

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

**Milford Haven School
Steynton Road
Milford Haven
Pembrokeshire SA73 AE**

School Number: 668 4063

Date of Inspection: 18 – 21 April 2005

By

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W/253/3508**

Date: 22 June 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T/25/04

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Milford Haven School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose 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 more information about their child's school. A copy of the summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

The inspection of Milford Haven School took place between 18th and 21st April 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mr Brian Medhurst undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years 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 attain the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who attain the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who attain the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

| | | | | | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-------|
| Year | R | Y1 | Y2 | Y3 | Y4 | Y5 | Y6 |
| Ages | 4-5 | 5-6 | 6-7 | 7-8 | 8-9 | 9-10 | 10-11 |

Secondary phase:

| | | | | | | | |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Year | Y7 | Y8 | Y9 | Y10 | Y11 | Y12 | Y13 |
| Ages | 11-12 | 12-13 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 15-16 | 16-17 | 17-18 |

The national curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. Milford Haven School is an English medium 11 – 18 mixed comprehensive school, maintained by Pembrokeshire unitary authority (UA). It has 1281 pupils on roll, of whom 197 are in the sixth form. The school was inspected previously in April 1999, when there were 1271 pupils on roll. Since the previous inspection, membership of the school's leadership team (SLT) has reduced by one (an assistant headteacher) and two new appointments have been made – one deputy and one assistant headteacher.
2. Milford Haven School is the only secondary school serving an area that includes the urban populations of Milford Haven and Hakin, together with the rural communities of the Dale peninsula. Almost every child in this area attends the school, providing it with a stable intake embracing the whole range of ability, although somewhat weighted towards the middle and lower end. Only a very few pupils join or leave the school during the year.
3. After the closing down of two oil refineries, the level of economic deprivation in the area rose, with unemployment levels for men reaching 20%. Correspondingly, the school's free school meal entitlement reached 27% of the pupil population. Hakin and part of Milford Haven are high enough on the index for social deprivation to attract post-16 funding from Education and Learning Wales (ELWa). The vast majority of the community are positive in outlook and support their children well. Current free school meal entitlement, for pupils in compulsory full-time education (KS3 and KS4), places the school within the range 21% to 30%.
4. There are 397 pupils registered as having special educational needs (SEN). Of these, 30 have specific statements of SEN, 112 require school action (SA) and 265 require school action plus (SA+). The overall figure represents around 40% of the pupils in KS3 and KS4. This is an extremely large proportion, well above the national average.
5. The attainment of pupils on entry has steadily risen over the past seven years, rising year on year from 44% obtaining level 4+ at KS2 in 1998 to 72% in 2003, although dropping back to 64% in 2004.
6. No pupils speak Welsh as a first language or to an equivalent standard. Under one percent of pupils speak a language other than English at home, but these pupils are fluent English speakers. Two pupils receive support teaching for English as an additional language.

The school's priorities and targets

7. The school's key purpose is to provide the best possible education for children of all abilities within a happy, child-centred, pleasant working environment.

8. It expects all governors, teachers, support staff and pupils to have high expectations, to encourage and expect success, and to seek to develop the full potential of everyone associated closely with the school.
9. The school aims to provide a relevant, broad and balanced curriculum, underpinned by a level of pastoral monitoring and support that enables all pupils to have equal access to the curriculum and to maximise their achievement.
10. It is committed to a belief that the quality of both teaching and learning is crucial to the success of individual pupils, and must be rooted in an atmosphere of raising expectations and constantly striving for improvement.
11. The school's targets, along with strategies for achieving them, are stated clearly within the school's development plan (SDP). Numerical targets include:
 - KS3: success in the national tests in English, mathematics and science at level 5 or higher to reach 70% in all subjects;
 - KS3: the proportion of pupils achieving level 5 or higher in all three subjects (the core subject indicator – CSI) to reach at least 55% (already reached 60% in 2004);
 - KS4: the proportion of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSE grades A* to C to reach at least 50% and the proportion of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSE grades A* to G to reach at least 90%;
 - KS4: proportion of pupils achieving at least grade C in English, mathematics and science (the CSI) to reach at least 40%
 - Sixth form: to improve the A level grades A to C pass rate to at least 70% and the AS grades A to E pass rate to at least 90%.

Summary

Tables of grades awarded

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

Standards

12. The team inspected the standards that pupils and students achieve in six areas of the curriculum.

| Standards in subjects inspected | | | |
|--|------------|------------|-------------------|
| Subject | KS3 | KS4 | Sixth Form |
| English | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Welsh | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Geography | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Religious education | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Religious studies | n/a | 1 | 1 |
| Music | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Physical education | 2 | 3 | 2 |

13. The following table shows the standards that pupils and students achieved, at different stages, in the subjects inspected:

| 80 lessons | % Grade 1 | % Grade 2 | % Grade 3 | % Grade 4 | % Grade 5 |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| KS3 | 5 | 90 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| KS4 | 8 | 67 | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| Sixth Form | 20 | 60 | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| Whole School | 9 | 77 | 14 | 0 | 0 |

(For an explanation of the grades, please refer to the beginning of the report)

14. These figures represent an outstanding improvement, on those achieved across all subjects, as recorded at the time of the previous inspection. The proportion of good or better standards has almost doubled since that time.
15. At KS3, pupils are performing well in all three core subjects, English, mathematics and science, above the national averages and in line with local averages.
16. In comparison with other, similar, schools in Wales having between 21% and 30% of pupils entitled to free school meals, results achieved in the 2004 KS3 tests results in English were above average, and in science and mathematics they were well above average. When these data are considered in the light of the school's high proportion of pupils with SEN, it is evident that some aspects are outstanding.
17. In comparison with results achieved in other schools having similar entitlements to free school meals, the school fared well in GCSE outcomes in 2004. For success at 5 or more grades A* to C, the CSI and average points scored, the school was above average. For 5 or more grades A* to G, the school was well above average, reflecting its success with average and below average pupils.
18. Pupils with SEN achieve very well, the large majority of them gain 5 A* to G GCSE grades as well as entry level qualifications in English and mathematics.

Middle ability pupils are achieving better than in the past. High ability pupils have always achieved well, but the quality of their results has improved further.

19. Contributory factors to the high standards achieved in KS3 and KS4 include:
 - effective and inspiring teaching in most subjects;
 - very good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour by most pupils;
 - regular attendance and promptness to lessons;
 - complete, well-presented work in books;
 - pupils' very good relationships with teachers.
20. Pupils' skills in communication are good with no important shortcomings. Reading skills are good. Writing skills are good. Overall, bilingual (Welsh/English) skills are developed well, both within Welsh lessons and across the curriculum. Numerical skills have good features and no important shortcomings. Pupils gain good information and communication technology (ICT) skills in taught lessons at both KS3 and KS4, and these are used to enhance standards across the curriculum.
21. Most pupils make good progress in acquiring new knowledge and skills, and their ability to use these in unfamiliar circumstances is also good. In most lessons, learners enjoy their work and they are enthusiastic about what they are doing.
22. Relationships between pupils are friendly and they are courteous and polite to teachers and visitors. Around the school, in corridors and in the playground, pupils behave very well.
23. In the classroom, pupils listen attentively and are eager and enthusiastic to participate in a variety of tasks and activities. They show interest in their work, sustain concentration and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.
24. The ability to work with others is good. Pupils collaborate well in pairs or groups and are considerate, respectful and supportive of each other in these situations.
25. Pupils are encouraged to respect the traditions and customs of other societies. They are made aware of the diversity of life styles, beliefs and cultures.
26. Overall, attendance at school for KS3 and KS4 over the last year was 91.7% - above both the UA and the national averages.
27. Pupils' punctuality is generally good, with lateness usually associated with transport difficulties. There are very good procedures for recording lateness and thus encouraging promptness.
28. Registration procedures are in accordance with Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) Circular 3/99.

Sixth form

29. At the end of Y11, around 78% of pupils either remain in school or transfer to college. About 10% of them take up employment and/or further training. These figures for retention in full-time education are good in comparison with national figures.
30. The relatively small numbers entering AS and A2 examinations at the school, make proportional comparisons with local or national data rather uninformative. In general, figures are just below national norms. However, when an individual's results in various subjects are compared with his/her average GCSE score, many students appear to fulfil or exceed expectations.
31. From lesson observations and scrutiny of work, inspectors found that in most subjects students achieve good standards.
32. In the sixth form, communication skills are very good. Students' numerical skills are good with no important shortcomings overall. Students are autonomous competent users of ICT for a wide variety of purposes.
33. Most students have a good level of understanding of their work and they make at least good progress in acquiring new knowledge and skills. Many of them are confident when applying current and previous learning in new and unfamiliar situations.
34. Students are considerate, respectful and supportive of each other. Very good relationships are strong features of life in the sixth form.
35. Students enthusiastically join in the range of activities available in lessons, respond well to questions, show interest in their work, sustain concentration and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.
36. Behaviour and attitudes are outstanding in the sixth form. Attendance is very good.
37. In many aspects, sixth form students are prepared well for life in the workplace. They are given many opportunities to exercise initiative and to demonstrate their skills of leadership. In these instances, they respond exceptionally well, usually to the benefit of the local and wider community. A most outstanding example is the very successful charity work undertaken for Children in Need.

The quality of education and training

38. The following table shows the quality of teaching and assessment in all the lessons observed during the inspection:

| 137 lessons | % Grade 1 | % Grade 2 | % Grade 3 | % Grade 4 | % Grade 5 |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| KS3 | 6 | 83 | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| KS4 | 7 | 64 | 29 | 0 | 0 |
| Sixth Form | 14 | 75 | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| Whole School | 8 | 75 | 17 | 0 | 0 |

(For an explanation of the grades, please refer to the beginning of the report)

39. WAG published targets for teaching in Wales for 2002. These required that 95% of teaching should be satisfactory or better, and that 50% should be good or better. These targets can now be interpreted as 95% at grade 3 or higher, with 50% at grade 2 or higher. As the table indicates, the school has far exceeded these targets. It achieved 100% at grade 3 or better, with 83% at grade 2 or better.
40. The figures also indicate significant improvement upon those achieved in the previous inspection.
41. An outstandingly good feature of the school is the quality of relationships that exists between pupils and teachers.
42. The large majority of pupils are co-operative and hard working in class, because the lessons are interesting and they feel their teachers know them well.
43. All teachers are suitably well qualified to match the requirements of the school's curriculum. They have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach.
44. A major positive feature of teaching in the school is the extremely effective use made of good learning support assistants (LSAs) throughout the school, but particularly in KS3, where there is support in the majority of classes.
45. Teachers monitor and review pupils' progress regularly. In most subjects, assessments are fair and accurate. The school has a very effective system for the collation, analysis and sharing of assessment data. Some, but not all, pupils are actively involved in assessing their work.
46. The school's assessment procedures are rigorous and statutory requirements for assessing and reporting pupils' achievements are fully met.
47. Whole-school target setting is particularly accurate and comprehensive. The school compares results over time against national, UA and internal data.
48. The procedure requiring rigorous marking of pupils' work twice each half term is effective. Subject teachers write comments that are helpful in identifying strengths, weaknesses and targets for improvement.

49. Annual and interim reports represent outstanding practice in informing parents and carers of pupils' progress and achievements. Annual reports are of a consistently good standard. Parents and carers are appropriately involved in the reporting process.
50. The curriculum overall meets the needs of all pupils and reflects the aims set out for pupils of statutory school age in the Education Act 1996.
51. The curriculum is accessible for all pupils including those with SEN. Pupils have opportunities to gain an appropriate range of GCSE and vocational qualifications.
52. The curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced in each key stage. It provides effective continuity and progression between years and key stages.
53. The planning for the development of key skills across the curricula in KS3 and KS4 is good. Through a number of initiatives and careful planning in all schemes of work, significant progress has been made. The school has been successful in gaining the Basic Skills Quality Mark.
54. The range of extra-curricular activities available for all years is an outstanding feature of the school. A large number of pupils benefit from the range of activities available, which broaden their experiences and promote their personal and social development.
55. A large number of pupils represent the school in musical activities with considerable success.
56. Pupils' spiritual development is good overall, but the quality of acts of worship in form bases is inconsistent. Moral development is strongly promoted by the school and pupils respond well by showing respect for each other and their environment. The vast majority of pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong, which they demonstrate in their daily actions.
57. Cultural development is reflected well in aspects of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities in many subjects.
58. The partnership with the community is of outstanding quality. Governors are active, knowledgeable and effective representatives of both the community and the school. Together with the SLT they successfully illustrate the link between curricular learning and employment.
59. The Milford Haven family of schools is a strong and supportive partnership and facilitates easy transition from KS2 to KS3. Useful partnership with and good knowledge of local college provision offers wider vocational experiences for less academic pupils and ensures that appropriate educational options are available at the end of KS4.
60. The curriculum overall meets legal requirements. The programmes for personal, health and social education, work related education and careers education and

guidance meet the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) guidelines and are well planned in the teaching programme.

61. Work related education has several good features and the school works hard to overcome some limitations inherent in the locality of the school. Y10 pupils undertake a well-organised and useful one-week work experience.
62. The school is successful in enabling pupils of all abilities equality of access to the curriculum. They are encouraged to achieve success in each key stage and to participate fully in the life of the school. The alternative provision in Y9 and KS4 successfully caters for pupils at risk of disaffection.
63. The school has developed an appropriate policy in respect of sustainable development. The emphasis is placed on the need to conserve energy and reduce waste in order to protect the environment for future generations. The School Council plays a prominent role in managing and supporting sustainable development.
64. There is outstanding provision to develop entrepreneurial and related skills. Problem solving skills are well developed across the curriculum. A high level of these activities has been maintained for many years and the school is a frequent winner of trophies at regional, Welsh and Great Britain level.
65. The school is a congenial, caring community. There is an outstanding supportive quality to the relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils respond positively to the care shown to them, being very ready to turn to their teachers for advice when the need arises.
66. The provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good with outstanding features. Assessment of pupils' special educational needs, together with information from the primary school, identify correctly the pupils to be placed on the SEN register, which is reviewed effectively twice a year. There is good involvement of parents, external agencies and the UA in the review of pupils' statements.
67. The school achieves outstanding success in supporting pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. When a pupil exhibits challenging behaviour, staff reaction is well informed and they implement the relevant strategies for that pupil. Parents and pupils are involved in setting pupils' targets for improvement.
68. The school is outstanding in the care it takes to create a climate where learners are free from harassment and discrimination. Parents and pupils are confident that the school would respond promptly to such instances.

Sixth form

69. The quality of teaching was adjudged to be best overall in the sixth form.

70. The high quality of relationships between teachers and students is particularly noticeable in the sixth form. When interviewed, students commented most positively about this.
71. Students are often and appropriately set 'open-ended' tasks to encourage them to make decisions about which steps to take and to evaluate and refine their work. In this manner, they are prepared well for lifelong learning in other environments, such as higher education establishments.
72. In the sixth form, the quality of assessment is regular, accurate and fair. It represents very good practice. Subject teachers have a very good knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses. They support students with helpful diagnostic written comments on their work and orally in lessons.
73. The good quality interim and full reports continue the process of identifying strengths, weaknesses and targets for improvement. They are usefully discussed with students, parents and carers.
74. In the sixth form, students can choose from an extensive programme of AS and A2 subjects and vocational courses at both AVCE and GNVQ levels. The programme is enriched through the inclusion of sociology, electronics and photography at AS/A2 level, and a general studies programme.
75. A large number of students benefit from the range of extra-curricular activities available, which broaden their experiences and promote their personal and social development.
76. In the sixth form, the opportunity for students to gain accreditation in key skills is an outstanding feature. A large number of students are successful in gaining awards in communication, application of number and information technology.

Leadership and management

77. The school's key purpose is to provide the best possible education for children of all abilities within a happy, child-centred, pleasant working environment. It succeeds exceptionally well in achieving this aim.
78. Within a truly collaborative and collegiate management structure, the headteacher provides extremely effective leadership. Members of the SLT, middle managers and all staff support her most effectively.
79. The school's policies and procedures to promote racial equality, and equality of opportunity for all, are appropriate and effective.
80. The school has a highly effective departmental review and self-evaluation system. All heads of year and heads of department have effectively embraced the role of monitoring and driving academic progress.

81. In a good number of departments, both leadership and management are outstanding. The high quality of some of the departmental self-evaluation reports presented to the inspectors bears testament to this statement.
82. The school takes due notice of the WAG's priorities and guidance provided by other organisations for the benefit of pupils and students. Particularly noteworthy are the links established with partner primary schools and local training providers.
83. The governing body is a well-informed and very supportive committee of critical friends. Governors have an outstandingly thorough understanding of their school and their roles in its management. Consequently their input to strategic management is informed and well focused.
84. Governors are fully and actively involved in all aspects of planning, monitoring and evaluation of school performance.
85. The governing body provides a strong sense of identity and direction for the school and these are clearly set out in the prospectus and reflected in the annual report to parents.
86. The school's self-evaluation report accurately and honestly addresses the seven key questions of the common inspection framework. The inspection team's findings correspond closely with those of the self-evaluation report.
87. Central to the school's activities for evaluating and planning for improvement, is the very effective and successful annual strategic planning meeting, attended by all members of the SLT and the governing body.
88. Integral to the school's self-evaluation procedures is the way in which it takes serious account of the views of pupils and students. This was confirmed during an interview with the senior prefects of the school and in other conversations with pupils.
89. The SDP focuses on themes that are appropriate for school improvement, within a framework of the seven key questions of the common inspection framework.
90. Exceptionally good financial management ensures that developmental priorities are adequately resourced and financed.
91. Overall, the school has made good and often outstanding progress in addressing the key issues for action highlighted in the previous inspection report.
92. The school is staffed well, with sufficient qualified, experienced teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum in all key stages.

93. The 25 LSAs who assist the large number of pupils with SEN are well trained and extremely supportive. An outstanding feature is the assignment of an LSA to each registration group in Y7 and Y8.
94. Overall, the provision of learning resources is exceptional. An outstanding feature of the provision is the availability of 36 electronic whiteboards and the pupil to computer ratio of 3:1.
95. The condition and quality of books used across the curriculum is good. The school has successfully enabled all pupils and students to have access to textbooks in all subjects. The library has been refurbished, is adequately resourced with books and 15 computers, and supports learning very well.
96. The school makes very good use of resources beyond the school to enrich the curriculum. They include museums, theatres, galleries and field centres. A wide range of visiting speakers enhances pupils' and students' learning experiences.
97. The overall quality of the accommodation is good and, in most respects, provides a stimulating learning environment.
98. The school has made some provision to enable pupils with physical disabilities to access most of the curriculum. The shortage of lifts in the buildings still limits access for a small number of pupils to art and home economics.
99. The school building and playing fields are well maintained. The site manager and cleaning staff work hard to ensure that the school is clean and there is little evidence of litter.
100. The school's budget is managed most effectively. The school uses its monies, including grant funding, very well to support strategies to raise standards. Spending decisions are made to respond to the requirements of development plans. The governing body and the SLT review the curriculum and its associated staffing and resource needs annually at least. Decisions are made only after due consideration has been given to all aspects.
101. The school has improved over recent years, and everyone is generally well provided for within the budget. Hence the school is achieving good value for money.

Recommendations

- R1 Continue to raise standards in all subjects.
- R2 Continue and extend the current good practice for encouraging pupils to assess their own work to help them develop as more independent learners. To assist in this, improve the consistency of day-to-day marking.

- R3 Improve the quality of daily acts of collective worship, which take place in tutor periods, so that all consistently match current best practice.
- R4 Continue to work with the UA to improve: facilities for pupils with SEN; and access to all areas of the school for pupils with disabilities.
102. All these recommendations have already been recognised by the school as areas for development.
103. The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving this report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

Standards

Key question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

104. The grade awarded by the inspection team agrees with the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation summary.

KS3 and KS4

105. The following table shows the standards that pupils achieved in KS3 and KS4 in the six areas of the curriculum inspected:

| 65 lessons | % Grade 1 | % Grade 2 | % Grade 3 | % Grade 4 | % Grade 5 |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| KS3 | 5 | 90 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| KS4 | 8 | 67 | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| KS3 & KS4 | 6 | 82 | 12 | 0 | 0 |

(For an explanation of the grades, please refer to the beginning of the report)

Pupils' success in attaining agreed learning goals

106. Throughout this report, comments on standards of achievement and other aspects take into account the ability and socio-economic background of the school's intake.

107. Using an appropriate range of information, the school sets challenging targets for progress in all areas of provision.

108. At KS3 in 2004, the school exceeded its own and statistically informed targets in mathematics and science, and met the target in English. Success in terms of the CSI exceeded the target figure. At KS3, pupils are performing well in all three core subjects, above the national averages and in line with local averages. In line with national trends, results in English are remaining stable and in mathematics and science they are improving.

109. In the other KS3 subjects, where achievement is measured by teachers' assessments, the school is performing above the national average in Welsh (2nd language), modern foreign languages, history and music. Achievement is in line with national averages in design technology, geography and art. It is slightly below the national, but above the local average, in physical education.

110. In comparison with other, similar, schools in Wales having between 21% and 30% of pupils entitled to free school meals, results achieved in the 2004 KS3 tests results in English were above average, and in science and mathematics

they were well above average. When these data are considered in the light of the school's high proportion of pupils with SEN, it is evident that some aspects are outstanding.

111. At KS4 in 2004, the school was within 1% of the statistically determined target for 5 or more GCSE grades A* to C and the CSI, but 2% below for 5 or more grades A* to G. The latter figure, however, still exceeded the local and national averages.
112. At KS4, pupils are performing well in English language, design technology, ICT, French, Spanish, Welsh (2nd Language), religious education, art and music. In business studies, English literature and history, pupils produce creditable results. Pupils also achieve well, when their prior attainment is considered, in child development, home economics, drama and health and social care.
113. In comparison with results achieved in other schools having similar entitlements to free school meals, the school fared well in GCSE outcomes in 2004. For success at 5 or more grades A* to C, the CSI and average points scored, the school was above average. For 5 or more grades A* to G, the school was well above average, reflecting its success with average and below average pupils.
114. Pupils with SEN achieve very well, the large majority of them gain 5 A* to G GCSE grades as well as entry level qualifications in English and mathematics. If pupils do not achieve it is because, despite all efforts, they are poor attenders. Basic skills classes, computerised learning programs, appropriately tailored timetables, small group teaching and classroom support all contribute to their success.
115. Middle ability pupils are achieving better than in the past. The school effectively identifies underachievers who tend to proliferate in this ability range. Mentoring, revision classes, coursework clubs, and focussing on their strengths, are strategies that are proving to be effective.
116. High ability pupils have always achieved well, but the quality of their results has improved further, as evidenced by the substantial increase in the numbers of A* and A grades at GCSE, and the increasing percentage gaining levels 6 and 7 at KS3.
117. Evidence on the school's database indicates that most pupils are improving by at least a third of a National Curriculum (NC) level each year, as required by school policy. The latest KS3 results show that 88% of Y9 pupils improved by at least one level per core subject, and 50% by 2 or more levels. Only 3 pupils out of 196 made no progress at all. This is due to careful monitoring of achievement, target setting and good, focused teaching.
118. The team inspected the standards that pupils achieve in six subjects taught at the school. Grades awarded can be seen in the table at the beginning of this section of the report. These figures represent an outstanding improvement in comparison with figures for all subjects as recorded at the time of the previous

inspection. The proportion of good or better standards has almost doubled since that time.

119. Looked after pupils integrate well and achieve as well as their classmates across the ability range. All pupils, regardless of ability, ethnicity, gender, or linguistic and/or social background have opportunities to achieve well and most of them respond to very good effect.
120. Contributory factors to the high standards achieved in KS3 and KS4 include:
 - effective and inspiring teaching in most subjects;
 - very good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour by most pupils;
 - regular attendance and promptness to lessons;
 - complete, well-presented work in books;
 - pupils' very good relationships with teachers.
121. Subject-specific good and outstanding features, along with shortcomings, for the six subjects inspected, can be found later in the report.
122. Pupils' skills in communication are good with no important shortcomings. In all lessons, most pupils listen attentively to teachers, to each other and to video. They respond to and pose questions. Many give extended responses to questions and use subject terminology correctly. In many lessons, good collaboration in pairs and small groups supports learning.
123. Reading skills are also good. Pupils have a good understanding of what is read in texts and on screen. Reading aloud is accurate and fluent, and often expressive. Many pupils use the library for research purposes. Pupils demonstrate good skills of retrieving information from a range of texts.
124. Pupils with SEN make good progress. There is effective support for these pupils from LSAs, the "buddy" system, the home reading scheme, the computerised learning programme and the department for SEN.
125. Writing skills are good. Pupils in both key stages write for a range of purposes and audiences. In a number of subjects, models and writing frames are used to support pupils with SEN. Most pupils make good progress by the end of each key stage.
126. Overall, pupils' bilingual (Welsh/English) skills are developed well, both within their Welsh lessons and across the curriculum. Extra-curricular activities, such as the school eisteddfod, also provide valuable and effective opportunities to extend and improve pupils' bilingualism.
127. Pupils' numerical skills have good features and no important shortcomings. Practice in mental calculations is a feature of lessons in KS3 and this is having a positive impact on standards.
128. In many subjects, pupils collect and analyse data. They use various types of graph to illustrate this data appropriately. In design technology and art, the

understanding of measurement, scale and dimension are used to advantage. In design technology (food), there is appropriate use of calculators for the costing of recipes. More able pupils use their knowledge of formulae effectively with spreadsheets in information technology.

129. The coordination of numeracy across the curriculum is an outstanding feature of the school's management systems. There is a clear policy with priorities and teachers of mathematics are linked with subjects to ensure consistency of method. This work is in the early stages of development and the positive impact has yet to be evaluated.
130. Pupils gain good information and communication technology (ICT) skills in taught lessons at both KS3 and KS4, and these are used to enhance standards across the curriculum.
131. In the subjects inspected, applications of ICT are outstanding in Welsh and religious education, where they are used for a wide range of information technology (IT) applications including word processing, desktop publishing, research using the Internet and database work. In English, geography and in KS4 music and physical education, standards are good.
132. Across the school, planning for the use of ICT is consistently good. In many subjects, pupils and teachers make significant use of interactive white boards to enhance standards and improve teaching.
133. Pupils have good access to computers outside lessons at lunchtime and after school, when they are enthusiastic users.

Pupils' progress in learning

134. As mentioned previously, the school makes good use of an appropriate range of information to set learning targets for pupils. Throughout KS3 and KS4, most pupils achieve or exceed their targets and make at least good progress towards fulfilling their potential. This is reflected in the comparative assessment and examination data mentioned in the section above.
135. When the assessment information obtained on entry to the school is compared with that produced at the end of each key stage, it is evident that most pupils, especially those with SEN, make at least good progress. There is little variation between subjects.
136. Most pupils make good progress in acquiring new knowledge and skills, and their ability to use these in unfamiliar circumstances is also good.
137. In most lessons, pupils enjoy their work and they are enthusiastic about what they are doing. Many pupils also take pride in the presentation of their work and, on numerous occasions, they will talk knowledgeably about what they are doing. Many also make progress through posing searching questions and undertaking individual research.

138. Pupils receive at least good information about how well they are doing, either verbally or in writing. Consequently, they understand how well they are making progress and what they need to do next to maintain that progress. This was confirmed clearly during interviews with pupils, where many youngsters commented that they were 'pushed' effectively to do well and supported skilfully to realise their potential.
139. Following successful years in KS3 and KS4, many pupils - at least 82% - remain in full-time education or training. Around 57% remain at school in the sixth form. When the ability profile of the school's intake is considered, these figures are very good.

The development of pupils' personal, social and learning skills

140. Relationships between pupils are friendly and they are courteous and polite to teachers and visitors. Around the school, in corridors and in the playground, pupils behave very well. At locations in the school where congestion occurs, they act responsibly and with tolerance.
141. In the classroom, pupils listen attentively and are eager and enthusiastic to participate in a variety tasks and activities. They show interest in their work, sustain concentration and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.
142. Pupils' problem solving skills are good. In most subjects across the curriculum pupils confidently investigate open-ended tasks and are fully engaged in decision making.
143. When presented with challenging tasks pupils respond positively. They use their initiative well to analyse and construct individual and group solutions to a range of problems.
144. Extra-curricular enterprise schemes involving small groups of KS3 and KS4 pupils have been particularly successful in gaining recognition for their problem solving and design skills. A number of prizes in national competitions have been gained in recent years.
145. In English, music and art, pupils are often creative in the development of their ideas. They demonstrate a good level of imagination and innovation in the presentation of their work.
146. The ability to work with others is good. Pupils collaborate well in pairs or groups and are considerate, respectful and supportive of each other in these situations.
147. Pupils are encouraged to respect the traditions and customs of other societies. They are made aware of the diversity of life styles, beliefs and cultures.
148. Pupils' behaviour, whether in class or elsewhere in and around school, is mostly of a very high standard in KS3 and KS4. There is a small minority who are potentially unruly in some lessons.

149. The school has good procedures for promoting good behaviour and for dealing with unacceptable misbehaviour. Outstanding pupil monitoring and tracking enable the early targeting of appropriate pastoral support and effectively prevent poor behaviour having an adverse effect on pupils' progress.
150. All pupils understand well the schools' expectations for good behaviour and the consequences that wayward behaviour may have on themselves and others.
151. In the playground, pupils relax as a happy community, with no evidence of outcasts, ostracised groups or groups in conflict. Although pupils acknowledge that a small amount of bullying occurs, they say this is swiftly dealt with. None was seen during the inspection.
152. Overall attendance at school for KS3 and KS4 over the last year was 91.7% and above both the UA and the national averages. Since the previous inspection, when attendance was about 90%, there has been a steady improvement in overall figures. Unauthorised absence is generally low; recent statistics, that seemed to indicate otherwise, reflected problems with the operation of a new electronic registration system.
153. Pupils' punctuality is generally good, with lateness usually associated with transport difficulties. There are very good procedures for recording lateness and thus encouraging promptness. Punctuality to lessons is good.
154. Registration procedures are in accordance with Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) Circular 3/99.

Sixth form

155. The following table shows the standards that sixth form students achieved in the subjects inspected.

| 15 lessons | % Grade 1 | % Grade 2 | % Grade 3 | % Grade 4 | % Grade 5 |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Sixth form | 20 | 60 | 20 | 0 | 0 |

(For an explanation of the grades, please refer to the beginning of the report)

156. These figures indicate a considerable improvement upon those recorded at the time of the previous inspection.

Students' success in attaining agreed learning goals

157. At the end of Y11, around 78% of pupils either remain in school or transfer to college. About 10% of them take up employment and/or further training. These figures for retention in full-time education are good in comparison with national figures.
158. At the end of Y12, about 75% of students remain in school and proceed to Y13 to continue their studies. About 13% transfer to college. These figures are above national averages for retention of students in school. About 75% of

students who complete their time in Y13 proceed to higher or further education. This figure is just above average.

159. The relatively small numbers entering AS and A2 examinations at the school, make proportional comparisons with local or national data rather uninformative. Nevertheless, in 2004, the percentage of students achieving A level or equivalent success in two or more examinations at grades A to C was below the national average. For two or more grades A to E, the school's figure was almost equal to the national average. Likewise, the average score per candidate was just below the national figure.
160. However, when an individual's results in various subjects are compared with his/her average GCSE score, many students appear to fulfil or exceed expectations.
161. From lesson observations and scrutiny of work, inspectors found that in most subjects students achieve good standards.
162. In the sixth form, communication skills are very good. Students listen respectfully and attentively. Many give extended responses and are confident and articulate. They adapt speech to audience and purpose. Reading standards are very good in all subjects. Writing is also of a good standard. Most students produce well-structured extended pieces using a mature style, terminology, appropriate references and good skills of technical competence.
163. Students' numerical skills are good with no important shortcomings overall. Numeracy is embedded in many aspects of the curriculum and students use mathematical 'tools' to good effect and appropriately in many subjects.
164. In the sixth form, students are autonomous users of ICT for a wide variety of purposes. In the subjects inspected, standards are outstanding in RE, and good in Welsh, geography, music and physical education. In English, good features outweigh shortcomings.

Students' progress in learning

165. Most students have a good level of understanding of their work and they make at least good progress in acquiring new knowledge and skills. Many of them are confident when applying current and previous learning in new and unfamiliar situations.
166. Students are usually well aware of how well they are doing and of what they are expected to achieve. In most instances, they are prepared to seek help, undertake independent research or to work with others, to ensure that they make appropriate progress. Such activities prepare them well for higher education. Students commented positively about the way in which they were taught and encouraged to become independent learners.

The development of students' personal, social and learning skills

167. Students are considerate, respectful and supportive of each other. They also value the contributions that teachers make as supporters for learning, as well as purveyors of subject and other information. Very good relationships are strong features of life in the sixth form.
168. In almost every lesson, students work collaboratively in pairs and groups when appropriate to do so. Working with others, within and beyond the formal curriculum, is an outstanding feature of sixth form education in the school.
169. Students enthusiastically join in the range of activities available in lessons, respond well to questions, show interest in their work, sustain concentration and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning
170. Students are well aware of the diversity of life styles, beliefs and cultures. They respect the customs and traditions of other societies.
171. Generally, they are very good at solving problems. Students work positively and independently, constructing coherent, well-reasoned solutions to a range of problems.
172. Behaviour and attitudes are outstanding in the sixth form. Attendance is very good.
173. In many aspects, students are prepared well for life in the workplace. They are given many opportunities to exercise initiative and to demonstrate their skills of leadership. In these instances, they respond exceptionally well, usually to the benefit of the local and wider community. A most outstanding example is the very successful charity work undertaken for Children in Need.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

174. The grade awarded by the inspection team agrees with the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation summary.

KS3 and KS4

175. The following table shows the quality of teaching and assessment in the KS3 and KS4 lessons observed during the inspection:

| 109 lessons | % Grade 1 | % Grade 2 | % Grade 3 | % Grade 4 | % Grade 5 |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| KS3 | 6 | 83 | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| KS4 | 7 | 64 | 29 | 0 | 0 |
| KS3 & KS4 | 6 | 76 | 18 | 0 | 0 |

(For an explanation of the grades, please refer to the beginning of the report)

How well teaching and training meets learners' needs and the curricular or course requirements

176. Figures for the quality of teaching and assessment observed in KS3 and KS4 during the inspection are shown in the table above.

177. WAG published targets for teaching in Wales for 2002. These required that 95% of teaching should be satisfactory or better, and that 50% should be good or better. These targets can now be interpreted as 95% at grade 3 or higher, with 50% at grade 2 or higher. As the table indicates, the school has far exceeded these targets. It achieved 100% at grade 3 or better, with 82% at grade 2 or better.

178. The figures also indicate significant improvement upon those achieved in the previous inspection. The corresponding figures then, for the whole school, were around 90% at grade 3 or higher, with 47% at grade 2 or higher. Such an improvement is as a result of the school's focus upon improving teaching and learning and very good leadership and management of the school.

179. An outstandingly good feature of the school is the quality of relationships that exists between pupils and teachers. This subscribes to the one of the school's main aims, "to provide the best possible education for children of all abilities within a happy, child-centred, pleasant working environment". In almost every

class, there is a culture of mutual respect and courtesy and learning occurs in a supportive, but structured, atmosphere.

180. The large majority of pupils are co-operative and hard working in class, because the lessons are interesting and they feel their teachers know them well. Levels of disruption are kept to a minimum, and consequently more learning takes place.
181. All teachers are suitably well qualified to match the requirements of the school's curriculum. They have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach, kept up to date and relevant through continuous professional development (CPD).
182. The good features can be described as follows:
183. Teachers:
 - use a wide variety of teaching strategies to provide variety and stimulus, and to meet a range of learning needs;
 - make very good use of ICT and the interactive whiteboards in their lessons;
 - have implemented the school's literacy, numeracy and ICT initiatives within teaching and are aware of the need to address different learning styles;
 - are extremely aware of all relevant pupil data and this influences their planning and preparation;
 - use the school's assessment database as an enormously useful tool in the identification of underachievement;
 - use lesson observations and self-evaluation processes to improve consistency in teaching standards both within subject areas and across the curriculum;
 - give full feedback to pupils, and use in-depth assessments and meaningful target setting on reports to enable pupils to have a better understanding of what they can achieve and how;
 - provide an enormous amount of support for pupils, enabling all pupils to access mainstream curriculum and achieve qualifications;
 - place appropriate emphasis upon ensuring that pupils are made aware of the diversity of life-styles, cultures and beliefs.
 - actively and most effectively promote equality of opportunity, through providing access for all pupils to suitable learning activities and experiences.
184. A major positive feature of teaching in the school is the extremely effective use made of good LSAs throughout the school, but particularly in KS3, where there is support in the majority of classes.
185. Although predominantly good, teaching has one or two shortcomings, for example:
 - there is some inadequate marking, leading to instances where pupils cannot work out how they might improve;

- teachers occasionally dominate lessons and allow too little time for pupils to become engaged in meaningful learning activities;
- not all pupils are encouraged to become independent learners.

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

186. Teachers monitor and review pupils' progress regularly. In most subjects, assessments are fair and accurate. The school has a very effective system for the collation, analysis and sharing of assessment data. Useful information gathered in Y7 is based on KS2 NC results and baseline testing from which target levels are predicted for each pupil. At the end of KS3, GCSE grades are also predicted. In addition, on two occasions each half term, subject teachers are required to add information on attainment, effort and presentation for each pupil.
187. This policy is consistently implemented with some examples of outstanding practice in the six subjects inspected. The school's database is thus updated regularly as pupils progress through the school.
188. The data is currently being extended to include reasons for behavioural problems, underachievement and preferred learning styles. Information on the school's database is accessible to all teachers. Monitoring is effective. Subject teachers, form tutors, heads of department and heads of year monitor progress, individuals are tracked and underachievement is identified. In KS3, LSAs contribute to the monitoring process, informing form tutors of underachievement. Heads of year and heads of department provide mentoring and support. Parents are well informed of progress. The system is particularly effective in Y9 and Y11.
189. The school's procedures are rigorous and statutory requirements for assessing and reporting pupils' achievements are fully met.
190. Whole-school target setting is particularly accurate and comprehensive. The school compares results over time against national, UA and internal data. The teaching and support for pupils with SEN are also good and the work set ensures progress to achieve targets identified in individual action plans (IEPs).
191. The procedure requiring rigorous marking of pupils' work twice each half term is effective. Subject teachers write comments that are helpful in identifying strengths, weaknesses and targets for improvement. Pupils are fully aware of procedures and know what they need to do to improve. There is guidance for teachers on target setting and departments use portfolios of marked work as exemplar materials for teachers. Senior managers and heads of department monitor pupils' work effectively to ensure consistency of quality in marking.
192. Some teachers give good verbal feedback to pupils, inform them of the criteria for success and involve them in self-assessment. The school plans to further develop these good practices across the curriculum.

193. In addition to the comprehensive database, heads of year, heads of department and subject teachers keep records that are manageable and helpful. Assessments usually inform planning.
194. Annual and interim reports represent outstanding practice in informing parents and carers of pupils' progress and achievements. Annual reports are of a consistently good standard. They give information on attendance and in the individual subject reports, teachers are required to inform parents of topics covered, the homework set, either the NC level or GCSE grade attained, the examination mark, as well as the highest and average marks attained in the group. Grades for effort, presentation, conduct and homework are awarded.
195. The reports include explanations of levels and grades for parents. There is consistently good practice in summary comments made by subject teachers. They include targets for improvement agreed with pupils. Both the form tutor and head of year add an overview of performance. The reports are comprehensive, informative, valuable and valued by both parents and pupils.
196. Parents are appropriately involved in the reporting process. They are invited to comment on reports and are contacted if there is a cause for concern. They have access to all assessment information. Parents of pupils with statements of SEN are fully involved in the process of review.

Sixth form

197. The following table shows the quality of teaching and assessment in the sixth form lessons observed during the inspection:

| 28 lessons | % Grade 1 | % Grade 2 | % Grade 3 | % Grade 4 | % Grade 5 |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Sixth form | 14 | 75 | 11 | 0 | 0 |

(For an explanation of the grades, please refer to the beginning of the report)

How well teaching and training meets learners' needs and the curricular or course requirements

198. The quality of teaching was adjudged to be best overall in the sixth form.
199. As in KS3 and KS4, the high quality of relationships between teachers and students is particularly noticeable in the sixth form. When interviewed, students commented most positively about this.
200. The good features described above for KS3 and KS4 are also present in sixth form lessons.
201. Additionally, students are often and appropriately set 'open-ended' tasks to encourage them to make decisions about which steps to take and to evaluate and refine their work. In this manner, they are prepared well for lifelong learning in other environments, such as higher education establishments.

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

202. In the sixth form, the quality of assessment is regular, accurate and fair. It represents very good practice. Subject teachers regularly share with students the objectives of learning, the criteria for success and examination requirements.
203. Subject teachers have a very good knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses. They support students with helpful diagnostic written comments on their work and orally in lessons. Students understand how improvements may be made through targets set.
204. Data on predicted grades are held on the school's database. Twice each half term, grades for work and effort are added to the database. Monitoring by subject teachers and pastoral staff is rigorous and ongoing. Those who are not achieving their target grades are identified and supported. Parents are informed and involved.
205. Records of students' achievement are helpful, comprehensive and manageable. Assessments reflect the criteria and requirements of examination boards.
206. The good quality interim and full reports continue the process of identifying strengths, weaknesses and targets for improvement. They are usefully discussed with students, parents and carers.

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

| |
|---|
| Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings |
|---|

207. The grade awarded by the inspection team agrees with the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation summary.

The extent to which learning experiences meet learners' needs and interests

208. The curriculum overall meets the needs of all pupils and reflects the aims set out for pupils of statutory school age in the Education Act 1996.

209. The curriculum is accessible for all pupils including those with SEN. Pupils have opportunities to gain an appropriate range of GCSE and vocational qualifications. Access to the sixth form is open to all students; they have opportunities to gain qualifications at A level and AS level, in the GCSE and in a range of vocational courses.

210. The curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced in each key stage. It provides effective continuity and progression between years and key stages.

211. The curriculum in KS3 meets the requirements of the NC and religious education. Pupils study French throughout the key stage with one lesson of Spanish being introduced for all pupils for one period per timetable cycle in Y9. All pupils study information technology as a discrete subject throughout the key stage. Citizenship is a good feature of the provision in Y7 and Y8.

212. Pupils in KS4 continue to study the statutory core subjects in addition to a range of optional subjects. An appropriate number of vocational subjects are included in the programme. A small number of pupils follow an alternative curriculum that includes pre-vocational and basic skill courses for part of the week.

213. In the sixth form, students can choose from an extensive programme of AS and A2 subjects and vocational courses at both AVCE and GNVQ levels. The programme is enriched through the inclusion of sociology, electronics and photography at AS/A2 level, and a general studies programme.

214. The planning for the development of key skills across the curricula in KS3 and KS4 is good. Through a number of initiatives and careful planning in all schemes of work, significant progress has been made. The school has been successful in gaining the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

215. In the sixth form, the opportunity for students to gain accreditation in key skills is an outstanding feature. A large number of students are successful in gaining awards in communication, application of number and information technology. A smaller number of students have also been successful in gaining accreditation in

the wider key skills through their involvement in the very successful 'Children in Need' project.

216. The range of extra-curricular activities available for all years is an outstanding feature of the school. Many pupils and students benefit from the range of activities available, which broaden their experiences and promote their personal and social development.
217. Numerous pupils represent the school in musical activities with considerable success; this is an outstanding feature. In sport, school teams are successful and many pupils have gained county and national honours. In addition to the wide range of clubs that meet during the lunch-hour and after school, there are visits off-site to places of interest, and to venues such as galleries and theatres. A number of visits abroad take place for a range of valuable curricular and social purposes. The school operates a successful Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme.
218. Pupils' and students' spiritual development is good. In a good number of subjects and collective worship, learners are offered opportunities to reflect on their own experiences and to develop a sense of wonder and curiosity about life. In tutor periods, there are opportunities for pupils to discuss and reflect on spiritual issues, but the quality of the experience is variable.
219. The vast majority of pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong, which they demonstrate in their daily actions. Moral development is strongly promoted by the school and pupils respond well by showing respect for each other and their environment.
220. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Pupils are treated with courtesy and consideration and this is reflected in their social interaction with peers and adults. Pupils are caring and helpful and readily acknowledge the success and achievement of others.
221. Cultural development is reflected well in aspects of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities in many subjects. Pupils benefit from a wide range of experiences that are successful in developing their knowledge and understanding of cultures that are different from their own.
222. The school provides well-focused and helpful information for parents. Open dialogue about school provision or pupils' concerns is strongly encouraged and is useful. The contributions of the parent-governors, the very successful and enthusiastic PTA, and many other individuals, effectively inform management planning and guide support for learning. Parents responded very well to the inspection questionnaire and indicated a high level of satisfaction with the school.
223. The partnership with the community is of outstanding quality. Governors are active, knowledgeable and effective representatives of both the community and the school. Together with the SLT they successfully illustrate the link between curricular learning and employment and maintain the school as a focus for

lifelong learning. There are established partnerships with many local enterprises that provide curricular, extra-curricular and pastoral support for pupils. The arrangements linking local organisations with specific year groups in which reciprocal support is negotiated is an outstanding innovation. Through collections and sponsored activities, co-ordinated by a very effective sixth form committee, pupils and parents raise very large sums of money for local and national charities.

224. The Milford Haven family of schools is a strong and supportive partnership and facilitates easy transition from KS2 to KS3. Under leadership from Milford Haven School it has ensured an outstanding breadth of pastoral and, particularly, curriculum links that provide an exceptionally smooth transition to secondary school. Useful partnership with and good knowledge of local college provision offer wider vocational experiences for less academic pupils and ensure that appropriate educational options are available at the end of KS4.
225. There are well-established links with several initial teacher training (ITT) colleges, and the school benefits from the breadth of view new students bring. In return students are well mentored and receive good training.
226. The curriculum overall meets legal requirements. The programmes for personal, health and social education, work related education and careers education and guidance meet ACCAC guidelines and are well planned in the teaching programme.

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

227. Work related education has several good features and the school works hard to overcome some of the limitations inherent in its locality.
228. In KS3, the PSE programme usefully explores personal attributes, employment options and requirements. In KS4, careers education and guidance provide a thorough understanding of the workplace and career possibilities. Good access to a professional adviser available in school every day allows pupils to further their understanding.
229. Y10 pupils undertake a well-organised and useful one-week work experience. The high demand on the limited employment places available locally has constrained the school's work experience timetable to the last week of the summer term. Pupils are expected to select their own placements from a list of opportunities provided. They receive good briefing from a professional adviser prior to the placement. A collective debriefing at the start of Y11 aims to broaden the value of the experience, but it is difficult to capture the full benefit after an intervening summer holiday.
230. An audit has been carried out to identify how all aspects of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig are addressed in subjects across the curriculum. Schemes of work in all subjects identify these opportunities.

231. Many initiatives are provided during the school year at all key stages to promote bilingualism. These include a school eisteddfod for pupils in Y7 and Y8 with competitions in most subjects, Urdd competitions and visits to Llangrannog. Good practice was observed in a mathematics lesson where pupils were encouraged to use Welsh in a relevant context. Bilingual signs are visible around the school, but not all displays have a strong bilingual ethos.
232. The school is successful in ensuring equality of access to the curriculum for pupils of all abilities. All are encouraged to achieve success in each key stage and to participate fully in the life of the school. The alternative provision in Y9 and KS4 successfully caters for pupils at risk of disaffection.
233. The school recently conducted a full audit and has developed an appropriate policy statement in respect of sustainable development. The emphasis is placed on the need to conserve energy and reduce waste in order to protect the environment for future generations. The theme is promoted in the teaching of most subjects with significant inputs delivered through geography, citizenship, PSE, science, history and design and technology. The paper recycling scheme is very successful in the disposal of all white printed paper. A 'pond area' has recently been improved using a grant of £1000 under the auspices of the 'Land for Learning Project'. The School Council plays a prominent role in managing and supporting sustainable development.
234. The Careers Fair, Enterprise Days and participation in the 'Careers on Line' Internet facility provide a broad understanding of the workplace. The local knowledge and involvement of governors, supported by informative collaboration with Careers Wales West and an Education Business Partnership, ensures that teachers, parents and pupils are well acquainted with the current needs of employers.
235. There is outstanding provision to develop entrepreneurial and related skills. Problem solving skills are well developed across the curriculum. All KS3 pupils learn about the importance of decision making through activities like the Real Game and Dynamo Project. There is a wide range of team-building activity based days. Enterprise schemes such as Celtic Enterprise and Young Enterprise, and competitions like Young Engineers allow pupils in all key stages and of all abilities to take their entrepreneurial skills further. A high level of these activities has been maintained for many years and the school is a frequent winner of trophies at regional, Welsh and Great Britain level.
236. The school has effective procedures in place to engage pupils in the pursuit of life long learning. These are initiated in Y6, through informative curricular links with primary schools, and reinforced in KS3, KS4 and in the sixth form, where community links and extra-curricular enterprise activities are strong. Pupils are actively offered the opportunities, expertise and training to become independent learners, although not all take full advantage of these. Classroom lessons and a range of activities familiarise pupils with community and national needs.

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

| |
|--|
| Grade 1: Good with outstanding features |
|--|

237. The grade awarded by the inspection team agrees with the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation summary.

The quality of care, support and guidance for learners

238. The school is successful in establishing a congenial, caring community. There is an outstanding supportive quality to the relationships between staff and pupils.

239. Pupils respond positively to the care shown to them, being very ready to turn to their teachers for advice when the need arises.

240. The school has been successful in establishing a pastoral system that emphasises the personal welfare and the academic achievements of its pupils.

241. Clear and direct procedures are in place, and the system is based on form tutors who are responsible to heads of year and the SLT. There is outstanding collaboration at each level, focusing on different aspects of the provision.

242. Pastoral work is enhanced and supported by the good quality PSE provision, which meets the ACCAC framework requirements.

243. Links with parents of mainstream pupils are good. They are outstanding for parents of pupils with SEN. A good number of appropriate strategies keep parents well informed and they are welcome to discuss issues with the relevant member of staff.

244. There are outstanding pastoral and curricular links with the contributory primary schools. Links with secondary schools and further education colleges are good, as are those with a local special school.

245. The induction programme for pupils from the primary partner schools is outstanding. Visits and joint project work make for a successful transition that the pupils and parents clearly appreciate.

246. Option books are distributed to pupils in Y9 and Y11, with relevant information on the subjects available for GCSE, AS and A2 level. Y9 pupils receive outstanding guidance and advice on subject choices by the SLT, as well as in PSE lessons and at a school open evening.

247. Links with local businesses and industry are strong and there is good liaison with the careers company, whose officers are based in the school and who provide valuable support and guidance.

248. The monitoring of pupils' punctuality, attendance, behaviour and performance is outstanding. Clear procedures are in place throughout and the school has worked hard and successfully to raise the standards.
249. Correct procedures are followed where pupils are excluded temporarily for unacceptable behaviour. No permanent exclusions took place in the three terms preceding the inspection.
250. Pupils are well aware of the standards of behaviour expected from them. Even at times when large numbers of pupils cause considerable congestion, movement is sensible and behaviour is good.
251. The school has clearly documented procedures to ensure pupils' wellbeing and health and an appropriate number of staff members with a recognised First Aid qualification.
252. Child protection procedures operate effectively. All members of staff have received training on identification strategies and how to respond to issues or incidents that might arise.

The quality of provision for additional learning needs

253. The provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good with outstanding features.
254. Assessment of pupils' special educational needs, together with information from the primary school, identify correctly the pupils to be placed on the SEN register, which is reviewed effectively twice a year. There is good involvement of parents, external agencies and the UA in the review of pupils' statements.
255. Individual educational and behavioural plans are of good quality. They provide relevant information and help all teachers to plan appropriate strategies and work. Pupils know their targets and most achieve considerable success.
256. Standards in the learning support classes in KS3 have good features and no important shortcomings.
257. LSAs offer outstanding support for individuals and small groups of pupils with SEN. They provide continuity and support, often helping to avoid difficulties and aiding pupils' educational progress.
258. When pupils are withdrawn from mainstream classes their work is well matched to their educational targets and the vast majority are making good progress.
259. Over 150 KS3 pupils successfully follow interactive computerised learning programmes in English and mathematics. The good records kept show that overall, pupils make outstanding progress in gaining the relevant basic skills.
260. A number of literacy schemes are successful in developing reading skills. Pupils are confident and most read with fluency and expression.

261. Pupils with specific learning difficulties receive effective in-class support. When they are withdrawn for extra help, the co-ordinator co-operates closely with mainstream teachers and LSAs to ensure effective cohesion and support where necessary.
262. Subject teachers' close cooperation with the learning support department ensures outstanding integration programmes for pupils with a wide range of SEN. A variety of outside expertise provides good practical support.
263. The school achieves outstanding success in supporting pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. When a pupil exhibits challenging behaviour, staff reaction is well informed and they implement the relevant strategies for that pupil. Parents and pupils are involved in setting pupils' targets for improvement.
264. Advice and counselling of individual pupils by the UA behavioural support teacher effectively enable a good number of pupils to remain in mainstream education.
265. The SEN co-ordinator (SENCO) and the assistant SENCO provide outstanding guidance and support, working together very well. Between them, they provide a wealth of effective expertise, which enables pupils with a wide and complex range of SEN to make good progress.
266. An outstanding whole-school approach to the education of pupils with SEN has successfully been established. The school governors and the SLT are very involved and supportive.

The quality of provision for equal opportunities

267. The school is outstanding in the care it takes to create a climate where learners are free from harassment and discrimination. Parents and pupils are confident that the school would respond promptly to such instances.
268. The school monitors and compares the assessment outcomes of boys and girls. Suitable strategies are in place from Y7 onwards to address problems where relevant.
269. Disabled learners are able to access most of the curriculum. The school has identified areas for improvement and is working with the UA to improve access to various areas of the accommodation.
270. Provision for the large numbers of pupils with SEN is of outstanding quality. These pupils are fully involved in the life of the school.
271. The curriculum successfully provides specific opportunities for pupils to learn about and discuss issues related to racism and human rights. The few pupils from ethnic minority groups have good friends across the age range and integrate very well.

272. Pupils who may experience difficulties in school or in the community are supported sensitively and effectively. The school has good working relationships with a wide range of external agencies.
273. All pupils looked after by the UA have appropriate care plans and receive outstanding support from the school.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features.

274. The grade awarded by the inspection team agrees with the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation summary.

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

275. The school's key purpose is to provide the best possible education for children of all abilities within a happy, child-centred, pleasant working environment. It succeeds exceptionally well in achieving this aim. Relationships between governors, the SLT, teaching staff, pupils, students and support staff are very good. These contribute to a positive and supportive working atmosphere, within which the progress and well being of the pupils and students are at the centre of everybody's thinking. There is an outstandingly strong team spirit, of which the school is rightly proud, and all 'pull together' to enhance the school's good reputation. Parents' and pupils' comments testify to this.
276. Within a truly collaborative and collegiate management structure, the headteacher provides extremely effective leadership. Members of the SLT, middle managers and all staff support her most effectively. Such leadership provides a very clear direction for the school and has been the major factor in moving the school forward and in promoting the strong positive and supportive ethos that exists in the school. The improvements in standards of achievement and in the quality of teaching provide strong evidence of the progress made by the school since the previous inspection.
277. It is expected that all governors, teachers, support staff, pupils and students shall have high expectations, that they will encourage and expect success, and seek to develop the full potential of everyone associated closely with the school. As seen within lessons and many other activities within the school, to a great extent these expectations are met.
278. The school's policies and procedures to promote racial equality, and equality of opportunity for all, are appropriate and effective. The school satisfies statutory requirements in relation to disability and looked after children.
279. The school has a very successful Performance Management system, within which all members of staff, teaching and otherwise, are actively and effectively involved. Every member of staff has had the opportunity for training and development, and members of staff readily embrace new ideas and initiatives. In-service education and training (INSET) days have been targeted on

improving key skills (literacy, numeracy, listening, thinking), study skills and 'learning learning', with a highly positive response and much resulting good practice from staff. The school consistently receives positive reports from 'Investor in People' assessors for its strong focus on professional development.

280. The school has been very successful in promoting the development of key skills across the curriculum. It has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark. Excellent progress has been made in extending and enhancing the use of ICT across the curriculum. The school has received much praise and recognition from the Basic Skills Agency, not only for the work seen by the agency, when the school applied for the award, but since then, for its cross curricular work on numeracy.
281. The school has an outstandingly effective departmental review and self-evaluation system. All heads of year and heads of department have effectively embraced the role of monitoring and driving academic progress.
282. The school's database, which has been developed in-house, is a crucial tool in the monitoring of achievement and underachievement, and heads of year and their assistants, in particular, use it very successfully.
283. All managers contribute to the SDP, with targets being shared with all staff at the beginning of the academic year so that everyone has a clear idea of the way forward. The emphasis is on planning and caring for the individual in so far as this is possible within the school's resources.
284. Most middle managers take their responsibilities for improving teaching and learning very seriously, and are doing their best to move their departments forward. In a good number of departments, both leadership and management are outstanding. The high quality of some of the departmental self-evaluation reports presented to the inspectors bears testament to this statement.
285. The school provides a very good programme of induction and mentoring for newly qualified teachers and for teachers new to the school. Comments from such members of staff indicated their appreciation of the arrangements. The school also supports well a sizeable number of ITT students, for whom it provides guidance and mentoring, each year.
286. The school takes due notice of the WAG's priorities and guidance provided by other organisations for the benefit of pupils and students. Particularly noteworthy are the links established with partner primary schools and local training providers.

How well governors meet their responsibilities

287. The governing body is a well-informed and very supportive committee of critical friends. Governors have an outstandingly thorough understanding of their school and their roles in its management. They are well aware of regional and national trends in education and have extensive experience of local and wider

community issues. Consequently their input to strategic management is informed and well focused.

288. They are fully and actively involved in all aspects of planning, monitoring and evaluation of school performance but acknowledge that the role of subject-link governors needs to become more rigorous. Assessment of performance is always in respect of the agreed SDP and progress towards its targets. The board holds itself accountable for the effectiveness, appropriateness for purpose and value for money of all school activities.
289. The governing body provides a strong sense of identity and direction for the school and these are clearly set out in the prospectus and reflected in the annual report to parents.

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

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| Grade 1: Good with outstanding features. |
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290. The grade awarded by the inspection team agrees with the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation summary.

How effectively the school's performance is monitored and evaluated

291. The school's self-evaluation report accurately and honestly addresses the seven key questions of the common inspection framework. The school has provided an overall judgement, listed good features and areas for development, and grades for each key question. The inspection team's findings correspond closely with those of the self-evaluation report.
292. The school has outstandingly well organised methodical arrangements for measuring its effectiveness. These include: detailed analyses of appropriate data, observation and evaluation of teaching and learning, scrutiny of pupils' work, detailed discussions about performances, and comparisons of outcomes with agreed targets and other internal and external data.
293. Central to the school's activities for evaluating and planning for improvement, is the extremely effective and successful annual strategic planning meeting, attended by all members of the SLT and the governing body.
294. The departmental review process enables heads of department to review all aspects of their subject with their line manager (SLT member) and the headteacher. This highlights areas of strength and achievement, which can be duly recognised and acknowledged. It also identifies concerns regarding staffing, training and resources, allowing the headteacher to plan effectively, and to put in place any necessary support. It provides well for effective one-to-one conversations and quality listening, and establishes relationships of trust. Thus the system provides a sound basis on which to build for the future.
295. In-depth departmental self-evaluation has enabled line managers and the headteacher to know their departments well. The accompanying lesson observations have helped to raise standards of teaching and planning. Whole school evaluation and review has become embedded into the annual school cycle, and has enabled managers to focus much more specifically on targets for improvement.
296. The school has most successfully managed to get all the processes into the right order, so that they inform each other. This has helped the school to plan much more systematically and effectively for improvement. It also focuses all parties on current targets and initiatives and enables everyone to see the part they have to play.

297. Developing its own school database has been a considerable help in enabling the school to see at a glance where everyone, staff and pupils, need to improve.
298. Integral to the school's procedures is the way in which it takes serious account of the views of pupils and students. This was confirmed during an interview with the senior prefects of the school and in other conversations with pupils. The main vehicle for pupils to express their views is the very effective School Council. The leadership and organisation provided by the senior prefects ensure its effectiveness. Parents also commented that the school responds positively to their observations, and that they felt their views are valued.

The effectiveness of planning for improvement

299. The school's self-evaluation and performance management systems provide a positive foundation for school, departmental and individual development plans.
300. The SDP focuses on themes that are appropriate for school improvement, within a framework of the seven key questions of the common inspection framework.
301. Appropriately, the SDP begins with a review of progress, followed by a statement of the whole school strategic plan. The detailed plan then clearly describes target areas, specific aims and objectives, personnel, timescales, success criteria and resource implications. Overall it provides a very good framework for further success and improvement.
302. Departmental development plans are rightly integral to the whole school plan. They are detailed and incorporate whole school priorities well within the different subject requirements. Targets are clear and monitoring systems are well defined.
303. Exceptionally good financial management ensures that developmental priorities are adequately resourced and financed.
304. Self-evaluation and development planning have led to improvements in a number of areas. The improvements made in recent years, in the provision and use of ICT, are outstanding. The effect of focusing over time on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy is obvious in the quality of work seen in many subjects. The quality of teaching and learning has improved considerably over recent years, as indicated elsewhere in the report.
305. Overall, the school has made good and often outstanding progress in addressing the key issues for action highlighted in the previous inspection report. The improvements identified in detailed action plans, written following the previous inspection, have been realised exceptionally well in practice.
306. Standards in physical education have improved considerably – as evidenced in the subject-specific section of this report.

307. Teachers' skills in ICT are now at least good and ICT has been developed very well across the curriculum. It is integral to many teaching strategies, and is used effectively to enhance learning.
308. The standards achieved by middle and lower ability pupils have improved considerably. Evidence that this is so can be found in lessons, but particularly in the quality of the KS3 assessment results, and in the increase in the proportion of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSE grades A* to G.
309. Overall, pupils' behaviour is at least good, and often of a high standard. This represents a great improvement.
310. The school's assessment practices provide much valuable evidence on how well pupils are performing and what they need to do to improve. Day-to-day marking of work is good overall, but there is still room for improvement in a few areas to ensure consistency of practice.

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

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| Grade 1: Good with outstanding features. |
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311. The grade awarded by the inspection team agrees with the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation summary.

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

312. The school is staffed well, with sufficient qualified, experienced teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum in all key stages. Overall, there is a good balance between teachers who have been in post for a number of years and recently appointed staff. The pupil teacher ratio is 16.7:1, which is close to the national average. The school's teacher contact ratio is also close to the national average, which enables teachers to have sufficient time to carry out their duties effectively.

313. The 25 LSAs who assist the large number of pupils with SEN are well trained and extremely supportive. They work very effectively with teachers to support individual pupils who have a wide range of SEN. An outstanding feature is the assignment of an LSA to each registration group in Y7 and Y8. Their input does much to help pupils achieve high standards in KS3. The learning support department carefully monitors their work.

314. The school is well staffed with appropriately skilled support personnel to enable teaching, administration and the day-to-day life of the school to function effectively and very efficiently under the direction of the bursar, who is a member of the senior leadership team. Members of the administrative staff ensure that the office, reception and reprographic areas are run efficiently. The laboratory technicians, three IT personnel and two technicians supporting the design technology, art and home economics areas contribute effectively to the daily routines. The site manager is extremely committed to the environment of the school and is regularly involved in the management of projects to upgrade the facilities.

315. Overall, the provision of learning resources is exceptional. An outstanding feature of the provision is the availability of 36 electronic whiteboards and the pupil to computer ratio of 3:1. Organisation to access these facilities is very good during lesson time, at lunchtime and after school. All subjects use ICT very well to enhance pupils' learning.

316. The condition and quality of books used across the curriculum is good. The school has successfully enabled all pupils and students to have access to textbooks in all subjects. The library has been refurbished, is adequately resourced with books and 15 computers, and supports learning very well.

317. The school makes very good use of resources beyond the school to enrich the curriculum. They include museums, theatres, galleries and field centres. A wide range of visiting speakers enhances pupils' and students' learning experiences.
318. The overall quality of the accommodation is good and, in most respects provides a stimulating learning environment. However, the part of the school that accommodates the learning support department is too small and needs refurbishment. There are sufficient classrooms for the number of pupils on roll; many are enhanced by good quality displays.
319. Nearly all specialist rooms are housed close to one another making sharing of resources and whole departmental discussion easier. Since the last inspection some significant improvements have been made to the overall facilities at the school. In particular, the physical recreation facilities have been upgraded to include a refurbished Astro turf area and tennis/netball courts, almost all the school has been redecorated and new toilets have been provided for staff and pupils.
320. The school has made some provision to enable pupils with physical disabilities to access most of the curriculum. The shortage of lifts in the buildings continues to limit access for a small number of pupils to art and home economics.
321. The school building and playing fields are well maintained. The site manager and cleaning staff work hard to ensure that the school is clean. There is little evidence of litter, because most pupils do not drop it.

How efficiently resources are managed to achieve value for money

322. The school's budget is managed most effectively. The school uses its monies, including grant funding, very well to support strategies to raise standards. Spending decisions are made to respond to the requirements of development plans. The governing body and the SLT review the curriculum and its associated staffing and resource needs annually at least. Decisions are made only after due consideration has been given to all aspects.
323. The school works hard to avoid waste in terms of staffing, training, resources, energy etc. to enable it to target more funding towards learning support. Best use is made of skills, resources and expertise within the school to train others. In this way, expenditure on external providers is minimised.
324. Teachers and support staff are deployed to best effect. As mentioned in comments in key question 5, they are managed and developed most effectively.
325. The bursar performs her duties most effectively and efficiently, especially in terms of monitoring spending and ensuring that best value for money is obtained. She has an increased understanding and perception of the school's needs through her position on the SLT, and thus she is also in the best position to improve the financial awareness of all staff and governors. In recognition of the quality of her management of the school's finances, she has recently become a Licentiate of the National Bursars' Association, and is used by the UA

to train other school bursars. Minor recommendations in the most recent auditors' report have been implemented fully.

326. Allocations of non-contact time, departmental budgets, refurbishment opportunities, support staff etc. are made clear to all and are seen to be fair.
327. The school has improved considerably over recent years, and everyone is generally well provided for within the budget. Overall, the school is achieving good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

English

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| Key Stage 3 | Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings |
| Key Stage 4 | Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings |
| Sixth Form | Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings |

Good features

KS3 and KS4

328. All pupils listen attentively and respectfully to the teacher and to one another. They respond rapidly to instructions.
329. In class discussions, they respond to questions, recalling previous learning and demonstrating a good understanding of their work.
330. They collaborate well in pairs and small groups for a range of purposes including the sharing of ideas and opinions and the preparation of extended pieces of writing.
331. Pupils read aloud with accuracy and fluency. Those with reading difficulties demonstrate good “word attack” skills. They are well supported by teachers, LSAs, Y10 “buddies”, computerised learning programmes and the home reading scheme. All pupils demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of a wide range of literary and non-literary texts, including screen.
332. Pupils demonstrate good skills of interpretation. They identify and appreciate devices used by writers such as persuasive techniques and imagery including simile and extended metaphor. They understand the effects of their use on the readers. Pupils also demonstrate good research skills of information retrieval including skimming and scanning.
333. All pupils, including those with SEN, engage in a wide range of writing. They understand that written language must be matched to the requirements of different audiences, purposes and forms.
334. Most pupils of all abilities improve writing by planning, drafting and responding to the guidance and the written comments of their teachers.
335. By the end of KS3 and KS4, most pupils produce good standards of writing in response to both language and literature. The work represents good progress over time. The most able pupils produce well-structured writing that includes mature expression, appropriate vocabulary and good technical skills.

Sixth form

336. Students listen intently to the teacher and to one another. They take part in class discussions, demonstrating a sound knowledge of characters, plots and themes as well as the social, cultural and historical backgrounds of set texts.
337. They collaborate well in pairs and small groups to analyse both seen and unseen texts. They put forward opinions, justify ideas, challenge others, persuade, negotiate and problem solve effectively.
338. By the end of the course, most students produce well-crafted critical writing which includes appropriate quotations to support opinions. All course work reflects good progress in relation to ability. The most able students use mature expression and demonstrate good skills of critical analysis.

Shortcomings

KS3 and KS4

339. A small number of pupils do not draft and proof read with sufficient rigour so that errors persist.

Sixth form

340. A small number of students in Y12 lack confidence in class discussion. They are too reliant on the teacher and do not always give sufficiently detailed written responses to critical analysis.

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| Welsh |
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| Key Stage 3 | Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings |
| Key Stage 4 | Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings |
| Sixth Form | Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings |

Good features

KS3

341. Pupils develop a good understanding of Welsh. The use of incidental Welsh by the pupils is a common occurrence.
342. Listening skills are good. Pupils extract information well when listening to the teacher and to each other. When they conduct a short survey by questioning several members of the class, they record the information quickly and accurately.
343. Pupils, across the ability range, are eager to volunteer answers. The most able can decipher the meaning of new vocabulary or phrases from similarities in words already learned.
344. Pupils write in a wide variety of formats. They are able to express their likes and dislikes well using simple constructions. As the rules of grammar are

explained regularly, written work is generally accurate, showing a sound grasp of mutation and tenses.

345. Pupils with SEN work well with appropriate support from learning assistants and make progress.
346. When activities are planned on a rotational basis, groups of lower ability pupils remain focused throughout. They show the same enthusiasm for all activities - listening, writing or problem solving games.
347. Standards in reading are commensurate with pupils' abilities. Able pupils read fluently with good expression.
348. By the end of KS3 the majority of pupils can sustain short dialogues using relevant vocabulary and a range of sentence patterns.
349. Pupils use ICT effectively to improve the standard of their work.
350. Pupils assess their strengths and weaknesses in each of the language skills and set themselves targets for improvement.

KS4

351. Pupils on the full GCSE course write accurately showing a command of syntax and grammar. They use wide vocabulary and sentence structures to write on a range of subjects. Their use of format shows an awareness of audience and purpose.
352. Pronunciation of the majority of pupils is clear whether speaking or reading aloud as pupils listen respectfully to their teacher and to each other.
353. Pupils collaborate well to produce dialogues where they express opinions on a range of issues. They make purposeful notes quickly and accurately without prompts.
354. Pupils make use of their ICT skills to present coursework effectively.

Sixth form

355. Students are able to conduct an impromptu conversation on familiar subjects with visitors, teachers and peers.
356. Folios of work contain a range of written formats that are structured effectively. The majority of students achieve a high level of accuracy, as they have a sound knowledge of the rules of grammar. Some work makes good use of idioms and comparisons.
357. When discussing three films, students make measured comments on plot, characterisation, theme and filming techniques.
358. Students carry out effective research of a range of valid sources including the Internet to inform their compositions.

Shortcomings

KS3

359. A minority of pupils prefer to provide brief responses to both oral and written questions.

KS4

360. Not all pupils on the GCSE short course build on the progress made at KS3 to improve their standards, due to lack of commitment.

Sixth form

361. A minority of students are reticent to take part in an extended discussion.

362. Pronunciation of less familiar words when reading aloud is not always secure.

Geography

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

Key Stage 4 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Sixth Form Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

KS3

363. Most pupils have a sound grasp of geographical terminology. They apply key geographical vocabulary with accuracy in their study of a variety of geographical themes and contexts.

364. The majority of pupils possess a good understanding of the types of industry. The unit of work on farming demonstrates their strong grasp of the environmental factors that determine farming practices. They use the agricultural model of physical and human inputs, process and outputs, with confidence.

365. Pupils are secure in their use of maps, atlas, information booklets and textbooks. They are competent in using a wide range of geographical skills. Pupils with SEN do particularly well.

366. Y7 work on weathering and coastal erosion demonstrates the pupils' thorough understanding of process and patterns in physical geography. Most pupils can describe and explain the formation of sea caves, arches, stacks and stumps.

KS4

367. The majority of pupils achieve good standards in their mapping and graphical skills. Their ability to analyse and interpret geographical data is good.

368. Good fieldwork and enquiry based projects contribute significantly to the pupils' understanding of patterns and processes in human and physical geography. Coursework assignments demonstrate good understanding of the processes at work in the formation of patterns associated with the River Syfynwy and urban development in Haverfordwest.
369. Pupils have a secure understanding of urban land-use models. They are able to apply the models to the land-use patterns in Swansea. Most pupils have a thorough knowledge of the characteristics of the Central Business District (CBD) using Swansea as a case study.
370. Most pupils understand the relationship between people and the environment. They are aware of the environmental consequences of the widespread destruction of natural resources, pollution and global warming.

Sixth form

371. Students' files are well presented and contain detailed notes on aspects of the course.
372. The majority of students demonstrate good research and enquiry skills. They apply geographical terminology with accuracy in the completion of assignments.
373. Most students display a mature approach to the subject. Their geographical skills are good accompanied by a sound grasp of issues relating to the subject.
374. Students interpret complex geographical data with confidence. Their work on the Narmada River Project demonstrates an understanding of the major issues involved in the development of a major water resource scheme. It contributes significantly to students' awareness of sustainable development issues.
375. The majority of students possess a good understanding of the processes influencing the changes in retail patterns over the past fifty years. They describe and explain accurately how these changes determine the physical patterns within and around our urban developments.

Shortcomings

KS3

376. A minority of pupils experience difficulty in fully understanding some geographical concepts.

KS4

377. A number of pupils display a lack of understanding of geographical terminology especially with reference to river processes.
378. The standard of work of a small number of pupils is hampered by a failure to focus on their studies. There is missing or incomplete work.

379. The standards achieved by a substantial number of pupils are restricted by a failure to complete tasks in detail. Pupils' responses, both orally and written, lack depth in terms of knowledge and understanding.

Sixth form

380. The essay work of a few students lacks structural organisation and sufficient depth in the answers to set tasks.

Religious education

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

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

Sixth Form Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

KS3

381. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of the units of work studied, which reflect the requirements of the local agreed syllabus.
382. They know how and why believers from the religions they study worship, meditate and celebrate their faith.
383. They are gaining an understanding of the importance of beliefs in everyday life for believers.
384. Standards of achievement are outstanding when there is an appropriate balance between teacher-directed activity and pupil participation, and when learning is related to life experiences.
385. Pupils discuss at the appropriate level their own and others' responses to questions about life and can relate religious teachings to social, cultural and moral issues.
386. Less able pupils can describe their own feelings, actions and opinions, and reflect on these, referring to the religions they study.

KS4

387. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding, which they apply effectively to their units of study, both in class discussion and in their written work.
388. They make good progress in their ability to participate in discussion, many analyse ideas and give reasons for their viewpoints.
389. Higher achievers are interested in, and become increasingly aware of, the questions about meaning and purpose arising from life experiences.

390. Across the ability range pupils respond thoughtfully to others' views and beliefs on religious and moral issues, and they form good values and attitudes towards life.

Sixth form

391. Students respond thoughtfully to religious, moral and social issues, and in their presentations, show confidence in discussing their own values and evaluating those of others.

392. They demonstrate a good awareness of the nature and problems of ethical issues, and of the ways religious beliefs and practices address these questions and issues.

Shortcomings

KS3 and KS4

393. In a few lessons, pupils' understanding is not refined or extended because of the lack of opportunities to share views and beliefs with peers.

Sixth form

394. No important shortcomings.

Religious studies

Key Stage 4 Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Sixth Form Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Good and outstanding features

KS4

395. Pupils successfully build upon the religious concepts acquired in KS3. They demonstrate outstanding maturity in the depth of their responses to tasks and challenges.

396. They successfully apply a range of religious concepts to present arguments for and against a variety of beliefs, teachings and practices.

397. They consider the implications of their own beliefs and actions, and compare these with other pupils to draw a balanced conclusion.

398. They use a good range of religious vocabulary appropriately and are able to explain the symbolic meaning of actions and language.

399. Pupils show outstanding ability when they interpret different beliefs and practices as a means of making sense of human experiences.

400. Pupils of average and less ability make outstanding progress in applying their religious knowledge and understanding to social and moral problems, and this is reflected in their outstanding GCSE grades.

Sixth form

401. Students have outstanding knowledge of the key concepts in the religious beliefs, ideas and principles of Buddhism.
402. They develop their analytical and evaluative skills successfully when considering aspects concerning the beliefs, values and traditions of the religious and ethical issues studies.
403. They show outstanding maturity when they evaluate the various aspects of religions and explain well how these affect the lives of individuals, communities and society.
404. Students produce good quality essays. They are able to select relevant points from teacher's notes and other sources to develop a coherent argument.
405. The more able show outstanding skill in expressing a balanced opinion when discussing various sources of information, orally and in writing.

Shortcomings

KS4 and sixth form

406. There are no significant shortcomings.

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| Music |
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| Key Stage 3 | Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings |
| Key Stage 4 | Grade 1: Good with outstanding features |
| Sixth Form | Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings |

Good and outstanding features

KS3

407. Pupils sing with secure intonation and clear diction. They perform with a good degree of accuracy on classroom instruments and keyboards and maintain secure ensemble in group and whole class performance.
408. Pupils often combine different sounds and textures imaginatively in "soundscape" compositions. Most melodic work is well shaped and rhythmically interesting. Pupils have a good awareness of musical elements and many make perceptive comments when appraising.

KS4

409. GCSE results in 2003 and 2004 were outstanding, with many pupils in the respective years gaining A* or A grades.

- 410. Pupils in Y10 make very good progress in all elements of their course.
- 411. Most pupils, across the key stage, have good or outstanding solo and ensemble performing skills.
- 412. Compositions demonstrate imaginative treatment of ideas and are enhanced by effective use of ICT to layer strands and add colour. Many pupils have a good and sometimes an outstanding sense of style.
- 413. More able and most middle ability pupils discern features well when appraising extracts of music from their different areas of study.

Sixth form

- 414. Students perform with conviction and an outstanding sense of style.
- 415. Most Y12 keyboard “Baroque” style compositions show good understanding of chords and melody writing; a few have a convincing sense of style. Free compositions by Y13 students display interesting treatment of ideas and many display good understanding of the chosen style and medium.
- 416. Student essays reflect personal research and good knowledge and understanding of the technical and stylistic features of the music being studied in the two areas of learning. Aural skills, although uneven, are good overall.

Shortcomings

KS3

- 417. Occasionally, in certain classes, singing lacks conviction.
- 418. A few compositions are limited in musical interest.
- 419. Comments made by pupils in certain classes when appraising their own practical work are brief and limited in detail.

KS4

- 420. A small number of Y11 compositions are rather limited in musical interest. The appraising skills of a few Y11 middle and lower ability pupils are not always secure in certain appraising tasks.

Sixth form

- 421. The keyboard writing style in a few Y12 “Baroque” compositions lacks conviction.
- 422. A few Y12 and Y13 compositions, and a small number of Y12 coursework essays, lack refinement and are incomplete.
- 423. The aural skills of certain students are uneven. They are good in many tasks but not always secure in others.

Physical education

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| Key Stage 3 | Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings |
| Key Stage 4 | Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings |
| Sixth Form | Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings |

Good features

KS3 and KS4

424. Pupils understand the need for warming up and are able to work independently to complete an appropriate warm up session. They work well together and they apply the rules of the activities. Pupils show good sporting behaviour when playing games.

KS3

425. Pupils take part enthusiastically. In Y7 tennis and Y8 athletics, pupils are prepared to practise and refine their actions.

426. Evaluative skills are developing and pupils are able to identify how improvements can be made to their own work and the work of others.

427. In all activity areas pupils are aware of safe practices and show respect for each other.

KS4

428. Pupils play the games of rounders and baseball enthusiastically and basic skills improve as the games progress.

429. In cricket, pupils work consistently on the task set.

430. Pupils are becoming confident in improving and applying the rules in a range of activities.

Sixth form

431. There is good group discussion within the AS Group. Students are willing to listen to and learn from others in the group.

432. AS students use correct terminology and are able to put forward their own views, justify their opinions and challenge the opinions of others in the group.

Shortcomings

KS3

433. In Y9 badminton, as the practices become more challenging, pupils make insufficient progress.

434. In Y8 athletics, a few pupils are not able to follow the instructions given and find difficulty in performing the throwing action for the discus.

KS4

435. In rounders and baseball, pupils show little understanding of fielding tactics. In some instances, silly behaviour leads to lack of concentration and full participation in the game.
436. Non-participation in a small number of classes detracts from the overall performance of the group.
437. Pupils' knowledge of the key principles of a health-related education programme and their ability to explain the short and long-term effects of exercise are limited.

Sixth form

438. When students in the small A level group respond to questioning, their answers lack depth and they do not draw on knowledge from across all areas of the syllabus to answer fully.

School's response to the inspection

439. The headteacher, staff and governors are delighted that the Estyn report confirms so positively the school's own self-evaluation report, which attempts openly and honestly to give a true picture of our school.
440. We believe that we have made outstanding progress since the last inspection. Our opinion has been justified by the grades awarded to the key questions, but in particular the figures for standards (86% grades 1 and 2 and 100% grade 3 or better), and for the quality of teaching (83% Grades 1 and 2 and 100% grade 3 or better). We feel that all the effort gone into improving the standards of learning and teaching has been rewarded with an objective and public acknowledgement of our success. Self-review and self-evaluation have been the key to this progress, with our assessment database a major tool in the monitoring and tracking of individual pupil's achievement. We will continue our efforts to raise standards in all subjects, and the further development of pupil self-assessment and independent learning will play a major part in this process.
441. We have always been proud of the quality of our care, support and guidance for pupils. Our steadfast efforts have paid off, and it is with tremendous pleasure and satisfaction that we read that "very good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour by most pupils" is listed as one of the contributory factors to the high standards achieved in KS3 and KS4. We believe in educating the whole child, offering them a wealth of opportunities both within and outside the classroom. We therefore appreciate the report's description of our extra-curricular provision, entrepreneurial activities and community links as outstanding features of our school. The report recognises the strong emphasis we put on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and acknowledges our pupils' friendly and courteous behaviour towards teachers, visitors and each other. We accept that we need to ensure greater consistency of standards in the daily act of worship.

442. Much time, effort and careful financial planning has gone into improving our learning environment and teaching resources. We were very pleased to receive confirmation of the impact of our provision on raising standards of teaching and learning. Staff have worked hard to improve their skills in order to make the best of our ICT provision and we very much appreciate the report's recognition of the progress we have made in this respect. We share the report's opinion on the relatively poor accommodation for SEN and the need for more lifts to enable disabled children to access all parts of the school. However, we are confident that the UA will help us implement plans for improvement in the near future. Most of all we are proud of the report's references to effective and inspiring teaching in most subjects, the outstanding contribution of all our support staff, the consistently high standards of management across all departments and year groups, and including the governors, outstanding additional learning support and the very real progress made by pupils of all abilities. We are grateful to a particularly sensitive team of inspectors who sought to see the best in us and allow us to show ourselves off in our true colours. With the help of this report and its recommendations we will be able to continue to move our school onwards and upwards into the future.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Name of school | Milford Haven School |
| School type | Community |
| Age-range of pupils | 11 – 18 |
| Address of school | Steynton Road Milford Haven Pembrokeshire |
| Postcode | SA73 1AE |
| Telephone number | 01646 690021 |

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Headteacher | Mrs P J Munday |
| Date of appointment | April 1998 |
| Chair of governors/ Appropriate Authority | Mr J Bramley |
| Reporting inspector | Mr Brian Medhurst |
| Dates of inspection | 18 – 21 April 2005 |

Appendix B

School data and indicators

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Year group | Y7 | Y8 | Y9 | Y10 | Y11 | Y12 | Y13 | Total |
| Number of pupils | 211 | 211 | 247 | 198 | 217 | 120 | 77 | 1281 |

| Total number of teachers | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------|
| | Full-time | Part-time | Full-time equivalent (fte) |
| Number of teachers | 75 | 2 | 76.6 |

| Staff information | |
|---|----------|
| Pupil:teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes) | 16.7 : 1 |
| Average teaching group size | 20.3 |
| Overall contact ratio (percentage) | 82% |

| Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection | | | | | | | | |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------------|
| | Y7 | Y8 | Y9 | Y10 | Y11 | Y12 | Y13 | Whole School |
| Term 1 | 93.0 | 92.5 | 91.7 | 90.2 | 92.0 | 92.9 | 85.8 | 91.9 |
| Term 2 | 97.4 | 88.2 | 90.4 | 90.0 | 88.8 | 87.5 | 91.3 | 90.4 |
| Term 3 | 95.0 | 92.6 | 92.7 | 91.8 | 89.6 | 84.8 | 80.7 | 91.4 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals | 18% |
| Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection | 43 |

Appendix C

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 3

| National Curriculum Assessment KS3 results: 2004 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------|----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|-----|-----|
| Total number of pupils in Y9: 195 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Percentage of pupils at each level | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | D | A | F | W | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | EP |
| English | Teacher assessment | School | 1.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 3.6 | 26.7 | 37.4 | 23.6 | 5.1 | 0 | 0 |
| | | National | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 9 | 22 | 34 | 22 | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| | Test | School | 1.5 | 1.0 | 4.1 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 7.2 | 20.5 | 40.0 | 20.5 | 5.1 | n/a | n/a |
| | | National | 0 | 3 | 4 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 8 | 21 | 31 | 23 | 10 | n/a | n/a |
| Mathematics | Teacher assessment | School | 1.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2.1 | 4.1 | 17.9 | 24.6 | 40.0 | 9.7 | 0 | 0 |
| | | National | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 8 | 22 | 25 | 29 | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| | Test | School | 0.5 | 4.1 | 2.6 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 3.6 | 15.9 | 20.5 | 39.5 | 13.3 | n/a | n/a |
| | | National | 0 | 5 | 2 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 7 | 19 | 21 | 32 | 14 | n/a | n/a |
| Science | Teacher assessment | School | 1.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 4.1 | 16.9 | 32.3 | 34.4 | 10.3 | 0 | 0 |
| | | National | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 8 | 21 | 32 | 25 | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| | Test | School | 0.5 | 2.1 | 0.5 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 4.1 | 15.4 | 31.8 | 35.4 | 10.3 | n/a | n/a |
| | | National | 0 | 4 | 2 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 6 | 19 | 31 | 25 | 14 | n/a | n/a |

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

| Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 5 in mathematics, science and either English or Welsh (first language) | | | |
|--|------|---------------|------|
| by Teacher Assessment | | By Test | |
| In the school | 61.0 | In the school | 60.0 |
| In Wales | 54.4 | In Wales | 53.5 |

Public Examination Results:

| For pupils aged 15, results in GCSE, Entry Level Qualifications, GNVQ and NVQ | |
|--|-----|
| Number of pupils aged 15 on the school roll in January 2004 | 211 |
| Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil | 38 |

| The percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2004: | School | UA | Wales |
|---|---------------|-----------|--------------|
| entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent | 92 | 88 | 87 |
| attained at least 5 GCSE grades A*-C, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both | 45 | 53 | 51 |
| attained at least 5 GCSE grades A*-G, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both | 91 | 87 | 85 |
| attained GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator) | 33 | 39 | 38 |
| entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or GCSE | 98 | 99 | 97 |
| attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification equivalent | 72 | 77 | 75 |
| attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G or the vocational qualification equivalent | 94 | 95 | 93 |
| attained no graded GCSE or the vocational qualification equivalent | 6 | 5 | 7 |
| attained one or more Entry level qualification only | 3 | 2 | 3 |

| For pupils aged 16, 17 and 18, results in A/AS, GNVQs and NVQs | | | |
|---|---------------|-----------|--------------|
| Number of pupils aged 16, 17 and 18 in January 2004 | | | 96 |
| Number of pupils entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations or equivalent in 2004 | | | 66 |
| Number of pupils entered for fewer than 2 GCE A levels or equivalent in 2004 | | | 30 |
| | School | UA | Wales |
| Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-C | 62 | 69 | 68 |
| Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-E | 94 | 95 | 95 |
| Average points score per candidate entering 2 or more subjects | 19 | 21 | 20 |

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

Fifteen inspectors spent the equivalent of 46 days at the school.

137 lessons, including full and part-time sessions were observed covering all curricular areas and a sample of citizenship lessons.

Inspectors attended assemblies, tutorial sessions, registrations, and observed a range of extra-curricular activities.

Inspectors held many discussions with the headteacher, members of the school's leadership team, heads of department, some heads of year, staff with whole-school responsibilities, and members of support staff.

The registered inspector and a colleague inspector met with the governing body prior to the inspection week and the registered inspector reported the main findings to them following the inspection.

Work across the curriculum, from representative pupils from each year group, was examined. Pupils' work was also scrutinised elsewhere and during lesson observations.

Inspectors held formal discussions with groups of pupils and students selected from Y7 to Y13. They also talked with many learners informally.

The registered inspector met the staff prior to the inspection.

Twenty-three parents attended the pre-inspection meeting. 276 replies to the questionnaire were received and analysed. Some parents also wrote to the registered inspector.

Many members of external agencies associated with the school wrote to the registered inspector.

Comprehensive documentation, including the school's self-evaluation report, was scrutinised before and during the inspection.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

| Team Member | Responsibilities |
|---|---|
| Mr B W Medhurst Registered Inspector | Key Questions 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 |
| Dr M H L Snow Lay Inspector | Contributions to Key Questions 1, 3, 4, 5 |
| Mr S G Davies | Key Question 3; Contributions to Key Question 7; Sixth form co-ordination |
| Mrs L Bithell | Contributions to Key Question 1, 2; English |
| Mr H Evans | Key Question 4; Contributions to Key Question 3; Religious Education/Studies |
| Mr A Edwards | Contributions to Key Questions 1, 3; Mathematics |
| Mrs M Crandon | Contributions to Key Questions 1, 3; Welsh |
| Mr S Gale | Contributions to Key Question 1 |
| Mr H Llewelyn | Contributions to Key Question 3; Geography |
| Mrs M Herbert | Contributions to Key Question 1 |
| Mr A Wynne-Jones | Music |
| Mrs S Steer | Physical Education |
| Mrs A Newman | Team inspector |
| Mr M Williams | Team inspector |
| Mr D Jones | Team inspector |
| Mrs E Seal | School's nominee |

Contractor Atlantes Educational Services
Technology House
Lissadel Street
Salford M6 6AP

Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the governors, staff and pupils of Milford Haven School for their courtesy and co-operation during the inspection.

Summary Report for Parents

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

**Milford Haven School
Steynton Road
Milford Haven
Pembrokeshire SA73 AE**

School Number: 668 4063

Date of Inspection: 18 – 21 April 2005

By

**Mr Brian Medhurst
W/253/3508**

Date: 22 June 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T/25/04

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Milford Haven School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose 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 more information about their child's school. A copy of the summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

The inspection of Milford Haven School took place between 18th and 21st April 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mr Brian Medhurst undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years 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 attain the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who attain the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who attain the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

| | | | | | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-------|
| Year | R | Y1 | Y2 | Y3 | Y4 | Y5 | Y6 |
| Ages | 4-5 | 5-6 | 6-7 | 7-8 | 8-9 | 9-10 | 10-11 |

Secondary phase:

| | | | | | | | |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Year | Y7 | Y8 | Y9 | Y10 | Y11 | Y12 | Y13 |
| Ages | 11-12 | 12-13 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 15-16 | 16-17 | 17-18 |

The national curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

Context

The nature of the provider

Milford Haven School is an English medium 11 – 18 mixed comprehensive school, maintained by Pembrokeshire unitary authority (UA). It has 1281 pupils on roll, of whom 197 are in the sixth form. The school was inspected previously in April 1999, when there were 1271 pupils on roll. Since the previous inspection, membership of the school's leadership team (SLT) has reduced by one (an assistant headteacher) and two new appointments have been made – one deputy and one assistant headteacher.

Milford Haven School is the only secondary school serving an area that includes the urban populations of Milford Haven and Hakin, together with the rural communities of the Dale peninsula. Almost every child in this area attends the school, providing it with a stable intake embracing the whole range of ability, although somewhat weighted towards the middle and lower end. Only a very few pupils join or leave the school during the year.

After the closing down of two oil refineries, the level of economic deprivation in the area rose, with unemployment levels for men reaching 20%. Correspondingly, the school's free school meal entitlement reached 27% of the pupil population. Hakin and part of Milford Haven are high enough on the index for social deprivation to attract post-16 funding from Education and Learning Wales (ELWa). The vast majority of the community are positive in outlook and support their children well. Current free school meal entitlement, for pupils in compulsory full-time education (KS3 and KS4), places the school within the range 21% to 30%.

There are 397 pupils registered as having special educational needs (SEN). Of these, 30 have specific statements of SEN, 112 require school action (SA) and 265 require school action plus (SA+). The overall figure represents around 40% of the pupils in KS3 and KS4. This is an extremely large proportion, well above the national average.

The attainment of pupils on entry has steadily risen over the past seven years, rising year on year from 44% obtaining level 4+ at KS2 in 1998 to 72% in 2003, although dropping back to 64% in 2004.

No pupils speak Welsh as a first language or to an equivalent standard. Under one percent of pupils speak a language other than English at home, but these pupils are fluent English speakers. Two pupils receive support teaching for English as an additional language.

The school's priorities and targets

The school's key purpose is to provide the best possible education for children of all abilities within a happy, child-centred, pleasant working environment.

It expects all governors, teachers, support staff and pupils to have high expectations, to encourage and expect success, and to seek to develop the full potential of everyone associated closely with the school.

The school aims to provide a relevant, broad and balanced curriculum, underpinned by a level of pastoral monitoring and support that enables all pupils to have equal access to the curriculum and to maximise their achievement.

It is committed to a belief that the quality of both teaching and learning is crucial to the success of individual pupils, and must be rooted in an atmosphere of raising expectations and constantly striving for improvement.

The school's targets, along with strategies for achieving them, are stated clearly within the school's development plan (SDP). Numerical targets include:

- KS3: success in the national tests in English, mathematics and science at level 5 or higher to reach 70% in all subjects;
- KS3: the proportion of pupils achieving level 5 or higher in all three subjects (the core subject indicator – CSI) to reach at least 55% (already reached 60% in 2004);
- KS4: the proportion of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSE grades A* to C to reach at least 50% and the proportion of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSE grades A* to G to reach at least 90%;
- KS4: proportion of pupils achieving at least grade C in English, mathematics and science (the CSI) to reach at least 40%
- Sixth form: to improve the A level grades A to C pass rate to at least 70% and the AS grades A to E pass rate to at least 90%.

Summary

Tables of grades awarded

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

Standards

The team inspected the standards that pupils and students achieve in six areas of the curriculum.

| Standards in subjects inspected | | | |
|--|------------|------------|-------------------|
| Subject | KS3 | KS4 | Sixth Form |
| English | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Welsh | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Geography | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Religious education | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Religious studies | n/a | 1 | 1 |
| Music | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Physical education | 2 | 3 | 2 |

The following table shows the standards that pupils and students achieved, at different stages, in the subjects inspected:

| 80 lessons | % Grade 1 | % Grade 2 | % Grade 3 | % Grade 4 | % Grade 5 |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| KS3 | 5 | 90 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| KS4 | 8 | 67 | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| Sixth Form | 20 | 60 | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| Whole School | 9 | 77 | 14 | 0 | 0 |

(For an explanation of the grades, please refer to the beginning of the report)

These figures represent an outstanding improvement, on those achieved across all subjects, as recorded at the time of the previous inspection. The proportion of good or better standards has almost doubled since that time.

At KS3, pupils are performing well in all three core subjects, English, mathematics and science, above the national averages and in line with local averages.

In comparison with other, similar, schools in Wales having between 21% and 30% of pupils entitled to free school meals, results achieved in the 2004 KS3 tests results in English were above average, and in science and mathematics they were well above average. When these data are considered in the light of the school's high proportion of pupils with SEN, it is evident that some aspects are outstanding.

In comparison with results achieved in other schools having similar entitlements to free school meals, the school fared well in GCSE outcomes in 2004. For success at 5 or more grades A* to C, the CSI and average points scored, the school was above average. For 5 or more grades A* to G, the school was well above average, reflecting its success with average and below average pupils.

Pupils with SEN achieve very well, the large majority of them gain 5 A* to G GCSE grades as well as entry level qualifications in English and mathematics. Middle ability pupils are achieving better than in the past. High ability pupils have always achieved well, but the quality of their results has improved further.

Contributory factors to the high standards achieved in KS3 and KS4 include:

- effective and inspiring teaching in most subjects;
- very good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour by most pupils;
- regular attendance and promptness to lessons;
- complete, well-presented work in books;
- pupils' very good relationships with teachers.

Pupils' skills in communication are good with no important shortcomings. Reading skills are good. Writing skills are good. Overall, bilingual (Welsh/English) skills are developed well, both within Welsh lessons and across the curriculum. Numerical skills have good features and no important shortcomings. Pupils gain good information and communication technology (ICT) skills in taught lessons at both KS3 and KS4, and these are used to enhance standards across the curriculum.

Most pupils make good progress in acquiring new knowledge and skills, and their ability to use these in unfamiliar circumstances is also good. In most lessons, learners enjoy their work and they are enthusiastic about what they are doing.

Relationships between pupils are friendly and they are courteous and polite to teachers and visitors. Around the school, in corridors and in the playground, pupils behave very well.

In the classroom, pupils listen attentively and are eager and enthusiastic to participate in a variety of tasks and activities. They show interest in their work, sustain concentration and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.

The ability to work with others is good. Pupils collaborate well in pairs or groups and are considerate, respectful and supportive of each other in these situations.

Pupils are encouraged to respect the traditions and customs of other societies. They are made aware of the diversity of life styles, beliefs and cultures.

Overall, attendance at school for KS3 and KS4 over the last year was 91.7% - above both the UA and the national averages.

Pupils' punctuality is generally good, with lateness usually associated with transport difficulties. There are very good procedures for recording lateness and thus encouraging promptness.

Registration procedures are in accordance with Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) Circular 3/99.

Sixth form

At the end of Y11, around 78% of pupils either remain in school or transfer to college. About 10% of them take up employment and/or further training. These figures for retention in full-time education are good in comparison with national figures.

The relatively small numbers entering AS and A2 examinations at the school, make proportional comparisons with local or national data rather uninformative. In general, figures are just below national norms. However, when an individual's results in various subjects are compared with his/her average GCSE score, many students appear to fulfil or exceed expectations.

From lesson observations and scrutiny of work, inspectors found that in most subjects students achieve good standards.

In the sixth form, communication skills are very good. Students' numerical skills are good with no important shortcomings overall. Students are autonomous competent users of ICT for a wide variety of purposes.

Most students have a good level of understanding of their work and they make at least good progress in acquiring new knowledge and skills. Many of them are confident when applying current and previous learning in new and unfamiliar situations.

Students are considerate, respectful and supportive of each other. Very good relationships are strong features of life in the sixth form.

Students enthusiastically join in the range of activities available in lessons, respond well to questions, show interest in their work, sustain concentration and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.

Behaviour and attitudes are outstanding in the sixth form. Attendance is very good.

In many aspects, sixth form students are prepared well for life in the workplace. They are given many opportunities to exercise initiative and to demonstrate their skills of leadership. In these instances, they respond exceptionally well, usually to the benefit of the local and wider community. A most outstanding example is the very successful charity work undertaken for Children in Need.

The quality of education and training

The following table shows the quality of teaching and assessment in all the lessons observed during the inspection:

| 137 lessons | % Grade 1 | % Grade 2 | % Grade 3 | % Grade 4 | % Grade 5 |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| KS3 | 6 | 83 | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| KS4 | 7 | 64 | 29 | 0 | 0 |
| Sixth Form | 14 | 75 | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| Whole School | 8 | 75 | 17 | 0 | 0 |

(For an explanation of the grades, please refer to the beginning of the report)

WAG published targets for teaching in Wales for 2002. These required that 95% of teaching should be satisfactory or better, and that 50% should be good or better. These targets can now be interpreted as 95% at grade 3 or higher, with 50% at

grade 2 or higher. As the table indicates, the school has far exceeded these targets. It achieved 100% at grade 3 or better, with 83% at grade 2 or better.

The figures also indicate significant improvement upon those achieved in the previous inspection.

An outstandingly good feature of the school is the quality of relationships that exists between pupils and teachers.

The large majority of pupils are co-operative and hard working in class, because the lessons are interesting and they feel their teachers know them well.

All teachers are suitably well qualified to match the requirements of the school's curriculum. They have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach.

A major positive feature of teaching in the school is the extremely effective use made of good learning support assistants (LSAs) throughout the school, but particularly in KS3, where there is support in the majority of classes.

Teachers monitor and review pupils' progress regularly. In most subjects, assessments are fair and accurate. The school has a very effective system for the collation, analysis and sharing of assessment data. Some, but not all, pupils are actively involved in assessing their work.

The school's assessment procedures are rigorous and statutory requirements for assessing and reporting pupils' achievements are fully met.

Whole-school target setting is particularly accurate and comprehensive. The school compares results over time against national, UA and internal data.

The procedure requiring rigorous marking of pupils' work twice each half term is effective. Subject teachers write comments that are helpful in identifying strengths, weaknesses and targets for improvement.

Annual and interim reports represent outstanding practice in informing parents and carers of pupils' progress and achievements. Annual reports are of a consistently good standard. Parents and carers are appropriately involved in the reporting process.

The curriculum overall meets the needs of all pupils and reflects the aims set out for pupils of statutory school age in the Education Act 1996.

The curriculum is accessible for all pupils including those with SEN. Pupils have opportunities to gain an appropriate range of GCSE and vocational qualifications.

The curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced in each key stage. It provides effective continuity and progression between years and key stages.

The planning for the development of key skills across the curricula in KS3 and KS4 is good. Through a number of initiatives and careful planning in all schemes of work,

significant progress has been made. The school has been successful in gaining the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

The range of extra-curricular activities available for all years is an outstanding feature of the school. A large number of pupils benefit from the range of activities available, which broaden their experiences and promote their personal and social development.

A large number of pupils represent the school in musical activities with considerable success.

Pupils' spiritual development is good overall, but the quality of acts of worship in form bases is inconsistent. Moral development is strongly promoted by the school and pupils respond well by showing respect for each other and their environment. The vast majority of pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong, which they demonstrate in their daily actions.

Cultural development is reflected well in aspects of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities in many subjects.

The partnership with the community is of outstanding quality. Governors are active, knowledgeable and effective representatives of both the community and the school. Together with the SLT they successfully illustrate the link between curricular learning and employment.

The Milford Haven family of schools is a strong and supportive partnership and facilitates easy transition from KS2 to KS3. Useful partnership with and good knowledge of local college provision offers wider vocational experiences for less academic pupils and ensures that appropriate educational options are available at the end of KS4.

The curriculum overall meets legal requirements. The programmes for personal, health and social education, work related education and careers education and guidance meet the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) guidelines and are well planned in the teaching programme.

Work related education has several good features and the school works hard to overcome some limitations inherent in the locality of the school. Y10 pupils undertake a well-organised and useful one-week work experience.

The school is successful in enabling pupils of all abilities equality of access to the curriculum. They are encouraged to achieve success in each key stage and to participate fully in the life of the school. The alternative provision in Y9 and KS4 successfully caters for pupils at risk of disaffection.

The school has developed an appropriate policy in respect of sustainable development. The emphasis is placed on the need to conserve energy and reduce waste in order to protect the environment for future generations. The School Council plays a prominent role in managing and supporting sustainable development.

There is outstanding provision to develop entrepreneurial and related skills. Problem solving skills are well developed across the curriculum. A high level of these

activities has been maintained for many years and the school is a frequent winner of trophies at regional, Welsh and Great Britain level.

The school is a congenial, caring community. There is an outstanding supportive quality to the relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils respond positively to the care shown to them, being very ready to turn to their teachers for advice when the need arises.

The provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good with outstanding features. Assessment of pupils' special educational needs, together with information from the primary school, identify correctly the pupils to be placed on the SEN register, which is reviewed effectively twice a year. There is good involvement of parents, external agencies and the UA in the review of pupils' statements.

The school achieves outstanding success in supporting pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. When a pupil exhibits challenging behaviour, staff reaction is well informed and they implement the relevant strategies for that pupil. Parents and pupils are involved in setting pupils' targets for improvement.

The school is outstanding in the care it takes to create a climate where learners are free from harassment and discrimination. Parents and pupils are confident that the school would respond promptly to such instances.

Sixth form

The quality of teaching was adjudged to be best overall in the sixth form.

The high quality of relationships between teachers and students is particularly noticeable in the sixth form. When interviewed, students commented most positively about this.

Students are often and appropriately set 'open-ended' tasks to encourage them to make decisions about which steps to take and to evaluate and refine their work. In this manner, they are prepared well for lifelong learning in other environments, such as higher education establishments.

In the sixth form, the quality of assessment is regular, accurate and fair. It represents very good practice. Subject teachers have a very good knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses. They support students with helpful diagnostic written comments on their work and orally in lessons.

The good quality interim and full reports continue the process of identifying strengths, weaknesses and targets for improvement. They are usefully discussed with students, parents and carers.

In the sixth form, students can choose from an extensive programme of AS and A2 subjects and vocational courses at both AVCE and GNVQ levels. The programme is enriched through the inclusion of sociology, electronics and photography at AS/A2 level, and a general studies programme.

A large number of students benefit from the range of extra-curricular activities available, which broaden their experiences and promote their personal and social development.

In the sixth form, the opportunity for students to gain accreditation in key skills is an outstanding feature. A large number of students are successful in gaining awards in communication, application of number and information technology.

Leadership and management

The school's key purpose is to provide the best possible education for children of all abilities within a happy, child-centred, pleasant working environment. It succeeds exceptionally well in achieving this aim.

Within a truly collaborative and collegiate management structure, the headteacher provides extremely effective leadership. Members of the SLT, middle managers and all staff support her most effectively.

The school's policies and procedures to promote racial equality, and equality of opportunity for all, are appropriate and effective.

The school has a highly effective departmental review and self-evaluation system. All heads of year and heads of department have effectively embraced the role of monitoring and driving academic progress.

In a good number of departments, both leadership and management are outstanding. The high quality of some of the departmental self-evaluation reports presented to the inspectors bears testament to this statement.

The school takes due notice of the WAG's priorities and guidance provided by other organisations for the benefit of pupils and students. Particularly noteworthy are the links established with partner primary schools and local training providers.

The governing body is a well-informed and very supportive committee of critical friends. Governors have an outstandingly thorough understanding of their school and their roles in its management. Consequently their input to strategic management is informed and well focused.

Governors are fully and actively involved in all aspects of planning, monitoring and evaluation of school performance.

The governing body provides a strong sense of identity and direction for the school and these are clearly set out in the prospectus and reflected in the annual report to parents.

The school's self-evaluation report accurately and honestly addresses the seven key questions of the common inspection framework. The inspection team's findings correspond closely with those of the self-evaluation report.

Central to the school's activities for evaluating and planning for improvement, is the very effective and successful annual strategic planning meeting, attended by all members of the SLT and the governing body.

Integral to the school's self-evaluation procedures is the way in which it takes serious account of the views of pupils and students. This was confirmed during an interview with the senior prefects of the school and in other conversations with pupils.

The SDP focuses on themes that are appropriate for school improvement, within a framework of the seven key questions of the common inspection framework.

Exceptionally good financial management ensures that developmental priorities are adequately resourced and financed.

Overall, the school has made good and often outstanding progress in addressing the key issues for action highlighted in the previous inspection report.

The school is staffed well, with sufficient qualified, experienced teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum in all key stages.

The 25 LSAs who assist the large number of pupils with SEN are well trained and extremely supportive. An outstanding feature is the assignment of an LSA to each registration group in Y7 and Y8.

Overall, the provision of learning resources is exceptional. An outstanding feature of the provision is the availability of 36 electronic whiteboards and the pupil to computer ratio of 3:1.

The condition and quality of books used across the curriculum is good. The school has successfully enabled all pupils and students to have access to textbooks in all subjects. The library has been refurbished, is adequately resourced with books and 15 computers, and supports learning very well.

The school makes very good use of resources beyond the school to enrich the curriculum. They include museums, theatres, galleries and field centres. A wide range of visiting speakers enhances pupils' and students' learning experiences.

The overall quality of the accommodation is good and, in most respects, provides a stimulating learning environment.

The school has made some provision to enable pupils with physical disabilities to access most of the curriculum. The shortage of lifts in the buildings still limits access for a small number of pupils to art and home economics.

The school building and playing fields are well maintained. The site manager and cleaning staff work hard to ensure that the school is clean and there is little evidence of litter.

The school's budget is managed most effectively. The school uses its monies, including grant funding, very well to support strategies to raise standards. Spending

decisions are made to respond to the requirements of development plans. The governing body and the SLT review the curriculum and its associated staffing and resource needs annually at least. Decisions are made only after due consideration has been given to all aspects.

The school has improved over recent years, and everyone is generally well provided for within the budget. Hence the school is achieving good value for money.

Recommendations

- R1 Continue to raise standards in all subjects.
- R2 Continue and extend the current good practice for encouraging pupils to assess their own work to help them develop as more independent learners. To assist in this, improve the consistency of day-to-day marking.
- R3 Improve the quality of daily acts of collective worship, which take place in tutor periods, so that all consistently match current best practice.
- R4 Continue to work with the UA to improve: facilities for pupils with SEN; and access to all areas of the school for pupils with disabilities.

All these recommendations have already been recognised by the school as areas for development.

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

Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the governors, staff and pupils of Milford Haven School for their courtesy and co-operation during the inspection.