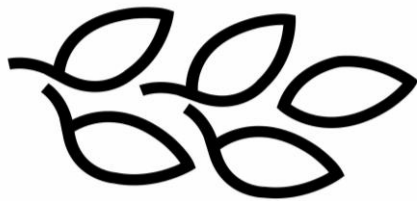


Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes



Cynlluniau Ysgolion Iach – Rhwydwaith Cymru

National Quality Award Report
of the visit to Monmouth Comprehensive School

15th and 16th July 2015

Section I

There can be no doubt that Monmouth Comprehensive School is a healthy school and fully deserving of its National Quality Award. Health and wellbeing and the healthy school concept are clearly embedded in the life and culture of the school and this is as a result of the truly committed approach of the governors, Headteacher and all staff. The school is inclusive in character and welcoming in nature, with the healthy schools process being enhanced by the active engagement of students, parents and visitors and the partnership work undertaken with agencies such as South Wales Police, the Youth Service and the School Nursing Service.

While the verification process demonstrated the excellent work being undertaken by the school, three features of school life stand out. The first is the way in which restorative practice has been melded into school life and the impact this has had across a wide range of issues, perhaps most notably on the mental and emotional health and wellbeing of students; the second is the way in which school encourages personal development and the importance of personal relationships, mutual support and the ability to adapt and compromise; and the third, as the remainder of this report will show, is the priority given to protecting and promoting the health and wellbeing of all those connected to the school including students, staff, parents and representatives of partner organisations.

Leadership and Communication

Leadership

The process of creating a healthy school has benefited greatly from the commitment and vision of Monmouth Comprehensive School's leadership team, led by the Headteacher, Mr R V Davies. Mr A Williams, Deputy Headteacher has championed the healthy schools concept and has overseen the development of Monmouth Comprehensive School's whole school approach to health and wellbeing.

The leadership team has a clear vision and passion for the wellbeing of everyone associated with Monmouth Comprehensive School. The approach adopted by the leadership team is collaborative in nature, emphasising the building of positive relationships between all members of the school community. In this context behaviour modelling is seen as a vital element in displaying the values and culture of the school. Underpinning the mental and emotional health and wellbeing programme is restorative practice – greater detail of this very beneficial approach can be found in the Mental and Emotional Health and Wellbeing section of this report.

The school's vision statement "Learning to Live our Lives" is reflected in the school's focus on ensuring that all students are valued and supported in ways that enable them to achieve to their full potential. The healthy schools concept has been brilliantly translated into practice and is truly embedded in the corporate culture, ethos and life of the school.

It was very clear that there is an exceptional relationship between the Governors and the school,

with the governors totally committed to the principles of restorative practice and the creation of a truly healthy school. Governors participate in a wide range of school initiatives and activities including 'Learning Walks', 'Success Assemblies', and the Literary Festival.

It is very positive to report that the supportive and proactive governing body has recently been awarded the Griffin Award in recognition of the commitment, work and effectiveness of the governors to the school.

It is also very positive to record that students are actively involved in all aspects of teaching and learning, including policy development, staff appointments and curriculum planning and evaluation. A very clear foundation of policies, procedures and protocols that govern the life of the school has been put in place. It is important to note that the concept of protecting and promoting health and wellbeing be that of the students, their parents, adults associated with the school but not directly employed by it, teachers, managers and governors is a clear element of these documents. On this foundation, the healthy schools concept is able to thrive.

We would heartily encourage those with leadership responsibility, in particular the governing body and senior management team, to act as trustees in protecting the ethos and culture of the school and ensuring that the healthy schools concept continues to grow and develop in Monmouth Comprehensive School.

Communication

The school is the first secondary school in the UK to receive the Restorative Services Quality Mark and the restorative practice within the school is reflected in the positive behaviour and the relationship between staff and students, the students and their peers and directly influences the ways in which individuals communicate with one another.

Considerable emphasis has been placed on developing an open and effective communication process with all groups associated with the school. A wide variety of communication tools are used to facilitate this process, which include daily breakfast meetings with Progress Leaders; the use of 'circle time' techniques in meetings and school council meetings to encourage staff and students to articulate their feelings and concerns; the Headteacher's lunches with students, where positive behaviour and success are recognised; the use of social media; the excellent school newsletter (also available via the website); and regular meetings with parents.

Curriculum

During the review of the evidence, conversation with teachers and students and the tour of the school, it became very apparent that the healthy schools concept has been translated into a very wide range of teaching activities. The school provides an integrated, skills based curriculum, which supports health and wellbeing.

Observation and meetings with student representatives demonstrated that students are very engaged and involved in their learning activity and the content and delivery of lessons. There is a strong student voice and students are actively encouraged to put forward ideas and opinions. A

fascinating example of this was provided by Emma, a Year 12 student, who has recently worked with members of the SMT to develop an equalities project, which results in Year 12 students leading sessions on equality in Key Stage 3 form groups. These sessions are participative in nature and use video and the game 'Privilege' to raise awareness and provoke reflection on equalities issues, such as sexism, homophobia and privilege.

Considerable emphasis is placed on the professional development and training of all staff within the school community. Staff are offered and take up a range of training opportunities, including learning coaching, peer mentoring, progress leader training, restorative practice and mindfulness. This training is an important element of the healthy schools approach and Monmouth Comprehensive School is to be commended for the emphasis it places on staff development.

Ethos and Environment

Ethos

That the school has totally embraced the healthy schools concept was immediately apparent. The ethos of the school is underpinned by the value-driven culture. The values are people centred and emphasise relationships, attitudes and learning.

The school is open and welcoming, caring and enabling.

Relationships are built on trust, mutual respect, courtesy, friendliness and tolerance. It was very noticeable in the relationships that existed within the school and in the way in which the verifiers were welcomed and treated that these values are not theoretical, but are a living element of school life at Monmouth Comprehensive School. A special mention must be made here of the students we met who were always polite, helpful and confident and keen to engage with us; ably informing us of how their school is a healthy school.

Environment

Very good use has been made of the indoor and outdoor environment. The school has just received its third Green Flag and students are actively encouraged to care for the whole school environment – recycling bins were seen in classrooms and the school grounds, while any litter is quickly removed.

Much attention is being focused on the plans and preparation for the construction of the new buildings. It is very positive to note that the architects and designers of the new building have worked with the school council to ensure that the views of the students are taken into consideration. The new buildings will be very eco / environmentally friendly, with as much use as possible being made of natural light.

Family and Community Involvement

Very considerable emphasis is placed by the school on engaging with parents, carers and the community, with the school viewing itself very much as part of the community and the community being very much part of the school.

The school communicates very effectively, using the school website, regular newsletters, a detailed prospectus, parent's mail and text messaging being examples of the methods used to engage with parents / carers. The school policies are available via the website and hard copies are available on request.

Mrs Hope and Mrs Hay of the friends association noted a strong sense of co-operation with a feeling of collaboratively working with the school and its staff to a common end, stating that strong relationships have been built with teachers and that a very supportive pastoral care system is in place. Mention was also made of the benefits of having 'go to' staff that have a great knowledge and understanding of the needs of students.

Strong collaborative arrangements are in place between the school and the friends association. Examples of activities, which have been run by the association, include Saturday workshops on how the teenage brain develops and how children have different approaches to learning, with a total of 80 parents attending; and a workshop on emotional intelligence and communicating, which 60 parents have attended. To ensure consistency with school practice, discussions took place with key individuals, including the senior management team, at the school in the preparatory phases of the workshops. It is proposed that the next workshop will address issues linked to self-esteem and will include self-abusive behaviour and drug / substance misuse issues.

Fund raising activities organised by the friends association have led to the purchase of the PA system, electronic noticeboards around school and sports kits as well as the running of a heart start programme for parents.

Mr Mike Powell described the links the school has with the local community, highlighting the wide range of activities that enable the students to develop skills, knowledge and understanding outside the classroom and noting the very supportive staff who enable this wide range of activities to be run. He also described the way in which the school, through local volunteers coming forward, has links with community based organisations such as Home Start and Keep Wales Tidy. Students are given opportunities to learn about these organisations and then work with them, with some students going on to become volunteers.

Informative meetings with external agencies, such as the school nursing service, demonstrated that the school has an excellent relationship with a range of partners, who are supportive and very positive about the school's commitment to health and wellbeing.

Conversations were had with the two school nurses who work at Monmouth Comprehensive School, Rachel who is based in the school and Leslie from Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

They highlighted the strengths of the partnership with the school, the open access that students have to the nursing service, their role in the delivery of PSE and the way in which they support the teaching staff. It was also impressive to learn of the way in which the nurses are able to support the health needs of students. The nurses attend the new entrants parents evening and learn from the parents of any health issues their child might be facing. Following this conversation a care plan is subsequently put in place, a home visit is made and contact can be made with the student's doctors / consultant.

The nurses run training sessions for staff on the use of epi-pens and a specialist epilepsy nurse also visits the school to brief / train staff. Rachel is about to be trained in the use of insulin pumps so that she can provide support to a student with Type I diabetes. First aid demonstrations are also run by the nurses.

The school is also strengthening links with the youth centre in Monmouth and health related initiatives are being jointly developed. Mr Pete Jenkins the Vocational Mentor and Mr Dave Egan, Pathways and Welsh BaccaLaureate Co-ordinator, described their roles, highlighting the partnership working with other agencies and the ways in which students and their parents are involved by the school. Mr Jenkins outlined the role of the vocational mentor, drawing attention to the vocational opportunities offered by the school and the links with local businesses and Coleg Gwent. He also drew attention to the way in which parents have been able to participate in a taster evening at the premises of the new provider of vocational education.

Mr Egan drew attention to the very positive work being undertaken to encourage students to feel valued and to be part of and feel safe and secure in Monmouth Comprehensive School. In particular he highlighted the way in which summer learning initiatives, involving activities such as canoeing, problem solving / It's a Knockout / archery etc., can encourage Year 12 students to act as and develop the skills of leaders.

General comments

The NQA achievement visit at Monmouth Comprehensive School was a very enjoyable one, with the discussions and interaction with the Headteacher, staff, governors, students, parents and representatives of organisations working with the school all conducted in a relaxed and open manner. This relaxed and friendly environment made it a very positive visit and a thoroughly absorbing process throughout.

Sincere thanks are again offered to the Headteacher Mr Davies and the Deputy Headteacher Mr Williams and their colleagues for the excellent arrangements made for the visit, the clear and extensive portfolio of evidence and the hospitality and welcome that was extended to us. The wealth of evidence provided by the school in support of their NQA and the interaction with everyone with whom we came into contact made it abundantly clear that Monmouth Comprehensive School is truly a health promoting school.

Section 2

Food and Fitness

The school has a comprehensive food and fitness policy with strong links to teaching and learning. Students are actively involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of the policy through the student led 'food council'.

The formal and informal curriculums accurately reflect the aims and objectives of the policy and it is clear that food and fitness has a high priority throughout the school. Students are able to discuss and experience healthy eating and physical activity across the curriculum.

Breastfeeding is included in the curriculum and facilities are available for visitors to use, if required.

School meal provision has been contracted to a private catering company who use the Saffron analysis system to ensure compliance with the Healthy Eating in Schools Regulations. Catering staff as well as staff involved in food handling and teaching have attended relevant training.

The dining room, which is also used for the well-attended breakfast club, has a number of attractive food outlets, which provide a range of inviting, locally sourced food. Healthy options are the lowest priced and the meal of the day is subsidised to promote a higher up-take. Water is available free of charge and students are encouraged to bring in water bottles. A cashless finger printing identification system, for payment of school meals and a staggered lunch time help to ensure a well-organised, pleasant dining experience.

There are plenty of opportunities for students to be physically active and participate in sport through the extensive PE curriculum and use of the sports facilities during break and lunchtimes. The school has a 5x60 officer, has participated in PE and School Sport (PESS) and has a broad timetable of after-school sports and activities staffed by school staff and outside agencies, which adhere to the school's food and fitness policy.

In conversation with Mr Paul Sullivan, the Monmouthshire sports development officer, and Mr Matt Penny, faculty leader for PE, a number of very positive points emerged. These included the wide range of opportunities that students can access through both the school curriculum and extra-curricular activities; the links with local sports academies organised by local clubs; the links with Sport Wales and the increase in participation in physical activity and sport. Among those receiving free school meals the increase is from 26% to 40% and for 'looked after children' the increase is from 31% to 70%. Physical activity is also used to promote learning and working in teams and all efforts are made to ensure that the programmes are completely inclusive in nature. It was also positive to note that staff has easy access and use of the facilities at Monmouthshire swimming pool.

Food and Drink Provision – Minimum standards

All minimum standards are adhered to within the school.

Food provision is in line with Healthy Eating in Schools Regulations 2013.

Food**Particular strengths:**

- Staff and students are involved in monitoring and evaluating food provision, for example, the student food council regularly discuss food in school at school council meetings and have been included in the interviewing process for new catering providers.
Key members of staff meet weekly with the catering manager to discuss operational issues and hold monthly monitoring meetings.
- The canteen offers a wide variety of nutritious food, which is set out in attractive, well-presented serveries. Students are able to eat outdoors at picnic tables, in a picnic area adjacent to the canteen and in addition there is a student run School Healthy Eating Dept (SHED) in the outdoor area, which offers healthy snacks.
- Comprehensive schemes of work demonstrate the use of innovative curriculum resources, which include a nutritional programme for students in Key Stage 4, which analyses the nutritional values of the dishes they produce, as well as suggesting healthier alternatives to their recipes.
- Students are encouraged to develop cooking skills through a school cookery club. Alex Dart a student in Year 7, who was unable to join us on the student led tour of the school, was so keen to tell us about the cookery club that he sent us a letter in praise of the club. To quote some of the letter “ Mrs Fuller and Mrs Egan are brilliant cooks and they are teaching students one of the most important things in a pupil’s life, cooking.” ...”They produce great recipes for cooking and they always show us the right way to success!” The letter goes on to comment on the food in the canteen, “The range of food in the canteen is amazing...I find it hard to choose every time I have main meals and I end up having the best thing on the menu”.

The areas for development:

- Maintain the current, very strong, practice.

Fitness**Particular strengths:**

- Following the cessation of the national PESS programme in Wales, the school is taking a lead role in developing the new Physical Literacy Programme in schools in the area. The school is piloting the programme and a member of staff is currently on secondment to Sports Wales to work on the project. The school links the programme to their feeder primary schools as an aid to transition, with Year 6 pupils integrating with Key Stage 3 classes on transition days, when primary school teachers have the opportunity to team teach.

- Students are encouraged to become role models and leaders in sport, through taking part in the Young Ambassadors Programme. A recent video presentation, produced by students, to Sports Wales Cymru, won an award of £500 for the school, which was spent on providing sports for all clubs in the school's sports hall.
- The school has excellent links with local sports clubs, including Monmouth rugby, cricket, and football clubs.
- There are strong links with the local leisure centre, which is sited adjacent to the school, and students have free access to the swimming pool.
- As well as the more traditional sports, students are able to access a wide range of sports and activities such as rowing, squash and equine management. There are plans to subsidise students on free school meals who wish to access any of the fee paying clubs, or academies in the locality.

The areas for development:

- Maintain the current, excellent, practice

Mental and Emotional Health and Wellbeing

The school's approach to mental and emotional health and wellbeing is an outstanding feature that affects every aspect of school life, making it a warm and caring environment, where students are valued and encouraged to enjoy their learning.

Policies reflect the school's attitude to positive behaviour management through restorative practice, to the extent that the behaviour management policy has been replaced with a relationships policy, emphasising the school's aim to promote and build on positive relationships and raise self-esteem, rather than to react to behavioural issues.

Mental and emotional health and wellbeing is a common thread running throughout the formal and informal curriculum and all staff have undertaken extensive training on the delivery of an innovative programme of study and use of resources.

The well informed and effective school council is involved in core areas of school life, including policy and strategy development, staff appointments and the curriculum.

There is an excellent transition programme and all the students we spoke to during our visit said they felt safe and secure throughout their time in school. Students are able to access the school counsellor, who is available two to three times a week, as well as the school based school nurse and the school health nurse. A drop in service, run by the local youth service, is located close to the school and is available for students outside school hours.

Staff health has a high priority, with protected PPA time and plenty of opportunities for continuing professional development. Staff has access to occupational health services and there is clear

signposting to support services. In addition staff are able to access the on-site school nurse, as well as the school health nurse.

Particular strengths:

- Restorative practice is a key feature and the school is the first school in the UK to achieve the Restorative Service Quality Mark.
- Mindfulness training sessions are provided for students, staff and parents to help them to find alternative ways of responding to what may be happening in their lives.
- Young people with additional needs and emotional issues are able to access the school's support centre, where they are able to express their needs and are listened to by qualified staff in a safe, calm environment.
- Peer mentors support new students by listening, providing advice and showing them around. A peer mentoring handbook / training is provided to all peer mentors.
- 2 training days have been provided by Dr Belinda Hopkins on listening skills and making relationships.
- It is particularly noteworthy that the school has many areas of excellent practice and is willing and able to share their knowledge and skills with neighbouring schools and the community.

The areas for development:

You may wish to consider:

- During our visit a very small number of staff expressed some concerns about the move to the new build, particularly in relation to the proposed new staff room arrangements, which you may wish to explore further.

A note on restorative practice

The decision to adopt restorative practices as a key element of school life was taken some years ago and Monmouth Comprehensive School is now 'leading the way' among schools across the UK.

The process commenced by focusing on teaching and learning and resulted in the move to working with young people rather than providing learning to young people – a move from 'done to or done for, to done with'.

With Monmouth Comprehensive School's catchment area containing 38 primary schools, it was recognised that there was a great need to help students and staff build relationships. Consequently contact with the form tutor was increased to 7.5 hours / fortnight. This greater contact supports the form tutor in his / her role as the significant adult. The teacher has a much better understanding and knowledge of the students and their family footprint. It was also decided that the form tutor remains with the class from Year 7 through to the end of year 11, and takes them through the Welsh Baccalaureate.

A conscious decision was taken to make health and wellbeing a more prominent theme in the curriculum structure.

Behaviour modelling took the place of behaviour management and the link with restorative approach moved the focus from blame and punishment to identification of the factors that contributed to the situation, in effect 'what was happening' – with key questions being, 'How were you feeling / what were you thinking? Students are asked about their thoughts and feelings before during and after the event. Underpinning this process is the principle that as human beings we are all of equal value.

The senior leadership team embraces and embodies restorative values and models the approach continuously.

Within the restorative approach, traditional merit and sanction systems don't have a place; rather any and all success is recognised and celebrated. To facilitate this process a monthly 'Success Assembly' is held; a key feature of which is that students nominate others for outstanding works. Much is made of verbal praise and written praise on pieces of work. Parents / carers are informed of student's successes in a letter.

The principles and practices of circle time are used widely across the school e.g. staff meetings and early morning meetings all use this practice, as do meetings of the school council. Circle time is used to encourage staff and students to articulate their thoughts in a non-threatening environment. Training of staff has played a vital role in the development of restorative approaches across Monmouth Comprehensive School. Progress leaders (responsible for year group) received 5 day restorative training and all staff have received training on giving affirming feedback in books, relationship building etc.

A number of key outputs have been achieved. These include:

- Changed relationships in the classroom.
- Enhanced relationship with the form tutor.
- Fixed terms exclusions have dropped by 91%.
- Students are talking more confidently (with confidence) on emotional wellbeing.
- Over the past 6 years referrals to the Youth Offending Team are down 78% and anti-social behaviour orders with a youth tag have dropped 48%.

Just a few examples of how students are actively involved in restorative practice include the following:

- Following a review of the anti-bullying policy by the school council, it was decided to rename the policy "Looking out for each other" and all students during their first year in school sign a pledge to this effect, which has been endorsed by the NSPCC.
- As well as peer mentoring, students who feel the need to report any issues or concerns but wish to remain anonymous are able to use an anonymous bystander email.

The experience of Monmouth Comprehensive School has been recognised across the county and

this good practice has been shared by the school with the following groups:

- The members of the local neighbourhood policing teams.
- All staff in the Monmouthshire Youth Service.
- All Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) staff.
- The Chief Executive of Monmouthshire Council and the members of the senior management team.
- The Chief Constable of Gwent and his team.

Personal Development and Relationships

The school has a comprehensive and informative policy for sex and relationships education (SRE) which provides contextual information and links to the relationships policy, PSE, teaching and learning and the science scheme of work.

A dedicated member of staff has the lead on SRE, with the support of progress leaders, the Pathways co-ordinator and the Deputy Headteacher.

Relationships education and sex education is delivered through an integrated curriculum across the year groups, throughout the year, using a variety of appropriate and up to date resources.

The main focus of SRE is targeted at students in Year 8 during summer learning week. “The journey of the sperm” resource is one of the resources used to deliver the programme. Parents are well informed and can access the SRE policy on the school website. Parents of students in Year 8 are sent specific information about their SRE programme.

Staff are trained in the delivery of SRE through formal training, twilight sessions and information is cascaded at team meetings.

Students are well supported by a team of well qualified professionals, including the school based school nurse, the school health nurse, school counsellor, members of the youth service and the All Wales Police Liaison Core Programme (AWPLCP).

Particular strengths:

- The school takes extra responsibility for students’ health by employing their own school based nurse, who is on site two days each week and is able to enhance the service provided by the school health nurse and the school counsellor.
The school nurse is an integral part of the school and provides first aid training to students and sessions on developing life skills prior to going to university, as well as working with individual students when required.
- The school’s SRE programme is augmented by annual presentations to students in Years 8 and 12 from a Sexual Health Nurse.

- Students have daily access to professionals who can offer counselling, sexual health advice and medical advice.
In addition, students are able to access a sexual health advice clinic run by the youth service, which is a few minutes' walk from the school.
- The very proactive friends association are planning to facilitate workshops for parents on understanding and communicating with teenagers.

The areas for development:

- Maintain the current, very good, practice.

Substance Use and Misuse

Monmouth Comprehensive School has a comprehensive approach to substance use and misuse in place. This approach engages the students and staff of the school and is complimented by the active support and engagement of parents, the school nursing service, Monmouthshire youth service, Gwent police and the AWSLCP.

Substance use and misuse learning is largely covered in the cross curricular PSE programme, which is values focused and includes promoting self-respect and resisting negative peer pressure. Much of the activity, in terms of resisting peer pressure, is undertaken through circle time in form / tutor groups. The school has put in place a peer mentoring process, with older students supporting and helping younger students – older students involved in this process having to apply for the role, be interviewed and trained.

Substance Use and Misuse – Minimum Standards

All minimum standards are adhered to within the school.

Particular strengths:

- Truly comprehensive policy that includes restorative practice, multi-agency collaboration, role and responsibilities and clear guidance on action to be taken in the event of an incident. This policy is currently being reviewed with the school council being fully involved – indicative of the excellent way in which student involvement is encouraged and enabled.
- Should an issue be identified, referral processes are speedy, comprehensive, fully supportive and student oriented.
- Training on substance use and misuse has been provided to teachers, lunchtime supervisors, learning support assistants and OSHL leaders by Gwent Police.
- Any student identified as smoking is provided with immediate 'brief intervention' through the school nurse. The students' parents / carers are contacted immediately the issue has become apparent.
- The supply teacher handbook and volunteer policy both include reference to non-smoking.
- The friends association is developing a Saturday afternoon awareness raising / training

session on substance misuse.

- Very good links have been established with Drugaid who recently supported a summer event in school.

The areas for development:

- Maintain the current, excellent, practice.

Environment

Monmouth Comprehensive School is clearly committed to the protection and nurture of the school environment and the wider environment in general.

Particular strengths:

- The work of the eco-council.
- The high level of student participation, engagement and ownership of issues pertaining to the school and wider environment.
- The way in which Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) has been incorporated into school life.
- Partnership working with local agencies such as the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (work on footpaths - removal of invasive species) and the work with Tidy Wales on rubbish removal / cleaning of the Severn estuary.
- The school based recycling initiatives – recycling bins throughout the school.
- The procurement of high energy efficient equipment and energy monitoring processes.
- The involvement of the students in the design of the plans for the new building and associated with the new build; the survey of the site to identify / protect mammals, the assessment of impact and the moving of the school pond.
- The creation of the Wildlife Garden.
- The school has just received its third Eco-Schools Green Flag award.

The areas for development:

- Maintain current practice

Safety

As far as health and safety management is concerned Monmouth Comprehensive School is a model of good practice. Health and safety is clearly embedded in the culture of the school with the overarching theme being 'everyone looks out for everyone else'. Risks have been identified and control measures and management processes have been put in place to minimise these risks. Should a risk be identified, the response is speedy, the risk is categorised under a 'red, amber,

green' system and the caretaker is emailed. A red rating requires an immediate response, amber requires a response within 24 – 48 hours and a green response has an open response time.

One of the major risks associated with the site is that of traffic management and a number of traffic calming / management schemes have been put in place.

Safety – Minimum Standards

All minimum standards are adhered to within the school.

Particular strengths:

- The comprehensive health and safety policy, which clearly sets out roles and responsibilities.
- Health and safety is an agenda item for meetings of the school council.
- NEBOSH (National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health) training provided for key staff.
- The way in which students have taken ownership / responsibility for toilets, so that any issues are reported and dealt with quickly.
- A comprehensive risk assessment is undertaken for all aspects of school trips, with training provided for staff where specific circumstances dictate e.g. three hours training provided to staff to enable a student to participate in a school trip.
- The redesign of the bus bay and the control systems in place.
- The way in which the school environment and routes used by students to reach school are regularly monitored and when a risk is identified, work is undertaken in partnership with other agencies to reduce that risk e.g. the underpass beneath the major trunk road.
- The survey of students routes to school, in which students mapped their routes to school and highlighted risk points. Undertaken as part of the safe routes in communities programme.
- On sun awareness, contact with all parents re hats, cream etc; the provision of shade areas and trees and that student's do not have to be outside during breaks.

The areas for development:

- Maintain the current, excellent, practice

Hygiene

The site management team has overall responsibility for maintaining good hygiene practice. Policies and procedures are in place and are in line with Teach Germs a lesson.

Schemes of work identify hygiene issues across the curriculum. Food hygiene and food safety is consistently taught in food technology, with posters on handwashing are displayed. Students are also reminded of personal hygiene during PE lessons.

Hygiene - Minimum Standard

All minimum standards are adhered to.

The school has been assessed for the Food Standards Agency's Food Hygiene Rating and awarded a 4 for the school kitchen.

Particular strengths:

- All staff involved in food handling and food technology is trained to a minimum of level 2 Food Hygiene training.
- Food hygiene training has been extended to include parents who support school events.
- We were impressed with the cleanliness of the bright and attractive dining room.
- The school cookery club follows the same risk assessment and food hygiene practices as food technology.
- Lessons are supported by the school nurse who delivers sessions on personal hygiene and handwashing.

The areas for development:

- Maintain current practice

Feedback to students

At the end of the summer term Mrs Carol Maher and I visited Monmouth Comprehensive School to observe all that is being done by the whole school community to make your school a healthy place in which to learn, develop skills, build relationships and become fully equipped to lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

From the moment we arrived we could really see that health and wellbeing was fully embedded in the culture and ethos of your school. What we saw, the conversations we had and what we experienced during our visit, evidenced very clearly just how positive and healthy a school Monmouth Comprehensive School is.

We would like to give a special thank-you to the students who guided us around your school – Sam (Year 7), Charlotte and Emily (Year 9), and Stephanie and Harry (Year 10) for making our tour of the school so informative and interesting.

There are many definitions of health; some speak of health as being simply ‘the absence of disease’. Unfortunately for many human beings this state of health is an unattainable goal! In our view a better understanding of health is that it is a resource for everyday life – we all possess this resource, the question is though what we do (or don’t do) and the choices we make, do we access and use this resource in the best possible way?

So much of what your school does is focussed on helping you use, maintain and protect that ‘resource for everyday life’. We congratulate everyone connected with Monmouth Comprehensive School on your school achieving the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes National Quality Award and we wish you a very happy and a very healthy future.

John Griffiths and Carol Maher

