



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales



WALES AUDIT OFFICE

SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

**A report on the quality of local authority education
services
for children and young people**

in

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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 provider's current performance and on their capacity to improve.

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

Excellent

Good

Adequate

Unsatisfactory

The report was produced in accordance with section 38 of the Education Act 1997, the Children Act 2004 and the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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Context

Context

The Isle of Anglesey is situated in North West Wales.

In the Isle of Anglesey, 60.9% of people over the age of three say they can speak Welsh compared to the Wales average of 24.8%.

The employment rate in the Isle of Anglesey was 69.5% compared to the Wales average of 66.4%. There are 11.1% of children living in workless households.

Of the working population in the Isle of Anglesey, 11.5% have no qualifications, which is lower than the Wales average of 13.7%.

The percentage of pupils of compulsory school age eligible for free school meals is 18.8%, lower than 19.7% nationally. This level of eligibility is the 11th highest in Wales (PLASC 2011). Only two of the 44 areas in the Isle of Anglesey are now in the 10% most deprived area in Wales.

As of 31 March 2011, the Isle of Anglesey had 80 children being looked after by the authority. There were 35 children on the Child Protection register.

Ethnic minorities account for 0.6% of the population, lower than the Wales average of 3.6%.

Funding

The Welsh Government's Standard Spending Assessment (SEA) for Isle of Anglesey County Council in 2011-12 is £1,764 per head, which is slightly above Wales' average. A net revenue budget of £118.9 million (excluding specific grants) has been set, which is 1.3% less than the previous year and lower than the SSA.

The authority set a net education budget of £48.7 million for 2011-2012, an increase of 1.4% compared to 2010-2011, and equivalent to £5,242 per pupil, which is the third highest in Wales. However, the increase in schools' delegated funds was less than 1%. Primary schools' delegated funds were equivalent to £3,739 per pupil (including specific grants), substantially below Wales' average of £3,821 per pupil. In the secondary sector, the delegated budget was £4,037 per pupil, compared to an average of £4,272 per pupil across Wales. Welsh Government statistics show that 66.3% of the funds available for schools was delegated, which is the lowest amongst authorities in Wales. This was increased to 80.4% by 2012-2013, in line with the expectations of the WG.

The authority has spent £24.9 million of capital funds on education projects since 2004-2005. Considering the size of the authority, this expenditure is similar to the average across Wales. However, the capital expenditure has been relatively small since 2010-2011, and the commitment that has been secured for the future from the Welsh Government's Twenty First Century Schools' fund is small.

Corporate leadership

In August 2008, concerns about the performance of the Isle of Anglesey County Council, particularly in terms of corporate governance and the effectiveness of the local democratic process, resulted in ministerial intervention and the appointment of an Intervention Board and an Interim Managing Director.

In March 2011, the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government appointed five commissioners to take responsibility for corporate governance, including the decision-making functions of the Council. The Commissioners have been authorised by Welsh Ministers to exercise all the functions of the executive. In the meantime, the council's Director of Education and Leisure was appointed interim Chief Executive.

Each of the Commissioners has corporate and individual executive responsibilities and functions, including responsibility for the Lifelong Learning portfolio.

In April 2011, the interim Chief Executive was appointed to the permanent post and a new Director of Lifelong Learning was appointed in April 2012.

Summary

Overall judgement: Unsatisfactory

The local authority's education services for children and young people are unsatisfactory because:

- standards for children and young people are below what could be expected at all key stages;
- attendance rates in secondary schools are unacceptably low;
- the school improvement service is inadequate
- not enough progress has been made in planning for school places;
- operational leadership in the delivery of education has not driven improvements in areas of underperformance and schools and officers have not been held to account; and
- business planning and risk-assessment processes have not been robust enough to identify and address the slow pace of progress in education services and schools.

Capacity to improve: Unsatisfactory

The local authority has unsatisfactory prospects for improvement because:

- there has been long-term underperformance at service level;
- the pace of action to bring about improvement has been too slow in the past to assure inspectors that improvement can follow this inspection without external challenge;
- self-evaluation processes have been patchy and progress against recommendations made in previous inspections has been limited;
- school leaders have not been held to account; and
- service level lines of accountability are unclear.

Recommendations

The local authority should:

- R1 raise standards in all key stages and make sure that all learners who can do so achieve functional literacy by the end of key stage 2;
- R2 plan more effectively with the relevant professionals to improve school attendance rates;
- R3 establish sound business-planning, project-planning and risk-assessment processes to professionalise the operational delivery of education services;
- R4 plan better efficiencies in the allocation of resources for the Lifelong Learning Service;
- R5 secure more thoroughness and consistency in requirements for self-evaluation both operationally and strategically;
- R6 take action to reduce surplus places; and
- R7 formalise and strengthen performance management systems and challenge the performance of schools and officers.

What happens next?

The local authority will produce an action plan to show how it will address these recommendations within 50 working days of receipt of the report.

Estyn is of the opinion that the authority falls into the follow-up category of requiring special measures and will inform the Welsh Government of this recommendation.

Any follow-up inspection work will be planned in consideration of other inspection and regulatory activity within an authority. All follow-up inspections will be fed into the Local Authority Regulatory Calendar to avoid duplication and take advantage of any opportunities to work more closely with the Wales Audit Office (WAO) and the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW).

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Unsatisfactory

Standards: Unsatisfactory

When compared with similar schools on the percentage eligible for free-school-meals, the performance of Anglesey schools is below average at every key stage. At all key stages too many schools are in the bottom 25% of similar schools and too few are in the top 25%. Over half the schools are in the bottom 50% for every indicator. At key stage 4, on three of the five main performance indicators, nearly half the schools are in the bottom 25%.

The percentage of pupils in Anglesey schools gaining the higher National Curriculum levels is also below average when compared to performance levels in similar schools. In key stage 3, no school is in the top quarter for pupils reaching these levels.

For the last three years Anglesey has met the Welsh Government's key stage 3 benchmark for performance based on free-school-meal entitlement. However, in 2011 it did not meet either of the key stage 4 benchmarks and in the two previous years it only met one of the two benchmarks.

Overall, progress between primary and secondary schools is average.

In key stages 1, 3 and 4 the difference in performance between boys and girls on the core subject indicator is smaller than it is across Wales. In key stage 2 the gap is larger. The difference in performance between those learners eligible for free-school-meals and other learners is smaller than the average for Wales.

In 2011, over a quarter of pupils starting in Year 7 in the secondary schools of Anglesey had a reading age below the level of functional literacy in Welsh or English.

The percentage of learners leaving full-time education without any recognised qualification reduced between 2010 and 2011, and is now among the best in Wales.

Performance in Welsh as a first language is lower than the all Wales average in every key stage. Performance in Welsh as a second language is above average in key stage 3 but below average in all other key stages.

The percentage of young people who achieved credits or qualifications in 2011 through the Youth Service has increased from 14% to 17% since the previous year. This is an improving trend and is adequate.

Wellbeing: Unsatisfactory

Attendance levels are unsatisfactory in secondary schools. When compared to similar schools on the free-school-meals benchmarks 80% of schools were in the bottom quarter in 2011.

Attendance rates in Anglesey primary schools have been consistently higher than average and more than half the schools are above average when compared to similar schools.

The rate of permanent exclusions in secondary schools is very low. Fixed-term exclusions of five days or less are lower than the average for Wales, but exclusions of six days or more are much higher than the average for Wales and are the second worst in Wales. This means that too many days are lost from school.

The percentage of Year 11 leavers who are not in education, training or employment (NEET) reduced significantly in 2011 and is now the lowest in Wales. However, only 80.8% of young people remain in full-time education after the age of 16, compared to the Welsh average of 82.8%.

Learners take part well in a range of activities that contribute to improving their wellbeing. Children and young people develop their understanding of the importance of fostering healthy and safe attitudes through a variety of projects. A recent questionnaire by the authority reports that children and young people have a good understanding of how to improve their health and how to be safe. Nearly all respondents believe that they are safe at school and, furthermore, most respondents know to whom to turn when something is worrying them.

Levels of participation in national sports development programmes are very good and the highest in Wales against all measures. The percentage of young people who indicate that they have opportunities take physical exercise in after-school clubs or in the community continues to increase.

Young people benefit from the work of the counselling service and it has a positive impact on emotional wellbeing. The authority's progress data reports a decrease in over-anxiety and trauma.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Unsatisfactory
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Support for school improvement: Unsatisfactory

Headteachers' understanding of the partnership agreement between the authority and schools varies. At present, the agreement does not reflect clearly enough the expectation that schools take responsibility for their own performance. In addition, it is not used to target the authority's resources effectively enough on the schools that need the most support.

Officers analyse performance data well and hold a structured programme of reviews with schools. They know their schools well. Officers submit reports of good quality that clearly detail the elements needing additional attention. Appropriate procedures are in place for ensuring the quality of the school improvement team's reports. However, leaders in underperforming schools are not held to account when performance does not improve. In addition, the authority has not analysed trend data on the performance of boys and girls or on patterns of attendance and linked them to information on underperformance to help it identify and plan for intervention to improve standards.

In a few cases, the support provided by the authority improves the performance of schools that are underperforming. However, the action is not always effective enough and standards achieved overall by schools remain too low for too long. In these cases, the authority has not got to the root of the weaknesses quickly enough and is slow to use its full powers to intervene and take action. At present, significant improvement is needed in one secondary school and follow-up work is needed by over half of the primary schools that have been inspected since 2010.

The authority has appropriate information about the quality of leadership and management in the schools, but does not share the information with the school's leadership team, governors or local authority members. School leaders are therefore unaware of the authority's view of their performance. The authority's processes for holding school leaders to account are weak and do not ensure sufficient challenge for school leaders in the process of improving standards. Information on underperforming schools has not been highlighted to corporate leadership consistently. County wide performance data is presented without identifying where specific concerns lie.

The process of challenging schools, specifically with regard to the expected levels and the higher levels at the end of key stages, is not sharp enough. This means the authority misses an opportunity to make sure that schools take responsibility for the core function of improving standards for learners.

Moderation processes in key stages 1 and 2 are not robust. This has led to inconsistencies, and uncertainty amongst teachers.

The authority supports a range of useful initiatives that address national priorities. Curricular support is generally suitable, and is welcomed by schools. There are a few examples where standards have risen, for example in modern foreign languages and science. However, overall standards are not improving quickly enough. The authority collects information on Year 6 pupils' reading levels, but does not make sufficient use of this information when developing a strategy for improving pupils' performance. One result is that too many learners transfer to secondary schools with reading levels that are too low.

Support is provided for middle managers, deputies and headteachers. However, it is not targeted and monitored effectively to impact on the quality of leadership in schools. The authority provides a wide range of courses for governors. However, over a third of Estyn inspections have identified weaknesses in governing bodies and the way they challenge headteachers to ensure accountability for the standards achieved.

Support for additional learning needs (ALN): Adequate

Anglesey fulfils its statutory responsibilities satisfactorily. The statements of special educational needs (SEN) are of good quality. In line with the national priority, the authority has decreased the number of statements from 496 in 2004-2005 to 381 in 2010-2011, but the rate continues to be the second highest in Wales.

Learners with ALN receive considerable support from assistants and specialist staff so that, generally, learners make appropriate progress. The monitoring of the progress of individual pupils at school level has improved, but the authority does not always make the best use of this information to evaluate the needs of groups of pupils and to plan strategically. It does not have an accurate evaluation of the impact of ALN services in order to ascertain the best way to focus additional support, to prioritise and develop the work of its operational teams.

Schools are supported by specialist and experienced staff of the Joint Special Educational Needs Committee¹. The Provision Table, which is being trialled, gives robust guidance to schools on successful and cost effective teaching strategies and intervention programmes. These are beginning to help schools to improve standards of attainment in literacy and numeracy and reduce the effect of poverty on educational attainment. The DaD² pilot scheme is beginning to have a positive impact on the quality of support for children with ALN. This tool ensures more effective planning, improved monitoring of progress and better costing of provision. Data is collected on the school attendance of ALN learners but the authority does not use the data effectively enough to address concerns and ensure higher levels of attendance by pupils.

A wide range of training is provided for teachers and assistants, and the availability of specially 'tailored' sessions is welcomed by schools. The learning, which includes addressing deprivation and improving behaviour, contributes to developing the ability of school staff to deal with a range of ALN and builds the capacity of schools to meet pupils' needs.

There is a good, constructive relationship between the local authority and parents of pupils with SEN/ALN. This keeps the number of referrals to the SEN Tribunal for Wales consistently low, with only one case since 2009. Parents have a central role in the statutory process and they are satisfied with the contents of statements and the process. When there is disagreement, the local authority works for a solution and effective use is made of SNAP Cymru, the parent partnership service that helps parents of children with special educational needs and disability.

Anglesey's expenditure per pupil with ALN is the highest in Wales. Criteria are used by the Moderation Panel for allocating support to individuals but there is a history of considerable overspending on ALN. Recently, officers have addressed the responsibility of controlling expenditure and the challenge of keeping within the allocated budget.

Promoting social inclusion and wellbeing: Adequate

There is good co-operation between the education department and others to provide a wide range of general activities for children and young people. The Lifelong Learning Service also works well with social services to provide targeted activities for specific groups, including vulnerable learners, learners who have been excluded, offenders and looked-after children.

¹ Joint ALN service between Môn and Gwynedd

² DaD (Darpariaeth a Deilliannau) Provision and Outcomes; a pilot programme to improve the monitoring of ALN intervention

An effective plan has been put in place to target young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEETS). In partnership with other North Wales authorities, external funding was secured for the 'Potential' project to target young people who are NEETS or likely to become NEETS. The project contributes towards increasing the number of learners who continue in education, work or work-based training. These actions have reduced the level of NEETS in 2011, and they are now among the lowest in Wales.

Despite having a range of activities in place aimed at monitoring, promoting and improving attendance, these are yet to have a significant impact on increasing learner attendance rates. A support officer works with targeted individuals to improve their behaviour in most secondary schools. In addition, carefully managed moves between schools contribute to reduced permanent exclusions.

The Children and Young People's Partnership has improved its quality assurance of individual providers and uses this information well to commission and decommission provision as necessary. However, the partnership is not doing enough to hold partners to account against the outcomes achieved by learners. In addition, the partnership does not have an overview of children and young people's outcomes. Anglesey's youth support services are adequate and are improving the availability of opportunities. However, only a few young people take advantage of these opportunities.

The authority has an appropriate safeguarding policy, which reflects the All Wales Child Protection Procedures. The authority has taken steps to monitor the safe recruitment of staff and governors. In addition, the authority is working on a corporate safeguarding policy and on formalising wider arrangements for safeguarding within the Lifelong Learning Department. The authority has plans to put a new system in place to collect and analyse safeguarding information from schools.

Access and school places: Unsatisfactory

Overall, the quality of school buildings and other settings is good. The authority's information about the condition and suitability of its school buildings is up-to-date and accurate and the arrangements for predicting the number of pupils are effective.

Since the last inspection of access services in 2005, the authority has closed four of its smallest primary schools. This has removed over two hundred surplus places. However, the percentage of empty places in the county's primary schools is the second highest among Welsh authorities. The number of empty places in the primary sector has increased by over 500 since 2005 and is forecast to increase further by almost 200 places by 2016. The number of primary schools that have a significant number of empty places increased between 2009 and 2011. In light of the increasing trend of empty places, and the associated costs, the authority has been slow to respond to its own forecasts. The authority reports that it will begin a process of informal consultation on options for reorganising schools in four catchment areas this year.

In the secondary sector, the total number of surplus places is the fifth highest of authorities in Wales. The total of empty places has increased by over 500 since

2005 and is forecast to increase by almost 400 additional empty places by 2016. There is a significant number of empty places in two of the five secondary schools and no schools are over-subscribed. The authority is in discussion with a nearby authority in order to develop long-term plans for post-16 provision. However, progress is very slow and no plans are being considered at present for reorganising school provision in the secondary sector.

Recently, corporate leaders have adopted a suitable policy framework to give direction to the work of modernising and rationalising schools in the county. However, considering the worsening trend the authority's corporate leadership has not taken timely or sufficient action to reduce surplus places.

Arrangements for consulting with local admissions authorities and co-ordinating admissions arrangements are effective. Nearly every expression of preference from parents is fulfilled and the arrangements for ensuring a suitable setting for children moving into the authority are good.

Overall, there is an appropriate number of settings for providing early years education within the county. However, the Children and Young People's Partnership does not give sufficient consideration to the quality of provision in non-maintained settings when deciding on sufficiency in their area. There is an appropriate range of youth support services that fulfil the needs of many young people. However, it is unclear whether the authority has a strategic overview of provision in order to co-ordinate services effectively.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Unsatisfactory
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Leadership: Unsatisfactory

The authority has been the subject of intervention by Welsh Ministers since 2009 as a result of previous political instability. More recently, since March 2011, the council's executive board has been replaced by five commissioners.

The commissioners have concentrated their efforts on building corporate functions and processes. Very recently, they have enabled the council to appoint a new senior team that includes a Corporate Director for Lifelong Learning. Reorganising this role has brought extra capacity to the department. However, the post has been empty for 12 months, and this has led to a reduction the department's capacity during a difficult period.

Strengthening the authority's core processes has led to better financial support for the Lifelong Learning Service; has increased availability in the field of managing human resources; and has pulled the department towards a common corporate business planning process. However, these arrangements have not yet had a positive influence on the effectiveness and impact of the service in ensuring the accountability of officers or schools.

There is an appropriate link between the aims and objectives identified in the Corporate Business Plan and the Lifelong Learning Service's Business Plan. In addition, the service's business plans for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 identify valid

priorities. But they do not identify useful milestones to enable officers to track progress, accountability and performance effectively. The arrangements for managers to ensure the accountability of officers in operational units are not thorough enough. Operational level business plans are not always in place. Project and business planning approaches are not well developed and risk-assessment is not robust enough in service areas. This has led to a lack of timely progress in a number of important aspects of the service's work.

Officers report to members annually on school standards overall across the county. Members also receive quarterly information on the performance of the Lifelong Learning Service. However, members do not receive sufficient information on the range of the department's work or its performance in order to enable it to lead, challenge and ensure accountability.

The commissioners have helped members to understand the council's constitution, their functions and their responsibilities fully. This includes scrutiny functions. On the whole, the scrutiny committee has a better understanding of its work and of what can be called before it. However, the process for bringing items before the scrutiny committee is still vague to some members and undermines the scrutiny process.

The Lifelong Learning Service recognises nearly every area for development that was identified during this inspection process, and draws attention to them as risks in the 2012-2013 business plan. In recent months, some risks within the Lifelong Learning Service have been raised to a corporate level because of their potential impact. Nevertheless, the authority has been slow to take action on these important aspects.

Despite the positive influence on the stability of the council, corporate leaders have yet to understand or engage fully with the numerous challenges facing education in Anglesey, such as underperformance in schools, the cost of surplus places and the low attendance levels of learners. However, corporate leaders now recognise the need for considerable change in the way education and resources for education are organised, as evidenced by their early ideas for significant structural changes.

Improving quality: Unsatisfactory

The authority provided a concise, clear self-evaluation report for the inspection. On the whole, the authority has identified many of the aspects that need to be improved. However, it did not acknowledge clearly enough that progress in fulfilling the recommendations from previous inspections of education services has been too slow. Although there have been some improvements from previous inspections, the most important recommendations have not been met in full.

The authority does not use self-evaluation consistently to plan, evaluate outcomes or take appropriate steps to challenge schools and other units within the Lifelong Learning Service to improve underachievement. As a result, improvements are too slow. Self-evaluation is not consistent or challenging across units. The Service does not identify the full impact of key areas for improvement and does not hold its staff to account against these priorities.

The authority has good quality data on schools, but does not use it effectively to bring about improvement. The authority is improving data collection processes and it is improving the quality of the data available across youth support services and the wider services of the Children and Young People's Partnership.

Corporate performance management has not yet had an impact on improvement. The method used focuses on outcomes but it has not yet permeated to every level within individual units of the service. As a result, the Lifelong Learning Service does not use business processes to monitor the impact of its work or plan for improvement consistently. The units do not have operational business plans to inform their work. This means that managers cannot monitor their progress against quantitative and qualitative targets.

Through Llais Ni³, Anglesey's children and young people have an effective forum for sharing their opinions on developments in the authority and ensure that their voice is heard. Cohesive links with school councils and Funky Dragon⁴ ensure that Llais Ni represents every school and youth service. The result of their work is their influence on strategic decisions.

A number of dynamic professional learning communities are beginning to have a good impact on teaching and learning. These include work to improve pupils' thinking and learning skills. External verification on the impact of this work has identified very positive outcomes in terms of pupils' attitudes to learning.

Partnership working: Adequate

The authority has strategic agreements with a number of partners in order to increase capacity and achieve their educational priorities. It has developed an active supportive relationship, for the benefit of the island's children and young people, with a number of agencies such as Careers Wales, the Youth Justice Board, North Wales Health Board and energy companies. There is also a variety of influential partnership projects, such as the Supporting Young Carers Project. Partners are aware of the need to develop processes to measure outcomes. On the whole, there is not enough consistency in the way partners evaluate the impact of their work on learners.

The authority has worked well with other North Wales authorities to establish a regional arrangement for commissioning and monitoring procurement. This has led to a significant reduction in home-to-school transport costs. It has also developed a good relationship with nearby authorities in North Wales in order to plan and develop a Regional Schools' Effectiveness and Improvement Service. The authority plays a proactive role in the development of a comprehensive data profile on school performance across the region.

The Local Service Board (LSB) discusses relevant corporate issues such as the challenge of promoting social inclusion and the need to respond to economic inactivity. There are detailed plans to combine the plans of Gwynedd and Anglesey, with a date for establishing a combined LSB in October 2012. These plans aim to

³ Anglesey's forum for young people

⁴ National Youth Council

ensure that the combined board will achieve financial savings and opportunities to share expertise across both authorities. Appropriate common priorities have been agreed upon, although there is a further challenge to overcome in developing both authorities' detailed priorities within a regional framework.

The Children and Young People's Partnership has a Quality Assurance Framework in place, but despite improvement it is not focused enough on outcomes and impact for learners. The authority works within the 14-19 Learning Network to provide cost-effective educational experiences. However, although the network evaluates the joint provision, the quality of information on outcomes and impact on standards for learners is varied.

Resource management: Unsatisfactory

There have been some improvements in how resources are managed since the inspection of 2009. Strategic corporate systems for managing risk and performance have been strengthened and have led to greater transparency in term of identifying financial problems. However, the authority has yet to address the inefficiencies that it has identified.

In response to the financial savings that the authority had to make during the last two years, there has been a significant decrease in the reserve funds kept by schools. This shows good progress in addressing the recommendation made in the 2009 inspection report. However, an increasing number of schools now have financial deficits, and a very few of them were serious deficits that have continued to increase over a long period. There has not been sufficient intervention from the authority to ensure that schools manage these deficits.

The authority's expenditure on provision for pupils with additional learning needs is much higher than that of any other authority in Wales and continues to grow at a faster rate than the education budget as a whole. Spending on ALN therefore represents an increasing proportion of the total funding available, limiting the authority's ability to address other educational priorities.

Within this budget is the 'integration budget', which funds an increasing team of assistants in schools. For many years, this budget has not been managed well enough. Too little detail has been available about exactly what the money has paid for, and there has been insufficient strategy to guide schools towards teaching a higher proportion of their pupils without applying for additional support. As a result, a pattern of over spending has undermined effective financial planning within the Lifelong Learning Service.

After detailed analytical work, expenditure on assistants in primary schools was controlled successfully in 2011-2012, but not so in the secondary schools, where there remained over spending of 19% on a budget that was 7.4% lower than in the previous year. After a further cut in this budget for 2012-2013, forecasts suggest that the authority will not keep expenditure within the budget.

Mainly because of the decision to keep the integration budget under central control, the percentage of the education budget devolved to the schools is the lowest in

Wales. In response to the expectations of the Welsh Government, the authority has significantly increased the percentage devolved to schools for 2012-2013. However, the additional money in schools' budgets is not likely to increase the funds available for 'the front line'. There is no flexibility for schools in the way the money is used, nor further responsibility to accompany the additional funds. For example, for contractual reasons schools have no option but to transfer newly-delegated funding for primary school meals back to the authority's control. More generally, schools are too willing to transfer funds back to the authority's control without really considering their investment's value for money.

The capital funds available for the future in order to invest further to improve the efficiency of the school system are limited. In 2011-2012, the authority spent £5,318 per pupil on primary education, the highest cost in Wales, while expenditure on secondary education was £4,967, in comparison with the Welsh average of £4,752 per pupil.

Considering the unsatisfactory standards achieved, the inefficiencies in the allocation of resources and the unsatisfactory support for school improvement and access, the Lifelong Learning Service provides unsatisfactory value for money.

Appendix 1

The inspection team

Betsan O'Connor	Reporting Inspector
Maldwyn Pryse	Deputy Reporting Inspector
Iwan Roberts	Team Inspector
Huw Collins	Team Inspector
Sw Roberts	Team Inspector
Clive Phillips	Team Inspector
Gareth Wyn Jones	Team Inspector
Huw Lloyd Jones	WAO
Gareth Morgans	Peer Inspector
Gwyn Parry	Nominee

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available on the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

Glossary of terms

National Curriculum

Expected National Curriculum levels

- By the end of the key stage 1, at the age of seven, learners are expected to reach level 2 and the more able to reach level 3.
- By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of eleven, learners are expected to reach level 4 and the more able to reach level 5.
- By the end of the key stage 3, at the age of fourteen, learners are expected to reach level 5 and the more able to reach level 6 or level 7.

Core subject indicator in all key stages

The core subject indicator relates to the expected performance in English or Welsh first language, mathematics and science, the core subjects of the National Curriculum. Learners must gain at least the expected level in either English or Welsh first language together with mathematics and science to gain the core subject indicator.

External examinations at key stage 4 or post-16

Core subject indicator – as above.

Level 1 qualification – the equivalent of a GCSE at grade D to G.

The Level 1 threshold – learners must have gained a volume of qualifications equivalent to five GCSEs at grades D to G.

Level 2 qualification – the equivalent of a GCSE at grade A* to C.

The Level 2 threshold – learners must have gained a volume of qualifications equivalent to five GCSEs at grade A* to C.

The Level 2 threshold including English or Welsh first language and mathematics – learners must have gained level 2 qualifications in English or Welsh first language and in mathematics as part of their threshold.

Level 3 qualification – the equivalent of an A level at A* to C.

The Level 3 threshold – learners must have gained a volume of qualifications equivalent to two A levels at grade A* to E.

The **average wider points score** includes all external qualifications approved for use in Wales at the relevant age – for example at age 16 or 18. To calculate this, the total points gained by all learners in the cohort is divided by the number of learners.

The **capped average points score** only includes the best eight results for each pupil from all qualifications approved for use in Wales at age 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 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.