

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

A report on the quality of education in

**Ysgol Gyfun Aberaeron
Stryd Y Fro
Aberaeron
Ceredigion
SA46 0DT**

School number: 6674042

Date of inspection: 2 March 2010

by

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Introduction

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

The inspection of Ysgol Gyfun Aberaeron took place between 02/03/10 and 05/03/10. An independent team of inspectors, led by William Gwyn Thomas undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

Estyn's reports follow its guidance for the writing and editing of reports, which is available on the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk). The table below explains the terms that Estyn uses to indicate quantities. The table is for guidance only.

Nearly all	with very few exceptions
Most	90% or more
Many	70% or more
A majority	over 60%
Half/around half	close to 50%
A minority	below 40%
Few	below 20%
Very few	less than 10%

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **standard** inspection.

Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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Context

The nature of the provider

- 1 Ysgol Gyfun Aberaeron is an 11-18 mixed, naturally bilingual comprehensive school maintained by Ceredigion Unitary Authority (UA). There are currently 689 pupils on roll with 118 students in the sixth form, compared with 748 at the time of the last inspection in April 2004 when there were 115 students in the sixth form.
- 2 The school is situated in the town of Aberaeron. The majority of pupils come from areas that are neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. The school attracts pupils from outside of the catchment area.
- 3 Ten point five per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals (FSM). This figure is slightly above the UA average of 10.6% and below the national average of 16.3%.
- 4 Pupils of all abilities are received by the school. There are 24 pupils with a statement of special educational needs (SEN) and a further 147 have been identified as needing additional support. The percentage of compulsory-age pupils on the SEN register is 28.2% which is below the UA average of 36.6% and above the national average of 20.9%. No pupil is disapplied from the National Curriculum (NC). Twelve pupils are "looked after" by the local authority and no pupils are dual registered.
- 5 Thirty per cent of the pupils come from homes where the predominant language spoken is Welsh. However, half of the pupils in the school speak Welsh as a first language or to an equivalent standard. Six pupils receive support teaching in English as an additional language.
- 6 The headteacher was appointed to the post in September 2007 and the senior management team (SMT) includes the headteacher, one deputy headteacher and one assistant headteacher.

The school's priorities and targets

- 7 The school's mission is to provide a centre of excellence within a bilingual community in which all individuals are encouraged to develop to their maximum potential.
- 8 The school's vision is to develop as a forward-looking, progressive teaching and learning environment, meeting the needs of all its pupils and the community.
- 9 The school's draft development plan (SDP) for 2010-2013 identifies areas for development that meet the school's needs. The school has identified three main areas which will have priority from 2010 onwards. These include improving learners' academic standards across the school, restructuring the workforce in the light of falling rolls and changes in the SMT and supporting the development of 3-19 year old learners in the Aberaeron catchment area. The school also sets numerical targets for success at the end of key stage (KS) 3 and KS4.
- 10 The targets for KS3 are that in 2010, 57% of pupils should reach at least level 5 in teachers' assessments in all core subjects combined (Welsh first language 53%, English 70%, mathematics 71% and science 58%).

Performance in external examinations at the end of KS4

11 In 2010, the following percentages of 15 year old pupils targeted to achieve are:

Level 1 threshold (a volume of qualifications at level 1 equivalent to 5 General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) grades A*-G)	91%
Level 2 threshold (a volume of qualifications at level 2 equivalent to 5 GCSE grades A*-C)	57%
Level 2 threshold including English or Welsh first language and mathematics (a volume of qualifications at level 2 equivalent to 5 GCSE grades A*-C including English or Welsh first language and mathematics)	49%
Core subject indicator (CSI) English/Welsh first language, science and mathematics combined	49%
Leaving full-time education without a recognised qualification	0%
Average wider points' score (AWPS)	450

Performance in external examinations at the end of year (Y) 12/13

12 In 2010, the following percentage of 17 year old students targeted to achieve is:

Level 3 threshold (a volume of qualifications at level 3 equivalent to 2 Advanced (A) level grades A-E)	100%
AWPS	700

Summary

- 13 Ysgol Gyfun Aberaeron has shortcomings in important areas, in leadership and management and in standards in mathematics.
- 14 Currently, senior and middle management do not monitor with sufficient rigour. There are inconsistencies in the quality of management and ineffective arrangements for ensuring improvement. The degree of accountability is inadequate. The standard in mathematics has remained low in KS4 for several years. There are several important key issues for action in relation to management which have not been addressed following the 2004 inspection.
- 15 "In accordance with the Education Act 2005, I am of the opinion, and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) agrees, that this school is in need of significant improvement in the above areas".
- 16 The headteacher has been in post since September 2007. Both he and his SMT have identified some of the areas for improvement in the SDP. The quality of care, support and guidance for learners is good while the provision for pupils with SEN is also good with a number of outstanding features. The curriculum throughout the school is good.

Table of grades awarded

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

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

Standards

- 18 Results in tests, statutory assessments in KS3 and pupils' performance in external examinations in KS4 have good features outweighing shortcomings. Based on prior attainment, pupils' attainment is below what was expected in KS3 and in KS4. The performance of pupils in external examinations in KS4 placed the school above the local and national averages in about half of the subjects examined. Sixth-form results are improving and are good.

Grades awarded in the six subjects inspected	KS3	KS4	Sixth form
Welsh first language	3	2	2
Mathematics	3	4	2
Information technology	1	1	1
Art and Design	2	3	2
Physical education	3	2	2
Media studies	NA	3	2

- 19 Standards in information technology are good with outstanding features. Standards in Welsh first language, mathematics and physical education in KS3 and in media studies and art and design in KS4 have good features outweighing shortcomings. Where a subject has been awarded a grade 2, standards are good with no important shortcomings. Standards in mathematics in KS4 have some good features, but shortcomings in important areas.
- 20 The overall grades for the standards of achievement observed in the six subjects inspected are barely adequate, with a third of lessons being awarded a grade 3 or 4 as shown in the grid below:

64 lessons	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
	11%	55%	31%	3%	0%

- 21 The standard of pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills and communication skills through the medium of English is good.
- 22 The standard of communication skills in KS3 through the medium of Welsh has good features outweighing shortcomings. In KS4 and the sixth form there are good features and no important shortcomings.

- 23 The standards of learners' creative and problem-solving skills, numeracy skills, the skill of improving their own learning and the skill of working with others have good features outweighing shortcomings in KS3 and KS4 and are good with no important shortcomings in the sixth form.
- 24 The overall standard of learners' bilingual skills is good.
- 25 Nearly all pupils with SEN make good progress in relation to their ability.
- 26 The behaviour of all learners is good or better in the school. The school is an orderly and civilized community where all learners are courteous and most have positive attitudes towards their work.
- 27 Attendance levels have improved over the last two years. However, they are below the UA and national averages for 2009. Nearly all pupils are punctual to lessons.
- 28 The standard of learners' social, cultural, moral and spiritual development is good.

The quality of education and training

- 29 Overall, the quality of teaching is adequate. Some outstanding practice was observed mainly in information technology and physical education. However, the quality of teaching is below that recorded in the previous inspection. The quality of teaching in the six subjects inspected and in the other lessons observed is well below the national average (76% grades 1 and 2) as reported in the 2008-2009 annual report of HMCI. Over a third of all lessons were awarded a grade 3 or 4. These grades are shown in the following table:

90 lessons	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Whole-school	12%	53%	32%	3%	0%

- 30 In the majority of lessons, teachers use their sound subject-knowledge to provide lessons with good pace and well-timed activities. There is imaginative use of ICT through detailed planning, effective use of learning support assistants (LSAs) and encouragement through the use of praise. Shortcomings in teaching include lessons which lack pace and challenge and provide few opportunities for pupils' participation.
- 31 Pupils' progress is not rigorously monitored through an effective whole-school assessment, recording and reporting process. Subject-specific targets are not set in the majority of subjects. Pupils have few opportunities to use self and peer-assessment to improve their own learning.
- 32 Annual and interim reports to parents are inconsistent on pupils' academic and personal development. Most subjects identify how well pupils are progressing. Subject-specific targets for improvement are less consistent.
- 33 The curriculum offered in the school is good. It meets statutory requirements for pupils of statutory school age. At KS4 and in the sixth form, there is a range of options which include a number of vocational subjects.
- 34 The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities with many clubs and visits being available. The provision for the development of learners' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good.

- 35 There are effective curricular links which assist the transition of pupils from KS2 to KS3. Many partnerships with local organisations and businesses are good. This results in valuable contributions to the personal and social education (PSE) and careers' education programmes in the school. Learners in Y10 and Y12 have good work-experience opportunities. The school takes good account of employers' needs.
- 36 The opportunities for all learners to use their bilingual skills are adequate in KS3 and good in KS4 and in the sixth form.
- 37 The school's contribution to the Healthy Schools' initiative is good. Fitness has a high priority and there are no vending machines in the school. The provision for education for sustainable development and global citizenship is good and the school's eco-committee is effective. Learners' entrepreneurial skills are developing at KS3 and KS4 and are good in the sixth form.
- 38 Overall, the quality of care, support and guidance is good. Arrangements for planning and managing care and support services are outstanding. Transition between Y6 and Y7 is good. Arrangements to enable pupils in Y7 to settle in quickly are good.
- 39 The quality of personal support is good. Emotionally vulnerable pupils are well supported. The organisation of careers' education has good features. The school takes good account of pupils' well-being, and child protection.
- 40 Provision for pupils with SEN has a number of outstanding features. All statutory requirements are met and the school has very good regard for the SEN Code of Practice and the Framework for Inclusion. The learning support department is well managed by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), who also participates in SMT meetings. The LSAs provide highly-effective support.
- 41 Overall, the quality of provision for equal opportunities is good. The school is highly effective at promoting gender equality and challenging stereotypes. Disabled pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school.

Leadership and management

- 42 The SMT does not ensure that all policies given to staff are carried out and monitored effectively. Whole-school strategies are not implemented consistently. Insufficient attention has been given to dealing with previous inspection issues.
- 43 The quality of senior and middle management is variable and lacks accountability. Monitoring by SMT and those with management responsibilities is inconsistent and not rigorous enough to ensure that standards are raised. The work and expectations of senior and middle managers are not specific enough. The quality of planning for improvement and data evaluation lacks consistency. The target-setting procedures at departmental, whole-school and pupils' levels are inadequate.
- 44 There is some limited good practice in middle management. However, this practice is not currently shared sufficiently with other members of staff with managerial responsibilities. The headteacher has strategies for moving the school forward but has inadequate support to develop the school effectively. There are areas of strategic importance where no one has overall responsibility.

- 45 The governing body's role as critical friend is developing. The accountability of senior and middle managers to the governing body is inadequate. Where there are governor links to departments, these are effective.
- 46 There are some good features in the process of self-evaluation at school and departmental levels. However, there is insufficient rigour in the analysis of performance and the collection of first-hand evidence. Quality assurance procedures are too informal or irregular.
- 47 A few departments have clear strategies for improvement. However, the SDP and a majority of departmental development plans (DDPs) are limited in their focus on improvement. They lack clarity in identifying quantifiable targets, resource implications and success criteria for improvement.
- 48 The school has an appropriate number of well-qualified staff. They are effectively deployed to deliver the broad and well-balanced curriculum. The appropriately skilled and efficient support team is highly valued by the teaching staff.
- 49 Resources across the school, including ICT resources, have improved since the last inspection and are now good. The school's accommodation has improved.
- 50 The management and control of the school's delegated budget are good. However, the three-year SDP lacks the necessary prioritisation, detail and financial costings to ensure a sharper focussed link with budgetary decisions. The planned sixth-form curriculum model with a large number of classes of fewer than five students is not cost effective.
- 51 The management of the professional development of all staff is good. However, the outcomes of continuing professional development (CPD) provision are not rigorously monitored to evaluate their impact on classroom practice. A significant number of support members of staff are not included in an annual performance management review.
- 52 The existence of a number of shortcomings in important areas restricts the value for money delivered by the school. It is only adequate.
- 53 The majority of key issues identified in the 2004 inspection report have not been fully addressed, especially those relating to the monitoring of procedures carried out at senior management level. The role of middle managers has not been developed enough and standards in some subjects have not improved.
- 54 The school meets the needs of its pupils in terms of the curriculum offered and the care it provides but it does not adequately meet all their needs in terms of the standards achieved.

Recommendations

In order to achieve its objectives, the school should focus on the following priorities.

- *R1. Raise pupils' academic standards in Welsh first language and physical education in KS3 and in media studies and art and design in KS4. Raise pupils' academic standards significantly in mathematics in KS3 and KS4.
- *R2. Improve the effectiveness of senior and middle managers by refining the roles of the senior management and the middle management teams. Ensure that all personnel are fully accountable to the headteacher and the governing body for their responsibilities and actions.
- R3. Establish quality assurance procedures which are comprehensive and systematic and draw on quality first-hand evidence.
- R4. Ensure that senior and middle managers:
 - undertake the whole-school initiative of assessment for learning;
 - monitor rigorously and consistently the quality of teaching, marking and standards of pupils' work on a regular basis; and
 - share best practice to promote good and very good features across the curriculum.
- R5. Ensure that the following strategic areas of responsibility are co-ordinated and delivered effectively by appropriate personnel:
 - data handling and evaluation;
 - assessment and target-setting;
 - key skills in KS3 and KS4; and
 - teaching and learning.
- R6. Improve the quality of teaching significantly by increasing the level of pace and challenge in lessons, eliminating the shortcomings and sharing the good and very good practice identified in this report.
- R7. Enhance the capacity of the governing body to act as critical friends of the school by improving their monitoring procedures and holding managers to account more effectively.
- R8. At whole-school and departmental level, prepare development plans which have a clear focus, challenging targets, a sharper focussed link between budgetary decisions and the school's priorities for development and success criteria which are reviewed regularly at all levels of management.
- R9. Instigate effective procedures to monitor the use of school resources to ensure greater value for money.
- R10. Ensure that all non-teaching members of staff are fully involved in the annual performance management cycle.
- R11. Increase the opportunities available to all learners to develop their bilingual skills further.

** The SDP addresses several of these recommendations.*

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

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

KS3 and KS4

Pupils' success in attaining agreed learning goals

- 56 Over the last three years, results in teachers' assessments at the end of KS3 have good features which outweigh shortcomings. The school's results do not compare very well with those of similar schools in Wales. Excluding information technology, results in most of the core subjects, the CSI and the non-core subjects, were in the bottom half of results in comparison with those of similar schools in Wales.
- 57 Attainment at KS3 was well below what was expected in 2009, based on pupils' performance at the end of the previous key stage in the CSI, English, science and Welsh first language. The percentage of pupils achieving level 5 or more in these indicators was below the local, family and national averages in 2009. The school was not well placed in these indicators compared with the family of ten schools.
- 58 Pupils' performance in external examinations in KS4 in 2009 in around half of subjects examined is good. Results in these subjects compare well against local and national averages.
- 59 The pupils' low performance in mathematics in KS4 had a significant negative impact on the CSI, threshold level 1 and both threshold level 2 indicators in 2009. The school has performed below the family averages in many key indicators in KS4.
- 60 The school's performance in 2009 resulted in:
- 89% of pupils achieving the level 1 threshold, below the local and the family averages and above the national average ;
 - 58% of pupils achieving the level 2 threshold, below the local, the family and the national averages; and
 - 42% of pupils achieving the level 2 threshold including mathematics and English or Welsh first language, below the local, the family and the national averages.
- 61 The school is placed in the top half of results for science and Welsh first language, but in the bottom half for all other key indicators in comparison with those of similar schools in Wales.
- 62 About 19.8% of pupils gained the A*/A grades in the GCSE examinations in 2009 compared with the national average of 19.2%.
- 63 In 2009, the KS4 results showed that pupils had not made good progress based on their attainment at the end of KS3.
- 64 In contrast to the national trend in 2009, in the end of KS3 assessments, boys outperformed girls in mathematics and science. At KS4, boys outperformed girls in science and the threshold level 2 indicator.

Their progress in learning

- 65 Pupils do not make good progress in the majority of lessons in KS3 or KS4.
- 66 The following grades were awarded for standards of achievement at KS3 and KS4 in the 46 lessons observed in the six subjects inspected:

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3	9%	57%	30%	4%	0%
KS4	13%	35%	48%	4%	0%
KS3 + KS4	11%	46%	39%	4%	0%

- 67 In 57% of the lessons, pupils achieved standards that have good features and no important shortcomings. In 96% of the lessons, pupils achieved standards that have good features outweighing shortcomings.
- 68 The inspection grades are below the grades awarded for standards in lessons for grades 1 and 2 (73%) in all secondary schools inspected in 2008/2009. They are below the national 2010 "Vision into Action" target of 98% for standards to be graded 1, 2 or 3.
- 69 Standards in information technology are good with outstanding features.
- 70 In KS3, standards in art and design have good features and no important shortcomings and standards in mathematics, physical education and Welsh first language have good features outweighing shortcomings. The standard in Welsh first language is lower because a greater number of second language pupils have been integrated into the first-language course.
- 71 In KS4, standards are good with no important shortcomings in physical education and Welsh first language. Standards in art and design and media studies have good features outweighing shortcomings. Standards in mathematics have some good features, but shortcomings in important areas.
- 72 All key skills have standards which have at least good features outweighing shortcomings.
- 73 The standard of nearly all pupils' ICT skills is good across the curriculum. Nearly all pupils use word-processing skills and simulation packages well.
- 74 Nearly all pupils have communication skills which are good through the medium of English and are sound through the medium of Welsh. They listen well to their teachers in both languages. When given the opportunity, they use extended speech more confidently in English. Reading and writing skills in terms of fluency and technical accuracy, relative to ability, are better through the medium of English.
- 75 Pupils' bilingual skills are good in KS4 compared with KS3. A minority of pupils use incidental Welsh frequently throughout the school.
- 76 Many pupils work adequately in pairs or larger groups. There are times when these pupils are reluctant to engage fully on the tasks in hand. Standards during group activities have good features outweighing shortcomings.
- 77 Pupils' creative and problem-solving skills and the skill of improving their own learning have good features outweighing shortcomings. Limitations in these skills are having a negative impact on academic standards. Good decision-making exercises of quality were observed in some lessons.

- 78 Self-assessment processes have not been developed enough. Many pupils in KS3 and KS4 are unclear about what they need to do to improve and this is having a negative impact on the standard of their work.
- 79 The standard of nearly all pupils' numeracy skills is adequate. A minority of pupils are confident in using number in a range of subjects across the curriculum. However, the standard of pupils' numeracy skills in KS4 is limited.
- 80 All pupils with SEN make good progress in relation to their ability.
- 81 In around half of subjects in KS4, pupils make limited progress towards their targets.

The development of their personal, social and learning skills

- 82 The behaviour of all pupils is good. All pupils are courteous, orderly and respectful. They understand the high expectations which the school has of them in terms of their behaviour and attitudes.
- 83 The school is an orderly, caring and an inclusive community. During the last academic year, a good feature was that only eight pupils were temporarily excluded, but no one permanently.
- 84 The attendance level for the three complete terms prior to the inspection was 90.7% and shows an improvement over the previous year. This is slightly below the all-Wales figure of 91% for 2008/2009 and below the Welsh Assembly Government's (WAG) target of 93%. It is below the UA average of 91.8%. Pupils' attendance levels are close to the average in KS3 compared with similar schools with similar levels of FSM. The levels of absence in 2009 were higher than expected in KS4. Currently, better monitoring is addressing this issue effectively. Nearly all pupils are punctual to lessons.
- 85 The standard of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The Welsh cultural dimension is also a good feature.
- 86 In KS3 and KS4, pupils are prepared for participation in the workplace and community to good standards.

Sixth form

Students' success in attaining agreed learning goals

- 87 Standards of attainment have been improving over the last three years (2007-2009) and are now good in relation to students' ability.
- 88 Results at A level in 2009 were marginally above those recorded in the previous inspection. Students' successes at two A level grades A-C were above local and national averages.
- 89 In 2009, 100% of students achieved the level 3 threshold. These results were above the local and national average of 96%.
- 90 In 2009, students' AWPS of 678 points was below the local average (700) and national average (688). Boys outperformed the girls in the AWPS in 2009 against the national trend.
- 91 In September 2009, 62% of Y11 pupils returned to the sixth form and 27% continued their studies in Further Education (FE). No 15 year old pupils left full-time education without a qualification. Nearly all pupils continued their courses from Y12 to Y13. Eighty-three per cent of students leaving Y13 continued their

studies in Higher Education (HE) and a further 17% decided to take a gap year before continuing to HE. These are good features.

Their progress in learning

- 92 Nearly all students make good progress during their period of study in the sixth form.
- 93 Standards are good with outstanding features in information technology.
- 94 Standards in the other five subjects inspected had good features and no important shortcomings.
- 95 The following grades were awarded for standards of achievement in the six subjects inspected in the 18 lessons observed in the sixth form:

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Sixth form	11%	78%	11%	0%	0%

- 96 Although the sample is small, these figures indicate that students achieve standards that have good features outweighing shortcomings in 100% of the lessons. The profile of grades awarded for standards in lessons inspected in the sixth form highlights that 89% of lessons were awarded grades 1 and 2. These grades are above those reported in HMCI's 2008/09 annual report.
- 97 All students in Y13 gained qualifications in some of the key skills in 2009. In Y12, the introduction of the Welsh BaccaLaureate Qualification (WBQ) for all students has raised standards in the six key skills to at least good.
- 98 The standard of students' numeracy and ICT skills is good. Students use their ICT skills to complete their project and portfolio work to good standards. Much of this work contains information which requires many mathematical calculations.
- 99 Students' communication skills are good. Students use their communication skills to improve the standard of their presentations when using PowerPoint to highlight aspects of their work. Students' writing skills are equally as strong in both languages with evidence of accurate extended work available in files. Communication skills of good quality were also evident when discussions were held with members of the school council. Students' bilingual skills are good.
- 100 The standard of students' problem-solving skills and the skills of improving their own learning is good. These skills have greatly assisted in raising students academic standards in the sixth form.
- 101 All students work well in pairs or larger groups when delivering presentations. Students work well together when engaged in group work.
- 102 Most students have an understanding of their levels of achievement and what they have to do to improve.

The development of their personal, social and learning skills

- 103 The standard of students' personal and social development is good. The standard of their spiritual, moral and cultural development is good.
- 104 Students of all abilities are developing good working habits. Many students organise their work well, without supervision in readiness for university life or the world of work. They prepare to the best of their ability and use study facilities appropriately. Their attitude to learning is good.

- 105 Nearly all students have a strong social conscience and work well as groups to raise money for charity.
- 106 All students are good role models for younger pupils and for one another. Their leadership skills are good. The relationships between senior and junior pupils are strong. Senior students support younger pupils. Very good relationships exist amongst the students.
- 107 Nearly all students demonstrate very responsible behaviour and respect towards one another and towards all members of the school community.
- 108 Students listen carefully to the views of others and they are able to express their views openly and honestly.
- 109 Skills of good quality have prepared the students very well for HE.
- 110 Attendance and punctuality to lessons are good.
- 111 Students gain much from their sixth-form experiences, in their academic, personal, social, moral and wider development.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

- 112 The school awarded itself a grade 2 in its self-evaluation report. The grade awarded by the inspection team is one grade lower because good features outweigh shortcomings. The shortcomings relate to:
- the decline in the quality of teaching, particularly at KS4, since the last inspection; and
 - inadequate assessment, target-setting and monitoring strategies at whole-school and departmental levels.

KS3 and KS4

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

- 113 The following table shows the quality of teaching in the six subjects and other lessons observed throughout the school at KS3 and KS4:

Quality of teaching	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Six subjects (46 lessons)	13%	44%	39%	4%	0%
All lessons (65 lessons)	11%	46%	38%	5%	0%

- 114 The 57% of lessons judged to be a grade 1 or 2 is significantly lower than the picture nationally as reported in HMCI's 2008/2009 annual report where 76% of lessons were judged to be a grade 1 and 2. In 38% of the lessons, good features outweigh shortcomings and in 5% there are some good features, but shortcomings in important areas. The figures do not compare well with the 'Vision into Action' secondary target for 2010, that the quality of teaching should be a grade 2 or better in 80% of lessons.
- 115 In the six subjects inspected, there are examples of teaching which is good with outstanding features, particularly in information technology and physical education.

- 116 The features of the outstanding teaching include:
- substantial use of subject-specific terminology;
 - opportunities to discuss work as a class, in pairs and in groups;
 - structured questioning to extend pupils' thinking skills;
 - regular checking of pupils' understanding;
 - a variety of tasks to structure the learning; and
 - planned lessons of high quality.
- 117 Where teaching was good, there was good pace and challenge and activities were well timed. Teachers frequently applied ICT imaginatively and lessons had been planned in detail with clear lesson objectives at the beginning. Learners were praised and encouraged to produce work of good standards. The majority of teachers possessed sound subject knowledge and made effective use of LSAs in the classroom.
- 118 Where there were shortcomings in the quality of teaching, lessons lacked pace and pupils were not challenged sufficiently. In a few lessons, pupils were not given enough opportunities to participate, even in practical lessons. In other instances, the work that was set did not match the ability and range of all the pupils. Some lessons were too dominated by the teacher and opportunities for pupils to develop their independent learning skills were too few.
- 119 Teachers do not meet the needs of the more able and talented pupils enough in many lessons.

How rigorous is assessment and how is it used to plan and improve learning

- 120 The quality of assessment, recording and reporting has good features but shortcomings in important areas. The school's assessment, recording and reporting policy is still very much in its infancy and has yet to be fully addressed throughout the school.
- 121 There is a lack of baseline data available. Members of staff and pupils cannot work together to develop challenging yet achievable targets in every subject. This impedes regular monitoring of targets at all levels throughout the year.
- 122 The assessment policy at KS3 and KS4 is neither yet fully developed nor operational. A minority of departments have been involved in piloting this policy. A strategic overview of pupils' attainment for the purpose of monitoring and tracking pupils' attainment has not been developed sufficiently for use by form teachers and heads of learning. In the majority of cases, pupils' targets tend to be general targets rather than subject-specific targets to impact on pupils' progress. Pupils' targets are not formally set at present until Y8 and Y10.
- 123 In the absence of a comprehensive whole-school assessment and marking policy, the quality of feedback to pupils is variable and consistency is lacking both within and between departments. A few departments have developed a common approach to assessment level descriptors at KS3.
- 124 Overall, pupils' work is marked regularly. In the best examples, there are constructive subject-specific comments and targets set.
- 125 There is a lack of consistency in a significant number of cases, both in the quality of comments and targets set and how pupils should improve their work to progress.

- 126 A few departments have begun to develop pupils' self and peer-assessment strategies, but in the majority of cases, the use of formative assessment to promote pupils' involvement and improvement in their own learning is at a very basic level.
- 127 The assessment and reporting procedures meet all the statutory requirements. The school conforms to the assessment needs of pupils with SEN.
- 128 At KS3, the procedures for standardising and moderating the quality of pupils' work have been developed well in the majority of departments.
- 129 Annual and interim reports to parents provide variable information on pupils' academic and personal development. Most subjects identify in detail how well pupils are progressing. However, they do not always set subject-specific targets for improvement. The consistency of reporting pupils' attainment varies between subjects. Pupils respond to their reports with a personal statement. This is a good feature.

Sixth form

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

- 130 The quality of teaching in the sixth form is good. The following table shows the grades awarded for the quality of teaching in the six subjects and all lessons observed in the sixth form:

Quality of teaching	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Six subjects (18 lessons)	22%	67%	11%	0%	0%
All lessons (25 lessons)	16%	68%	16%	0%	0%

- 131 Many of the outstanding and good features in the teaching seen in the sixth form are similar to those seen in lessons at KS3 and KS4. The majority of lessons which were good with outstanding features were observed in information technology and physical education.
- 132 Additional good features observed in sixth-form teaching include regular reference to examination assessment criteria and grade boundaries and the sharing and reflecting on marked work between students on how they could improve and develop in future work. Teachers' detailed knowledge of examination criteria and the level of challenge to students are also strengths.
- 133 The relationships between teachers and students are good.
- 134 Where there were shortcomings, there was a lack of purposeful planning, pace was too slow and there was a lack of challenge to students.

How rigorous is assessment and how is it used to plan and improve learning

- 135 The quality of assessment and marking across the sixth form is good. Overall, the assessment of students' work is good with the majority of teachers providing clear verbal and written feedback which identifies specific areas for improvement.
- 136 In the best practice, marking includes diagnostic comments of quality from teachers and effective self-assessment by students.
- 137 Parents are regularly informed of students' progress. The subject comments are detailed and identify clearly the students' strengths. In a minority of instances, the reports do not identify subject-specific targets for students to improve.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

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

- 139 The curriculum offered enables learners of all abilities to study a broad and balanced range of subjects and to gain qualifications in all the courses they follow. The curriculum allows for effective continuity and progression between years and key stages.
- 140 At KS3, a good feature for the most able pupils is the introduction of German from Y8 onwards. Time for this is created by the reduction of one period from French and a core subject. At KS3, information technology is taught as a discrete subject.
- 141 At KS4, there is a range of academic and vocational subjects that adhere to WAG's 14-9 Learning Pathways' agenda. At this key stage, in addition to the core curriculum, there are three option blocks. All courses, except PSE lead to pupils gaining qualifications.
- 142 At KS4, the number of subjects offered, including the vocational options to pupils, exceeds the requirements for the UA. Effective links with other providers extend the range of provision. This enables vocational subjects such as building, engineering, health and social care, and outdoor education to be offered.
- 143 In the sixth form, the links with other schools and Coleg Ceredigion create a greater choice of academic and vocational subjects for students. In September 2009, the school successfully introduced the WBQ for all Y12 students to enhance curricular provision. The use of video-conferencing facilities for psychology extends the provision.
- 144 Provision to develop learners' basic and key skills at KS3 and KS4 has good features that outweigh shortcomings. However, there is no overall co-ordinator for this initiative and its delivery is the responsibility of subject areas. In the sixth form, the WBQ ensures good co-ordination and delivery of key skills.
- 145 Many opportunities exist to broaden and enrich learners' experiences with the variety of activities and visits arranged. Pupils have the opportunity to gain the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and to be involved in Urdd activities. School productions are performed every two years (Oliver in 2008). School visits are arranged abroad and at Easter pupils have the opportunity to visit Italy and Beijing. There are numerous opportunities with singing and instrumental groups as well as team games and the 5x60 club.
- 146 The provision for the personal development of learners is good. The daily acts of worship in tutor groups and on a whole-school basis are of good quality and statutory requirements are met. Pupils are provided with valuable opportunities to contribute and the services are enhanced by musical contributions. These provide the pupils with worthwhile opportunities. Religious education lessons make a good contribution to the spiritual development of learners.

- 147 The school promotes pupils' moral and social development well. The quality of relationships, respect for peers, adults and visitors and the very good support given to a range of charities are good. The provision for the moral development of pupils is good and pupils readily support the high behavioural expectations of the school.
- 148 The pupils' awareness of the Welsh and other cultures is good across numerous areas of the curriculum. There is an annual school eisteddfod and use is made of the local specialists to contribute to this development.
- 149 Effective and valuable transition arrangements are in place to ensure the smooth transfer of pupils from the numerous primary partner schools. These arrangements involve many curricular developments. Community links are good and learners benefit from the input of a number of outside agencies.
- 150 The opportunity provided for KS4 pupils to experience mock interviews as part of the careers' education programme is valuable. This involves governors and members of the local business community. The school has many links with schools and the local FE College for the provision of courses and with the University of Aberystwyth and the Open University for the provision of initial teacher training (ITT).
- 151 The curriculum meets all legal requirements and all qualifications are nationally approved. Religious education is included in the curriculum for all pupils and meets statutory requirements.

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

- 152 The provision of work-related education is good and Careers Wales offers the school valuable support. Work-related education is covered in the PSE provision, and the vocational courses at KS4 and in the sixth form greatly enhance this aspect. Pupils in Y10 and students in Y12 are involved in work experience. The school has gained the Careers' Wales Award. Careers' education is an effective part of the PSE provision at KS3. The PSE programme meets statutory guidelines and is of good quality.
- 153 Aspects of 'Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig' feature well in many subjects across the curriculum. The learning experiences provided to promote pupils' bilingual skills have good features that outweigh shortcomings at KS3 and good features with no important shortcomings at KS4 and in the sixth form. The school offers subjects through the medium of Welsh at all stages, including the sixth form, and the school takes opportunities to promote bilingualism. School assemblies are conducted in Welsh and English and the annual school eisteddfod has a positive contribution to this aspect. There is a specific course "Cwrs trochi" to strengthen the Welsh language skills of some pupils at the beginning of KS3.
- 154 All learners have the opportunity to learn about social disadvantage and stereotyping mainly through the PSE programme. There is equality of access to all subjects for all pupils and students irrespective of their background or physical disability.
- 155 Education for sustainable development and global citizenship are promoted well within the school. The school has an active eco-committee and this group is working towards achieving the Green Flag award. This area is effectively

coordinated by a member of the science department. Last year a “One World Day” was organised that involved primary partner schools. Numerous workshops and exhibits were arranged to increase awareness in this important area.

- 156 The school is involved in recycling paper, cardboard, plastic and mobile phones as part of this element. There is a wind turbine attached to a school building that produces a small amount of electricity for the national grid and this project enables pupils to realise what can be done for sustainable development. The eco-group is involved with the Comenius project which promotes international awareness on environmental issues and citizenship by forging links with other European countries including Ireland, Denmark and Poland.
- 157 The development of entrepreneurial skills at KS3 and KS4 is adequate. At KS3 this skill is developed through the “Real Game” and the “Dynamo Project” arranged by Careers’ Wales. In KS4, this involves the pupils in taking on the roles involved in creating and running businesses. In the sixth form these skills are developed well as part of the WBQ provision. Year 12 students working in groups set up business ventures of good quality during an organised day.
- 158 The school provides learners with numerous valuable opportunities and experiences during their time at Ysgol Gyfun Aberaeron. These reflect national priorities for lifelong learning and community regeneration. This provision is good.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

159 This grade matches the school’s self-evaluation grade.

The quality of care, support and guidance to learners

- 160 The quality of care, support and guidance and the attention paid to learners’ welfare throughout the school are good. The school has a very caring and supportive ethos, where every pupil and student is valued and included. Learners feel secure, at ease and know who to turn to for help, reassurance and guidance. Planning, management and co-ordination of care and support are of a very high quality.
- 161 Information is shared with parents and carers through pupils’ contact diaries which include the home-school agreement. A comprehensive school prospectus is issued to all parents and carers as well as regular newsletters and notices. The school’s website is another source of useful information. The school recognises the importance of parents and carers in the learning partnership.
- 162 The school council is effective in ensuring that learners have a voice in the school’s affairs. It has been pro-active in developing healthy eating, suggesting a change in the school’s uniform and fund-raising.
- 163 The school provides guidance of good quality for pupils when they choose appropriate courses at KS4 and in the sixth form. Comprehensive and informative documentation, individual interviews, open evenings and careers’ education activities enable pupils to make well-informed choices.

- 164 Transition from KS2 to KS3 is carefully planned. There are good curricular links in the core subjects and with many other areas of the curriculum. Regular meetings take place with primary partner school headteachers and facilities are shared. Induction of pupils to the school, at all stages, is effective.
- 165 The school has a comprehensive and up-to-date PSE programme which meets the needs of the national framework. There are good opportunities in PSE lessons to discuss relevant contemporary issues. Particular attention is paid to aspects of health education and careers' guidance and good use is made of external speakers to enrich pupils' experiences.
- 166 Personal support of good quality is available to all learners. The youth officer provides support of very good quality in counselling emotionally vulnerable pupils. The nurture group and learning coaches support the referred or self-referred pupils, helping them to organise their study and manage their time.
- 167 Through very effective partnerships with Careers Wales and local businesses, the school prepares its learners thoroughly for choices, the next stages in their educational career and the world of work.
- 168 The strategies that have been introduced over the last year to improve attendance and punctuality are beginning to be effective. There has been an improvement in both areas.
- 169 The school has good procedures for ensuring the well-being of its pupils. There is good emphasis on physical activities. Healthy eating is encouraged and there are no vending machines in the school which is a member of Ceredigion's Healthy Schools' project. Water is available to all.
- 170 There are robust child protection arrangements in place. The nominated persons for child protection procedures are the headteacher and the SENCO. They are well supported by the designated governor. The well-documented policy and procedures for child protection are known to staff. All members of staff have received appropriate training. The school works closely with social services to provide effective support for pupils who are looked after by local authorities. Appropriate individual pastoral plans are in place.

The quality of the provision for additional learning needs

- 171 There are a number of outstanding features in the quality of provision for learners with SEN. The quality of provision and management of SEN is a strength of the school. The school recognises the diverse needs of pupils and promotes inclusive education effectively.
- 172 The outstanding features include the:
- early identification of pupils with SEN;
 - well-targeted and co-ordinated support for pupils with SEN; and
 - arrangements for pupils' inclusion.
- 173 The SENCO provides clear vision and direction with a strong sense of purpose. The department has comprehensive documentation.
- 174 The school is designated by the UA as a school suitable for pupils with physical disabilities. Pupils registered as SEN at the school have a wide range of learning difficulties. Consequently, SEN has a high profile within the school.

- 175 Highly-effective partnerships with primary partner schools allow for early sensitive and careful diagnosis of pupils' individual needs. The school uses a variety of tests to identify pupils' further needs. The monitoring of detailed targets and strategies identified in pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) is good.
- 176 Individual education plans are in place for all pupils who require them. These plans and targets are reviewed regularly.
- 177 Pupils who have statements of SEN are supported well by individual programmes. Statements are reviewed effectively and the school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice (Wales). Arrangements to support pupils with statements are very good.
- 178 The school benefits immensely from the support provided by a substantial number of experienced and well-qualified LSAs. Members of the learning support team with delegated responsibility for managing provision for pupils' emotional/behavioural difficulties, hearing impairment, severe learning difficulties and those accessing computer-assisted learning programmes are extremely effective and provision for these pupils is very good.
- 179 Pupils with SEN have full access to the curriculum through inclusion in mainstream classes. Many teachers meet the needs of pupils with SEN very effectively through making best use of LSAs and careful planning and application of tasks of varying degrees of difficulty in their lessons. However, in a few subject areas and classes, teachers do not plan and modify tasks appropriately enough to meet pupils' needs, nor make good use of support staff.
- 180 Pupils at KS4 follow a range of Entry Level courses, which include academic, practical and vocationally-based programmes. Appropriate qualifications are gained by following the First Skills' and the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) programmes. The majority of pupils on the SEN register gain Entry Level/GCSE qualification.
- 181 The governor with responsibility for SEN is well informed and visits the school on a regular basis. The school benefits from her "hands on" approach.
- 182 The school provides good effective support through its policies and practices for those pupils whose behaviour impedes their progress and those of others. There are opportunities for those pupils to be counselled by the youth worker and the system of restorative justice is particularly effective in having a positive effect on relationships within groups of pupils.

The quality of provision for equal opportunities

- 183 The school has a clear policy to promote equal opportunity, diversity and racial equality. No pupil is prevented from taking part in the life of the school.
- 184 Pupils who need support with English as an additional language are provided with specialist support of good quality. The school's arrangements to meet the needs of pupils who are "looked after" by a local authority are effective and meet statutory requirements.
- 185 The school challenges stereotyping effectively in advising pupils on subject choices.

- 186 The few pupils from minority ethnic groups have been integrated naturally. The PSE programme, together with religious education, English, art and design and history, promote racial and social equality. Extra-curricular activities also make a valuable contribution.
- 187 There are good procedures to monitor and respond to any incidences of anti-social behaviour. The school has an anti-bullying policy. The school gives high priority to anti-bullying issues. All aspects of bullying are dealt with immediately and positively.
- 188 The school has a Disability Equality Scheme and a clear access strategy. Any disabled person can gain access to any room in the school.
- 189 The school's pastoral procedures, as well as the formal curriculum, contribute well towards respecting diversity and equality.

Leadership and management

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

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

- 190 The school awarded itself a grade 2 in its self-evaluation report. The grade awarded by the inspection team is two grades lower because there are some good features, but shortcomings in important areas. These shortcomings relate to:
- the ineffective monitoring by SMT to ensure compliance with policies;
 - insufficient progress in strengthening the monitoring procedures of senior management to ensure consistency in teaching and learning experiences;
 - inconsistencies and shortcomings at middle management level;
 - inappropriate and inconsistent target-setting procedures; and
 - poor progress in key management issues for action since the last inspection.
- 191 This grade is one grade below the grades awarded for key question 1 and key question 7 due to the features noted above, especially the ineffective monitoring procedures of senior and middle management in raising standards.

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

- 192 There are some good features of leadership and management at middle management levels evident in a very few departments. These include science, geography and English. Of the six subjects inspected, the quality of leadership and management was judged to be very good in information technology. Within these few departments there is a clearer focus on teaching and learning, exemplified by a very few members of staff with very good teaching qualities. However, this best practice is not shared on a whole-school basis.
- 193 There are good features in the development of national priorities and local partnerships. The school has embarked on the WBQ in Y12. Initiatives including healthy eating and lifestyles, entrepreneurial skills, sustainability and global citizenship and the Learning Pathways' agenda have been established in KS4 and the sixth form. Collaborative partnerships involving other educational establishments and numerous local businesses are well developed.
- 194 However, there are several shortcomings in important areas.

- 195 The aims and expectations of the school are not implemented consistently throughout the school by staff and managers as they are not shared by all members of the school community. Their impact is not monitored effectively by senior or middle managers. The extent of these shortcomings has not been addressed by the link members of the SMT to the mathematics and physical education departments.
- 196 Policies have been written and some systems have been established to bring about consistency. They are currently only having a limited impact on standards.
- 197 There is no specific person with overall responsibility for ensuring consistency for whole-school assessment and target-setting across the school. Neither is there a skills' co-ordinator in KS3 or KS4.
- 198 The standards which pupils achieve in subjects across the curriculum are variable. There is insufficient progress in pupils' attainment in KS3 and KS4 and there are inconsistencies in the management of teaching, learning and assessment across the curriculum. Strategic monitoring of these managerial aspects by senior and middle managers is not rigorous enough. There is no effective rigorous quality assurance of teaching and learning across the school by the person responsible for this aspect of management.
- 199 Communication between the headteacher, middle management and staff is constructive. However, there are no formal meetings held between heads of department and heads of learning. Middle managers are not sufficiently involved in critical debate with heads of learning to determine priorities and formulate strategies to move the school forward.
- 200 The degree of accountability and expectations associated with managerial roles have not been fully understood nor developed as too many procedures are undertaken informally. This degree of accountability has not been set out clearly in the individual job descriptions of senior or middle managers.
- 201 Each member of the SMT, including the headteacher, is linked to a department or a cluster of departments. Even though the responsibilities of the SMT have increased, these responsibilities have not been prioritised to impact fully on standards. Consequently, the time available to the members of the SMT is not used appropriately to manage these responsibilities or the school, strategically.
- 202 The links between senior managers and the departments they line manage, have not been developed and vary in their effectiveness. Senior managers attend their link departmental meetings irregularly. The SMT links with departments are ineffective as members do not monitor, assure quality or review the work of individual subject departments with sufficient rigour. The school has no cycle of departmental monitoring reviews to assure quality.
- 203 The headteacher has the responsibility for the line-management of the heads of learning. With all his other commitments, this is too demanding.
- 204 There is no consistency in driving forward collaboratively the agenda for school improvement due to the variable quality of middle managers. In art and design, media studies, Welsh and physical education, the quality of middle management is adequate. In mathematics, there are important shortcomings.
- 205 The school's target-setting processes are insufficiently developed and inconsistent, particularly in KS3 and KS4. All pupils are not fully aware of their targets and in

- many cases are not sufficiently clear on how to improve. Currently, there is little accountability for ensuring that children reach their full potential.
- 206 Departments set targets for the end of each key stage. They are neither realistic nor challenging. Targets are not refined. On most occasions there is a complete mismatch between the targets set and outcomes. Many middle managers and teaching members of staff do not understand data or how to identify underachievement accurately or track progress.
- 207 There are inadequate strategies for target-setting processes for departmental improvement. There are no rigorous or challenging targets for improving standards or the quality of teaching and learning. Self-evaluation reports present an unrealistic position. Ineffective monitoring does not facilitate detailed planning for improvement. Currently, there is not a sufficiently robust, self-critical culture amongst middle managers.
- 208 The school ensures that teaching, administrative and technical staff have access to suitable training courses. However, senior managers do not monitor the impact of this training on standards sufficiently. Training of staff with managerial responsibilities, including senior managers, is underdeveloped. There has been insufficient support and training to heads of learning and those responsible for piloting the new assessment and tracking procedures. Middle managers are not afforded sufficient opportunities to shadow senior managers on a rotational basis.
- 209 The programmes for the induction of newly-qualified teachers (NQTs), and those on ITT are organised and managed soundly.
- 210 Performance management is undertaken in accordance with requirements. However, outside of this process, most heads of department and some senior managers do not formally monitor teaching and learning enough.
- 211 There is no formal system for the performance management of some of the non-teaching staff.

How well governors or other supervisory bodies meet their responsibilities

- 212 The governing body includes able and experienced members, some of whom have supported the school over a number of years, and members recently appointed. Their individual professional expertise is beginning to be used effectively.
- 213 All members have a clear understanding of the school's main priorities through the effective working of the sub-committee structure.
- 214 Governors are involved in the strategic management of the school. The quality of their strategic management and involvement in the evaluation processes are developing. The degree of challenge by the governing body is insufficient. The role of the whole governing body as a critical friend is not yet sufficiently challenging and is not focused enough.
- 215 Middle managers do not report progress in their respective areas of responsibilities to the governing body. The degree of accountability of middle managers to the governing body is insufficient.

- 216 Governors are linked to some but not all departments. Where links exist, departmental monitoring and attendance at departmental meetings occur. However, this practice is not applied consistently to all departments.
- 217 The governor with responsibility for SEN has developed strong links with this department.
- 218 The school's prospectus complies fully with requirements.
- 219 All regulatory and legal requirements are met.

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

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

- 220 The school awarded itself a grade 2 in its self-evaluation report. The grade awarded by the inspection team is two grades lower because important shortcomings were identified. These relate to the:
- lack of comprehensive and systematic quality assurance procedures at all levels;
 - lack of focus in the SDP and inconsistencies in the effectiveness of planning for improvement in a number of departments; and
 - insufficient progress made since the last inspection.

How effectively the school's performance is monitored and evaluated

- 221 There are some good features in the process of self-evaluation. Subject self-evaluation reports are based on the seven key questions within Estyn's Common Inspection Framework and are generally linked to the whole-school report. The school self-evaluation report draws on subject reports, lesson observations as part of the performance management process, departmental monitoring reports and the monitoring of the teaching and learning policy.
- 222 Although the self-evaluation report is accurate in its judgement of three key questions, its grades in four of the seven key questions are different from those of the inspectors who awarded one grade lower in questions 2 and 7, and two grades lower in questions 5 and 6. The school underestimated the shortcomings in teaching and assessment and the value for money provided by the school, as well as important deficiencies in leadership and management at all levels.
- 223 At both senior and middle management levels there is a lack of rigour in the implementation of quality assurance procedures to inform self-evaluation.
- 224 Although the SMT uses a number of methods to inform about performance, the analysis of data lacks focus, monitoring reports lack rigour, lesson observations are often informal and there is a lack of evidence of regular book surveys. The lack of a formal meeting between the headteacher and each curriculum leader at the start of the autumn term to discuss examination and assessment performance is an important shortcoming.
- 225 Members of the SMT are not sufficiently involved in monitoring and supporting middle managers in the process of self-evaluation on a regular basis. There are very few formal meetings with individual managers to discuss progress,

consider further strategies for improvement or review action plans. This is an important shortcoming.

- 226 Self-evaluation in many subject areas is not fully informed by regular formal lesson observations, scrutiny of work and analysis of pupils' progress. In a few departments pupils' performance is analysed in depth. In a majority of departments, data and target grades are not used effectively as a means of self-evaluation and to identify areas for improvement in teaching and learning and standards.
- 227 In a minority of departments, a culture of self-evaluation is well established and all members contribute to the process of self-evaluation and planning. However, in the majority of subject areas this practice is not well developed. There are regular meetings between LSAs and the SENCO. However, pastoral teams and other support staff are not fully involved in the self-evaluation process.
- 228 The school council is successful in bringing matters to the attention of the SMT and has contributed to the making of changes to the school uniform, school environment and raising funds for a new minibus. The views of pupils, staff, parents and governors were collected for a survey carried out by Concentra. At present, the report is in statistical format and has not provided a detailed analysis to inform the self-evaluation process.

The effectiveness of planning for improvement

- 229 The SDP (2008-2010) has the main focus of raising pupils' academic standards and improving learning for all. In addition, there are plans for curricular development, the learning focus, links with the community and the sharing of good practice. Although key matters, targets, timescales, personnel, general resources and performance indicators are identified, the plan does not indicate specific quantifiable targets, detailed financial costings or clear success criteria. The generic nature of the plan and responsibilities for monitoring limit the effectiveness of the plan in undertaking meaningful evaluation of the progress made. The draft SDP for 2010-2013 also lacks a clear focus for improvement. This is an important shortcoming.
- 230 The DDPs have the same main focus as the SDP and vary enormously in quality. In a few plans, targets are clearly identified, detailed financial costings are provided and performance indicators are specific. In the majority of departments there is a lack of clarity in the action to be taken and performance indicators are too generic.
- 231 There is an important shortcoming in the use of targets for pupils in KS3 and KS4. At present, targets are set for pupils in Y8 and Y10, with interim assessments three times each year for effort and achievement. The lack of targets from early in Y7, the complex link between targets and interim assessments and the lack of focus in monitoring by heads of learning are significant weaknesses in the process.
- 232 Although the school is able to provide adequate resources for teaching and learning and there is a clear indication of priorities in around half of the DDPs, there is not always a specific focus on the resources required to support strategies in the SDP and other subject plans.

- 233 There are important shortcomings in the progress made in addressing the key issues identified in the last inspection. Good progress has been made in raising standards in physical education in KS4 and in the sixth form, in the use of ICT across the curriculum, providing religious education for all Y11 pupils and implementation of school policies in relation to behaviour and discipline.
- 234 An improvement of 2% has taken place in pupils' attendance which still remains below UA and national averages and WAG's target of 93%. The recording of pupils' progress and achievement in core ICT, physical education and religious education in KS4 is now more regular.
- 235 Boys' performance in KS4 remains a key issue for most indicators.
- 236 In the six subjects inspected in depth, information technology has also improved. However, there has been a decline in standards in media studies in KS4 and in the sixth form and in Welsh first language in KS3. The decline in mathematics in KS4 is significant.
- 237 There has been a decline in the percentage of lessons graded 1 and 2 for teaching and assessment throughout the school compared with the last inspection.
- 238 The quality of the monitoring procedures carried out at SMT level and the development of the role of middle managers remain key issues in this report.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

- 239 The school awarded itself a grade 2 in its self-evaluation report. The grade awarded by the inspection team is one grade lower because there are good features outweighing shortcomings. The shortcomings relate to the:
- lack of cost-effectiveness of sixth-form provision;
 - inadequate monitoring of the impact of the CPD of staff;
 - absence of a formal performance management process for a significant number of support staff;
 - ineffective link between the SDP and budgetary decisions; and
 - school's limited value for money.
- 240 The grade awarded to KQ7 is one grade higher than the grade awarded to KQ5 because the monitoring of resources by the SMT is sufficient to ensure that resources are deployed to achieve adequate value for money.

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

- 241 All teaching members of staff are well qualified. All are subject specialists and are effectively deployed to deliver the broad and well-balanced curriculum. The school's staffing profile reflects an emphasis on experience with around 40% of the teaching members of staff having taught for more than 20 years. The very few members of staff who teach outside their subject specialism receive good support from the relevant heads of department.

- 242 The implementation of the workforce remodelling agreement has resulted in the employment of an appropriate range of additional non-teaching staff. This has considerably reduced the administrative work load of teachers. The appropriately skilled and efficient support team is highly valued by the teaching staff.
- 243 The school employs 27 LSAs who are directly managed by the SENCO. The LSAs provide substantial support for pupils with SEN. However, some of the teaching members of staff do not liaise consistently with LSAs regarding schemes of work, classroom organisation and lesson content. This renders the support provided by LSAs less effective.
- 244 The cost-effective distribution of departmental capitation has ensured a good stock of books, equipment, hardware and software across all departments. Departmental expenditure is regularly monitored by the bursar and finance sub-committee. They ensure that all expenditure is directly linked to departmental plans and the SDP. Information and communication technology resources have improved significantly since the last inspection.
- 245 There are now five dedicated information technology suites giving a favourable pupil-to-computer ratio of 1:3.7. The number of interactive whiteboards and data projectors has increased with all departments benefiting from a planned programme of provision. Improved access to computer technology has had a positive impact on the range of teaching methods deployed by teachers.
- 246 Library provision is good with an adequate stock of both fiction and non-fiction books. Pupils have full access to the facilities at all non-teaching times. The borrowing pattern is good, especially in KS3. The library makes a significant contribution to pupils' standards across the school.
- 247 The building is sufficient to accommodate the number of pupils on roll. A significant number of developments have been implemented in recent years to improve and add to the school's accommodation. This has had a positive impact on the quality of the teaching and learning environment. The physical education facilities are very good. However, the playing fields are away from the school site.

How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money

- 248 The management and control of the school's delegated budget by the headteacher and administrative officer are good. Financial management procedures are efficient ensuring a cost-effective operation of all aspects of the school's investment and expenditure programmes. However, the three-year SDP lacks the necessary prioritisation, detail and financial costings to ensure a sharper focussed link with budgetary decisions. This is a shortcoming.
- 249 The school places considerable emphasis on the effective professional development of staff. The management of the professional development of both teaching and support staff is good. The support and development programmes for NQTs and those in early professional development (EPD) are comprehensive and of a good quality.
- 250 The school has provided 10% of the teaching time for staff planning, preparation and assessment. The effectiveness of this provision is not reflected in the overall quality of the teaching and standards achieved by the learners.

- 251 However, the outcomes of CPD provision are not rigorously monitored to evaluate their impact on classroom practice and learners' standards. A significant number of support members of staff are not included in the annual performance management process. These are shortcomings.
- 252 Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks have been successfully completed for all teaching and support staff.
- 253 The school conducts an effective annual review of the use of its resources.
- 254 The planned sixth-form curriculum model, with its large number of classes of five students or less, is not cost-effective. The sixth form is not self-financing. This is a shortcoming.
- 255 The value for money delivered by the school is limited and is only adequate due to the:
- standards achieved by learners in KS3 and KS4;
 - shortcomings in the quality of teaching;
 - ineffective link between the SDP and budgetary decisions; and
 - shortcomings in the management and monitoring of a significant number of whole-school processes and procedures.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Welsh first language

Key stage 3: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

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

- 256 Examination results at GCSE in the last two years have varied. In 2009, GCSE results in language and literature were higher than national averages for grades A*-C. In 2008, results in language were lower but higher in literature. In both 2008 and 2009, the percentage of A*/A grades was higher than the national averages in language and literature.
- 257 Examination results at A level in the last two years were higher than the national average for grades A/B.

KS3 and KS4

Good features

- 258 Across the ability range in KS3, pupils' standards in listening are good. Pupils respond readily to teachers questions.
- 259 In KS3, pupils' ability to converse and discuss in Welsh is satisfactory. Pupils contribute relevantly to pair and group discussions and by the end of the key stage, the more able succeed in expressing their ideas at length and maturely in an appropriate language register.
- 260 In KS4, the majority of pupils work together successfully, discussing sensibly and respecting each other's comments. In the best examples, they display a

- good grasp of language and syntax and use vocabulary confidently when presenting information and expressing an opinion.
- 261 The more able pupils across the key stage read aloud well. They use the appropriate register and tone. Some pupils can respond well to various literary, non-literary and instrumental texts both orally and written. The appreciation skills of the more able pupils are developing well.
- 262 In both key stages, the majority of pupils can glean information effectively from different sources and use ICT skills to arrange information and present it to a higher standard. This shows a good awareness of audience needs.
- 263 In KS4, the majority of pupils are increasingly showing lively personal response in their critical work and this is soundly based on a good understanding of the set texts. When there is appropriate detail, quotation of evidence and correct terminology the standards are good. Some pupils can show maturity and develop their ability to think analytically in getting under the skin of characters, interpreting themes and dealing with style features.
- 264 In Y7 and Y8, some pupils succeed in showing originality when writing creatively. By Y9, the more able make subtle and effective use of language and show confidence when writing in a variety of formats.
- 265 By KS4, work is broad and varied and overall, standards are good. The majority of pupils across the ability range succeed in writing at length and with more structure. At best, the ideas offered are mature, original and the language resources are sound.
- 266 Most pupils in KS4 redraft sections of their work and edit content well. The standard of pupils' written work is raised.
- 267 Across the skills and in relation to their ability, pupils with SEN achieve good standards.
- 268 Across the ability range pupils' self-evaluation skills are beginning to develop in KS3 and pupils are beginning to evaluate their own written and oral work and that of their peers against specific criteria.

Shortcomings

- 269 In KS3, about half the pupils have difficulty in holding a coherent pair and group discussion and extending their responses to convey ideas in detail. Their ability to feed back to the remainder of the class has not fully developed. Often comments are brief and less well developed.
- 270 An uncertain grasp of syntax restricts the oral responses of a small minority of pupils in KS3 and prevents them from expressing themselves to the utmost.
- 271 In KS3, the comments of a substantial minority of pupils are brief when interpreting various reading texts using evidence, appropriate terminology and comparison skills.
- 272 Pupils' standards of reading aloud vary in KS3.
- 273 In both key stages, errors in mutation, misspelling and inaccurate verb endings impair the accuracy of the written expressions of many pupils of average ability.
- 274 In KS4, the written work of a minority of pupils, mainly boys, is not detailed enough.

Sixth form

Good features

- 275 Throughout the key stage, the majority of students are increasingly offering detailed and extended oral comments when working in groups and contributing to class discussions. A number can exchange ideas easily and respond sensibly to each other's ideas. They succeed in responding at length and change the direction of the discussion confidently and with the appropriate vocabulary.
- 276 Students' ability to deal critically with various set texts is developing well throughout the key stage. In Y12, they succeed in meaningfully analysing the motivation of characters in a film and offer appropriate evidence to reinforce opinion. When responding to a novel in Y13, the more able attain a good standard in thinking independently, getting to grips with the characters and offering original ideas in analysing the motivation of characters and themes.
- 277 In Y13, students show a clear understanding of challenging texts in prose and poetry from different periods. They analyse a text in Middle Welsh knowledgeably and show a good understanding when dealing with the 'Hengerdd' poems dealing with the concepts effectively.
- 278 Students' understanding of the essentials of grammar is developing well throughout the key stage. By Y13, students show an awareness of language and grammar structure when translating and the more able succeed in expressing themselves in language of a good quality.
- 279 The extended work of a good number of students shows their ability to write in different linguistic registers. The majority of students compose essays that have been carefully structured applying and selecting facts and displaying a sound grasp of language.

Shortcomings

- 280 In Y13, students' skills in meaningfully cross-referencing the literary styles and themes of different authors and poets are not fully developed.
- 281 In Y12 and Y13, students' ability to meaningfully weave quotations into the structure of their discussions, whether orally or written, in order to enrich their responses is not completely effective.
- 282 When analysing various literary texts, some students have difficulty in interpreting and discussing the effectiveness of style features knowledgeably.

Mathematics

Key stage 3: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key stage 4: Grade 4: Some good features, but shortcomings in important areas

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

- 283 Examination results at GCSE in the last two years have been significantly below the local and national averages for passes at grades A*-C. These results represent poor achievement for these pupils.
- 284 Examination results at A level in the last two years at grades A/B have been similar to the local and above the national averages in 2008 and below the local and national averages for passes in 2009.

285 In 2009, Advance Supplementary (AS) results for grades A-C were significantly above those of the UA and Wales and in 2008 similar to the UA and above the national averages.

KS3

Good features

286 Most Y7 pupils show a secure recall of mathematical facts and these pupils can accurately multiply a two digit number by another two digit number. The majority is able to extend the approach used to three or more digit numbers.

287 Nearly all lower ability pupils are able to combine simple algebraic terms by addition and are able to use ICT well to present a class survey.

288 Most pupils show a good understanding of the use of integers and are able to use trial and improvement methods to find square roots and solutions to simple quadratic equations when one root is a positive integer.

289 Nearly all Y8 middle ability pupils understand inverse operations and most are able to solve simple linear equations involving two operations.

Shortcomings

290 A minority of pupils lack confidence in their mathematical ability and this limits the standard of their work.

291 A few pupils present their work poorly and do not complete set tasks.

292 A few pupils are not able to use basic algebraic conventions.

293 A minority of pupils show an insecure knowledge of basic mathematical facts and sometimes use a calculator inappropriately for basic operations.

KS4

Good features

294 The majority of lower ability pupils in Y11 can recall basic angle facts and are able to calculate the values of angles on straight lines. They are able to use the correct terminology to describe simple probability.

295 A majority of able pupils in Y11 are able to understand the need to calculate frequency densities for a set of data with uneven class intervals and are able to draw histograms accurately. They are able to explain how to use factorisation to solve quadratic equations.

296 In a practical introduction to trigonometry, a majority of pupils are able to measure angles and lengths to an appropriate degree of accuracy. They can correctly identify the sides of a right angled triangle and understand how to calculate the size of an angle given any two sides. A majority of pupils with scientific calculators are able to use the second function button to carry out calculations involving inverse trigonometric functions.

297 A majority of middle ability pupils in Y11 can describe the translation of shapes in two dimensions using column vectors and are able to calculate averages from data given in frequency tables.

Shortcomings

298 Around half of pupils of middle ability are unsure of the angle properties of common triangles and are unable to use these properties to calculate the value of angles.

- 299 Many pupils are not able to select and organise strategies independently in order to solve problems of increasing complexity to their age and ability.
- 300 A minority of able pupils do not bring essential mathematical equipment and consequently complete given tasks to lower standards.
- 301 When working with a calculator display, around half of able pupils do not automatically write answers to an appropriate degree of accuracy.
- 302 Many pupils do not consider mental methods appropriate to the task and their ability but instead rely upon calculators.
- 303 Around half of middle ability pupils are not secure when using arithmetic that includes negative numbers.
- 304 A majority of lower ability pupils are not able to convert from grams to kilograms.
- 305 A minority of middle ability pupils had difficulty in recognising the correct sort of average to use in everyday situations.
- 306 Across the ability range a significant minority of pupils do not complete set homework tasks, either in their exercise books nor through the department's web based e-learning site.

Sixth form

Good features

- 307 Students' results in AS examinations were very good in 2009.
- 308 Students studying the WBQ can use appropriate mathematical modelling in application of number projects at level 2 and level 3
- 309 In Y12 most students are able to use statistical functions on a calculator and can understand and use simple probability formulae that include statistical shorthand representation.
- 310 All Y12 AS students are able to manipulate different forms of the equation of a circle.
- 311 All Y13 students are able to use simple substitution methods to integrate expressions and are able to use the binomial theorem appropriately.

Shortcomings

- 312 A minority of Y12 AS students were unable to manipulate complex vulgar fractions.
- 313 A few students had difficulty in synthesising previous work in order to calculate conditional probabilities.
- 314 The standard of presentation of a few Y12 students is poor.

Information and communication technology

Key stage 3: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Key stage 4: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Sixth form: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

- 315 Examination results at GCSE in the last two years have been significantly above national averages for passes at grades A*-C and A*/A. These results represent outstanding achievement for these pupils.

316 Examination results at A level both in computing and information technology in the last two years have been significantly above local and national averages for passes at grades A/B. These results represent outstanding achievement for these students.

KS3

Outstanding features

317 Almost all pupils have outstanding practical computing skills.

318 Most pupils' confidence and competence levels in handling the computer and a very broad range of software applications are outstanding. Nearly all pupils communicate information using word-processing, desktop publishing and PowerPoint presentation software to very high standards.

319 Nearly all pupils have an outstanding recall of the work done in previous lessons. When answering questions or describing their work they use an outstanding level of technical terminology.

Good features

320 Almost all pupils are able to research and use information from a very wide variety of sources, including the internet, independently. Most pupils' knowledge and understanding of data-capture when developing their database skills are very good. They carry out searches and sorts on their data using a range of criteria to very high standards.

321 Almost all pupils have a very good understanding of the theoretical aspects of their tasks and are able to explain and discuss their work to good standards using the appropriate technical terminology.

322 Pupils with SEN make good progress and produce work of a good standard.

Shortcomings

323 There are no significant shortcomings.

KS4

Outstanding features

324 Almost every pupil pursues a GCSE in the subject with a 100% of pupils achieving a grade A*-C.

325 Nearly all pupils' practical computing skills are outstanding. They use the hardware, together with a very broad range of software and associated peripheral equipment exceptionally well.

326 Almost all pupils' problem-solving skills are outstanding and this skill features strongly in every lesson particularly in choosing and using the more complex functions and attributes of a very broad range of software, including media presentations. This skill contributes significantly to pupils' work of very high quality.

327 Most pupils' standard of graphical-communication skills seen in the production of information leaflets is outstanding.

328 Most pupils' knowledge, understanding and use of higher-order computing skills and techniques are outstanding.

Good features

- 329 Most pupils' knowledge and understanding of computer systems, including a range of peripheral input devices such as the ATM machine, are very good.
- 330 Most pupils can readily select and use a very broad range of software packages that best fits the required task. These packages enable the pupils to produce work of good quality.
- 331 All pupils plan their work thoroughly and show good problem-solving and evaluation skills. They have a good understanding of the theoretical aspects of their tasks and can explain and discuss their work using a good level of technical vocabulary.
- 332 All pupils can model information using a spreadsheet. They use the functions and facilities of the software very effectively to produce predictions of good standards using a range of processes such as the "what if" facility. In other applications they can create a sophisticated business database and set up very effective and efficient queries to search their data and model information.
- 333 Pupils with SEN make very good progress and achieve very well.

Shortcomings

- 334 There are no significant shortcomings.

Sixth form

Outstanding features

- 335 All students from a relatively large cohort achieved a 100% pass rate at grades A/B at A level in 2009.
- 336 A significant number of students show an outstanding level of practical competence and computer skills.
- 337 Most students show outstanding standards in the design and development of leaflets to advertise their chosen business applications. The graphical communication skills are exceptional, bordering on professional quality outputs.
- 338 Most students show outstanding levels of creativity in the house styles they develop in their documentation for their projects. The work reflects outstanding standards in using a range of word-processing and desktop-publishing techniques.

Good features

- 339 Most A level students apply their computing skills to problem-solving issues in the real world to very high standards.
- 340 The standard of work in most students' project files is very high. Students have a good understanding and knowledge of the theory relating to computer systems.

Shortcomings

- 341 There are no significant shortcomings.

Art and design

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

342 Examination results at GCSE in the last two years have been below local and national averages for passes at grades A*-C. These results represent underachievement for these pupils.

343 Examination results at A level in the last two years have been above local and national averages for passes at grades A/B. These results represent good achievement for these students.

KS3

Good features

344 Progression is clearly demonstrated in the skills, knowledge and understanding of learners as they move through the key stage. Most pupils show evidence of good standards in the use of the visual elements as well as in their use of two and three-dimensional processes and materials.

345 All pupils in Y7 produce varied work of a good standard in response to seascapes. Most pupils show well developed critical skills as they compare and contrast the work of local artists and are able to manipulate clay appropriately to create well made boats.

346 Most pupils in Y7 are able to assess their work effectively in collaboration with their peers. This raises the standard of their work.

347 All pupils in Y8 show pencil-drawing techniques of good standards as they create competent line drawings to develop compositions in the style of African art. Most pupils demonstrate a good understanding of pattern which they use effectively to frame their compositions.

348 All Y9 pupils reach good standards in their clay portraits showing competent technical skills as they score the surface of the clay and use slip to add facial features. Many pupils show good levels of imagination and construction skills as they manipulate the clay to create individual personalities within their portraits.

Shortcomings

349 Throughout KS3, there is an over reliance on secondary source materials and this inhibits pupils' progress.

350 Pupils do not produce homework which is connected to their class work. The homework does not build upon pupils' school-based art making experiences sufficiently.

351 The majority of pupils, including pupils with SEN in KS3, do not use ICT to create art work of high standards.

KS4

Good features

352 The majority of pupils make good references to the work of artists to guide and influence their creative making. This has a positive impact on their standard of work.

- 353 A few Y10 pupils make very good progress showing thorough research and proficient skills in their investigations.
- 354 Many pupils who are working to the theme of 'Wild Wood' have made competent short films, often accompanied by music to document areas of the local landscape.
- 355 A minority of pupils in both year groups achieve good standards in their work which covers a good variety of skill areas, such as drawing, painting, sculpture, ceramics, papier-mâché and film making.
- 356 A significant minority of pupils in KS4 make good connections with the work of a range of well selected artists and annotate their work appropriately to justify the modifications and developments made.

Shortcomings

- 357 Many pupils demonstrate an over-dependence on second hand images to develop their coursework. This restricts their creativity and the overall standard of their work.
- 358 A significant minority of pupils are unable to explain how artists presented in sketch books link in with their work and do not show any visual evidence of the connection.
- 359 Many pupils show under developed technical skills as they draw, paint and create imaginative three-dimensional outcomes.
- 360 Most pupils in Y10 only make adequate progress as they investigate the theme of personal journeys for their coursework.
- 361 Many pupils are only able to make tenuous connections between pages in sketchbooks and portfolios. This restricts the progression of their work and has a negative impact on standards.

Sixth form

Good features

- 362 In Y12 and Y13 all students' sketchbooks, preparatory sheets and final outcomes show imagination, thorough exploration of materials and techniques, good technical skills and robust connections with the work of a diverse range of artists. The development of original thought-processes is a strong feature of the work.
- 363 All Y12 students demonstrate good evidence of their ability to explore topics successfully. All students have created thoughtful, competent outcomes which show a highly personal response to their chosen topic.
- 364 In Y13, all students display mature, well-developed investigative skills in response to a diverse range of topics.
- 365 Some students explore interesting subjects successfully. This results in skilful painting, sculpture and film making.

Shortcomings

- 366 Some students' skills and techniques in drawing from direct observation have not been developed enough.

Physical education

Key stage 3: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

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

367 Examination results at GCSE in the last two years have fluctuated from below to above local and national averages for passes at grades A*-C. The most recent results were exceptional and represent very good achievement by the pupils.

368 Examination results at A level in the last two years have fluctuated from below to above local and national averages for passes at grades A/B. The most recent results represent very good achievement by the students.

KS3

Good features

369 Many pupils demonstrate individual swimming techniques of a good standard in health, fitness and well-being activities.

370 Most pupils are able to perform personal survival skills of a good standard.

371 The majority of pupils display good standards in the competitive activities of rugby, football and netball.

372 Most pupils demonstrate good standards in the execution of defensive and attacking tactics.

373 The majority of pupils show good standards in planning, performing various skills and evaluating their work and the work of others.

374 Most pupils are able to locate their base position on a simple map and move around the school site to locate markers in adventurous activities to a good standard.

Shortcomings

375 The physical fitness of a few pupils is unsatisfactory and this impacts negatively on standards of these pupils' performance.

376 A few pupils show a lack of understanding of the importance of an active lifestyle.

377 A very few pupils exhibit unsatisfactory fine motor skills.

378 Many Y9 girls are unable to maintain control in contested situations when playing hockey.

379 A majority of pupils were unable to participate effectively in some of the games' activities due to their limited knowledge of the rules.

KS4

Good features

380 Most pupils' work in the health, fitness and well-being aspect of the curriculum is of a good standard.

381 Many pupils show a good level of ability when planning, undertaking and evaluating a fitness programme. A few pupils are able to lead whole-class warm-ups and cool-downs to good effect. Many pupils display a very good

understanding of how the components of physical fitness are developed, and how these relate to an active and healthy lifestyle.

382 In examination groups, many pupils demonstrate good subject knowledge and understanding of the content of the syllabus. This knowledge is applied effectively in practical and theoretical situations to produce standards in performance and written work of good quality.

383 Most pupils demonstrate good standards in planning, performing and evaluating their work and the work of others. In the competitive activities of hockey and netball, many pupils' performances are of a high standard.

Shortcomings

384 A few pupils have an inadequate knowledge of the subject. This limits the capacity of these individuals to achieve high standards in the examinations.

385 The physical fitness of a few pupils is unsatisfactory. This has a detrimental impact on their standards in performance activities.

Sixth form

Good features

386 In a variety of examination modules, all students demonstrate knowledge and understanding to a good standard.

387 Nearly all students demonstrate good standards when assessing their own sporting performance.

388 Nearly all students produce presentations of high quality. These students are able to defend and debate the issues relating to their chosen topic to high standards.

389 Students with SEN engage in a variety of activities and perform to a good standard.

Shortcomings

390 The lack of depth and breadth of a few students' research and reading in the subject hinders their progress and limits the standard of their work.

Media studies

Key stage 4: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

391 Examination results at GCSE in the last two years have varied. They have been above and below national averages for passes at grades A*-C and A*/A.

392 Examination results at A level in the last two years have been below national averages for passes at grades A/B.

KS4

Good features

393 All pupils from across the ability groups make steady progress in the development of their skills and observations as they move through the course.

- 394 Most pupils demonstrate a growing understanding and confidence in using the vocabulary of the subject.
- 395 Most middle and higher-ability pupils show good subject knowledge and understanding in the work on decoding magazines and film.
- 396 Most pupils produce written coursework of good standards. The final pieces are often very thorough and well presented using ICT.

Shortcomings

- 397 The written or oral contributions of some middle and lower ability pupils to the lessons are limited.
- 398 Most pupils do not produce notes of good quality. These notes do not reflect the depth and quality of the discussions held during the lesson.
- 399 The standard of work of a minority of pupils is limited.

Sixth form

Good features

- 400 Most students are beginning to draw parallels with different genre in their work on the representation of youth and women in the media. The standard of these debates is good.
- 401 Some students demonstrate considerable insight, awareness of audience and purpose when reflecting on images.
- 402 In the best examples, the most able students develop their thinking to include symbolic messages beyond the more obvious technical and written codes.
- 403 Written coursework is of a good standard. It is fluent and well argued showing good research and structure. Knowledge and use of technical vocabulary are evident throughout.
- 404 Presentation of written course work is good. Many students write for a range of audiences and in a range of styles. Most have good ICT skills which are used very effectively to enhance their work.

Shortcomings

- 405 The first written drafts of work by a majority of students do not reflect a clear understanding of what has been studied.

School's response to the inspection

The school was invited to provide a response to the inspection report but in this case, declined to do so.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Gyfun Aberaeron
School type	Secondary
Age range of pupils	11-18
Address of school	Stryd Y Fro Aberaeron Ceredigion
Postcode	SA46 0DT
Telephone number	01545570217

Headteacher	Aneurin Roberts
Date of appointment	September 2007
Chair of governors	Eifion Morgans
Reporting inspector	W Gwyn Thomas
Dates of inspection	2-5 March 2010

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

Year group	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Total
Number of pupils	113	103	98	134	123	58	60	689

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	45	1.5	46.5

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	15.2:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	-
Average teaching group size	22.3
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	76%

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole school
Term 1	95	94	92	88	87	91	88	91
Term 2	92	94	87	90	87	90	94	90
Term 3	94	91	89	91	89	90	79	90

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	10.5
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	8 Temporary

Appendix 3

This report uses data for 2009 for LEA and Wales comparative information

GYFUN ABERAERON COMPREHENSIVE
Ceredigion

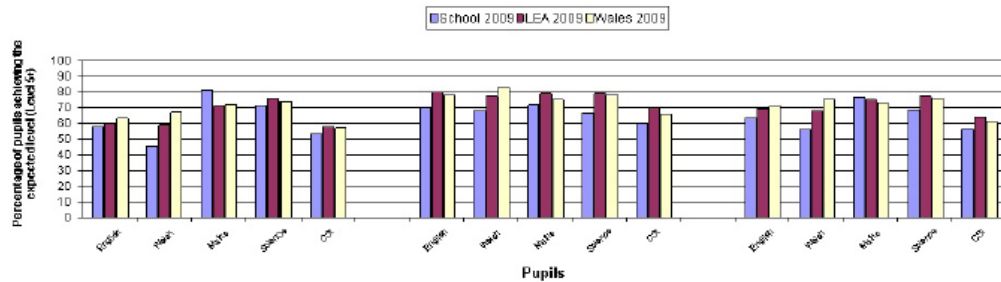
LEA/School no: 667/4042

School comparative information: National Curriculum Assessments 2009 with benchmarking

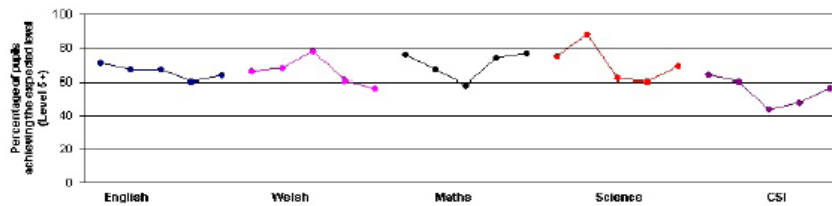
Key Stage 3

Percentage of boys, girls, and pupils achieving at least the expected level (Level 5+):

	Boys			Girls			Pupils		
	School 2009	LEA 2009	Wales 2009	School 2009	LEA 2009	Wales 2009	School 2009	LEA 2009	Wales 2009
English	58	60	63	70	80	78	64	69	71
Welsh	46	59	67	68	77	83	56	68	75
Maths	81	71	72	72	79	75	77	75	73
Science	71	76	74	67	79	78	69	77	76
CSI	54	58	57	60	70	66	57	64	61



School Performance over time (2005 - 2009)



Contextual Information

Benchmarked against schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals.

School's results shown in greyed boxes. Column headings refer to...

- Quartile 1 School is in the top 25 per cent.
- Quartile 2 School is in the top 50 per cent but not the top 25 per cent.
- Quartile 3 School is in the bottom 50 per cent but not the bottom 25 per cent.
- Quartile 4 School is in the bottom 25 per cent.

Free School Meal Group

More than or equal to 10 per cent and up to 15 per cent eligible for FSM

	Quartile 4	Lower Quartile Boundary	Quartile 3	Median Boundary	Quartile 2	Upper Quartile Boundary	Quartile 1
English	58	60	63	74	79	81	81
Welsh	46	59	67	77	83	81	81
Maths	81	71	72	77	75	81	81
Science	71	76	74	80	82	82	82
CSI	54	58	57	66	71	71	71

Notes:

1. Figures for Welsh refer to attainment in Welsh first language only.
2. CSI = Core Subject Indicator. To achieve the CSI a pupil must achieve at least the expected level 5 in both Mathematics and Science and either English or Welsh first language.
3. If there were no pupils eligible for assessment in a subject for a particular year the graph will discontinue and show a gap for that year.

This report uses data for 2009 for LEA and Wales comparative information

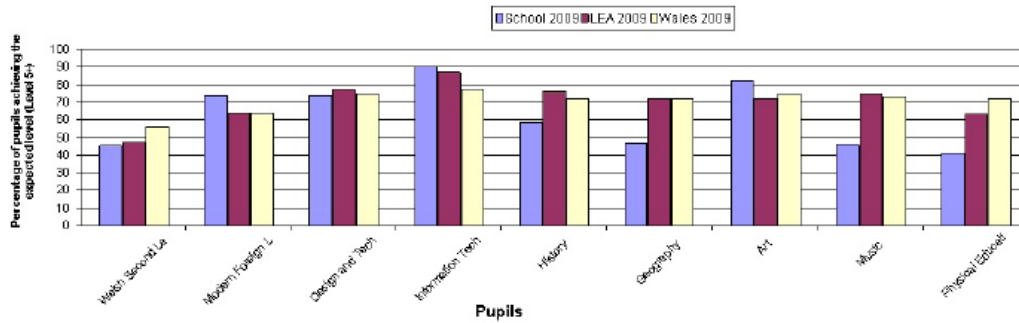
GYFUN ABERAERON COMPREHENSIVE
Ceredigion

LEA/School no: 667/4042

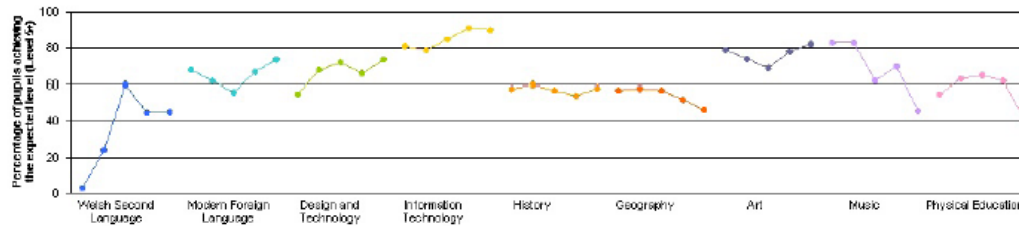
School comparative information: National Curriculum Assessments 2009 with benchmarking
Key Stage 3

Percentage of pupils achieving the expected level (Level 5+)

	Boys			Girls			Pupils		
	School 2009	LEA 2009	Wales 2009	School 2009	LEA 2009	Wales 2009	School 2009	LEA 2009	Wales 2009
Welsh Second Language	48	41	46	42	55	66	45	47	56
Modern Foreign Language	67	52	55	82	77	73	74	64	64
Design and Technology	77	69	68	70	85	83	74	77	75
Information Technology	90	81	72	90	93	83	90	87	77
History	49	67	66	68	85	78	58	76	72
Geography	38	66	67	57	80	77	47	72	72
Art	72	61	66	93	83	85	82	72	75
Music	38	67	66	55	84	81	46	75	73
Physical Education	43	71	72	38	54	72	41	63	72



School Performance over time (2005 - 2009)



Contextual Information

Benchmarked against schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals.

School's results shown in greyed boxes. Column headings refer to...

- Quartile 1 School is in the top 25 per cent.
- Quartile 2 School is in the top 50 per cent but not the top 25 per cent.
- Quartile 3 School is in the bottom 50 per cent but not the bottom 25 per cent.
- Quartile 4 School is in the bottom 25 per cent.

Free School Meal Group

More than or equal to 10 per cent and up to 15 per cent eligible for FSM

	Quartile 4	Lower Quartile Boundary	Quartile 3	Median Boundary	Quartile 2	Upper Quartile Boundary	Quartile 1
Welsh Second Language	48	50		61		71	
Modern Foreign Language		61		68	74		75
Design and Technology		73	74	80			85
Information Technology		78		83			86
History	58	72		76			80
Geography	47	74		79			83
Art		76	82	83			89
Music	46	72		78			83
Physical Education	41	68		76			82

Notes:

- 1. If there were no pupils eligible for assessment in a subject for a particular year the graph will discontinue and show a gap for that year.

Pupils aged 15

Number of pupils aged 15 who were on roll in January 2009 : 93

Percentage of pupils aged 15 who :

	entered at least one qualification	achieved the Level 1 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE pass in English or Welsh first language and mathematics	Core Subject Indicator (2)	Average wider points score per pupil
School 2008/09	100	89	58	42	42	401
LEA Area 2008/09	100	91	68	52	52	447
Wales 2008/09	99	88	61	47	46	379
School 07/08/09	100	87	60	..	45	389
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	47	382

Number of boys aged 15 who were on roll in January 2009 : 48

Percentage of boys aged 15 who :

	entered at least one qualification	achieved the Level 1 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE pass in English or Welsh first language and mathematics	Core Subject Indicator (2)	Average wider points score per pupil
School 2008/09	100	92	52	35	35	388
LEA Area 2008/09	100	88	64	49	49	425
Wales 2008/09	98	86	55	43	43	357
School 07/08/09	99	86	54	..	41	364
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	41	348

Number of girls aged 15 who were on roll in January 2009 : 45

Percentage of girls aged 15 who :

	entered at least one qualification	achieved the Level 1 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE pass in English or Welsh first language and mathematics	Core Subject Indicator (2)	Average wider points score per pupil
School 2008/09	100	87	64	49	49	416
LEA Area 2008/09	100	94	72	54	55	469
Wales 2008/09	99	91	66	51	50	401
School 07/08/09	100	88	67	..	49	414
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	53	420

GYFUN ABERAERON COMPREHENSIVE

SSSP

Summary of Secondary School Performance (1)

LEA/School No. 667/4042

Pupils aged 15

	Percentage of pupils aged 15 who :		Percentage of boys aged 15 who :		Percentage of girls aged 15 who :	
	achieved one or more ELQ (3) only	Left full time education without a qualification (4)	achieved one or more ELQ (3) only	Left full time education without a qualification (4)	achieved one or more ELQ (3) only	Left full time education without a qualification (4)
School 2008/09	1	0.0	2	0.0	0	0.0
LEA Area 2008/09	2	0.3	2	0.3	2	0.2
Wales 2008/09	2	0.9	3	1.0	1	0.8
School 07/08/09	1	..	2	..	0	..
School 06/07/08	2	..	3	..	1	..

Pupils aged 17

	Number of pupils aged 17 who were on roll in January 2009 : 56		Number of boys aged 17 who were on roll in January 2009 : 30		Number of girls aged 17 who were on roll in January 2009 : 26	
	Percentage of 17 year old pupils entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17	Percentage of 17 year old pupils entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17	Percentage of 17 year old pupils entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17
School 2008/09	100	678	100	715	100	636
LEA Area 2008/09	96	700	95	671	96	729
Wales 2008/09	96	688	95	656	97	715
School 07/08/09	..	636	..	599	..	672
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	..	..

- (1) For details on approved qualifications, point scores and contribution to thresholds, please see the Database for Approved Qualifications in Wales (DAQW) at <http://www.daqw.org.uk/>
- (2) For information about which syllabuses are included in each subject area see Notes for Guidance.
- (3) Entry Level Qualification.
- (4) As defined under the National Performance Indicator EDU/002.
- .. Data not available

GYFUN ABERAERON COMPREHENSIVE
School Type: Comprehensive 11-18
Linguistic Delivery: Bilingual

LEA/School No. 667/4042

Number of SEN Unit/Special Classes: 0

Number of Pupils on Roll in NCY 11: 92

Percentage of compulsory school age pupils eligible for FSM 2008/09: 10.8

Percentage of compulsory school age pupils eligible for FSM 07/08/09: 11.6

Percentage of compulsory school age pupils on SEN register: 28.2

Percentage of 15 year old pupils on SEN register: 26.1

Level of Welsh Bacallaureate Offered:

	Advanced for Post-16 Pupils	Intermediate for post-16 Pupils	Pilot Foundation for post-16 Pupils	Pilot Intermediate for pre-16 Pupils	Pilot Foundation for pre-16 Pupils
Welsh Bacallaureate Offered: Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No

**Key Stage 4 free school meal benchmarking data for Ysgol Gyfun Aberaeron (6674042)
(summary data)**

Free school meals (FSM) benchmarking group (a)	2007	2008	2009
Up to and including 10% of pupils of statutory school age eligible for FSM			
Over 10% and up to and including 15% of pupils of statutory school age eligible for FSM	12.7%	10.9%	11.5%
Over 15% and up to and including 20% of pupils of statutory school age eligible for FSM			
Over 20% and up to and including 30% of pupils of statutory school age eligible for FSM			
Over 30% of pupils of statutory school age eligible for FSM			

Source: Pupil Level Annual Schools' Census (PLASC)

(a) From 2009, a three-year average of these data is used to determine the free school meal benchmarking group for the school, and so these data are presented as a three-year average from that point (i.e. by taking the data for the current year, and also the two years prior in deriving the figure).

Summary of positions within the relevant FSM benchmarking group for each achievement (a)

Subject	2007	2008	2009
Percentage of 15 year olds achieving the level 2 threshold including English/Welsh and Maths	.	4	4
Percentage of 15 year olds achieving the level 2 threshold	2	3	4
Percentage of 15 year olds achieving the level 1 threshold	4	3	4
Percentage of 15 year olds achieving the Core Subject Indicator	2	3	4
Average wider points score across all subjects	1	2	2
Percentage of 15 year olds achieving a level 2 qualification in English	2	2	3
Percentage of entrants achieving a level 2 qualification in Welsh as First Language (b)	2	2	1
Percentage of 15 year olds achieving a level 2 qualification in Mathematics	3	4	4
Percentage of 15 year olds achieving a level 2 qualification in Science	1	2	2

Absence data (a):

Percentage of half-day sessions missed due to absence	1	3	~
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Sources: Pupil Examination Performance Information and Pupil Level Annual Schools' Census (PLASC)

(a) A rating of 1 means that school's position is within the highest 25% of schools in the relevant benchmarking group.

A rating of 2 means that school's position is within the highest 50%, but not the highest 25% of schools in the relevant benchmarking group.

A rating of 3 means that school's position is within the lowest 50%, but not the lowest 25% of schools in the relevant benchmarking group.

A rating of 4 means that school's position is within the lowest 25% of schools in the relevant benchmarking group.

This system applies to both subject performance and absence. A rating of 1 indicates above average performance and also above average absence within the relevant benchmarking group, while a rating of 4 indicates below average levels of each indicator.

(b) For Welsh as First Language, the position is determined with reference to ALL relevant schools rather than just those in the benchmarking group.

The symbol "." means that data are not applicable.

The symbol "~" means that data are not available until late 2009.

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Inspectors spent a total of 40 days in the school and were joined by the school's assistant headteacher as nominee. They held a meeting before the inspection.

During the inspection, inspectors visited:

- 90 lessons;
- registrations and assemblies; and
- some extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team met with:

- staff, parents and governors before the inspection;
- senior managers, middle managers, teachers, support assistants and administrative staff;
- groups of pupils representing each year group;
- representatives of the school council; and
- business and other school partners.

The team also considered:

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- 69 replies to the parents' questionnaire;
- comprehensive documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection;
- samples of pupils' reports; and
- a range of pupils' work.

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

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
William Gwyn Thomas Registered Inspector	Context, Summary, Recommendations, Appendix Key Question 1 and Key Question 5,
Gwynoro Jones Lay inspector	Contributing to all key questions
Dylan Gwyer Roberts	Key Question 2
Peredur Francis	Key Question 3
David B Morgan	Key Question 4
Glyn Davies	Key Question 6
Huw Llewelyn	Key Question 7
Manon W Sion	Welsh first language
Shan Samuel-Thomas	Art and design
Hugh Griffiths	Mathematics
Keith Hopkins	Information technology
Dr Steve Lloyd	Physical education
Debra Makin	Media studies
Emyr W Roberts	Support and contributing to all key questions.
Wynne Rogers	Nominee

Acknowledgement

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

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