



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Argoed High School
Bryn Road
Bryn Y Baal
Nr Mold
Flintshire
CH7 6RY**

Date of inspection: January 2016

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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Context

Argoed High School is an 11-16 mixed English-medium community comprehensive school in Flintshire serving the areas of Mynydd Isa, Buckley, Alltami, New Brighton and Sychdyn. Two per cent of pupils live in the 20% most deprived areas in Wales. Currently there are 590 pupils on roll and this is slightly higher than at the time of the last inspection.

Around 7% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is lower than the Welsh average of 17.4%. A very few pupils speak Welsh as a first language or speak Welsh at home. The proportion of pupils who come from ethnic minority groups is around 1.6%. A very few pupils have English as an additional language (EAL).

Fourteen and a half per cent of pupils have special educational needs, compared with 25.4% nationally, and 6.3% of pupils have statements of educational needs, compared with 2.5% nationally. The school has two specialist teaching facilities, one for pupils with speech and language difficulties and the other for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder.

The leadership of the school comprises the headteacher, who has been in post since 2011, three assistant headteachers and a business manager.

The individual school budget per pupil for Argoed School in 2015-2016 is £4,377 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the secondary schools in Flintshire is £4,933 and the minimum is £3,783. Argoed School is fifth out of the 12 secondary schools in Flintshire in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

The school's current performance	Adequate
The school's prospects for improvement	Adequate

Current performance

The school's current performance is adequate because:

- Performance in many indicators, including those that include English and mathematics, has fluctuated; while it was strong in 2012 and 2014, it was weaker in 2013 and much weaker in 2015
- Performance in the level 1 indicator has been high over the last four years and compares well with family and national averages
- Pupils with additional learning needs are supported well and generally make progress in line with expectations
- At key stage 4, the proportion of pupils achieving a level 2 course in Welsh second language compares well with family and national averages
- The majority of pupils make good progress in lessons
- Attendance rates have improved gradually during the last four years and are in line with modelled outcomes
- The attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals compares well with that of similar pupils in the family and nationally

However:

- There is too much variation in outcomes and, in 2013 and 2015, performance in many indicators was weaker than that of similar schools.
- More able pupils do not achieve as well as they should
- A minority of teachers over scaffold the learning and therefore limit the challenge to pupils in lessons
- A majority of written feedback does not give pupils clear enough guidance about how to improve subject specific skills
- In the last three years, boys' performance was lower than the average for boys in the family of schools in around half of indicators
- In 2015, boys and girls performed less well than the average for boys and girls in the family in many indicators

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are adequate because:

- Over the last four years, leadership has secured strong performance in many indicators in 2012 and 2014 and has improved attendance
- Leadership has been successful in securing high standards of wellbeing as well as further developing provision for more vulnerable learners
- The senior team work well together and are supportive of each other

- Senior and middle leaders have a developing understanding of their roles in quality assurance

However:

- The impact of leadership on maintaining high standards of achievement and improving aspects of provision has been more limited, particularly in 2013 and 2015
- The school's processes for evaluating pupils' work and lesson observations do not focus well enough on the standards that pupils achieve
- Senior leaders do not rigorously quality assure self-evaluation processes or analyse the findings sufficiently at whole-school level
- At senior leadership level, it is unclear who has the strategic overview of data, tracking and quality assurance

Recommendations

R1 Reduce the variation in standards at key stage 4 and improve the standards of groups of pupils, particularly the more able and talented

R2 Ensure that teaching meets the needs of all pupils and improve the quality of teachers' feedback

R3 Improve systems for tracking and monitoring the progress of pupils

R4 Improve the consistency and accountability of leaders at all levels

R5 Improve the rigour and quality of self-evaluation and improvement planning

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan, showing how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Adequate

Standards: Adequate

In key stage 4, performance in many indicators, including those that include English and mathematics, has fluctuated markedly over the last four years.

In 2012 and 2014 performance in the level 2 threshold including English and mathematics was well above or in line with modelled outcomes and placed the school in the top quarter of similar schools. However, performance in 2013 was below modelled outcomes and noticeably below in 2015, placing the school in the lower half and the bottom quarter of similar schools respectively and below family averages. Performance in the capped points score was in line with modelled outcomes in 2012 and 2014, placing the school in the lower half of similar schools, but below modelled outcomes in 2013 and 2015, placing the school in the bottom quarter for both those years. Performance in the level 2 indicator has fluctuated similarly and placed the school in the lower half of similar schools in 2012 and 2014, but in the bottom quarter in 2013 and 2015.

Performance in the level 1 indicator has been generally strong during the same period and has compared well with family and national averages. It currently places the school in the upper half of similar schools for a second year. The school's performance in the capped points score indicator including English and mathematics was at the average for the family in 2012 and 2014 but below it in 2013 and 2015. The proportion of pupils who achieve five A* to A grades at GCSE has been consistently below the average for the family for the last four years and also below the average nationally in 2013 and 2015.

Key stage 4 performance in English and mathematics has fluctuated over the last four years. In 2015, performance in both is below the average of the family and places the school in the lower half and bottom quarter of similar schools respectively.

In key stage 3, the proportion of pupils gaining level 5 or above in the core subject indicator has also fluctuated over the last four years. In 2015, performance in the core subject indicator and English has placed the school in the lower half of similar schools. Performance in mathematics and science has placed the school in the bottom quarter of similar schools.

Apart from in mathematics at level 7 and above, performance at level 6 and 7 and above in the core subjects has been lower than the average for similar schools in the last three years and has placed the school in the bottom quarter in 2015.

In 2015, pupils' progress from key stage 2 to key stage 4 has been significantly below expectations in many indicators, except in the level 1 threshold and the proportion of pupils achieving five A* to C grades at GCSE.

In 2015, there has been a decline in the performance of boys and girls in nearly all indicators compared with the previous year. However, girls' performance has

declined more noticeably in mathematics, and boys' performance has declined markedly in science. In both instances performance is significantly well below the average for similar pupils in the family.

The performance of pupils eligible for free schools meals has also fluctuated. In 2012 and 2014 these pupils performed much better than similar pupils in the family and nationally in most indicators, except the level 2 threshold where they performed less well than similar pupils in 2014. However, in 2013 and 2015, free-school-meal pupils performed noticeably less well than similar pupils in the family or nationally in most indicators, except in the level 1 threshold where their performance has been consistently high.

Nearly all pupils move on to further education, employment or training. Pupils with additional learning needs generally make progress in line with expectations.

In lessons, nearly all pupils participate enthusiastically. Many recall prior learning well and are able to apply this knowledge effectively to new situations. Most work readily and purposefully in groups and pairs. Most pupils are able to sustain their concentration well in lessons. However, a minority of particularly more able pupils do not make as much progress as they should.

Nearly all pupils listen attentively to their teachers and peers. Most speak confidently and express their ideas suitably well using subject specific vocabulary. However, a minority of pupils' responses are brief and underdeveloped when answering questions or expressing their reasons.

Most pupils read confidently and with expression. They are able to retrieve information well. A majority are able to draw suitable inferences from the texts that they read. In a majority of subjects, many pupils write longer texts confidently and mostly accurately. They use evidence appropriately to support their arguments. The most able give detailed explanations and have a secure sense of audience. However, in a minority of lessons, pupils do not write confidently without support, and a few find structuring longer pieces of text into paragraphs difficult.

In a minority of lessons, many pupils demonstrate strong thinking skills. Many pupils develop suitable numeracy skills and apply basic arithmetic rules appropriately. They collect and use data suitably and use this to draw relevant graphs. However, a minority of pupils do not use number skills confidently to solve problems.

Standards in Welsh are a strength of the school. While performance in key stage 3 at level 5 and above has placed the school in the bottom half of similar schools in the last three years, at key stage 4 the proportion of pupils achieving a level 2 in full course Welsh has been consistently well above family and national averages for the last four years. Performance in short course Welsh is also strong and is well above family and national averages in 2015.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all pupils feel safe in school and consider that the school deals well with the very few incidences of bullying. Most pupils have a good understanding of the importance of regular exercise and the need to eat healthily.

Nearly all pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. They arrive punctually to lessons. They participate enthusiastically in class, work effectively with their peers and show responsible attitudes towards school life. There have been no permanent exclusions during the last eight years. Rates of fixed-term exclusions are low and compare well with national figures.

Most pupils develop their social and life skills very well through participation in a very wide range of cultural, sporting, community and work-related activities, including yoga and ukulele clubs and close links to the Royal British Legion. Many pupils take on a wide range of responsibilities, for example providing support to younger pupils, helping to deliver personal and social education lessons, and contributing to subject self-evaluation groups. Members of the school council contribute constructively to decision-making, for example in staff appointments and in a review of key stage 4 option choices.

Attendance rates have improved gradually during the last four years and are in line with modelled outcomes. They are just below the median for similar schools. The attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals has also improved gradually and is above the averages for similar pupils in the family and nationally. Rates of persistent absence and the percentage of pupils persistently absent are low when compared to national figures and those of the family.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Good

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets statutory requirements. The key stage 3 curriculum builds appropriately upon pupils' experiences in key stage 2. At key stage 4, the school offers a comprehensive range of general courses including the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification. The school provides pupils with a wide range of valuable extra-curricular activities, including a chamber choir, debating society and handball club.

The school has useful systems to identify pupils requiring additional support in literacy and numeracy. Effective programmes are in place to track and support these pupils to make progress. A marking policy assists teachers and pupils in identifying and addressing common errors in literacy and numeracy. The school has made suitable progress in planning opportunities for pupils to develop and consolidate their skills progressively in relevant contexts. However, the implementation of these plans is in an early stage of development in a majority of subjects.

Welsh lessons have a prominent place in the school curriculum and the school allocates a significant proportion of curriculum time to the Welsh department. The school has appropriate arrangements to promote pupils' knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental and historical characteristics of Wales. These include the school Eisteddfod, visits to Glanllyn and useful links with the Urdd.

Subjects across the curriculum such as geography and science develop pupils' understanding of sustainability and global citizenship well. For example, skills

projects have been used to good effect to develop pupils' awareness of renewability. The school's active eco committee has promoted the concept of sustainability well through activities such as a tree-planting project and a school production using recycled materials for props and costumes.

Teaching: Adequate

Nearly all teachers have sound subject knowledge. They share with pupils clear, often well structured, lesson objectives. Generally, activities link well to prior learning and ensure that pupils engage quickly with tasks at the start of the lesson. The majority of lessons have appropriate pace and teachers use a wide range of activities and resources to engage pupils in their learning. Most teachers provide clear verbal feedback to help pupils' progress.

In many lessons, teachers ensure that questioning involves as many pupils as possible in discussion and is used well to assess pupils' learning. In a minority of lessons, questioning is a strong feature with teachers using open and probing questions to develop deeper understanding of important concepts and ideas. They use exemplars well to extend pupils' understanding of assessment criteria.

In a minority of lessons, teaching does not exploit fully the potential of all pupils either by limiting the challenge or by over-scaffolding the learning. This limits the progress that pupils make in these lessons.

Pupils receive frequent oral and written feedback from many teachers. In a few cases, pupils respond thoughtfully to the teacher's written comments and this helps in extending their learning significantly.

However, in a majority of instances, teachers' written feedback does not provide pupils with a clear enough indication of what they need to do to improve their subject specific skills and how to make these improvements. As a result, in these instances, pupils do not make the required improvements to the quality of their work.

Departments track the performance of pupils within subjects and pastoral leaders monitor performance across the subjects. However, there is no clear system to enable senior staff to track the performance across each year group. Therefore the information from tracking at department level is not used well enough at whole school level to predict and respond to underperformance, particularly across key performance indicators.

In addition to two parents' evenings, the school provides written progress reports twice a year for pupils in key stage 3 and key stage 4. However, the written reports for key stage 3 pupils do not provide parents with a clear enough indication of their child's progress against end of key stage targets.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school successfully encourages pupils to become actively involved in the life of the school and the wider community. Together with work in lessons, including the comprehensive personal and social education programme, this promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

The school's highly inclusive ethos ensures that pupils are well supported in a caring environment. All pupils are mentored by an individual member of staff. This support has a significant impact on pupils' social development, attendance and behaviour. There are very effective procedures to identify and meet the needs of vulnerable pupils. The school works well with a range of specialist services to provide advice and support to enable pupils to make well-informed choices at key stages in their time at school.

The school has suitable provision for promoting healthy eating and drinking and worthwhile arrangements to support pupils' health and wellbeing. A wide ranging enrichment programme, including sporting and cultural activities, and educational visits both locally and further afield, offers good support to the development of high standards of pupil wellbeing.

Additional learning needs staff have detailed knowledge of the needs of individual pupils, and this is communicated well to all teachers. As a result, teachers and support assistants provide well-targeted support for individuals and groups of pupils. The school has developed beneficial links with primary schools to ensure that pupils' needs are identified early and their progress is monitored carefully through regular reviews. Staff review and revise targets in individual education plans at appropriate intervals. They use these plans effectively to prepare activities that meet pupils' needs. Pupils who have specific difficulties make valuable progress as a result of planned interventions.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause concern.

Learning environment: Good

The school provides a caring and supportive environment with a nurturing ethos. The school is an inclusive community, which promotes equality and diversity well. Pupils feel that staff respect them and help them to develop mutual respect for others regardless of their background. The school identifies and addresses individual pupil needs well.

Overall, the accommodation is sufficient for the number of pupils on roll. The condition of most of the accommodation is good. The premises, including toilets and changing facilities, are well maintained, fit for purpose and treated with respect by pupils. Investments in technology and information and communication technology (ICT) facilities provide good quality resources for teaching and learning. The school makes good use of its accommodation to create a stimulating learning environment. Colourful displays in classrooms, corridors and communal areas illustrate and celebrate pupils' achievements and support pupils' learning well. The extensive school grounds are safe, secure and well maintained.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?
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Adequate

Leadership: Adequate

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school to provide inclusive education and promote pupils' wellbeing based on the school's motto 'Succeeding Together'. Since her appointment in 2011, there have been significant changes to the membership of the senior team. Senior leaders are supportive of each other and work well together.

An annual seconded post to the senior team helps build capacity at senior level and provides useful professional development opportunities for aspiring senior leaders. Roles and responsibilities at middle and senior leadership level have been redefined to align with the school's priorities for improvement. However, at senior leadership level, it is unclear who has the strategic overview of data, tracking and quality assurance. As a result, common areas for improvement identified at departmental level are not routinely tackled at a whole-school level.

Over the last four years, leadership has been successful in securing high standards of wellbeing as well as further developing provision for more vulnerable learners. However, its impact on maintaining high standards of achievement and improving aspects of provision has been more limited.

The school has a useful calendar of meetings to ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for leaders at all levels to come together. Line managers meet regularly with those they line manage and there is a clear focus on the majority of the important aspects of the school's work. Curriculum leaders regularly discuss aspects of provision and monitor progress in implementing the departmental improvement plan. However, these meetings do not focus enough on matters such as the outcomes of tracking activity and feedback from quality assurance processes.

Many middle leaders have a clear understanding of their role to develop provision and work well with colleagues to support pupils with additional learning needs. Their role in holding members of their department to account continues to develop appropriately.

The school has recently updated its performance management process. Although the process focuses well on teachers' professional development needs, objectives vary considerably in quality and the process is not implemented well enough to support school improvement fully.

The governing body is supportive of the school. Link governors provide beneficial support to curriculum leaders and have developed a sound understanding of their work in departments. Governors challenge the school to improve their work, although their understanding of the significance of important aspects of performance data is more variable.

Improving quality: Adequate

The school has recently refined its self-evaluation and planning for improvement processes. It makes suitable use of data to analyse the performance of most groups

of pupils and identify trends in performance, but does not currently compare itself well enough to similar schools. Overall, the school's self-evaluation is informative, and gives a detailed account of all aspects of the school's life. Pupils have suitable opportunities to express their views on learning experiences, as do parents. However, the report does not provide an accurate enough evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Senior and middle leaders have a developing understanding of their roles in quality assurance. Most middle leaders evaluate appropriately their areas of responsibility and provide a scrutiny of data against the family and national outcomes. However, a minority of middle leaders do not draw well enough from the full range of evidence to prioritise main areas for improvement. Their processes for evaluating pupils' work and lesson observations are not sufficiently robust and do not focus well enough on the standards that pupils achieve. Senior leaders do not rigorously quality assure these processes or analyse sufficiently the findings at whole-school level. As a result, leaders do not make strong enough connections between outcomes and the evaluations they make of teaching and assessment. This means that the school does not identify clearly enough what needs to improve.

The recently refreshed approach to improvement planning has resulted in a clear and concise school improvement plan. It identifies broadly appropriate priorities and includes a strong focus on improving the achievement of vulnerable pupils. It includes suitably costed actions along with appropriate monitoring points. Departmental action plans mirror the priorities in the school improvement plan. However, the targets and success criteria in the school and department plans are insufficiently precise for groups of pupils and subject areas to monitor progress and therefore secure sustained improvement.

Partnership working: Good

The school works effectively with a range of partner schools and organisations to provide a wide range of additional courses at key stage 4. It also makes beneficial use of partnerships with external agencies to secure additional support for pupils' wellbeing. The school's role as a Confucius school, promoting an understanding of the language and culture of China, and as a Hwb centre for excellence for ICT, has had a positive impact on its curriculum. Links with businesses and the local college enable the school to provide pupils with a range of valuable work-related learning experiences, and effective pathways are provided that ensure that nearly all pupils enter employment, education or training successfully when leaving school.

Collaboration with partner primary schools is well established. As a result, pupils settle quickly into Year 7 and make suitable progress in their skills' development from key stage 2 to key stage 3.

A varied range of activities help parents to support their children and, as a result, many parents feel confident about the constructive relationship they have with the school. The school undertakes satisfactory evaluations of most of its partnerships, but does not link them sufficiently well to pupils' outcomes.

Resource management: Adequate

The school is appropriately staffed to deliver the curriculum. Non-teaching staff provide valuable support to teachers and senior leaders. The school has a detailed programme of activity to support the continuous professional development of its staff. There are beneficial systems for staff to review the effectiveness of individual training activities, although key messages are not drawn together and evaluated at a whole-school level. This year, the school has introduced a useful triad programme to enable teachers to work together in small groups to discuss important aspects of teaching and learning. The school has developed useful links with other local schools to share effective practice in provision and self-evaluation. This work has led to the school reflecting on and amending its quality assurance processes.

The business manager and headteacher have a clear overview of the school's financial matters and spending decisions are planned and monitored well. The governing body's finance committee monitor this work during their termly meetings. For the last few years, the school has carried over a small surplus. The school uses the pupil deprivation grant well to support the wellbeing and achievements of disadvantaged pupils. Recent activities have impacted positively on attendance rates for these pupils, but the impact on their performance has been more variable.

Given the standards achieved by pupils, the school provides adequate value for money.

Appendix 1

6644042 - Argoed School

Number of pupils on roll	580
Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) - 3 year average	8.1
FSM band	1 (FSM<=10%)

Key stage 3

	School				Family average (2015)	Wales average (2015)
	2012	2013	2014	2015		
Number of pupils in Year 9 cohort	129	114	114	116		
Achieving the core subject indicator (CSI) (%)	86.8	82.5	91.2	91.4	92.1	83.9
Benchmark quartile	2	4	2	3		
English						
Number of pupils in cohort	129	114	114	116		
Achieving level 5+ (%)	90.7	84.2	95.6	92.2	94.6	87.9
Benchmark Quartile	2	4	1	3		
Achieving level 6+ (%)	38.8	31.6	66.7	53.4	67.6	52.6
Benchmark Quartile	4	4	2	4		
Welsh first language						
Number of pupils in cohort	.	.	.	.
Achieving level 5+ (%)	.	.	.	.	91.4	90.9
Benchmark Quartile	.	.	.	.
Achieving level 6+ (%)	.	.	.	.	32.8	56.1
Benchmark Quartile	.	.	.	.
Mathematics						
Number of pupils in cohort	129	114	114	116		
Achieving level 5+ (%)	91.5	89.5	91.2	92.2	94.9	88.7
Benchmark Quartile	2	3	4	4		
Achieving level 6+ (%)	63.6	64.9	67.5	60.3	71.9	59.5
Benchmark Quartile	2	3	3	4		
Science						
Number of pupils in cohort	129	114	114	116		
Achieving level 5+ (%)	93.8	90.4	94.7	94.8	97.1	91.8
Benchmark Quartile	2	4	4	4		
Achieving level 6+ (%)	55.0	59.6	64.0	61.2	71.0	58.5
Benchmark Quartile	3	3	3	4		

The core subject indicator (CSI) represents the percentage of pupils achieving level 5 or above in English or Welsh (first language), mathematics and science in combination.

. Denotes the data item is not applicable.

* This item may disclose information on individuals, or it is not sufficiently robust for publication, not applicable or is otherwise unavailable.

The benchmark quartile compares the performance of one school against others who have similar levels of pupils with free school meals (FSM). FSM is used as a proxy of social deprivation in schools. This allows a comparison of the performance of a school against others who are in the same FSM category, and who might therefore have a similar intake of pupils from deprived backgrounds.

A school in benchmark quartile 1 is in the highest performing 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals to this school. Therefore, the school's attainment levels are higher than many other schools with similar levels of pupils from deprived backgrounds. A school in benchmark quartile 4 is in the lowest performing 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals to this school. Therefore, the school's attainment levels are lower than many other schools with similar levels of pupils from deprived backgrounds.

The benchmarks for Welsh are calculated using all schools that have pupils taking Welsh first language qualifications, and are based on the number of entries and do not include Welsh second language qualifications.

6644042 - Argoed School

Number of pupils on roll 580
 Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) - 3 year average 8.1
 FSM band 1 (FSM<=10%)

Key stage 4

	School				Family average (2015)	Wales average (2015)
	2012	2013	2014	2015		
Number of pupils aged 15	107	117	124	115		
Percentage of 15-year-old pupils who:						
Achieved the level 2 threshold including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and mathematics	74.8	64.1	75.8	61.7	69.6	57.9
Benchmark quartile	1	3	1	4		
Achieved the level 2 threshold	84.1	77.8	86.3	80.9	90.5	84.1
Benchmark quartile	3	4	3	4		
Achieved the level 1 threshold	99.1	94.0	99.2	99.1	99.1	94.4
Benchmark quartile	1	4	2	2		
Achieved the core subject indicator (CSI)	73.8	61.5	64.5	53.0	65.6	54.8
Benchmark quartile	1	3	3	4		
Average capped wider points score per pupil	358.1	339.2	363.1	347.0	366.2	343.5
Benchmark quartile	3	4	3	4		
Average capped wider points score plus per pupil	356.1	336.0	360.1	344.5	363.3	338.7
Benchmark quartile	.	.	.	.
Achieved five or more GCSE grades A*-A	22.4	15.4	21.8	14.8	23.6	16.6
Benchmark quartile	.	.	.	.
Achieved A*-C in English	75.7	75.2	79.8	76.5	81.8	68.6
Benchmark quartile	3	3	2	3		
Achieved A*-C in mathematics	83.2	69.2	85.5	68.7	76.0	64.4
Benchmark quartile	1	3	1	4		
Achieved A*-C in science	85.0	69.2	69.4	67.8	85.1	84.0
Benchmark quartile	2	4	4	4		
Number of pupils aged 15 who entered Welsh First Language:	.	.	.	.
Of those who entered Welsh First Language:						
Achieved A*-C in Welsh	.	.	.	.	56.3	75.2
Benchmark quartile	.	.	.	.

Includes all qualifications approved for pre-16 use in Wales.

Includes results for 15-year-old pupils, in maintained schools and independent schools, achieved during the academic year and any examinations taken at earlier age. Ages at the start of the academic year.

The core subject indicator (CSI) represents the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 or above in English or Welsh (first language), mathematics and science in combination.

The average capped wider points score is calculated using the best 8 results from all qualifications approved for pre-16 use in Wales for each pupil.

For pupils entering Welsh First Language, the best grade of Welsh language and literature is taken. The denominator for this indicator is the number of 15 year olds who entered Welsh First Language, rather than the total number of 15 year olds.

. Denotes the data item is not applicable.

* This item may disclose information on individuals, or it is not sufficiently robust for publication, not applicable or is otherwise unavailable.

The benchmark quartile compares the performance of one school against others who have similar levels of pupils with free school meals (FSM). FSM is used as a proxy of social deprivation in schools. This allows a comparison of the performance of a school against others who are in the same FSM category, and who might therefore have a similar intake of pupils from deprived backgrounds.

A school in benchmark quartile 1 is in the highest performing 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals to this school. Therefore, the school's attainment levels are higher than many other schools with similar levels of pupils from deprived backgrounds. A school in benchmark quartile 4 is in the lowest performing 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals to this school. Therefore, the school's attainment levels are lower than many other schools with similar levels of pupils from deprived backgrounds.

The benchmarks for Welsh are calculated using all schools that have pupils taking Welsh first language qualifications, and are based on the number of entries and do not include Welsh second language qualifications.

6644042 - Argoed School

Number of pupils on roll 580
 Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) - 3 year average 8.1
 FSM band 1 (FSM<=10%)

Key stage 4 - performance of pupils eligible for free school meals

	School				Family Average (2015)	Wales Average (2015)
	2012	2013	2014	2015		
Number of pupils aged 15 eligible for free school meals	*	13	5	9		
Percentage of 15-year-old pupils eligible for free school meals who:						
Achieved the level 2 threshold including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and mathematics	*	7.7	60.0	33.3	41.0	31.6
Achieved the level 2 threshold	*	23.1	60.0	55.6	76.2	69.4
Achieved the level 1 threshold	*	84.6	100.0	100.0	99.0	89.4
Achieved the core subject indicator (CSI)	*	7.7	40.0	22.2	32.4	29.3
Average capped wider points score per pupil	*	242.9	323.6	321.0	335.7	303.7
Average capped wider points score plus per pupil	*	240.9	320.0	319.6	331.2	296.4
Achieved five or more GCSE grades A*-A	*	0.0	0.0	11.1	9.5	4.3
Achieved A*-C in English	*	30.8	60.0	55.6	57.1	45.1
Achieved A*-C in mathematics	*	23.1	60.0	66.7	51.4	39.2
Achieved A*-C in science	*	30.8	40.0	44.4	68.6	74.4
Number of pupils aged 15 who entered Welsh First Language:		
Of those who entered Welsh First Language:						
Achieved A*-C in Welsh	*	51.5

Includes all qualifications approved for pre-16 use in Wales.

Includes results for 15 year old pupils, in maintained schools and independent schools, achieved during the academic year and any examinations taken at earlier age. Ages at the start of the academic year.

The core subject indicator (CSI) represents the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 or above in English or Welsh (first language), mathematics and science in combination.

The average capped wider points score is calculated using the best 8 results from all qualifications approved for pre-16 use in Wales for each pupil.

For pupils entering Welsh First Language, the best grade of Welsh language and literature is taken. The denominator for this indicator is the number of 15 year olds who entered Welsh First Language, rather than the total number of 15 year olds.

. Denotes the data item is not applicable.

* This item may disclose information on individuals, or it is not sufficiently robust for publication, not applicable or is otherwise unavailable.

More information is available on the Welsh Government website, My Local School, in the link below.

<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/index.html?lang=eng>

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

denotes the benchmark - this is a total of all responses since September 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion		Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	
I feel safe in my school	157		65 41%	90 57%	1 1%	1 1%	Rwy'n teimlo'n ddiogel yn fy ysgol.
			44%	52%	4%	1%	
The school deals well with any bullying	154		33 21%	96 62%	19 12%	6 4%	Mae'r ysgol yn delio'n dda ag unrhyw fwlio.
			26%	57%	14%	3%	
I have someone to talk to if I am worried	157		61 39%	80 51%	13 8%	3 2%	Mae gen i rywun i siarad ag ef/â hi os ydw i'n poeni.
			38%	52%	8%	1%	
The school teaches me how to keep healthy	157		32 20%	95 61%	27 17%	3 2%	Mae'r ysgol yn fy nysgu i sut i aros yn iach.
			23%	56%	18%	3%	
There are plenty of opportunities at school for me to get regular exercise	155		89 57%	62 40%	2 1%	2 1%	Mae digonedd o gyfleoedd yn yr ysgol i mi gael ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
			45%	45%	9%	2%	
I am doing well at school	157		49 31%	95 61%	11 7%	2 1%	Rwy'n gwneud yn dda yn yr ysgol.
			32%	62%	5%	1%	
The teachers help me to learn and make progress and they help me when I have problems	156		47 30%	99 63%	8 5%	2 1%	Mae'r athrawon yn fy helpu i ddysgu a gwneud cynnydd ac maent yn fy helpu pan fydd gen i broblemau.
			38%	55%	6%	1%	
My homework helps me to understand and improve my work in school	155		32 21%	69 45%	44 28%	10 6%	Mae fy ngwaith cartref yn fy helpu i ddeall a gwella fy ngwaith yn yr ysgol.
			20%	54%	21%	5%	
I have enough books and equipment, including computers, to do my work	157		80 51%	68 43%	8 5%	1 1%	Mae gen i ddigon o lyfrau, offer a chyfrifiaduron i wneud fy ngwaith.
			45%	47%	7%	1%	
Pupils behave well and I can get my work done	156		12 8%	81 52%	49 31%	14 9%	Mae disgyblion eraill yn ymddwyn yn dda ac rwy'n gallu gwneud fy ngwaith.
			10%	56%	27%	6%	

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion		Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	
Staff treat all pupils fairly and with respect	155		48 31%	75 48%	27 17%	5 3%	Mae staff yn trin pob disgybl yn deg ac yn dangos parch atynt.
			29%	50%	17%	5%	
The school listens to our views and makes changes we suggest	153		27 18%	98 64%	23 15%	5 3%	Mae'r ysgol yn gwrandao ar ein barn ac yn gwneud newidiadau rydym ni'n eu hawgrymu.
			16%	53%	25%	5%	
I am encouraged to do things for myself and to take on responsibility	156		64 41%	87 56%	3 2%	2 1%	Rwy'n cael fy annog i wneud pethau drosaf fy hun a chymryd cyfrifoldeb.
			34%	60%	5%	1%	
The school helps me to be ready for my next school, college or to start my working life	155		58 37%	75 48%	19 12%	3 2%	Mae'r ysgol yn helpu i mi fod yn barod ar gyfer fy ysgol nesaf, y coleg neu i ddechrau fy mywyd gwaith.
			36%	54%	9%	1%	
The staff respect me and my background	153		54 35%	87 57%	10 7%	2 1%	Mae'r staff yn fy mharchu i a'm cefndir.
			37%	53%	7%	2%	
The school helps me to understand and respect people from other backgrounds	152		60 39%	81 53%	9 6%	2 1%	Mae'r ysgol yn helpu i mi ddeall a pharchu pobl o gefndiroedd eraill.
			36%	56%	7%	1%	
Please answer this question if you are in Year 10 or Year 11: I was given good advice when choosing my courses in key stage 4	68		20 29%	34 50%	7 10%	7 10%	Atebwch y cwestiwn hwn os ydych ym Mlwyddyn 10 neu Flwyddyn 11: Cefais gyngor da wrth ddewis fy nghyrsiau yng nghyfnod allweddol 4.
			28%	51%	16%	5%	
Please answer this question if you are in the sixth form: I was given good advice when choosing my courses in the sixth form	16		3 19%	7 44%	4 25%	2 12%	Atebwch y cwestiwn hwn os ydych chi yn y chweched dosbarth: Cefais gyngor da wrth ddewis fy nghyrsiau yn y chweched dosbarth.
			27%	50%	16%	7%	

Responses to parent questionnaires

denotes the benchmark - this is a total of all responses since September 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
Overall I am satisfied with the school.	59	25 42%	25 42%	8 14%	1 2%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r ysgol yn gyffredinol.
		44%	50%	5%	1%		
My child likes this school.	59	33 56%	22 37%	3 5%	1 2%	0	Mae fy mhentyn yn hoffi'r ysgol hon.
		47%	48%	4%	1%		
My child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the school.	58	30 52%	24 41%	3 5%	1 2%	0	Cafodd fy mhentyn gymorth i ymgartrefu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn yr ysgol.
		51%	45%	4%	1%		
My child is making good progress at school.	58	25 43%	28 48%	4 7%	1 2%	1	Mae fy mhentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn yr ysgol.
		46%	49%	4%	1%		
Pupils behave well in school.	56	14 25%	37 66%	5 9%	0 0%	3	Mae disgyblion yn ymddwyn yn dda yn yr ysgol.
		25%	60%	12%	3%		
Teaching is good.	55	15 27%	33 60%	6 11%	1 2%	4	Mae'r addysgu yn dda.
		35%	59%	5%	1%		
Staff expect my child to work hard and do his or her best.	57	29 51%	21 37%	7 12%	0 0%	1	Mae'r staff yn disgwyl i fy mhentyn weithio'n galed ac i wneud ei orau.
		51%	46%	2%	1%		
The homework that is given builds well on what my child learns in school.	55	15 27%	32 58%	6 11%	2 4%	4	Mae'r gwaith cartref sy'n cael ei roi yn adeiladu'n dda ar yr hyn mae fy mhentyn yn ei ddysgu yn yr ysgol.
		33%	56%	9%	2%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	57	18 32%	25 44%	11 19%	3 5%	2	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
		35%	52%	10%	3%		
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	57	21 37%	30 53%	6 11%	0 0%	2	Caiff fy mhentyn ei annog i fod yn iach ac i wneud ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		35%	56%	8%	1%		
My child is safe at school.	58	24 41%	33 57%	1 2%	0 0%	1	Mae fy mhentyn yn ddiogel yn yr ysgol.
		43%	53%	3%	1%		
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs'.	50	20 40%	22 44%	4 8%	4 8%	8	Mae fy mhentyn yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		37%	52%	8%	2%		
I am kept well informed about my child's progress.	57	19 33%	22 39%	10 18%	6 11%	2	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyson am gynnydd fy mhentyn.
		35%	51%	12%	3%		

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
I feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem.	59	29 49%	21 36%	6 10%	3 5%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n esmwyth ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwn i'r ysgol, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problem.
		43%	49%	7%	2%		
I understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints.	53	16 30%	31 58%	5 9%	1 2%	6	Rwy'n deall trefn yr ysgol ar gyfer delio â chwynion.
		31%	56%	11%	2%		
The school helps my child to become more mature and take on responsibility.	57	26 46%	27 47%	4 7%	0 0%	1	Mae'r ysgol yn helpu fy mhlentyn i ddod yn fwy aeddfed ac i ysgwyddo cyfrifoldeb.
		38%	55%	6%	1%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to the next school or college or work.	52	21 40%	22 42%	8 15%	1 2%	6	Mae fy mhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda ar gyfer symud ymlaen i'r ysgol nesaf neu goleg neu waith.
		32%	55%	10%	2%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	59	28 47%	28 47%	3 5%	0 0%	0	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweliadau.
		37%	51%	10%	2%		
The school is well run.	56	22 39%	28 50%	3 5%	3 5%	3	Mae'r ysgol yn cael ei rhedeg yn dda.
		43%	50%	5%	2%		

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Mrs Mamta Arnott	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Karen Newby Jones	Team Inspector
Mrs Catherine Evans	Team Inspector
Mr Alan Lowndes	Team Inspector
Mr James Kerry George Jones	Lay Inspector
Mr Martin Howell	Peer Inspector
Mrs Kathleen Edwards (Deputy Head)	Nominee

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

Year groups, the Foundation Phase 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 local authorities.

The following table sets out the age ranges relevant to each year group. For example, Year 1 refers to the group of pupils who reach the age of six and Year 13 is the year group who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The Foundation Phase and key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Nursery, Reception, 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

Glossary of terms

Key stage 3 terms

The core subject indicator (CSI)

Progress in learning through key stage 3 is indicated by levels (level 1 to level 7 in the main).

The core subject indicator in key stage 3 relates to the expected performance in the core subjects of the National Curriculum:

- English or Welsh ¹
- mathematics
- science

By the end of the key stage 3, at the age of 14, pupils are expected to reach level 5 and more able pupils to reach level 6 or above.

Pupils must gain at least the expected level (level 5) in the three core subjects to gain the core subject indicator.

Key stage 4 and sixth form terms

Core subject indicator (CSI)	This relates to the expected performance in English or Welsh, mathematics and science, the core subjects of the National Curriculum.
Families of schools	These have been created to enable schools to compare their performance to that of similar schools across Wales. Families include nine other schools with similar proportions of pupils: eligible for free school meals, living in 20% most deprived areas of Wales, having special education needs at school action plus or statemented and with English as an additional language acquisition less than competent.
Level 1	This represents the equivalent of a GCSE at grade D to G.
Level 1 threshold	This represents the equivalent of five GCSEs at grade D to G.
Level 2	This represents the equivalent of a GCSE at grade A* to C.

¹ This indicator does not include Welsh second language qualifications.

Level 2 threshold including English or Welsh ¹ and mathematics	This represents the equivalent of five GCSEs at grade A* to C including English or Welsh ¹ and mathematics.
Level 2 threshold	This represents five GCSEs at grade A* to C or their equivalent.
Level 3	This represents the equivalent of an A level at grade A*-E.
Level 3 threshold	This is the equivalent of two A levels at grade A* to E.
Average wider points score	This includes all qualifications approved for use in Wales at the relevant age, for example at the age of 16 or at the age of 18.
Capped wider points score	This includes the best eight results from all qualifications approved for use in Wales at the age of 16.
Benchmarking groups	Schools are grouped together according to the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals in order to compare their performance with similar schools in different indicators.
Modelled outcomes	This is a prediction of a school's mean performance based on the statistical relationship between the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals and a particular indicator.