

# Wyedean School and 6th Form Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115766
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	363838
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 October 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Tom Winskill

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1220
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	352
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alan Henderson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Clive Pemberton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 November 2007
<b>School address</b>	Beachley Road Chepstow NP16 7AA
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 36 lessons taught by 35 different teachers and made short visits to a further 11 personal, social and health education lessons. They met with groups of students, staff and governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including improvement plans, monitoring records, policies and 177 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How good are outcomes for students in the sixth form, and particularly their academic progress?
- What is the achievement of students who join from schools in Wales and so do not have prior attainment data directly comparable with those pupils from English primary schools?
- Are some aspects of care, guidance and support exemplary, as suggested by school documentation?
- Is low-level disruptive behaviour managed consistently well to minimise its impact on learning?
- To what extent are students encouraged to apply the skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum?

## Information about the school

This larger than average school serves the area of Sedbury and also admits around a quarter of its students from nearby Chepstow, which is in Wales. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The vast majority of students are of White British heritage. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is below the national average. The proportion of students who have a statement of special educational needs is below the national average. The school has had mathematics and computing specialist status since 2003.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school which has maintained good levels of performance and secured a number of improvements since its last inspection. The students' outstanding behaviour contributes to the positive ethos for learning and the highly cohesive community, which are strong features of the school. One student commented that 'it's like a giant family'. Outstanding care, guidance and support result in students feeling exceptionally safe in school and contribute to their high levels of attendance. The effective support provided for students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, both within the classroom and through specific programmes, enables them to make good progress.

Good teaching helps students, including those in the sixth form, to learn effectively and make good progress. However, in a minority of lessons, teaching does not enable all students to progress as quickly as they could. For example, students of different ability in the same class often carry out the same task, which limits the progress of the most able students as well as those who require more support. The assessment of students' learning in a minority of lessons is not sharp enough. As a result, learning activities are not adapted sufficiently to enable different groups of students to extend and deepen their learning. The school uses several effective approaches to improve the quality of teaching. However, best practice, for example in the use of questioning to assess progress and improve learning, is not systematically embedded across the whole school.

The school has improved the curriculum, which meets the needs of most students, by increasing the range of courses at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. The specialist subjects also extend the curriculum choices for older students. There are good opportunities for students to apply a wide range of basic skills in different subjects, and the school has begun to broaden further the opportunities to apply their literacy skills. The students make a strong contribution to their own school community and are active in a variety of projects to improve the local community. The school has introduced a range of procedures to help students have a greater say in improving teaching and learning, although these are not widely established.

The school's good capacity for further improvement is rooted in its highly effective and continually improving system for monitoring and tracking the attainment and progress of every student in each subject taught in school. The information gathered is used well by school leaders to identify areas of success and to support plans to tackle underperformance. For example, the progress of the most able students has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Leaders and managers have improved the quality of teaching over the last three years through rigorous, accurate monitoring and a range of professional support focusing on different aspects of teaching and learning.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of the students' learning and progress from good to outstanding, by:
  - consistently providing tasks, activities and resources in lessons that are matched closely to students' aptitudes and prior attainment
  - assessing students' learning more rigorously in lessons so that learning activities can be adjusted to extend or consolidate students' learning.
- Improve the quality of teaching and assessment from good to outstanding, by systematically embedding best practice in teaching and assessment across the school.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Over 90% of students who completed the Ofsted questionnaire indicated that they enjoy school. They show positive attitudes to their work and are keen to succeed. Typically in lessons they concentrate well and, when encouraged to do so, are able to work independently, making good progress without continued direction from the teacher. Even in those few lessons where teaching was pedestrian and the activities did not capture students' interest, their standards of behaviour were never unacceptable. Exclusion rates are low as the school works successfully with students at risk of exclusion to improve their behaviour.

All groups of students achieve well. The school has established that students, including those from Wales, enter the school with attainment which is broadly in line with national averages, and by the time they complete their compulsory schooling it is above average. In the school's specialist subjects there is a mixed picture. Students achieve highly in ICT. In mathematics, progress has been satisfactory in recent years, but it is now improving and students are making good progress.

Students are well prepared for the choices and decisions they face at age 14, and again at age 16. They work well in groups and pairs in lessons and are typically confident and articulate young people. They are confident in the use of ICT as a result of the effective provision in this specialist school subject. Students are clear that bullying is minimal and is dealt with effectively. They are well informed about risks to their safety and are rightly confident in the care provided by the school. There is a high take-up of healthy school meals and after-school sporting activities are popular. However, a few students who completed the Ofsted questionnaire indicated they did not feel the school helped them adopt healthy lifestyles. There are strengths in the students' spiritual, moral and social development. Students readily take on opportunities for reflection and consideration on a range of issues in effective school assemblies, and through good opportunities in subjects such as religious education, geography and personal, social and health education. They have less experience of the cultural diversity in many parts of Britain. The school is taking steps to broaden students' understanding of different cultures, both further afield within Britain and abroad. For example, in a good citizenship lesson, students worked effectively in groups to consider what it meant to be British and how they could convey that to students in their partner school in Uganda.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching is typically well planned, so that well-organised lessons proceed at a good pace and have clear learning objectives. A variety of learning activities is used successfully to motivate and interest the students. In the best lessons, activities are planned to meet students' varying individual needs and to encourage them to work independently. For example, in an outstanding German lesson, students were able to select, with guidance from the teacher, the activity which was best suited to helping them make rapid progress in their learning. Teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to provide clear explanations and illustrate effectively what they expect students to learn. In lessons, teachers and teaching assistants provide good support for different groups and individuals. For example, in a mathematics lesson, the teaching assistant ensured that a pupil who had special educational needs was able to work independently and then provided support for other members of the class. Marking has improved since the last inspection and is often detailed and helpful, although some inconsistencies also remain in this aspect of assessment.

The school curriculum now provides more choice for a wide range of students, including courses at a local further education college. The well-coordinated personal, social and health education programme contributes effectively to students' understanding about risks to their health and safety and to maintaining high standards of behaviour. For example,

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Year 8 students took part in a good discussion on how to deal with different types of bullying. Students enjoy the wide range of clubs and activities the school provides.

The school's practice in identifying, monitoring and supporting more vulnerable students is exemplary. These procedures involve an extensive network of external experts working highly effectively with the school in the best interests of the students. As a result, a number of students have continued in education despite very difficult personal circumstances. The school has reduced the number of students who are persistently absent, and consequently, overall attendance is high. This is the result of taking effective steps to improve liaison with parents and carers, improving monitoring through the use of electronic registration, and taking action as soon as a student's attendance begins to decline. Students joining the school in Year 7 spoke highly of the school's arrangements for the transition from primary schools, which enable them to settle quickly. One student commented that 'they make you feel part of it, make you feel welcome'.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher provides calm, effective leadership. Together with the senior staff, he has made the priorities for the school crystal clear. These are set out in the latest school improvement plan, which rightly emphasises teaching and learning as being at the heart of further school improvement. Some subject leaders and heads of year have been particularly enthused by professional development aimed at improving their leadership and management skills. They are increasingly taking a whole-school view of school improvement strategies as well as seeking to improve performance in their own areas of responsibility. Lines of accountability and performance management arrangements are clear. Senior staff and other leaders set high expectations for their respective teams. Where monitoring indicates any underperformance in teaching, support measures are set in train and further monitoring is carried out to see that improvements are made.

The effectiveness of the governing body is currently satisfactory, and it is taking steps to improve its links with the school community. It ensures that detailed policies and procedures provide a strong framework for the school's safeguarding arrangements, which contribute to the high degree of safety felt by the students.

The school actively promotes equal opportunity and tackles discrimination. It assiduously tracks the progress of all groups of students and takes action to tackle underachievement. The school has a coherent plan for promoting community cohesion which actively involves students and enables them to make a good contribution to the wider community. For example, a group of 'student wardens' actively links with the local community and the

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students involved report on their work in school assemblies. The school works well with service families to ensure that students who join at different times of the year because of military redeployment are smoothly and fully integrated into the school.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Sixth form

Students in the sixth form make good progress in their learning so that standards at A and AS level are above average. Progress in Applied ICT is exceptional. Students speak highly of their experience in the sixth form and enjoy the varied enrichment programme provided. In particular, they were overwhelmingly positive in their views about the care, guidance and support provided. However, over half of the sixth formers who completed the Ofsted questionnaire did not think that the school helped them to be healthy.

Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding in the sixth form. In the better lessons, probing questioning involved all students and helped to improve their knowledge and understanding of the topic, while ensuring that the teachers knew exactly how well students were learning. For example, in an outstanding geography lesson, incisive, persistent questioning ensured students thought deeply about the work. This reinforced their understanding, but also meant that the teacher was able to modify the lesson plan to ensure students' learning needs were met as she assessed their understanding.

Leadership and management of the sixth form are effective with clear links between the heads of Years 12 and 13, who are responsible for day-to-day operations, and the senior team. Links between subject leaders and sixth form leaders are less well developed.



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*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

## Views of parents and carers

The parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire provided a positive endorsement of the work of the school, and 96% indicated that they were happy with their children's experience at Wyedean School and 6th Form Centre. These generally strong perceptions were also reflected in the results of a small survey of parents and carers undertaken by the school earlier in the year. A small number of parents and carers expressed concerns about behaviour and variability in the way poor behaviour is managed. The school has clear strategies to improve the consistency of behaviour management. In the lessons observed during the inspection, students' attitudes to learning were highly positive.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wyedean School and 6th Form Centre to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 177 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1220 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	94	53	77	44	3	2	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	69	39	105	59	1	1	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	52	29	101	57	15	8	4	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	54	31	101	57	10	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	54	31	104	59	3	2	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	24	102	58	12	7	5	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	19	120	68	8	5	8	5
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	47	27	97	55	10	6	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	62	35	100	56	7	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	54	31	87	49	18	10	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	21	104	59	10	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	65	37	96	54	4	2	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	82	46	88	50	5	3	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



22 October 2010

Dear Students

**Inspection of Wyedean School and 6th Form Centre, Sedbury, NP16 7AA**

Thank you for your help during the recent inspection. I am pleased to report that we found your school to be a good school. It has maintained its good performance in many areas of its work and improved others since it was last inspected. For example, teaching and the choice of subjects for older students have improved.

You make good progress and learn well as a result of the good teaching you receive. There is a very positive atmosphere in the school; your behaviour is outstanding and you get on well with each other and with teachers. The outstanding care, guidance and support the school provides help you feel exceptionally safe in school. You enjoy school, including the many extra activities the school provides.

We have asked the headteacher and your teachers to make the following improvements so that the school can become outstanding. You can help by working with the school to identify ways in which your learning can be improved.

- Provide activities in all lessons which are closely matched to your needs, so your learning improves and you make more rapid progress.
- Make sure teachers always check how well you are learning in lessons, so they can adapt activities to help you learn more effectively.
- Help you make outstanding progress and do even better in examinations by making sure more teachers apply the successful teaching methods used by the best teachers.

Yours sincerely

Tom Winskill

Her Majesty's Inspector

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