

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

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

**Portfield Special School  
Haverfordwest  
Pembrokeshire  
SA61 1BS**

**School Number: 6687001**

**Date of Inspection: 5 February 2007**

**by**

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Portfield Special School 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 Portfield Special School took place between 05/02/07 and 08/02/07. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mr Cliff Warwick undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

"There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **full** inspection."

## Year groups and Key Stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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	Y14
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19

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. Portfield School is the only special school serving the rural county of Pembrokeshire. Within the local authority there is a mix of affluent and socially disadvantaged areas. The school provides 80 places for pupils aged between three and 19 years with a wide range of learning difficulties. The pupils are currently taught in 10 classes grouped largely by key stage; four primary age and five secondary age with one post-16 unit. Seven pupils are dually registered. All pupils have English as their home language. One pupil is of black and white Caribbean origin. Thirty-two per cent of pupils receive free school meals and 39 pupils are "looked after" by a local authority. Admissions are arranged via the local education authority (LEA) inclusion panel, which includes LEA officers and headteachers.
2. A teacher staffs each class, with a senior teaching assistant and classroom assistants according to the level of support pupils require. The number on-roll has increased by approximately 20% over the last three years, due mainly to the increased number of pupils admitted at key stage 3 secondary transfer and by pupils moving to Pembrokeshire from other parts of the UK. Two pupils are out of county placements.
3. At the time of the inspection, all but one pupil had a statement of their special educational needs (SEN), with just over three quarters being identified as having severe learning difficulty (SLD) as their main special need. Twenty per cent of pupils are identified as having profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), with a small proportion of pupils identified as having Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI) and Emotional and Behavioural difficulties (EBD). Many pupils also have additional difficulties such as physical, speech and language/communication or behavioural difficulties. Overall, a description of "complex learning difficulties" best describes pupils' needs.
4. The school adopts an inclusive approach with all pupils being offered all the experiences the school has to offer. No pupils are withdrawn from collective worship. An increasing number of pupils have benefited from integrated experiences in mainstream schools. Twenty-six pupils benefit from being included with their local peers and an additional seven post-16 students attend a link programme at local comprehensive schools or Pembrokeshire College.
5. Since the last inspection in January 2001, the school has developed a transition class at the neighbouring Tasker Milward Comprehensive School and an Outreach Support service for pupils in mainstream schools throughout Pembrokeshire.
6. A wide range of other functions includes the hosting of orthopaedic and seating clinics and the provision of an after school club "Tots to Teens" run by Social Services.

### **The school's priorities and targets**

7. Portfield School aims to provide a 'centre of excellence' for pupils with SEN, which together with its Outreach Service provides for the whole of the Pembrokeshire. The school's vision statement is as follows:
  - "to create a happy, stable and supportive learning environment in which each child develops personal, social and academic skills through a flexible and imaginative approach to a structured programme which meets their individual needs."
8. This is achieved through the following:
  - an inclusive approach;
  - a broad and balanced curriculum;
  - a multi-sensory approach;
  - inter-disciplinary approaches;
  - a positive partnership with parents and carers;
  - an environment that is safe, caring, happy, and responsive to each child's needs;
  - pupils' participation in the community, schools and colleges and effective liaison with mainstream schools; and
  - a range of professionals, services and resources.
9. At present the school's priorities for 2006/7 include the following:
  - refine the teaching of key skills through improved objective setting and assessment;
  - improve teaching especially by managing behaviour more effectively, making better use of specialist programmes to teach reading and appointing an information and communications technology (ICT) technician to ensure information technology (IT) equipment is used to its full potential;
  - improve pupils' physical development through the appointment of a physiotherapy assistant and the development of a junior football team;
  - work towards the Basic Skills quality mark for secondary and primary schools for the second and third time, to achieve the Careers Wales Quality award, the Sustainable Schools silver award and the Healthy School Y4 award;
  - improve leadership and management through the introduction of a revised management system and the appointment of a part-time administrative assistant; and
  - improve the physical environment through a replacement programme of class furniture and equipment.

## Summary

10. Portfield School has significantly improved since the last inspection and it has many good and outstanding features. Its integration links with the comprehensive school, with which it shares its site, are increasingly providing outstanding education for its more able secondary aged pupils.
11. The grades awarded by the inspection team matched those in the school's self-evaluation report for six of the seven key questions. The exception was in key question 1, where the inspection team awarded a higher grade due to the significant outstanding features relating to pupils and students' achievement. The inspection team judged the school's work as follows:

### Table of grades awarded

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

### Standards of achievement

12. All pupils and students have severe or complex learning difficulties and their achievements are judged in relation to their individual needs and the progress they make.
13. Overall, pupils' standards of achievement in the lessons inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
24%	63%	11%	1%	0%

14. The overall grades are well above the Welsh Assembly Government's (WAG) target of 65% standards graded 2 and above. This shows that the school is very good at meeting the needs of its pupils. They achieve outstanding progress in key stages 3, 4 and at post-16 and, overall, pupils achieve good standards in key stage 2. However, in key stage 1, whilst there are many good features, there are some shortcomings.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>KS1</b>	<b>KS2</b>	<b>KS3</b>	<b>KS4</b>	<b>POST-16</b>
English	3	2	2	1	2
Mathematics	2	2	2	1	2
Science	2	1	1	1	2
Welsh 2 <sup>nd</sup> Language	2	2	2	2	2
Information Technology	3	2	1	1	1
Design and Technology	2	2	2	2	2
History	2	2	2	1	
Geography	2	2	1	2	
Modern Foreign Language					
Art	2	2	1	1	1
Music	3	2	2	1	2
Physical Education	2	1	2	1	2
Religious Education	2	1	1	2	2

15. The consistently high achievement of pupils across the school is evident from the proportion of lessons observed where standards were judged to be good or good with outstanding features. Further confirmation is provided by the consistency of judgements about standards in the National Curriculum (NC) subjects (see table above).
16. Pupils in key stage 4 and post-16 students all gain appropriate accreditation to mark their achievements through the Awards Scheme Development Accreditation Network (ASDAN) and the Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR) for life and living. A few more able post-16 students also achieve qualifications through OCR awards. Students develop a good understanding of the world of work and, at post-16, they develop very good social and work-related skills.
17. Consistently good standards are achieved across the school in the key skills of communication, numeracy and ICT and, overall, standards are outstanding in key stages 3 and 4. Pupils make outstanding progress in listening and reading. Good progress is made overall by pupils in learning to communicate in Welsh.
18. The standards in personal and learning skills are good in key stage 1 and outstanding in the rest of the school. Pupils and students are highly motivated, generally behave responsibly and progressively develop a good understanding of right and wrong. They make good progress towards independence.
19. Taking into account the number of pupils with significant health difficulties, attendance is good.

### **The quality of education**

20. The quality of teaching in the lessons inspected is as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
26%	59%	11%	4%	0%

21. In 96% of lessons the quality of teaching was judged at Grade 3 or better and in 85% of lessons it was good or good with outstanding features. This exceeds WAG targets. The effective planning and the consistent high quality of work from teachers and classroom support staff to meet the sensory and communication needs of pupils are particularly outstanding. Where teaching is

less effective, mainly in key stage 1, strategies to manage the behaviour of pupils are underdeveloped and planning for individuals is not reflected in practice.

22. The rigorous assessments of pupils' needs and their progress are used very effectively to plan lessons, set targets for further achievement and to appropriately report to parents.
23. The school offers a broad and balanced range of learning experiences of very high quality that allows pupils and students to continue to make progress throughout their school life. Generally good access to the NC is assured, but the disapplication of pupils from Welsh and a modern foreign language (MFL) is inappropriate, given the good progress achieved in these subjects.
24. The outstanding features of the overall curriculum provided for pupils and students include the opportunities for:
  - the development of their personal, social and learning development;
  - pupils with a wide range of SEN and, in particular, those with PMLD to make very good progress;
  - out-of-school learning, including residential educational visits and after-school clubs;
  - pupils in key stage 4 and post-16 students to gain accreditation; and
  - the development of pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
25. The very good partnerships with the local community and with mainstream schools and colleges in particular, provide valuable opportunities for pupils and students to develop their independence and social skills. The newly established unit in the neighbouring comprehensive school is a particularly outstanding feature.
26. Parents and carers think very highly of the school and are extremely satisfied with the progress their children make and how their individual needs are met. The Friends of Portfield support the school very well by organising social events and raising money for the school.
27. The school provides outstanding quality of care and guidance for pupils and students. Staff have a very good understanding of the wide range of individual needs at the school and work together well to ensure a happy, safe and supportive environment is maintained. Provision for all aspects of equal opportunities is also outstanding.

### **Leadership and Management**

28. The headteacher provides exceptional leadership based upon sound values and a clear vision for the school. This has led to an outstanding culture focused on achievement, in which all pupils, staff and governors feel valued. There is a high expectation of pupils' learning and behaviour that is transformed into realistic and challenging individual targets.
29. Curriculum co-ordinators make an outstanding contribution to the management of the school curriculum and the recently appointed deputy and assistant headteachers are beginning to provide effective support for the headteacher.

30. The governing body is highly effective and meets all statutory regulations. Governors know the school well, play an active role and, overall, provide very good support for the headteacher.
31. Monitoring and self-evaluation procedures are very well developed. There is rigorous monitoring of the curriculum and an outstanding system for the annual assessment of pupils' achievement. Outcomes from these processes determine priorities in the good quality annual school development plan (SDP). Targets for improvement within this plan are systematically implemented by the senior management team (SMT) and curriculum co-ordinators.
32. The school has adequate staff and resources to meet the needs of its pupils. These, together with the budget, are managed very efficiently and good value for money is achieved. Good use is made of the school building, however, it is too small for the current pupil population and car-parking provision is poor. The lack of a properly equipped medical room, continuous nursing provision and inadequate therapy provision, particularly of speech and language therapy are unsatisfactory and a concern for parents and governors.
33. Welsh Assembly Government priorities are promoted well and the school has made good progress in promoting sustainable development and in developing a multi-cultural awareness. Good progress has been made in the development of the school since the last inspection. Overall, the issues for action identified in the report have been very well addressed. Outstanding progress has been made in developing pupil assessment procedures and self-evaluation processes.

## **Recommendations**

In order to improve further, the school needs to:

- R1 Continue to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching particularly in key stage 1;
- R2 Review the current arrangements for disapplication from Welsh and MFL and formally establish both subjects within the school timetable;
- R3 Continue to work with both the LEA and the Local Health Board to ensure full-time nursing provision;
- R4 Continue to seek an increase in the provision of speech and language therapy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy provision; and
- R5 Implement plans for the improvement of the school accommodation, including the provision of a fully equipped medical room.

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

## Standards

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

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

34. In its self-evaluation report, the school judged this aspect as Grade 2. The higher grade awarded by the inspection team is due to the following outstanding features:

- the high standards achieved in the vast majority of lessons;
- the evidence from assessment data and individual educational plans (IEPs) of the very consistent progress made by pupils across the school in all subjects and in every aspect of their development;
- the significant proportion of pupils who have made exceptional progress over the last two years; and
- the very good development of pupils' personal, social and learning skills.

35. Pupils' and students' standards of achievement in the lessons inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
24%	63%	11%	1%	0%

36. All pupils and students have severe or complex needs and their achievement is judged by the progress they make in relation to their needs and targets set in their IEPs.

37. Standards of achievement were graded 1 or 2 in 87% of lessons. This is substantially better than the WAG target of 65% and provides clear evidence of how well the school is meeting the needs of its pupils.

38. Levels of developmental achievement made by pupils and students are an outstanding feature of the school. Those with physical disabilities make very good progress in their motor development and those with communication disorders also make good progress.

39. Overall, consistently good progress is evident from annual assessments of attainment relating to the NC subjects and the end of key stage teacher assessments.

40. Overall, consistently good progress is made by pupils in the NC subjects as measured by annual and end of key stage assessments.

41. Post-16 students' achievements are very good and many make outstanding progress in a wide range of work-related activities and accredited courses. In summer 2006, 15 out of 16 students achieved a qualification in at least 1 module of the ASDAN Transition Challenge. More able students also achieved the OCR National Skills Profile award, in which they demonstrated overall good standards in literacy and ICT and outstanding achievement in numeracy.

42. Overall standards of achievement are good in key stage 2 and good with outstanding features in key stage 3 and 4. The majority of pupils and students

make consistent progress year on year towards their learning targets within their IEPs.

43. In key stage 1, the overall achievement of pupils is good with no important shortcomings. There is clear evidence from assessment data and IEPs that almost all pupils are making good progress in most areas of their development. However, often, they find it difficult to concentrate and remain on task in lessons. Learning activities are often too short or are interrupted by other pupils.
44. The progress made by pupils and students with PMLD in meeting targets set for their physical, sensory and communication needs is, overall, very good and is exceptionally good in key stage 4 and at post-16.
45. Overall, pupils make good progress in developing communication skills across the school and their achievement is outstanding in key stages 3 and 4. Pupils with little or no speech learn to use augmentative and alternative communication aids well as they progress through the school. Standards of listening are outstanding, as is the progress pupils make with their reading.
46. Standards in numeracy are consistently good across the school. Overall standards of ICT skills are also good and are outstanding in key stages 3 and 4. Good progress overall is made by pupils in learning to communicate in Welsh, although there are some shortcomings in key stage 1.
47. In the subjects inspected, the standards achieved across the key stages and at post-16 are as follows:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>KS1</b>	<b>KS2</b>	<b>KS3</b>	<b>KS4</b>	<b>POST-16</b>
English	3	2	2	1	2
Mathematics	2	2	2	1	2
Science	2	1	1	1	2
Welsh 2 <sup>nd</sup> Language	2	2	2	2	2
Information Technology	3	2	1	1	1
Design and Technology	2	2	2	2	2
History	2	2	2	1	
Geography	2	2	1	2	
Modern Foreign Language					
Art	2	2	1	1	1
Music	3	2	2	1	2
Physical Education	2	1	2	1	2
Religious Education	2	1	1	2	2

48. Pupils make at least good progress in all core and foundation subjects. As the chart above demonstrates, pupils' achievement in the subjects is particularly strong in key stages 3 and 4. In key stage 4, pupils' achievement is good with outstanding features in English, mathematics, science and the majority of foundation subjects. In the lessons observed in key stage 1, there are some important shortcomings in English, information technology and music.
49. Attendance is good and compares favourably with other similar schools. Recording complies with WAG regulations. Pupils' punctuality at the start of the school day and at individual lessons is good. The school monitors pupils' attendance and takes early action where necessary.

50. Behaviour is of a high standard. The majority of pupils behave well both in lessons and when moving around the school. A minority of pupils because of the severity of their challenging behaviours struggle to relate their actions to their consequences. They act out their anxiety or distress in ways that are at times difficult to manage. However, in the majority of classes pupils are aware of others and their own needs, and behaviour is considerate and well controlled. These pupils show respect for each other and for adults and help one another. They eagerly engage in learning activities and demonstrate increasing ability to concentrate and remain on task.
51. On a few occasions however, particularly in key stage 1, the inconsistent response to the challenging behaviour results in pupils not achieving.

### **Development of Personal, Social and Learning Skills**

52. Pupils enthusiastically engage in the daily life at school and make at least good progress in learning new skills, developing understanding and gaining new knowledge. They are eager to engage in learning activities and demonstrate an increasing level of concentration.
53. In the vast majority of lessons, pupils have a positive attitude to learning, engage fully with the task in hand and work hard. At each key stage pupils work with increasing independence and progressively learn to problem solve and improve their own learning.
54. Morning registration is completed quickly and effectively and provides opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for routine tasks, for example, taking the class register to the office or the dinner register to the kitchen. In addition, pupils are encouraged to share their news and their achievements with their peers. In some classes good use is made of Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS) and communication aids to ensure all pupils were fully involved.
55. Standards in personal, social and health education (PSHE) are good with outstanding features as pupils develop independence skills, self-confidence and self-esteem through cross-curricular links.
56. Pupils show respect for each other, for staff and visitors and develop an understanding of right and wrong. Circle time, together with class and whole-school assemblies, offer positive opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of spiritual, moral and social issues. The school council effectively develops this understanding into the wider community.
57. Relationships throughout the school are very good and pupils help one another, for example, singing and signing to a less able pupil to engage him during assembly. This is an outstanding feature.
58. Pupils in key stage 4 and post-16 students follow an extensive world of work module and through active participation in the healthy tuck shop, school council and Mini-Enterprise projects learn valuable aspects of work and develop entrepreneurial skills.

## The Quality Of Education And Training

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

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

59. This grade matches the school's grade in the self-evaluation report.

60. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
26%	59%	11%	4%	-

61. The WAG targets for teaching in Wales require that 95% of lessons should be graded 3 or better and that 50% should be graded 2 or better. The school has exceeded these targets. It achieved 96% at Grade 3 or better with 85% at Grade 2 or better.

#### Where teaching is outstanding

- Teachers question pupils regularly to find out how well pupils are learning. They modify their approach and plan other work for pupils to build upon their understanding.
- Good relationships between staff are evident. Teachers and support staff use praise effectively and this has the effect of encouraging pupils to remain on task for extended periods of time.
- A range of carefully chosen multi-sensory experiences are used to challenge and motivate pupils.
- Clear learning objectives are communicated to the pupils at the start of lessons and these are reinforced throughout lessons to promote learning and achievement.
- Pupils' linguistic needs are given a high priority and teachers make good use of signing, symbols, speech and augmentative aids to support pupils' developing communication skills.
- Teachers and support staff fully implement the school's equal opportunities policy by ensuring that each pupil is considered equally and is respected as an individual.

#### Where the quality of teaching is good

- Lessons are well timed and paced to match the needs of the pupils.
- Lessons are planned carefully and follow the progression of schemes of work.
- The school's behaviour management policy is applied consistently and pupils know and respond positively to what is expected of them.
- Teachers set appropriately differentiated targets taking into account the full range of pupil needs.
- Support assistants are effectively deployed to support individuals and small groups of pupils in meeting their IEP targets.

- A wide range of effective teaching strategies is used to engage and motivate pupils.
  - Resources, including the use of a range of software, are used purposefully to support, captivate and maintain pupil's attention and interest.
  - Teachers have a good in-depth knowledge of the subjects they teach.
62. The quality of teaching progressively improves through the key stages and in key stage 4 all lessons observed were good or good with outstanding features.
63. In some key stage 1 lessons, where there are significant shortcomings:
- planning for individual pupils is not reflected in practice and as a result pupils' active participation is not ensured; and
  - the limited range of strategies used when dealing with pupils with challenging behaviour result in these pupils making insufficient progress.
64. Planning for key skills is a strength of the school. Key skills are planned into each lesson and very good use is made of the school devised key skills checklists to ensure breadth and progression. Opportunities for numeracy key skills are generally less developed.

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

65. Assessment across the school is thorough, accurate and meets statutory requirements. The school's extensive assessment, recording and reporting systems are outstanding and information gained through the carefully moderated assessment tools are used to inform individual targets and improve pupils' learning.
66. The school makes very good use of the nationally recognised P-scales as the performance indicator for English, maths, science and PSHE. Rigorous analysis of the data is achieved through the administration of the nationally recognised PACE assessment package. The foundation subjects are similarly assessed using PLYMOUTH, a 'best fit' teacher assessment tool based on the P-scales.
67. Utilising the data, the school very effectively tracks the progress of individuals, cohorts and year groups. Individual pupil information is included in the comprehensive end of year reports and is shared with parents at the annual review meeting.
68. For pupils with more complex needs, the school has begun to implement the Routes for Learning assessment package, which provides a very good basis for focussing on the range and breadth of pupils' experiences.
69. All pupils have Record of Achievement files, which contain past reviews, IEPs, samples of work, photographs and evidence of pupils' achievements, both academic and extra-curricular. These files are compiled by the class teachers and senior support assistants and provide valuable evidence of progress made over the years. They are shared with parents during parents' evening.
70. Pupils' work is regularly marked and clearly dated. Where appropriate pupils are involved in the process, which is positively supported through pupil-centred reward systems.

71. Opportunities for individual target setting and reflection on progress are very effectively built into the introduction and plenary of many lessons in key stages 3 and 4, and post-16.

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

<b>Grade 1: Good with outstanding features</b>
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72. This grade matches the grade in the school's self-evaluation report.
73. The development of key skills is clearly identified in good quality schemes of work. The curriculum of the school is appropriately broad and balanced, providing effective continuity; it enables pupils to make good progress between the years and each key stage.
74. The curriculum is accessible for all pupils, including those with SLD and PMD, those with ASD spectrum and those with additional learning needs. This is an outstanding feature.
75. All pupils are offered opportunities to achieve accreditation through a rich range of curriculum experiences that are well matched to their needs. A good example is the Accredited Swimming Scheme.
76. Pupils in key stage 4 and at post-16 are offered very good curricular opportunities for accreditation through the ASDAN scheme.
77. At post-16, students are offered an outstanding range of curricular opportunities to develop independence, improve their basic skills and learn the skills needed for employment. Their opportunities to gain recognised qualifications are further extended through ASDAN and the OCR Basic Skills qualification.
78. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is a strength of the school and pupils show respect for each other, for staff and visitors and develop an understanding of right and wrong. Circle time, together with class and whole school assemblies offer positive opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding.
79. In addition, opportunities are built in across the curriculum for pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and feelings. Music and art, in particular are used effectively to awaken their awareness of the culture of Wales and Europe. The school council successfully develops this understanding into the wider community especially through their fundraising links with Kenya.
80. The school makes outstanding use of the Unlocking Potential monies from WAG and has developed a key stage 3 transition group on the site of the neighbouring comprehensive school. Pupils are offered a wide range of curriculum opportunities, which helps them make progress in many areas of the curriculum alongside their mainstream peers.
81. There is a comprehensive and detailed scheme of work to promote pupils' bilingual competence. Spoken Welsh is targeted at morning registration when pupils listen and respond to questions about the weather, what they would like for lunch and how they are feeling. Incidental Welsh is used across the curriculum to reinforce learning and listening skills. Generally, throughout the school, pupils make good progress in line with their ability.

82. *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is integral to the ethos of the school. The provision for pupils to experience the language and culture of Wales is at least good across the school and opportunities include the study of Welsh artists and poets, visits to local landmarks, a visiting harpist and clog dancer during Welsh Week and pupil participation in the annual eisteddfod.
83. All the pupils join the school already disappplied from the NC requirements to study both Welsh and MFL. Incidental Welsh is timetabled during registration periods and taught across the curriculum as a key skill. Elements of MFL are offered through topic work and the ASDAN scheme in key stage 4. However, the provision of MFL within the curriculum is inadequate and both Welsh and MFL are insufficiently represented within the school timetable.
84. The quality of out-of-school learning is very good and pupils benefit from regular opportunities to access activities in the community. These include carefully planned educational visits to support curriculum planning, residential courses at Red Ridge and Llangranog and work experience courses together with positive links to local schools and colleges.
85. There are very good opportunities for pupils to participate in a range of out-of-school and off-site activities. In partnership with Social Services, the school offers an after-school club three times per week, which is run mainly by the school staff and is enjoyed by all. It helps to extend and enrich learning opportunities for the pupils and develop positive friendships. Lunchtime clubs in art, music and physical education, which are also well supported by the pupils and further enhance curriculum opportunities for the pupils.
86. All pupils are valued equally. The school has a strong sense of community with a positive school ethos. Pupils are encouraged to care for each other and to appreciate other people's needs. This is strength of the school.
87. Pupils generally have a good awareness of the world of work. The organisation and monitoring of work experience are good. All post-16 students undertake work experience and job coaches from MENCAP support external work-related experience. This is an unusual and outstanding feature. Evidence from work experience is accredited via ASDAN and students' ASDAN portfolios are of a high standard.
88. Links with employers are varied and good. There are good examples of action taken to guard against gender stereotyping in arranging work placements. The school organises an annual careers exhibition for all young adults in special provision in Pembrokeshire and all the Pembrokeshire colleges and comprehensives attend. This is an outstanding feature.
89. The school has made a very positive start in enabling pupils to gain a better understanding of sustainable development and has reviewed and amended schemes of work to include sustainability. It has been awarded the Eco Schools Bronze Award and is now working towards the Silver Award.

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

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

90. The grade matches the grade in the school's self-evaluation report.
91. The school provides outstanding care and guidance for pupils across the age and ability range. There is a very happy, safe, supportive environment where all pupils are valued and treated with respect. Staff know their pupils very well and these positive relationships impact positively on pupils' learning. This is exemplary.
92. Detailed induction arrangements for pupils are flexibly planned. Pupils transfer at varying stages of their school career and the school works hard to ensure all relevant information is gained from home and link schools prior to admission to enable pupils to settle in quickly. Transition review planning is completed appropriately in partnership with the Careers Wales Service.
93. The school successfully promotes positive relationships with parents and carers and parents are encouraged to be partners in their child's life at school. The Friends of Portfield School, who are largely parents of pupils, organise effective support for the school. They effectively organise family social events and raise money for equipment and activities.
94. Home/school books are used throughout the school to maintain regular contact with parents. Some books provide full interesting comments, which inform parents of the day's activities and achievements, whereas, others are brief and less informative. In addition, the school provides regular newsletters, which keep the parents well informed about the life of the school. The prospectus and the annual governors' report to parents are user-friendly and meet statutory requirements.
95. Systematic assessment procedures are in place and are understood by all staff. Data collected is analysed to highlight progress and inform both individual and whole-school targets. This is an outstanding feature of the school.
96. Relationships with local mainstream schools are very good. The schools work together to meet individual needs of pupils creatively, including integration into mainstream, reverse integration into Portfield School and dual registering of pupils.
97. The school operates a well co-ordinated outreach programme into mainstream schools across Pembrokeshire and is utilising the WAG Unlocking the Potential Initiative to further extend this. The training and support are well received by mainstream colleagues and helps maintain pupils' mainstream placement.
98. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Awards 1-3 and is currently working towards phase 4. The healthy tuck shop successfully provides an opportunity to improve pupils independence and money handling skills.
99. The school adopts a rigorous approach to the monitoring of attendance and punctuality. The secretary, notified by teachers of pupil absence, contacts parents immediately to ascertain the reason. Punctuality at the start of lessons is generally good but during one or two of the lessons observed there was a delay.

100. There is an effective policy for child protection and all staff are aware of their responsibilities and the reporting procedures. The headteacher is the nominated officer and there is a named link governor. The school keeps a database of CRB checks on personnel.
101. Health and safety issues are dealt with quickly and efficiently. Comprehensive risk assessments are undertaken conscientiously to ensure pupils' safety within the school building, on the school site and during out-of-school activities.
102. Working relationships with Health and Social Services are generally good, however the school is provided with insufficient physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech and language therapy to meet the needs of pupils. The lack of speech and language therapy is a particular concern of both parents and staff.
103. Health care plans appropriately outline pupils' medical needs and staff are trained to administer medication as necessary. The lack of a school nurse inhibits some parents' confidence in the school's ability to respond to some medical needs.
104. Outstanding provision is made for pupils with a wide range of specific additional learning needs. A team of teachers and support staff who work closely together to support pupils with ASD, PMLD, multi-sensory impairment, physical and sensory difficulties, significantly enhances this. Staff work closely to ensure the curriculum is suitably accessible. The teamwork between the staff is an outstanding feature of the school.
105. Where staff have received specific specialised training, for example, in the Teaching and Education of Autistic and related Communications Handicapped Children (TEACCH) or PECS, this has led to improved teaching skills and the achievement of pupils with additional learning needs. Generally, staff use augmentative communication strategies well and the use of signalong by school staff is of a consistently high standard.
106. Objects of reference and communication boards are used very effectively to improve pupils' communication skills. Where pupils are provided with an augmentative communication aid, this gives them outstanding opportunities to participate in a full range of curricular activities. However, insufficient pupils are currently provided with an appropriate alternative communication aid.
107. The school has a comprehensive behaviour policy, which rewards positive behaviour with star charts and reward systems and parents have great confidence in the high standards expected at this school. Very effective procedures are employed to monitor challenging behaviour and consistent handling protocols are in place for pupils. All staff are trained in the *Team Teach* approach and these agreed methods are used successfully to diffuse potentially disruptive situations, which could impede pupils' learning. Staff are sensitive to the pupils' needs and are generally successful in implementing individual behaviour plans in a calm and controlled manner. This is an outstanding feature.
108. The provision for equal opportunities is very good. The school has clear and effective policies in place in relation to equal opportunities and very good support is provided to the whole-school population. There is a strong sense that all pupils have equal access to all activities in school.

109. The school recognises its responsibility to promote racial equality and to prepare pupils for a multicultural environment. There is a good quality racial equality policy, which includes procedures for its implementation and guidance to curriculum coordinators. The curriculum content promotes multicultural awareness and understanding by providing opportunities for pupils to learn about their own and other cultures. All incidents are appropriately scrutinized for indications of racial motivation.
110. The school is very effective in promoting gender equality and this is outstanding at post-16. All pupils are free from harassment, bullying and all forms of discrimination. The school has a disability and access policy that includes appropriate implementation procedures. The school has recently undergone an access audit with satisfactory results.
111. Links with Careers Wales are strong and productive and the school is preparing a submission for the Careers Wales Quality Award. Careers Wales staff participate in guidance interviews in key stage 4 and at post-16. Advice and guidance given to students are systematic and personalised.
112. All sixth form leavers have a post-school destination arranged. Induction programmes into the destinations are good and fully supported. Where residential provision is thought to be appropriate, preliminary visits are made 18 months in advance.

## Leadership and Management

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

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

113. This grade matches the grade in the school's self-evaluation report.

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

114. The headteacher provides exceptional leadership, which has inspired the purposeful pursuit of high standards by all staff and governors. She has a clear vision for the school, based upon sound child-centred values. This has led to the following outstanding features:

- high expectations of achievement and good behaviour;
- improved standards of pupil achievement and the quality of teaching since the last inspection;
- a school community in which everyone feels valued;
- a highly effective system of curriculum co-ordination; and
- a very effective and involved governing body.

115. The headteacher is well supported by her deputy and assistant headteacher, both of whom have had recently enhanced senior management roles. Together they are developing a team approach to the leadership and management of the school, although currently the roles of the deputy and assistant are insufficiently developed.

116. Staff are very clear about what is expected of them and realistic and challenging targets are set for individual pupils and these are reflected in staff work plans and whole-school targets. Progress towards meeting targets at all levels is closely monitored by senior managers and curriculum co-ordinators to ensure best outcomes.
117. Both teaching and support staff have benefited from rigorous and sustained professional development and training. These, together with an effective performance management process, have much improved the quality of education and led to the raising of pupil achievement.
118. The school takes full account of WAG priorities and has actively pursued the development of the wider role of the school. For example, this year, in partnership with the LEA and the secondary school with which it is co-located, the innovative development of an integrated unit, using the WAG Unlocking the Potential funding, has taken forward the inclusion of older pupils into mainstream education. The imaginative plan for a new secondary block, again in partnership with the neighbouring school and jointly funded by the LEA and WAG, is evidence of the school's positive vision and leadership.

#### **How Well Governors Or Other Supervisory Bodies Meet Their Responsibilities**

119. The governing body gives outstanding support to the headteacher and staff and has a clear understanding of the strategic direction of the school.
120. Governors know the school well and have a clear understanding of their roles. The sub-committees work very well with the headteacher providing outstanding support on strategic and operational issues. Governors are very knowledgeable of the finances of the school and recognise how the future needs of the school could be met.
121. Governors are developing their role as critical friends and each governor is linked to a subject co-ordinator. There is evidence of regular monitoring of policies and schemes of work and some governors regularly support staff by helping to prepare teaching resources. There is a full awareness of the whole-school annual pupil assessment process and an understanding how the school analyses the relevant data.
122. The governing body fulfils its legal requirements very effectively. Some areas of appropriate on-going concern expressed by the governing body that are outside their direct control include:
  - lack of a full-time school nurse;
  - amount of therapy provision offered to the school by the health authority; and
  - cramped accommodation, which greatly hampers the staff at the school.

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

**Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

123. This grade matches the grade in the school's self-evaluation report.
124. The school has a well-established culture of self-evaluation and improvement, which make an important contribution to the quality of education and the fostering of high pupil achievement. The outstanding features are the:
- rigorous system of curriculum monitoring;
  - annual assessment and analysis of pupil achievement;
  - consultations with parents, governors and staff; and
  - processes for the planning and implementation of developments and improvements.
125. The good quality self-evaluation report is based on a sound process of consultations and reviews and the outcomes form the basis of annual school development priorities. A particular strength of the report is its focus on pupil achievement, although there is relatively little analysis of the data rewarded in the report. The inspection team agrees with the judgements made in six of the seven key questions.
126. Curriculum co-ordinators take it in turns to lead thorough reviews of teaching and learning related to their subject every half-term. Outcomes from the reviews are moderated by the headteacher and the resultant action plans inform priorities in the SDP.
127. The SDP is of good quality and sets out clear priorities and whole school targets for the forthcoming year and outline priorities for the following two years. It includes plans for staff development and an audit trail of expenditure on curriculum development over the last three years.
128. The school has made very good overall progress since the last inspection and there have been marked improvements in achievement and quality in all areas.
129. Parents' views are sought through regular questionnaires and parents contribute to the annual review and the health care plan. Following concerts or productions parents are asked to evaluate the performance and responses are always positive and appreciative.

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

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

130. This grade matches the grade in the school's self-evaluation report.
131. The adequacy, suitability of staffing, learning resources has many good features including:
- the number of appropriately trained and qualified teaching staff;
  - the good ratio of support staff to the numbers of pupils on roll;

- the effective deployment of support staff to meet the needs of the pupils;
- the contribution support staff make to the educational experiences of all pupils;
- the good use made of colourful displays and interesting artefacts, which make classrooms and corridors stimulating learning environments;
- the high quality support given by the school secretary and school administrative officer;
- the overall high level of maintenance and cleanliness of the school. Caretaking, cleaning and catering staff who provide good, efficient support to the school;
- the effective implementation of staff workload agreements;
- good resources for teaching, especially resources for ICT;
- the use of the visits and off-site activities to enrich the curriculum; and
- in part, the classroom accommodation which is adequate for the numbers of pupils and their curricular needs. The classroom provision for post-16 students is good.

132. There are shortcomings in accommodation and staffing. They are:

- the three classrooms in demountable buildings are too small for the number of pupils and the range of their needs;
- the car parking is inadequate for the number of staff who work in the school and for the large number of visitors who visit the school on a daily basis;
- the lack of a suitably equipped medical room;
- the inadequate time allocation of speech and language therapy provision to the school to address the communication needs of the majority of the pupils;
- the inadequate provision of physiotherapy and occupational therapy to meet identified therapy needs; and
- the lack of a full-time nurse in school has a significant impact on the education of a number of pupils with complex medical needs. On occasion these pupils have not been able to come into school or have had to arrive late as there is no appropriately qualified nursing staff available on site at all times.

133. The resources are managed efficiently to achieve good value for money.

134. The good features are:

- the very good systems established by the headteacher and administrative officer for managing the school budget ensure that funds are spent effectively to meet the priorities set out in the SDP;
- the effective role that the governors and governing body finance committee play in the financial management of the school. The finance committee

meets regularly to monitor the budget and to ensure that resources are used efficiently; and

- the comprehensive and carefully planned professional development programmes for all staff. These are linked to targets set out in the SDP and individual performance management objectives; and the school is proactive in raising money from a variety of sources and uses this additional income to good effect.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

### English

<b>Key Stage 1:</b>	<b>Grade 3:</b>	<b>Good features outweigh shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 2:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 3:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 4:</b>	<b>Grade 1:</b>	<b>Good with outstanding features</b>
<b>Post-16:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>

### Good and outstanding features

135. Pupils' listening skills are good. They generally listen attentively and achieve increasingly sustained periods of concentration as they progress through the school.
136. Standards are good in reading in all key stages. In accelerated learning sessions pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills. Pupils respond well to the teacher when reading as a group from Big Books.
137. Standards of writing are good. Pupils in key stage 1, key stage 3 and key stage 4 and post-16 students make good use of computers to develop their writing skills.
138. Key stage 1 pupils anticipate what is going to happen next when listening to the story of The Three Pigs. They are confident to explore the story props and the more able pupils join in the story using repetitive phrases.
139. In key stage 2, pupils respond well to visual, auditory and tactile stimuli when listening to the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. They demonstrate interest and enthusiasm using facial expression, body language, speech and gesture. More able pupils answer, with confidence, simple questions about the story.
140. Pupils in key stage 3 are attentive and focussed when completing their daily diaries. Lesser able pupils use the computer to record their news. More able pupils can identify words by their initial sounds and with support read with increasing levels of fluency. Their writing skills are good.
141. An outstanding feature of the work of pupils at key stage 4 is the quality and range of their responses when engaged in work on Camille and the Sunflowers, they responded well to questioning and demonstrate understanding using a range of communication options. They are co-operative and remain on task for extended periods of time.

142. Students at post-16 use symbols, signs and speech well to support communication. In their written work they rehearse and produce increasingly complex sentences when completing work as part of their ASDAN course.

### **Shortcomings**

143. The communication skills for pupils in key stage 1 are not developed consistently. This shortcoming affects the achievements of pupils in all areas of their work in English.

<b>Welsh second language</b>
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<b>Key Stage 1:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 2:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 3:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 4:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Post-16:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>

### **Good features**

144. Key stage 1 pupils learn to respond appropriately to simple questions and more able pupils can say a few familiar words. Pupils steadily build their vocabulary and their understanding of words aided by signalong.

145. Pupils in key stages 2 and 3 continue to develop their understanding of words and short phrases. They learn to pronounce words well and a few are able to say a few common phrases in answer to questions.

146. Pupils' in key stage 4 and post-16 students build on their vocabulary well and the most able can make very simple conversation. Others can reply to simple questions with appropriate one-word responses.

147. Pupils with PMLD throughout the school, who have no speech, show general understanding of Welsh questions and instructions and some learn to respond in a variety of ways.

### **Shortcomings**

148. Although pupils make good progress in their brief lessons and through the use of incidental Welsh across the curriculum, progress is hindered by the insufficient structured teaching time allocated within the timetable.

<b>Mathematics</b>
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<b>Key Stage 1:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 2:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 3:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 4:</b>	<b>Grade 1:</b>	<b>Good with outstanding features</b>
<b>Post-16:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>

### **Good and outstanding features**

149. Consistently good progress is made in all aspects of mathematics across the school. As they progress through the school, pupils and students concentrate for increasingly extended periods of time and consolidate their knowledge and skills.
150. In key stage 1, pupils develop early counting skills, which they apply in a variety of situations. With support, they learn to take turns in number songs and the purpose of money. More able pupils show good knowledge of simple shapes and are able to understand the differences between 'heavy' and 'light', and 'big' and 'small'.
151. In key stage 2, pupils learn to reliably recognise colours and sort items into groups according to colour, shape and size. They progressively develop an understanding about time and more able pupils have a good knowledge of time vocabulary. Number skills and knowledge also develop progressively throughout the key stage and by Y6 more able pupils can count accurately and can work out what is one more and one less.
152. Key stage 3 pupils show good number skills. More able pupils can add numbers to a total of 10, with support and demonstrate a grasp of simple number bonds. More able pupils, with minimal support, can use a calculator to check their answers. Pupils can identify different shapes and learn to discuss the properties of shapes and objects using mathematical terminology.
153. More able pupils in the key stage 3 unit attached to the adjacent comprehensive school make good progress in numeracy through the Successmaker programme, whilst integrating into the mainstream school.
154. Pupils progressively learn the practical application of mathematics in everyday living in key stage 4 and post-16. They learn to use money in a variety of contexts in the community with increasing reliability. The students following the OCR National Skills Profile achieved very good results in numeracy in summer 2006.
155. Outstanding progress is made by key stage 4 pupils in learning to measure, with more able pupils accurately measuring in millimetres, whilst others showed a very good understanding of measuring with non-standard measures.
156. Pupils and students with PMLD respond increasingly well to a wide range of stimuli and sensory experience. They respond to number rhymes and songs and learn to explore shapes, feeling edges, corners and curves. The concept of trial and error is learned in a variety of ways, including switch-work and pupils show an increasing ability to discriminate and make choices. In key stage 4, very well planned individual learning activities enable students with PMLD and complex needs to make exceptional good progress.

157. Very good standards are consistently achieved in key skills in mathematics lessons, particularly in the key skills of literacy and problem solving.

### Shortcomings

158. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Science</b>
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<b>Key Stage 1:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 2:</b>	<b>Grade 1:</b>	<b>Good with outstanding features</b>
<b>Key Stage 3:</b>	<b>Grade 1:</b>	<b>Good with outstanding features</b>
<b>Key Stage 4:</b>	<b>Grade 1:</b>	<b>Good with outstanding features</b>
<b>Post-16:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>

### Good and outstanding features

159. In key stage 1, pupils begin to show an awareness of science and actively use their senses to explore the world around them. They are learning the names of body parts through action songs.

160. Pupils in key stage 2 acquire a good awareness of science. They actively discover the properties of different materials and begin to group them accordingly. They achieve very good investigative skills through a practical approach and meaningful experiences and begin to record their observations using simple charts. In relation to their ability, the pupils' very good use of descriptive language is an outstanding feature.

161. In key stage 3, pupils are gaining good knowledge about their bodies. Younger more able pupils show good awareness of the body's need for energy through food and liquid; the less able are able to name foods, which are healthy or unhealthy. Older pupils worked collaboratively, with support, to make a model of a working heart. They were able to name the relevant body parts and demonstrate how the model works. Pupils' comprehension and use of incidental Welsh in the lessons are outstanding.

162. Some pupils in key stage 3 benefit from attending the local high school for their science lessons. They listen well and are learning to handle data and interpret graph work and are making outstanding progress.

163. Very good progress is made in scientific development in key stage 4, including the understanding of energy sources and sustainability. Pupils are very motivated, make good use of resources and actively participate in lessons. Very good use is made of community links and pupils' understanding and progress in learning is extended. This is an outstanding feature.

164. Within the modules of the ASDAN course followed by the post-16 students, good standards are achieved in science related activities in food preparation and daily living modules.

### Shortcomings

165. There are no important shortcomings.

## Information Technology

<b>Key Stage 1:</b>	<b>Grade 3:</b>	<b>Good features outweigh shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 2:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features with no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 3:</b>	<b>Grade 1:</b>	<b>Good with outstanding features</b>
<b>Key Stage 4:</b>	<b>Grade 1:</b>	<b>Good with outstanding features</b>
<b>Post-16:</b>	<b>Grade 1:</b>	<b>Good with outstanding features</b>

### Outstanding features

166. Pupils in key stage 3 are highly motivated in IT lessons and demonstrate very good IT skills. They make good use of the computer and sustain engagement in their learning.
167. Key stage 4 pupils in the ASDAN Self-Advocacy module demonstrate very good use of a variety of IT equipment. They can use the pen effectively to select and drag symbols when using an interactive whiteboard.
168. Pupils with PMLD are able to use the tracking system very effectively; they are able to understand two part instructions and use the technology to initiate the appropriate responses enabling them to be more independent around school.
169. Post-16 students are able to make a presentation using *PowerPoint* presentations. They used this to show the work of the school council to make an outstanding presentation to staff and visitors.

### Good features

170. In key stage 1, pupils are able to respond consistently to auditory and visual stimuli and to anticipate what was going to happen next. They demonstrate a clear understanding of cause and effect in switch work.
171. Key stage 2 pupils can effectively operate simple computer programs and can match shapes and groups of objects by size using a touch screen. Pupils can make connections between control devices and the information on screen.
172. Pupils in key stage 3 are able to respond appropriately to IT language and show a good understanding of key IT terms. They are able to drag, edit and save pictures through appropriate programs.
173. Less able pupils in key stage 4 are able to select and load a program independently. They are able to use the computer with a touch screen.
174. Post-16 students demonstrate that they have good mouse skills and can use the interactive whiteboard with symbols.

### Shortcomings

175. In key stage 1, pupils lack concentration and remain on-task for short periods. This hinders their progress.

## Design Technology

<b>Key Stage 1:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 2:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 3:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 4:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Post-16:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>

### Good features

176. In all key stages, learners develop and improve their skills in designing and making. They use a wide range of materials and understand that they have different features. Pupils can select and use a range of tools and equipment confidently and safely for a specific task and use them effectively. Standards of achievement in design technology have been helped by regular workshops organised by the subject co-ordinator.
177. In key stage 1, pupils develop a range of making skills. They engage and experience different materials, particularly during cookery lessons. Less able pupils can focus their attention on an object when exploring different materials.
178. Key stage 2 pupils demonstrate a good use of skills and show a particular interest in the subject. They become fully engaged in the tasks they are investigating and become increasingly capable of working independently. Less able pupils tolerate and become engaged in *co-active exploration* activities particularly when working with Playdough.
179. Pupils in key stage 3 are increasingly able to make choices about materials and processes. They are able to operate familiar products and explore how they work. Some pupils are able to communicate views about materials and, when prompted, can name materials used in packaging such as glass, milk bottles.
180. In key stage 4, pupils use a range of equipment with confidence. They are able to demonstrate preferences for products, materials and ingredients. Some pupils are able to further develop their key skills through examining familiar products and articulating their views through the use of ICT. Pupils demonstrated that they are able to use food technology equipment effectively when producing rice puddings to raise money for the school council project on Africa.
181. At post-16, there is good progression onto accredited courses where some students achieve high standards in a food studies ASDAN course at a local comprehensive. Students can identify and purchase ingredients for a meal and plan how they are to be cooked. Some students can prepare a meal with minimum support.

### Shortcomings

182. There are no important shortcomings.

## History

<b>Key Stage 1:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 2:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 3:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 4:</b>	<b>Grade 1:</b>	<b>Good with outstanding features</b>

### Good and outstanding features

183. Pupils in all key stages are exposed to a range of historical artefacts and practical historical experiences in the form of visits and guest speakers. Their knowledge and understanding of the past are enhanced by these experiences and this is reflected in the good standards that they achieve.
184. In key stage 1, pupils begin to respond consistently to familiar people, events and objects. Pupils recognise themselves and other people in pictures of the recent past and react well to these activities and experiences.
185. Key stage 2 pupils relate positively to events from the past when studying home life in Victorian times. All pupils handle artefacts well. They sustain concentration for extended periods and, with prompting, can answer simple questions relating to artefacts and how they compare with their modern day equivalents.
186. In key stage 3, pupils demonstrate an understanding of when the past happened, that they are in the present and that the future is to come. When undertaking a study of World War II, pupils empathise with the problems faced by evacuees and relate these experiences to their own lives. Pupils engage co-operatively when exploring World War II artefacts.
187. Pupils in key stage 4 listen with increasing attention to stories about people and events in the past in their own lives. In their study of old and new cars they began to recognise the difference between transport in the past and in the present. They show a particular interest in this subject and ask sensible and interesting questions. This is an outstanding feature.

### Shortcomings

188. There are no significant shortcomings.

## Geography

<b>Key Stage 1:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no significant shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 2:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no significant shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 3:</b>	<b>Grade 1:</b>	<b>Good with outstanding features</b>
<b>Key Stage 4:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no significant shortcomings</b>

### Good and outstanding features

189. In key stage 1, pupils show emerging awareness of their school environment. They respond consistently to visual, auditory and tactile experiences when exploring the sensory garden. More able pupils can, with support, follow simple directions around the school building.
190. More able pupils in key stage 2 understand the characteristics of small and large rivers and can describe their differences. Lesser able pupils focus with

increasing concentration when studying the flow of water during a visit to a local beach.

191. Pupils in key stage 3 are able to describe with accuracy land use in the local area. They can make deductions from information obtained from studying aerial photographs and relate these deductions to sketch maps of the area. An outstanding feature is their ability to ask and respond to questions about places in and around their home environment.
192. In key stage 4, pupils can understand the differences between natural and man-made features. During their study of Asia they can express their thoughts about how people live in India. They can answer simple questions about artefacts and can express with confidence their preferences.

### Shortcomings

193. There are no significant shortcomings.

<b>Art</b>
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<b>Key Stage 1:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features with no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 2:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features with no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 3:</b>	<b>Grade 1:</b>	<b>Good with outstanding features</b>
<b>Key Stage 4:</b>	<b>Grade 1:</b>	<b>Good with outstanding features</b>
<b>Post-16:</b>	<b>Grade 1:</b>	<b>Good with outstanding features</b>

### Outstanding features

194. There are very good quality displays of art work around school, which demonstrates pupils have studied local artists, Impressionist Work and studied the immediate locality for sources of inspiration, for example Pembrokeshire sea life.
195. Displays of work and the portfolio of evidence provide many examples of work produced to a very high standard and shows good evidence, particularly in key stage 3 and above, of the use of key skills particularly ICT.

### Good features

196. Throughout all key stages, pupils develop a sound knowledge of art, craft and design. Pupils experience working in a variety of media and produce consistently high standards of work.
197. In key stage 1, pupils express preferences when exploring materials. They enjoy exploring with sand and paint and some pupils are able to work independently.
198. Key stage 2 pupils show that they can create and apply familiar techniques to a task. Pupils experience simple colour mixing and more able pupils achieve a good standard of work. Less able pupils use a tactile approach to simple pictures, for example the painting of a firework display.
199. In key stage 3, pupils are able to initiate the use of tools, materials and techniques and they apply knowledge well in refining and appraising their work. Less able pupils are able to cut out simple shapes independently.
200. Pupils in key stage 4 show an outstanding awareness of cause and effect in the creative process and are able to start to critically evaluate their work to improve

outcomes. Less able pupils are able to use paintbrushes of various sizes to aid their work.

201. Post-16 students follow a creative studies course as part of the ASDAN Towards Independence Award. They progress very well and achieve good standards throughout the course. Students following an art course at a local comprehensive school make very good progress.

### **Shortcomings**

202. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Music</b>
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<b>Key Stage 1:</b>	<b>Grade 3:</b>	<b>Good features outweigh shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 2:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 3:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 4:</b>	<b>Grade 1:</b>	<b>Good with outstanding features</b>
<b>Post-16:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>

### **Good and outstanding features**

203. Pupils in key stage 1 explore rhythm and dynamics using a range of kitchen equipment as their sound source. Several children show good manipulation skills and can whisk enthusiastically with a natural rhythm.
204. In key stage 2, pupils sing in tune and with good volume. They have good control of percussion instruments and play with a clear sense of rhythm. They show an emerging knowledge of duration by responding appropriately to the teacher's requests for long or short sounds.
205. Using the Pentatonic Scale, pupils in key stage 3 make good progress when composing short musical passages on a range of glockenspiels. They appraise each other's work and listen for dynamics and pace. As a finale, the students successfully played together, layering the sound to good effect.
206. In key stage 4, pupils show an increasing awareness of rhythm and beat. Working within a set structure outlined by a visiting musician, the pupils engage positively in turn-taking and exploring sound. Pupils, with particularly challenging behaviour, showed outstanding engagement and interaction during a call and response activity.
207. Post-16 students listen enthusiastically to contrasting extracts from Italian opera and interpret their responses creatively through a range of art media. More able students are able to comment on the tempo and dynamics of the music using appropriate Italian terms.
208. The extensive range of musical experiences makes a significant contribution to pupils' appreciation of music and includes the use of peripatetic specialists, the school choir, the kazoo band and visiting musicians. The use of music to support the curriculum across the age and ability ranges helps to raise standards in all subjects.
209. Music is used effectively to create meaningful time markers throughout the day, for example, pupils enter school each day to a set piece of music and during

lunch 'Food Glorious Food' is played to act as a point of reference for pupils with pml. These features make a significant contribution to pupils' achievement.

### Shortcomings

210. The singing and percussion skills of a few more able students are insufficiently developed.
211. In some lessons, less able pupils are given insufficient time to respond and consequently, make less progress.

<b>Physical Education</b>
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<b>Key Stage 1:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 2:</b>	<b>Grade 1:</b>	<b>Good with outstanding features</b>
<b>Key Stage 3:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 4:</b>	<b>Grade 1:</b>	<b>Good with outstanding features</b>
<b>Post-16:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>

### Outstanding features

212. The school plans and co-ordinates swimming in a very effective manner. The swimming scheme of work facilitates very good progression for all pupils. Pupils in key stage 4 achieve a very good standard of stroke development, particularly front crawl.
213. In key stage 2, less able pupils respond to a number of musical stimuli used to encourage their awareness of body parts. Pupils respond very well to a variety of different music showing an awareness of change of mood, tempo and speed.

### Good features

214. Pupils in key stage 1 experience different gymnastic movements and respond enthusiastically to familiar songs, which encourage knowledge of their body parts.
215. In key stage 2, pupils respond well to visiting dance groups. They show good expression of movement through the dance activities. Pupils demonstrate good recall of movement sequences from previous lessons and are able to link different movements together. Pupils learn to evaluate each other's performances and reflect on how the movements could be improved.
216. In key stages 3 and 4, pupils achieve good standards in swimming and respond well in a different sporting environment. They are highly motivated to improve their swimming strokes and respond well to the swimming instructor at the local leisure centre. Less able pupils respond well in the local hydro pool and show their understanding of being in a different environment. They work hard in the sessions and some show a significant improvement in water confidence.
217. Key stage 4 pupils enjoy taking part in the physical education club. They have good hockey skills and are beginning to have an understanding of the rules of the game. Throughout these activities pupils demonstrate calm behaviour and awareness of the need for safety.
218. At post-16, students follow a gymnastics programme as part of the link course at the local college. Many students attended an outdoor education residential,

where they develop independence, problem-solving skills and learn to work with others. Some pupils participate in swimming sessions as part of the ASDAN Sports and Leisure Award.

### **Shortcomings**

219. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Religious Education**

<b>Key Stage 1:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Key Stage 2:</b>	<b>Grade 1:</b>	<b>Good with outstanding features</b>
<b>Key Stage 3:</b>	<b>Grade 1:</b>	<b>Good with outstanding features</b>
<b>Key Stage 4:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
<b>Post-16:</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	<b>Good features and no important shortcomings</b>

220. Pupils throughout the school make at least good and often very good progress in following the locally agreed syllabus, which has been very well modified to meet their needs.

### **Outstanding features**

221. In key stage 2, younger less able pupils with PMLD participated in a multi-sensory presentation of the story of Noah. They sustained positive engagement throughout the session and were able to track the animals moving from left to right extremely well.
222. More able pupils in key stage 2 have explored the special relationships within a Hindu family. They are able to recall key facts and demonstrate an understanding of culture and religion. Using the smart board, pupils can recognise key symbols and artefacts to play a matching pairs game. Pupils, with particularly challenging behaviour, were motivated to take turns and complete the task.
223. In key stage 3, pupils extend their knowledge of other cultures and faiths through the study of the Diwali festival. They use artefacts and symbols to develop their understanding and respond well with interest and respect. Their participation and understanding during the Diwali party was outstanding.

### **Good features**

224. No lessons were seen at key stage 1, key stage 4 or at post-16 but records of assessment, scrutiny of work and planning, together with discussions with the co-ordinator, indicate that pupils make at least good progress relative to their age and ability.
225. The school makes good use of its positive links to a number of churches in the town by holding their carol concert or special services in the community. The Reverend Welsby and his puppet Oswald are frequent visitors to the school and successfully engage the pupils in a number of moral and social stories. This makes a positive contribution to raising standards.

### **Shortcomings**

226. There are no significant shortcomings.

## Modern Foreign Languages

227. The only MFL lesson inspected was in key stage 4, as part of the ASDAN Transition Challenge course. Whilst the achievement of pupils was good in this lesson, insufficient MFL lessons were observed and there is insufficient evidence of pupils' work to form an overall judgement.

### Good features

228. Pupils in the key stage 3 transition class progressively learn simple French vocabulary and about the French way of life. Considering the small amount of time they have spent studying the subject, pupils are making good progress towards an understanding of simple classroom commands, short statements and questions in French. More able pupils can respond using single words, signs or symbols.

229. Elsewhere in key stage 3, pupils learn about the life and culture in other European countries through topics in other subjects, for example, Images of France in geography.

230. In key stage 4, pupils show good recall of French food vocabulary and have a good understanding of the differences between the French and Welsh ways of life.

### Shortcomings

231. Insufficient progress is made by key stage 3 pupils in MFL due to the lack of time allocated to the subject on the timetable.

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

The staff and governors are very pleased that the inspectors believe Portfield School to have many good and outstanding features and that the development of our integration links, particularly with our neighbouring comprehensive school, is providing outstanding education. We would like to thank the team for the courtesy and consideration shown to both staff and pupils as the school coped during the inspection with the unexpected loss of a pupil.

We are proud that the inspectors have given the highest grade to the majority of the school's work and that the levels of pupils' and students' achievement are judged outstanding features of the school. We are also pleased that this is attributed to the skills and dedication of staff and the exemplary relationships between pupils and staff.

The inspection confirmed that we are achieving our aim to be a welcoming, secure, happy and caring community where all pupils are valued and treated with respect. The report recognises the importance we place on working with and involving our parents, carers and community and the crucial role that our governors play in helping our school move forward.

We will maintain our commitment to improving our school by addressing the recommendations of this report in our school improvement plan and will seek further guidance as how to address the issue of the provision of Welsh and MFL within the curriculum, particularly for pupils with severe and complex needs and speech and language disorders.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Portfield Special School
School type	Special
Age-range of pupils	3-19
Address of school	Off Portfield Haverfordwest
Postcode	SA61 1BS
Telephone number	01437 762701

Headteacher	Mrs Sue Painter
Date of appointment	September 2002
Chair of governors	Cllr Beryl Thomas-Cleaver
Registered inspector	Mr Cliff Warwick
Dates of inspection	5 – 8 February 2007

## Appendix 2

### School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group								
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Number of pupils		2.8		2	4	4.6	8	8.2

Year group	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y13	Y 14	Total
Number of pupils	6	12	4.8	7	7	4.5	4	5	79.9

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	11	5	13.8

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery)	1:5.8
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	-
Average class size, excluding nursery classes	EY/KS1/2/3 – 7 KS4/6 <sup>th</sup> Form - 10
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.38:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection			
	N	R	Y1 – Y6
Term 1	71.43	98.86	87.57
Term 2	97.63	-	89.63
Term 3	89.96	-	83.42

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection									
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Y14	Whole School
Term 1	94.41	87.50	86.76	92.47	79.73	88.43	99.32	91.23	88.96
Term 2	86.54	69.35	92.45	81.96	86.46	95.94	92.12	94.31	88.79
Term 3	82.82	60.58	91.62	70.83	76.48	97.70	92.20	93.88	83.98

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	32%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

### Appendix 3

#### National Curriculum Assessment

Statutory assessments are undertaken at the end of KS3 and reported to parents. The nature of the school makes it inappropriate to compare results with those of other schools nationally.

### Appendix 4

#### Evidence base of the inspection

Six inspectors spent a total of 22 inspector days at the school and met as a team before the inspection.

Inspectors visited:

- 76 lessons or part lessons;
- integration activities in mainstream schools;
- registration and tutorial periods and acts of worship; and
- sessions with visiting therapists.

Members of the team had meetings with:

- the headteacher, the SMT, governing body, parents and staff before and after the inspection;
- teachers with responsibilities for curriculum co-ordination;
- the chair of governors; and
- visiting therapists and other supporting professionals.

The team considered:

- documentation provided by the school both before and during the inspection;
- a selection of pupils' work and records of achievement;
- videos and photographs of school productions, educational visits and other activities;
- responses to the parents' questionnaire; and
- comments from pupils and students about their school.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Cliff Warwick Registered Inspector	KQ1- Achievements/progress/standards/NC KQ5 - Leadership and Management KQ6 MSI/Sensory Welsh 2 <sup>nd</sup> language, Maths, MFL
Andy Henderson Team Inspector	KQ3 – Curriculum/PSE KQ4 – ALN, EO, SEN KQ5 – Governors Post-16, DT, IT, Art, PE
Brian Brayford Team Inspector	KQ1 – Behaviour KQ2 – Teaching KQ7 – Resources & Efficiency ASD, English, History, Geography
Jane Kelly Team Inspector	KQ1 – Key Skills, Personal Social & Learning KQ2 – Assessment KQ3 – PSMSC, bilingual KQ4 – Quality of care, support & guidance, Child Protection PMLD, Science, Music
Liz Heaven Lay Inspector	KQ1 – Attendance KQ3 – Work related and careers KQ4 – Race equality and disability
Chris Matthews	Peer Inspector

### ***Acknowledgement***

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

#### **Contractor**

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