.

200. Pupils in key stage 4 achieve good standards in Entry-Level examinations in Welsh as a second language.

201. Many listen well to a taped conversation and identify specific information correctly, such as reasons why a patient is visiting the doctor. They use this information well to explain their findings.

202. Many pupils create a poster advertising a local Youth Club and make effective use of appropriate vocabulary and phrases. They produce good and relevant information in their writing about the Youth Club.

203. Most pupils write a brief letter to an employer asking if there are any job vacancies, using correct lay-out, expression and personal information.

Shortcomings

204. There are no significant shortcomings.

Mathematics

Key stage 3: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings
Key stage 4: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

205. Pupils in key stage 4 make very good progress in acquiring the knowledge and skills required to achieve qualifications at Entry-Level and GCSE examinations.
206. Older pupils in key stage 4 show a good knowledge of division strategies and apply these well in practical situations and real-life tasks.

207. Many pupils undertake various investigative and problem-solving tasks confidently. They present their findings in various graphic forms and interpret their findings clearly and accurately.

208. Many older pupils distinguish between events that are likely or unlikely to happen, and confidently state the differences between some things which are possible, impossible and certain.

Good features
209. In both key stages, pupils of all abilities:
- identify numerical skills they use in the lesson;
- use correct mathematical terms appropriately; and
- use previously-acquired knowledge appropriately to solve new mathematical problems.

210. Many younger pupils in key stage 3 use a ruler correctly to measure the perimeter of given shapes. They draw squares and rectangles accurately to measurements of given lengths.

211. Many pupils state the time correctly to the hour, half hour and quarter to and after the hour.

212. Most pupils correctly state how many 20p or 50p coins are needed to make £1. They set out a series of given coins correctly in order of value, starting with the least and finishing with the highest value coin.

213. The more able pupils correctly show which coins are needed to make up £5.

214. Many pupils in key stage 3 carry out basic investigative tasks confidently, such as recognising various items in the classroom, which have a right angle. They identify specific properties of given shapes and use the correct terminology when describing them.

215. The more able pupils correctly describe the meaning of a perimeter using correct terminology; less able pupils correctly count the distance around the perimeter of a shape.

216. Many pupils in key stage 4 describe clearly, using correct terminology, the properties of a circle, and suggest different ways of determining its size.

217. The more able pupils suggest strategies to discover the precise centre of a circle, and use the terms radius, diameter and circumference in their appropriate context.

Shortcomings
218. There are no significant shortcomings.

Science

Key stage 3: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings
Key stage 4: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features
219. All Y10 pupils complete their Entry Level work allowing them to concentrate on GCSE work in Y11. Talking to students they state how much they enjoy their
studies in science and that they find the subject interesting. They achieve a 100% pass rate at Level 3 at Entry Level and 100% pass rate at GCSE.

220. At key stage 4 pupils have confident, secure recall of knowledge and good understanding of aspects of chemistry, biology and physics. The more able pupils explain clearly, both orally and in writing, complex and abstract scientific concepts.

221. Pupils across both key stages make very good scientific links in their work with many other subjects such as literacy, numeracy, physical education, ICT and design technology.

**Good features**

222. In both key stages, many pupils’ investigative skills and experimental skills are developing very well. All pupils undertake a very good range of practical work in and outside the classroom. When thinking of new ideas, most pupils draw successfully on knowledge and understanding they acquired in earlier lessons.

223. Many pupils in key stage 3 make links with the applications of science to society in a very positive way particularly with respect to environmental issues, such as investigating the effects of smoking.

224. They use apparatus confidently in the science laboratory to develop their understanding of how air pressure can explain several phenomena. They solve problems confidently, plan scientific investigations and carry out practical work carefully and sensibly.

225. All pupils at key stage 3 show very high levels of interest in their lessons and put forward reasonable explanations to account for what they have observed. They explain convection current and radiation and use their knowledge to demonstrate effectively their understanding of energy-efficient homes.

226. At key stage 4, most pupils collaborate well to conduct investigations. They understand and keep to the rules of fair testing.

227. Most pupils know that science contributes to society in a wide variety of contexts. They have a very good awareness of its impact on industry and the environment.

228. All key stage 4 pupils produce an effective and informative PowerPoint presentation on hydrocarbons. They know how crude oil is extracted from the earth and that the world has a fuel crisis which impacts on the environment. They have a very sound scientific vocabulary and apply ICT well to their scientific studies.

229. All pupils in key stage 4 visit the local woods to look for carnivores and herbivores to make pyramids of numbers and biomass. They conduct their scientific enquiries conscientiously and record their findings accurately, and in detail.

**Shortcomings**

230. There are no significant shortcomings.
Information technology

Key stage 3: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features
Key stage 4: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features
231. In key stage 3, pupils show exceptional levels of competence in all ICT skills.
232. The quality of completed work is of an exceptionally high standard.
233. In key stage 4, most pupils’ degree of expertise over a very wide range of applications is outstanding. The range of ICT skills is exceptional and pupils are extremely confident users of complicated software applications.

Good features
234. Most pupils at both key stages understand and accurately use subject-specific terminology.
235. At key stage 3 most pupils indent paragraphs by the required amount, justify typing and move paragraphs around the document. Most pupils change line spacing, font and font size and insert images confidently and correctly.
236. Most pupils in key stage 3 locate graphical images on the Internet, download them and insert them into text documents. Most pupils enhance presentation of documents by using ‘word art’ effectively.
237. Most key stage 3 pupils set up a simple spreadsheet and enter data and formulas. They convert data in a tally chart to produce accurate line and bar graphs.
238. Many pupils in key stage 3 are confident users of presentation applications, using slides to record and present data appropriately.
239. They show a high degree of competency in using desktop publishing applications, using borders, backgrounds and different styles of text to enhance their work.
240. Most pupils at key stage 4 have a very good understanding of input and output devices. In presenting information they edit documents, insert headers and footers, delete sentences, insert new paragraphs, save and print their work.
241. Most older pupils in key stage 4 use a wide range of ICT techniques effectively in the preparation of GCSE portfolios. They undertake investigative work confidently using search engines to locate specific information on the Internet. They edit, amend and enhance graphical images, moving them to the front or background of documents. They rotate, crop, resize and change colour of whole images or parts of images.
242. Most pupils at key stage 4 are competent at spreadsheet modelling. They confidently enter and edit data, insert or delete rows and columns. They use formulae and create graphs appropriately, and use complex functions confidently, showing very good knowledge of these processes.
243. In data handling many older pupils are competent users of relational databases, creating and using text and numeric fields. They sort data and conduct simple and complex searches using filters and design data-capture forms.
244. Most pupils in key stage 4 use control mechanisms such as programming roammers and accurately use forms of ‘logo’.

Shortcomings
245. There are no significant shortcomings.

Design technology

Key stage 3: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features
Key stage 4: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features
246. In key stage 3, many pupils show a high degree of understanding of complex concepts such as exploring load-bearing materials. Their application of creative thinking skills significantly impacts upon the design process. They explore various ways in which to construct such a bridge out of unlikely material, evaluating their designs as they work and rethinking as a result of their deliberations. Most pupils succeed in constructing a working bridge capable of supporting an object.

247. They show a good understanding of subject-specific terminology, for example, tension and compression, and of the four types of load-bearing bridges. They use these terms appropriately when planning innovatively to design a load-bearing bridge.

248. In key stage 4, the pupils’ outcomes and their evaluation are of a high quality.

Good features
249. In key stage 3, pupils carefully select ingredients to make a range of healthy drinks. Very good health, safety and hygiene issues are considered and pupils ensure clean hands and clean working areas.

250. Pupils use ‘green’ chopping boards and chop ingredients carefully and safely. They show a high degree of independence and focus well on their tasks.

251. Pupils give good reasons for their choices and are aware of healthy-living considerations when choosing ingredients.

252. Pupils taste and evaluate the finished products and make sensible suggestions for improvements.

253. In key stage 4, pupils design and make a healthy sandwich. All pupils pay due regard to health, safety and hygiene issues. They carefully select suitable ingredients.

254. All pupils design and make a hot and a cold sandwich. They show that they consider relevant aspects of health and safety during cooking.

255. All pupils are involved in the evaluation process and all make appropriate comments when discussing their work within the groups. They compare the cost of their produce with bought sandwiches and consider how their products could be marketed.

256. Most pupils in key stage 4 know the names of drawing components used in graphical and material studies. They know the three angles of a set square.
They use different grades of pencil, and types of shading when undertaking graphic work.

**Shortcomings**

257. There are no significant shortcomings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modern Foreign Language - French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key stage 3:</strong> Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The subject is not taught at key stage 4.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good features</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>258. Most pupils:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• read basic phrases correctly, using appropriate pronunciation, and count numbers confidently up to ten;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• reorganise given jumbled-up words to write clearly, using appropriate vocabulary, an order for specific items in a French café;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• write the names of various countries in French;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• use basic spoken French greetings and requests appropriately, using relevant vocabulary, in the classroom situation;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• complete the school timetable in French and recognise correctly the names of the various subjects;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• create and fill in a simple identity card using correct vocabulary and relevant personal information; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• state correctly, the names of the days of the week orally in French.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shortcomings</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>259. There are no significant shortcomings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>History</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key stage 3:</strong> Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key stage 4:</strong> Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good features</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>260. Many pupils at key stage 3 use a range of sources including reference books, primary/secondary evidence and ICT appropriately to investigate historical topics. They make good use of the many opportunities to link history to other curricular areas. They use ICT skills effectively to research specific topics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>261. Most pupils in key stage 3 select and organise historical information in a way that shows good awareness of chronology and the main events and characters from periods in the past.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>262. Many pupils develop their understanding of the era of the industrial revolution through their personal interpretation of the artist L S Lowry. They make effective use of his paintings to write their accounts of life in northern England.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>263. Pupils visit a range of local places of historical interest. They develop a good understanding of their own culture and record in detail the historical importance of such places such as the Big Pit, or Rebecca Riots in St Clears.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Across the key stages pupils develop their extended writing skills well through independent investigate work on topics such as the life of Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

At key stage 4, many pupils carefully evaluate sources providing information on events surrounding the Second World War. They show good understanding of the causes and consequences of the war through comparing and discussing different accounts.

At key stage 4 most pupils record their learning in a variety of ways. They use ICT tools effectively to enhance their presentation and to develop their research on how British people coped with the experiences of the Second World War.

**Shortcomings**

There are no significant shortcomings.

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### Geography

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

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

**Good features**

Most pupils in key stage 3 identify features of their local environment well from aerial photographs. They explain clearly what they like about their area and how the environment could be improved. They know that objects and locations can appear different when seen from different viewpoints. They enjoy looking at photographs, which show things from a bird’s-eye view.

The majority of pupils in key stage 3 describe the effect of prevailing wind and chemicals on trees and buildings. They identify the effect of roots, leaves of ivy on the condition of Llanllwch Church following a field visit. Many pupils correctly state that U-shaped valleys are caused by a glacier and a V-shaped valley caused by a river. Many pupils correctly state the location of the source of the River Tywi and describe the characteristics of its source. Nearly all the pupils have a clear understanding of the cause of processes of erosion.

Many older key stage 3 pupils are able to locate Wales and Italy on a map of Europe. They understand the development of the European Union and know that Italy is a member, amongst a large number of countries.

Many pupils in key stage 3 develop their geographical skills progressively, and demonstrate their ability to observe and collect information in the field. They are confident when using maps in a variety of scales and apply appropriate vocabulary to their geographical studies.

At key stage 4 most pupils have a very sound awareness of the need for sustainable development and of the impact of pollution on the environment. They have a good perception of global and local issues. All pupils have developed a good understanding of how humans need to change their behaviour to protect the environment. They achieve well through their work on the Eco-Schools bronze and silver awards and are well on the way to gaining the Green Flag award.
273. At key stage 4 many pupils have a good understanding of the causes and effects of natural disasters, and name various types of natural disasters around the world.

274. Many pupils in key stage 4 understand the characteristics of shanty towns in Mexico and the reasons for migration from one area to another.

**Shortcomings**

275. There are no significant shortcomings.

### Art

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

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

**Good features**

276. Many younger key stage 3 pupils, making a collage, show a good awareness of texture and shape. They show good judgement in choosing components for the collage and take care in its assembly.

277. Older key stage 3 pupils show good appreciation of Lowry paintings and comment in detail on the industrial landscapes and figures in the paintings. They are aware of the lack of vibrant colour and compare this with other paintings.

278. They demonstrate good line-drawing skills and complement this with good examples of shade. Other work shows good understanding of colour, tone, shape and texture.

279. Many key stage 3 pupils produce a range of attractive two and three-dimensional compositions, for example Halloween masks and magnets, using a range of appropriate materials.

280. At key stage 4 pupils work creatively with artists in residence. Nearly all demonstrate their understanding of proportion through creating a series of effective still-life compositions. They use a variety of media such as pencil, charcoal and pastel in an appropriate manner. Their finished work exemplifies their good understanding of composition, light, shade and tone.

281. Other work at key stage 4 shows pupils’ understanding of the four basic shapes and how these are used to compose drawings. Past examples of work show pupils’ effective use of design when making greeting cards and paintings.

282. For the critical studies’ component of their work, key stage 4 pupils study the work of famous artists such as Matisse and Monet. They successfully incorporate elements of the artists’ style into their own work. They show a high degree of competency and observational skills when undertaking this work.

**Shortcomings**

283. There are no significant shortcomings.

### Music

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

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

284. Only lessons in key stage 3 were observed during the inspection. Scrutiny of displays, videos, CDs and discussions with peripatetic music staff and LSAs
provided evidence that pupils across both key stages achieve good standards in music.

**Good features**

285. Many pupils develop their appraising and performing skills well. They describe characteristics of music that they hear and play instruments using some simplified notation with confidence.

286. Most pupils make perceptive comments and use technical vocabulary well when appraising music with ICT support at key stage 3.

287. Throughout the key stage pupils improvise and compose successfully many short rhythmic and melodic ideas in response to different stimuli. Individually and in groups, they select and combine instrumental sounds within set structures.

288. Many pupils make effective use of ICT to enhance their development and understanding of a range of musical skills and experiences as well as developing their music technology skills.

289. Key stage 3 pupils, with practice, quickly learn and play a line of melody on keyboards and xylophones.

290. Across the key stages pupils develop a sound knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary of music across a broad range of musical styles and cultures.

291. At both key stages pupils use their voice and various other instruments to perform confidently to an audience.

292. Pupils show enhanced skills when receiving individual tuition from peripatetic music teachers and childcare staff during social time.

293. Most pupils are familiar with a range of music from Wales and other countries. They take part enthusiastically in specialist workshops with Young Americans, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Alpha Brass and the Electric Voice Theatre.

294. Many pupils discuss, and show appreciation of, specific aspects of musical performances they experience on visits to various productions, such as ‘Joseph and the Technicolour Dreamcoat’ at the Swansea Grand Theatre and ‘Swan Lake’ at Convent Garden.

**Shortcomings**

295. There are no significant shortcomings.

**Physical education**

**Key stage 3: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features**

**Key stage 4: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features**

**Outstanding features**

296. At key stage 4, all pupils achieved Level 3 at Entry Level. Eight pupils were entered for the GCSE (short course) and achieved 100% pass rate. Five entries were Y10 pupils.
297. At key stage 4, pupils participate enthusiastically in fitness training and improve on their previous standards of fitness. They make very effective use of ICT to motivate, monitor and evaluate their own performance, and that of their peers.

298. In all physical education activities pupils contribute their ideas clearly. Key stage 4 pupils show very good analytical and evaluation skills when practising and developing their table tennis skills.

**Good features**

299. Across the key stages, nearly all pupils show a good understanding of the need for effective warm-up prior to activity. They show a thorough awareness of the effects of exercise on their bodies.

300. All pupils attending the school engage in a range of sporting activities within the local community and after school. They enhance their understanding of tactics and skills in sports through visiting local sporting events, for example, watching the Welsh rugby squad training at Tenby and at the Vale of Glamorgan. They subsequently show a greater understanding of tactics and rules, and show improvement when playing as a team.

301. In swimming, many key stage 3 pupils demonstrate several styles of strokes and develop good techniques. Higher attaining pupils show that they are competent swimmers and are aware of the principles and skills required for survival in the water and to care for the safety of others.

302. In key stage 4 many individual pupils accept responsibility by leading the whole class in warming up and stretching routines, modelling each movement very well.

303. Many pupils, in key stages 3 and 4 write up match reports, both accurately and objectively, to help with their extended writing. Most pupils develop a healthy-living style based on the activities they undertake enthusiastically at the school.

304. Pupils in key stage 4 show increased confidence when they take part in activities at the Morfa Bay Outdoor Pursuit Centre assault course. They show good initiative towards developing the skills required for working effectively as a team.

**Shortcomings**

305. There are no significant shortcomings.

### Religious education

**Key stage 3: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features**
**Key stage 4: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features**

**Outstanding features**

306. Pupils in key stage 4 achieve very good qualifications at GCSE examinations.

307. Many pupils in both key stages make outstanding progress. They develop a very good understanding of important issues within Christianity and other major faiths worldwide.

308. Most pupils in key stage 4 explain clearly, with understanding, as to why Muslims pray, meditate and celebrate. They are able to name the most
important aspects in the Islamic faith, and appreciate the commitment required for daily prayer.

309. Many pupils in key stage 4 show a deep understanding of the various ways in which charities and voluntary organizations help to improve the environment. They discuss the views of Christians and Jews of their roles in looking after and safeguarding the world, and compare these effectively with their own values.

**Good features**

310. Many pupils in key stage 3 describe the importance the Qur’an and the Bible and how they are used by worshipers within the different faiths. They explain well how the teachings of the Qur’an and the Bible affect people of Islamic and Christian faiths.

311. Nearly all pupils in key stage 3 understand the importance of sacred places in various religions, and the reasons why people go on pilgrimages.

312. Most pupils in key stage 3 show an increasing awareness of a variety of religions and the part religion plays in many people’s lives. They understand the significance of religious festivals, describe religious artefacts used in the Jewish Feast of the Passover, and say what their significance is to people of that religion.

313. Most pupils in key stage 3 relate the story of Mary Jones and her quest for a Welsh Bible. They show through discussions why the availability of the Bible in Welsh became important to people in the nineteenth century.

314. Many pupils in key stage 4 understand that Christian Aid is based on religious beliefs, and how it helps to improve the quality of people’s lives around the World.

315. Less able pupils in key stage 4 suggest various ways in which people in Wales can help those less fortunate in Third World countries. They show a good understanding of concepts such as Fair Trade.

**Shortcomings**

316. There are no significant shortcomings.

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**School's response to the inspection**

I would like to express our sincere thanks to Mr Glyn Griffiths and the inspection team for their highly professional, thorough and sensitive approach during the inspection. They enabled staff and pupils to engage fully in the inspection process and this ensured a positive experience for everyone involved.

The report encapsulates the very positive ethos within Ysgol Rhydygors. It recognises the outstanding contribution of a highly skilled and dedicated staff team, and governors, parents support services and most importantly of all the young people of the school.

We are delighted to have been recognised as a ‘beacon of excellence’ and we will build upon the findings of this report to ensure even more success at Ysgol Rhydygors.
# Appendix 1

## Basic information about the school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of school</th>
<th>Ysgol Rhydygors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School type</td>
<td>Special</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age-range of pupils</td>
<td>8-16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address of school</td>
<td>Llansteffan Road Johnstown Carmarthen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postcode</td>
<td>SA31 3NQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone number</td>
<td>01267 231171</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Headteacher                  | Mr Courtney Saunders, OBE |
| Date of appointment          | 01/09/1991              |
| Chair of governors           | Reverend Illtyd Protheroe |
| Registered inspector         | Mr Glyn Griffiths      |
| Dates of inspection          | 15/09/2008 – 18/09/2008 |

# Appendix 2

## School data and indicators

### Number of pupils in each year group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year group</th>
<th>N (fte)</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>Y1</th>
<th>Y2</th>
<th>Y3</th>
<th>Y4</th>
<th>Y5</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Y13</td>
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<td>Y14</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Total number of teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
<th>Full-time equivalent (fte)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Staffing information

- Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery): 5:1
- Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes: -
- Average class size, excluding nursery classes: 5
- Teacher (fte): class ratio: 1:1

### Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>Y1 – Y6</th>
<th></th>
<th>Y7</th>
<th>Y8</th>
<th>Y9</th>
<th>Y10</th>
<th>Y11</th>
<th>Y12</th>
<th>Y13</th>
<th>Y14</th>
<th>Whole School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term 1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td>93</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td>98</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td>99</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results

Pupils are assessed at the end of each key stage and the outcomes are reported to parents. It is not appropriate to compare the results with those of other schools.

Public Examination Results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For pupils aged 15, results in GCSE, Entry Level Qualification, GNVQ and NVQ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of pupils aged 15 on the school roll in January 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2008:</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C, the equivalent vocational</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qualifications or a combination of both</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G, the equivalent vocational</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qualifications or a combination of both</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attained GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCSE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equivalent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G or the vocational qualification</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equivalent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attained no graded GCSE or the vocational qualification equivalent</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attained one or more Entry level qualification only</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Foundation level or NVQ level 1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Intermediate level or NVQ level 2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Four inspectors, including the school's nominee, spent a total of 18 inspector days at the school, and met as a team before the inspection.

These inspectors visited:

- 45 lessons or part lessons in school;
- break periods, lunchtime and the beginning and end of the school day sessions;
- assemblies and registration periods; and
- a cross section of extra curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- staff, parents, carers and governors before the inspection;
- teachers, support staff, middle managers and administrative staff;
- the school council; and
- groups of pupils in each key stage.

The team also considered:

- documents provided by the school before and during the inspection, including the school's self-evaluation report, and contributions from various community based agencies involved with the school;
- a selection of pupils' work in all subjects;
- pupils behaviour during break periods, at lunchtime and at the beginning and end of the school day;
- samples of reports to parents and carers; and
- 10 responses from parents' questionnaire.
### Appendix 5

**Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team member</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glyn Griffiths Registered Inspector</td>
<td>Key question 1, Key question 5, Welsh second language, mathematics, modern foreign languages, religious education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Donovan Team Inspector</td>
<td>Key question 2, Key question 3, English, information technology, design technology, art.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Beaumont Morgan Team Inspector</td>
<td>Key question 4, Key question 7, science, history, geography, music, physical education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwynoro Jones Lay Inspector</td>
<td>Key question 6, Contributions to Key questions 3 and 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthony Morgan</td>
<td>Nominee. Providing evidence and support to the inspection team.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Acknowledgement**

The inspection team wish to express their thanks to the governing body, headteacher, staff, parents and pupils at the school for the co-operation and assistance both before and during the inspection.

**Contractors:** EPPC/Severn Crossing Ltd  
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