



*Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all*

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg  
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**Mountain Ash Comprehensive School  
New Road  
Mountain Ash  
CF45 4DG**

**Date of inspection: February 2012**

**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:

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

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

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## Context

Mountain Ash Comprehensive School is an English medium 11-18, mixed comprehensive school, maintained by Rhondda Cynon Taf local authority. There are 935 pupils on roll, of whom 135 are in the sixth form. It serves the small town of Mountain Ash and its surrounding villages. The area is economically and socially disadvantaged, with only a small minority of pupils coming from advantaged backgrounds. Around 34% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, compared with 17.4% nationally. Seventy-five per cent pupils live within the 20% most deprived wards in Wales. Around half of pupils arrive in year 7 with reading ages at least six months below their chronological age. Thirty-five per cent of pupils arrive without functional reading age. The school has significant pupil mobility because of the high number of rented accommodation. Very few pupils speak Welsh as their first language and there are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.

The school is a member of the Cynon Valley consortium for post-16 education. Students attend courses at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School, other schools and the local college.

The current headteacher was appointed in April 2010 and the current deputy head teacher in September 2011. They are joined by three assistant head teachers to make up the senior management team.

The individual school budget per pupil for Mountain Ash Comprehensive School in 2011-2012 means that the budget is £4,212 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the secondary schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf is £4,511 and the minimum is £3,634. Mountain Ash Comprehensive School is sixth out of the 19 secondary schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf in terms of its school budget per pupil.

## Summary

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

The good features in the school's work include:

- the improvement in performance over recent years, which now compares well with that of similar schools;
- the majority of pupils read and write well, and effectively develop their knowledge, understanding and skills;
- pupils joining the school with weak reading skills make good progress;
- the good quality of teaching by the majority of the staff;
- the behaviour of pupils and their positive attitudes to learning;
- the high level of care and support for all pupils; and
- an effective partnership arrangement that supports the most vulnerable pupils very successfully.

However, current performance is judged as adequate overall because:

- in a minority of lessons pupils do not make enough progress in gaining new knowledge understanding and skills;
- middle ability boys and pupils entitled to free school meals do not achieve as well as others in similar schools;
- a minority of pupils do not make enough progress in developing their writing skills;
- attendance rates are lower than those in similar schools;
- standards in Welsh second language in key stage 4 are too low; and
- teachers' expectation of pupils' progress is not high enough in a minority of lessons.

### Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are judged as good because:

- the headteacher has a clear strategic vision for the school and is supported well by the senior leadership team;
- there is a positive trend of improvement in achievement and attendance;
- there are effective systems for the performance management of staff;
- there is a suitable range of procedures for monitoring and evaluation;
- managers make good use of data to evaluate performance;
- the school improvement plan includes challenging targets; and
- there are effective systems for monitoring the budget to ensure prudent spending for the future.

## **Recommendations**

The staff and governors of Mountain Ash Comprehensive School need to:

- R1 improve the achievement of middle ability boys and pupils entitled to free school meals;
- R2 improve pupils' writing skills;
- R3 increase attendance rates;
- R4 improve standards in Welsh second language; and
- R5 increase the challenge of teaching to match that in the best lessons.

### **What happens next?**

The school will draw up an action plan, which shows 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

Performance at key stage 3 has improved over the last three years and is now above the average of similar schools. However, performance in writing and at the higher levels in mathematics is not as strong as that in similar schools.

Performance at key stage 4 is generally higher than that of the family of schools and above expectations. Performance in those indicators that include English and mathematics has generally improved over the last four years and is in the top quarter in 2011 when compared to that of similar schools in terms of free-school-meals benchmarks. Most pupils gain qualifications in essential skills in key stage 3. Very few pupils fail to gain a recognised qualification at the end of key stage 4 and very few Year 11 pupils who left school in 2011 are reported as being not in education, employment or training. Performance in the sixth form has generally been just below the Wales average over recent years.

Boys do not achieve as well as girls in most indicators at key stage 3 and key stage 4, particularly in those indicators that include English and mathematics. These differences are wider than Wales and family averages. Both at key stage 3 and key stage 4, pupils receiving free school meals do not achieve as well as similar pupils when compared with Wales or family averages, in indicators that include both English and mathematics.

Pupils effectively develop their knowledge, understanding and skills, in a majority of lessons. In a minority of lessons, where there is insufficient challenge, pupils do not make enough progress. In these lessons, pupils do not make sufficient gains in understanding new concepts or develop their thinking, writing or mathematical skills well enough. Sometimes a minority of pupils lose interest in their work.

Most pupils can express their ideas orally well and when given opportunities, offer clear explanations. Most pupils listen well to each other and respond positively to their teachers.

A majority of pupils across the school read fluently and are able to select relevant information from a range of texts to show a clear understanding. However, a minority of pupils struggle to read texts confidently. A minority of pupils arrive in Year 7 without the reading skills that allow them to access the curriculum successfully. These pupils make significant progress in intervention groups and only a very few do not have these skills by the end of key stage 3.

A majority of pupils are able to produce accurate written work for a wide range of audiences and purposes. However, a minority make too many basic errors in grammar or spelling. In general, boys' writing skills are not as well developed as those of girls.

Pupils have positive attitudes to developing their knowledge of Welsh. They are increasingly able to use Welsh in contexts other than Welsh lessons. In Welsh second language at key stage 3, performance is above family averages and has improved over the last three years. However, at key stage 4, the proportion that gains a level 2 qualification in short course Welsh is very low.

**Wellbeing: Good**

Pupils feel safe and very well supported in the school. They feel that the school deals effectively with any incidents related to bullying. Most pupils understand what it is to be healthy and an increasing numbers of them choose a healthy meal in the newly established 'Caffi MACS' canteen. Most pupils have regular opportunities for exercise. The school offers a very wide range of physical activities during lunchtime and after school, which are very well attended.

Pupils' behaviour in most lessons and around the school is very good. They arrive punctually for lessons, are keen to learn and take part willingly in activities. Attendance has steadily improved over the last three years. Even so, in 2011 the school is in the third quarter of similar schools and just below the average for the family.

Pupils take part in a wide range of community activities and contribute well to many aspects of school life. Specific pupils benefit from valuable targeted support to raise their self-esteem and improve their wellbeing.

The School Council, known as the 'Senedd', is very effective. It contributed to the appointment process of senior members of staff, made decisions about improvements to the school environment, and is involved purposefully in the school's self-evaluation process. Members provide valuable information to the headteacher regarding health and safety issues, and are in the early stage of developing their role as 'learning investigators' to influence teaching and learning.

Pupils have well-developed social and life skills. They show a high level of respect and care for each other, to staff and to visitors to the school. Most pupils have the skills to move on to the next stage of learning.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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**Learning experiences: Good**

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets the needs of all learners. In particular, the curriculum has had a positive impact on the number of pupils attaining the level 2 threshold. In the sixth form, effective collaboration with other providers ensures that all learners can choose from a comprehensive range of academic and vocational courses. The school provides a wide range of well attended extra-curricular activities. There are especially high levels of participation by pupils of all ages in the 'E3' project, which is an initiative, run by the local authority, offering a wide range of after-school activities.

There are effective transition arrangements in place to ensure that pupils build on their knowledge, understanding and skills gained from primary school. The recent introduction of the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification for all pupils in key stage 4 and a minority of pupils in the sixth form offers wider opportunities for pupils of all abilities.

Pupils with weak literacy and numeracy skills receive a very effective personalised programme to meet individual needs. However, only a few subject departments adapt work appropriately to support the development of these pupils' literacy skills, particularly in writing in mainstream lessons.

The Welsh dimension features well in the majority of subjects, and through the ethos and activities of the school. The use of the Welsh language by both pupils and staff is a strong feature of the school. The majority of staff and pupils are confident in using Welsh in lessons. There are good opportunities to celebrate Welsh culture including eisteddfodau, residential courses and in school competitions.

Pupils gain a secure understanding of global citizenship through international links, the personal and social education programme, and subjects such as religious studies, science and geography. There is appropriate provision to enable pupils to learn about sustainability.

### **Teaching: Adequate**

In the very few outstanding lessons, teachers have very high expectations of their pupils, stimulate them to think and to evaluate their own work, and challenge them to reach the very highest levels of attainment. In most lessons there are good working relationships between teachers and pupils. A majority of teachers set clear learning objectives and plan their lessons well to ensure a logical and progressive structure. A majority of teachers use a variety of questions skilfully to probe and extend pupils' understanding.

The majority of teachers have suitable expectations of what pupils should achieve. However, in a minority of lessons, teachers' expectations are not high enough. In these lessons, pupils are set tasks that do not fully capture their interest, develop their writing skills well enough nor challenge them to make enough progress in their knowledge and understanding. A minority of teachers do not adapt work well enough to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities. As a result, pupils in need of support do not make sufficient progress and more able pupils do not develop their thinking and subject specific skills enough.

Nearly all teachers mark and assess learners' work regularly. The majority of teachers provide appropriate subject specific feedback to pupils that help pupils to make progress. However, in a minority of books, marking does not clearly identify the areas for improvement.

Staff use an appropriate whole-school tracking system well to monitor pupils' progress, including identifying those who are underachieving. Annual reports provide parents with relevant information on their children's progress, effort and attainment. In a minority of cases, comments are not specific enough and do not give pupils a clear indication of how to improve.



### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

The school provides a high level of care. Provision for personal and social education, and for developing and supporting pupils' health and wellbeing, is very effective. This has a positive impact on improving pupils' behaviour and attendance. The school has established a wide range of highly effective initiatives for promoting health and wellbeing, which includes the Year 7 health and wellbeing day, the mental health project and the innovative 'Caffi MACS' school canteen.

The school works effectively with a wide range of specialist services to improve pupils' wellbeing and has very good procedures for identifying pupils who need support. This is well co-ordinated across the school.

The school successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and assemblies provide useful opportunities for reflection.

Effective transition arrangements with partner primary schools ensure that pupils in Year 7 settle in well. Parents and pupils receive valuable advice and helpful support, for example when making option choices or considering future careers.

Well-qualified and highly-trained support staff and sixth-form pupils provide beneficial targeted support for individuals and small groups of pupils. This has resulted in significant improvements in these pupils' reading and numeracy skills, their confidence and their ability to access the curriculum.

The majority of pupils with additional learning needs make good progress. However, a minority of pupils do not receive work that is well matched to their individual abilities nor the specific support they require to help them progress in mainstream lessons. The annual review process for pupils with special educational needs satisfies statutory requirements. However, individual education plans do not always identify appropriate learning targets that are known, used and reviewed effectively by staff and pupils across the school. The school uses a good range of strategies to keep parents of pupils with additional learning needs well informed about their child's education and to encourage them to be fully involved.

The school has procedures and an appropriate policy for safeguarding.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The school's inclusive and caring ethos identifies pupils' individual needs and addresses them well. The school promotes an understanding of diversity and respect for people from different backgrounds and successfully challenges stereotypes. There are appropriate arrangements to ensure that pupils with physical disabilities are not disadvantaged in any way.

The accommodation is of high quality and very well maintained. Attractive displays along the corridors and in most classrooms enhance the learning environment. Pupils have access to a very wide range of learning resources. Provision for information and communication technology is particularly good.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Leadership: Good**

Despite standards being adequate, leadership is good because it has contributed significantly to the improvements in standards and attendance. The headteacher has a clear strategic vision that is well understood by staff and pupils. He is well supported by his senior management team and together they give effective direction to the school's work. Leadership has introduced a series of successful measures to improve pupils' aspirations and to ensure greater consistency in the work of the school.

Senior managers are well informed about the work of departments and year groups, and provide good levels of support. There are suitable systems for performance management of staff and the school challenges underperformance well. Most middle managers are fully accountable for their areas of responsibility. Most staff at all levels are clear about their roles and responsibilities and carry them out well.

Governors are well informed about the performance of the school and offer a suitable level of challenge and constructive criticism to the school. The governing body is well organised and plays a useful role in the development of improvement strategies and monitoring progress.

The school takes appropriate account of local and national priorities such as raising levels of literacy, healthy living and the Welsh dimension.

### **Improving quality: Adequate**

The school has a well-planned programme for self-evaluation and improvement planning. This includes appropriate systems to gather the views of pupils and parents. The school's self-evaluation report contains a very detailed and accurate analysis of data. It is mainly evaluative and provides suitable evidence to present a valid picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses in most areas.

Performance data is used effectively by many middle managers to monitor progress and plan for improvement. However, a minority do not use data well enough to compare performance with that of similar schools.

Leaders and middle managers draw on a wide range of first-hand evidence of teaching and learning from lesson observations, departmental reviews and book scrutiny. However, the evaluation from reviews and lesson observations does not lead systematically into improving planning and teaching. The school improvement plan contains challenging targets to improve pupil outcomes, but it does not focus strongly enough on improving teaching. There is a suitable link between the school improvement plan and departmental plans.

Actions from self-evaluation have led to improvements in the curriculum, examination outcomes and the quality of support for many pupils. The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection. However, there are still shortcomings in attendance and aspects of improving pupils' assessment of their own learning.

Continuous professional development activities support staff well. The school plans

these activities carefully. They are clearly linked to performance management targets as well as departmental improvement priorities. The school provides valuable opportunities for teachers to develop their leadership skills through secondments to the extended leadership team. All teachers are involved in working groups within the school that focus appropriately on national priorities. The school has made suitable progress in establishing links with other schools in their family to improve teaching and learning. Most of these groups are at an early stage of development.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The school has developed a wide range of effective partnerships with other schools, organisations, agencies and employers. These partnerships contribute successfully to the wellbeing and learning experiences of pupils.

The school plays a productive role in the Cynon Valley Consortium, which is a formal partnership at post-16 between local schools. There are appropriate quality assurance procedures in place for the collaborative provision. This partnership has led to greater choice and significantly improved outcomes for sixth-form pupils.

The school has strong links with parents. Parents have useful opportunities to discuss problems, attendance and their children's progress.

The school takes a leading role in the 'Mountain Ash Partnership', which brings together a number of key partners in the community. The partnership has established a number of effective projects and initiatives, such as the school's robotics innovation centre. This project provides pupils and members of the local community, with stimulating opportunities to learn through play and develop thinking skills. The partnership has had a positive impact on improving pupils' attendance.

The school works effectively in partnership with the 'Bryncynon strategy', a local community charity, to deliver the 'KeyStart' programme, which supports more vulnerable key stage 4 pupils. These pupils spend time on valuable work placements to achieve a wide range of vocational qualifications. This enables them to progress successfully to further education and work-based learning. Almost all pupils completing this programme have achieved a positive outcome and are well prepared for their next stage of learning.

### **Resource management: Adequate**

The school is appropriately staffed to meet the requirements of the curriculum and support learning. There are enough suitably qualified teaching staff with appropriate expertise. The school manages resources very well and there are very good levels of efficiency and cost-effectiveness, for example through the development of 'Caffi MACS' and the effective 'Key Start' programme. Effective partnership arrangements enable the sixth form to provide good value for money

The school carefully monitors the costs of its improvement plans and is successfully managing a reducing budget due to falling rolls. The headteacher and governors use a wide range of sources of funding to support the school effectively.

As standards in the school are judged to be adequate, the school provides adequate value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Commentary on performance data

In key stage 3, performance in the core subject indicator has improved over the last three years. In 2011, the proportion of pupils attaining the core subject indicator (CSI) was just above the average for the family of schools benchmarks and a little above modelled expectations. This placed the school in the top quarter in 2011, when compared with similar schools based on the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. During the previous three years, it was in the bottom quarter or lower half when compared with similar schools.

Performance in English, mathematics, and science has improved during the last three years. In 2011, performance in English, mathematics and science placed the school in the top quarter of similar schools based on free-school-meal benchmarks. At level 6 and above, English performance was above the family average and science performance was similar to it, while performance levels in mathematics were below. A small proportion of pupils achieved level 7 or above in English, mathematics and science. Overall, pupils make good progress from the previous key stage.

In key stage 4, the proportion of pupils attaining the level 2 threshold including English and mathematics has generally improved over the in the last four years. It has placed the school in the lower half in comparison with similar schools in terms of free-school-meal benchmarks in three of the last four years. In 2011, it was just above family averages, a little above modelled expectations and placed the school in the top quarter when compared to similar schools in terms of free-school-meal benchmarks. Performance in the core subject indicator has fluctuated over the last three years, but is consistently in line with family averages and, in 2011, it placed the school in the top half of similar schools in terms of free-school-meals benchmarks.

In 2011, performance in the capped wider points score was above family averages and placed the school in the top quarter of similar schools. Attainment of the level 2 threshold has shown continuous improvement since 2008 and consistently places the school in the top benchmark quarter when compared with similar schools. Performance in the English level 2 has been declining since 2008, but it is still above family averages and places school in top benchmark quarter when compared with similar schools. Performance in mathematics at level 2 is improving and is in the top half when compared with performance levels in similar schools. Performance in science at level 2 has improved greatly in the last two years, is above family average and, in 2011, placed the school in the top benchmark quarter when compared with similar schools.

The proportion of pupils attaining the level 1 threshold has fluctuated over the last three years. In 2011, it was broadly in line with family averages and placed the school in the top half benchmark quarter when compared with similar schools. When compared with their performance in previous key stages, learners make very good progress in nearly all indicators.

The percentage of learners leaving school without a qualification in 2011 was extremely low. It has improved over the last three years and is now better than the family and Wales averages. In the sixth form, a very high percentage of sixth form pupils gained the level 3 threshold. Pupils' attainment on the wider points score was a little below local and national averages in 2011.

In key stage 3 and key stage 4, boys perform worse than girls in most indicators. At key stage 3, the difference between the performances of boys and girls in the CSI is the third largest in the family and much wider than the family average. This is mainly due to performance in English, but the gaps are also large in mathematics and science. At key stage 4, girls perform significantly better than boys in the level 2 threshold including English or Welsh and mathematics, and in the CSI. In 2011, the difference in the performance of boys and girls was considerably wider than family and Wales averages in most indicators.

In key stage 3, pupils receiving free school do not perform as well in the CSI when compared with family, local authority or Wales averages. In key stage 4, pupils receiving free school do not perform at the level 2 threshold including English and mathematics to the levels achieved on average by those in other similar schools, or the average for Wales. In relation to attainment of the level 2 threshold, the gap between them and other pupils has decreased. Pupils with special educational needs make the expected progress.

In Welsh second language at key stage 3, performance is above family averages and has improved over the last three years. At key stage 4, the percentage of the cohort entered for full-course Welsh is low and the proportion that gains a level 2 qualification in short-course Welsh is low.

## Appendix 2

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Response to learner questionnaires

Estyn received responses from 253 pupils, selected at random across all year groups.

Nearly all pupils feel safe at school and most feel that they have someone to talk to if they are worried. Many pupils believe that the school deals well with any bullying and a majority think that pupils behave well. Most pupils feel that they are encouraged to take on responsibility and to do things for themselves. Nearly all pupils feel that they are doing well and that teachers help them to progress and prepare for their future.

Most learners confirm that the school helps them to understand and respect people from other backgrounds. Many feel that staff treat them fairly and with respect. Many learners feel that the school takes account of their views.

Most pupils think that they have enough books, equipment and computers to do their work. Many pupils say that the school teaches them to be healthy and most say that they have plenty of opportunities at school to get regular exercise. Most pupils feel that the school prepares them well for their next stage in life.

These responses compare very favourably with the views of pupils in other secondary schools.

#### Response to parent questionnaires

Estyn received 222 completed questionnaires from parents or carers. Of those that responded, most parents gave a positive or very positive response to most questions.

Nearly all parents are pleased with the school and most think that their children like school and are doing well. Nearly all parents feel that their children are safe in school and most think pupils behave well.

Nearly all parents believe that their children are expected to work hard and that teaching is good. Nearly all say that there is a good range of activities, visits and opportunities for exercise. Many think that homework helps their children to make progress. Most parents feel that the school is well led. Most parents understand the school's procedures for dealing with complaints and feel comfortable about approaching the school if they have any questions or concerns.

Most parents think that the school helps their children to mature and take on responsibility. Most parents believe that their children receive the right level of additional support for their learning and many believe that their children are well prepared to move on to their next stage of education or employment. Most parents feel that staff treat pupils with respect and that they are well informed about their children's progress.

Most of these responses compare very favourably with the views of parents in other secondary schools.

### Appendix 3

#### The inspection team

Ceri Jones HMI	Reporting Inspector
Jackie Gapper HMI	Team Inspector
Meinir Rees HMI	Team Inspector
Peter Harris	Team Inspector
Sandra Barnard HMI	Shadow
Edward Tipper	Lay Inspector
Marc Belli	Peer Inspector
Martin Franklin	School Nominee

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))

Under the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school must provide copies of the report to all parents of the school. Where a pupil is subject to placement by a local authority, a copy of the report should be sent by the school to each relevant authority.

### Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

Year	FPR	FPY1	FPY2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	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 four key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	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

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 schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to 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 a volume of learning equivalent to five GCSEs at grade D to G.
Level 2	This represents the equivalent of a GCSE at grade A* to C.
Level 2 threshold including English or Welsh first language and mathematics	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to five GCSEs at grade A* to C including English or Welsh first language and mathematics.
Level 2 threshold	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to five GCSEs at grade A* to C.
Level 3	This represents the equivalent of an A level at grade A*-E.
Level 3 threshold	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to 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.
All-Wales Core Data sets	Schools and local authorities may refer to performance relative to their family of schools. These families of schools have been created to enable schools to compare their performance to that of similar schools across Wales. Families include schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to 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.