



■ Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen Headteacher Alun Llwyd sharing the good news with Year 7 pupils Esme Crowe, Cadi Roberts and Pedr Owen

## Bilingual comp first for 'double excellent' grade

A BILINGUAL comprehensive school has become the first secondary in North Wales to get a "double excellent" in its inspection report.

Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen in Bethesda, Gwynedd, was awarded the coveted grade after a visit from education watchdog Estyn in November.

Inspectors said the school's overall performance and prospects for improvement were "excellent", with quality of teaching attracting particular praise.

They said pupil performance at Key Stage 4 (GCSE) was well above average and no pupil had failed to gain a recognised qualification at the school since 2009-10.

And amid Estyn's wider concerns about key skills, Dyffryn Ogwen appears to be bucking the national trend in writing with the majority of pupils developing well in English and Welsh.

In his report, lead inspector Gareth Wyn Jones said: "The school curriculum offers a wide range of subjects that ensures



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that it meets pupils' and students' various needs and interests, and statutory requirements.

"The quality and consistency of teaching is one of the school's strengths, and half of teaching is excellent. In excellent lessons, teachers question successfully. They develop pupils' understanding of subjects and their thinking and literacy skills in a very creative and effective manner.

"Teachers' expectations and the level of challenge of tasks are high and extend all pupils successfully. Activities are often exciting and stimulating. Tasks are timed particularly well and this ensures that the pace of lessons is excellent."

Mr Wyn Jones, himself a former teacher, said sustainable development and global citizenship were good features of the school's curriculum and a number of activities were arranged in the local area to enrich pupils' understanding.

The school has a strong link with a partner in Indonesia and was invited to take part in the opening ceremony of last summer's London Olympics.

Mr Wyn Jones praised headteacher Alun Llwyd's "clear vision" and emphasis on improving standards, which he said had "permeated through all aspects of school life".

He added: "The senior management team support the headteacher's work very well. As a team, they work together closely and share an agreed vision.

"During recent years, an appropriate emphasis has been seen by the school's staff on providing education of the highest quality, improving standards and ensuring that all pupils possess the important skills for life and work.

"The headteacher and senior team challenge any under-performance effectively.

"Where standards and teach-

ing have caused concern to leaders, they have responded sensitively, promptly but very firmly."

Dyffryn Ogwen, which has 370 pupils, has been invited to draw two case studies of good practice for use on Estyn's website.

Gwynedd council's cabinet member for education Sian Gwennllian said: "We are extremely proud of the fact that Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen has become the first secondary school in North Wales to be awarded the 'excellent' grade for the two main indicators under the new Estyn inspection framework.

"Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen joins a growing list of Gwynedd schools that have received national recognition by Estyn for the excellence of the education they provide.

"As a council, we are working to build on these successes. To do this we have established a county-wide framework to enable every teacher and every school to learn from excellent practice and to improve standards."