

**Report to:** Performance Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 2 October 2014

**Lead Member/Officer:** Lead Member for Education/Head of Education

**Report Author:** School Effectiveness Performance Officer - Secondary

**Title:** Provisional External Examinations and Teacher Assessments

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**1. What is the report about?**

The performance of schools at all key stages and provisional external examinations results at Key Stage 4 and post 16. A detailed analysis of results will be provided for committee members when verified and benchmarked information is available in December for KS4 and KS5.

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

To provide information regarding the performance of Denbighshire schools teacher assessments and external examinations.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

That members review the performance of schools against previous performance and the external benchmarks that are currently available and comment accordingly.

**1. Verified Teacher Assessments Foundation Phase to KS 3**

**2. Foundation Phase**

2014 performance has improved to 86.1% compared 84.9% in 2013 for the Foundation Phase Indicator (FPI). Despite improving by 1.2% Denbighshire's rank position has dropped from 8<sup>th</sup> in 2013 to 9<sup>th</sup> in Wales.

However, apart from Language Literacy and Communication which dropped by 0.5% and from 6<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>, all measures were in the top 10 in Wales. In terms of the percentage of pupils achieving the FPI, this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of improvement.

**3. Key Stage 2**

All measures are top 10 performing except for Cymraeg, which dropped from 14<sup>th</sup> (88%) in 2013 to 18<sup>th</sup> (85.1%) in 2014, a difference of -2.9%. The Core

Subject Indicator (CSI) is the number of pupils achieving Level 4 in English/Welsh, maths and science. The percentage of pupils achieving the CSI at the end of KS2 has increased for the 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. However between 2013 (86.0%) and 2014(86.6%) the rate of decrease and rank position dropped from 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> in Wales.

Maths performance increased from 89.1% to 89.5% but dropped from position 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>. Science performance dipped from 92.3% in 2013 to 90.9% in 2014 and from 5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> position in Wales. The area of focus for intervention is Cymraeg this year.

#### **4. Key Stage 3**

2014 performance improved significantly from 2013, with all measures in the top 10 and improved upon their 2013 percentages. Welsh Second Language is ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> (82.4%) in Wales from 16<sup>th</sup> (72.6%), an increase of almost 10% on 2013. CSI improved by 8.2%, and moved from 15<sup>th</sup> (75%) to 10<sup>th</sup> (83.2%).

There is also a significant increase in English (88.5%), Cymraeg (91.1%), maths (88.8%) and science (93.5%) compared to 2013, there has also been an increase in the number of pupils achieving the higher Levels 6 and 7 in 2014 in all core subjects.

#### **5. Unverified external examination results**

##### **Level 2/GCSE**

The Level 2 Threshold including English/ Cymraeg and maths has improved from 53.23% in 2013 to 55.4% in 2014. This places the LA third in North Wales behind Gwynedd and Flintshire and likely to be in the top 10 in Wales and above our benchmarked position subject to verification.

The Level 1 and 2 thresholds improved for the seventh consecutive year. The Level 2 Threshold (5 \*A-C or equivalent) has provisionally improved from 84.4% in 2013 to 88.6% in 2014. This is likely to place Denbighshire in the top three in Wales this year. The Level 1 Threshold has improved from 93.7% in 2013 to 95.0% in 2014.

The national trend in attainment in English declined to 58.0% (-1.6%) and Mathematics also declined 50.6% (-2.2%). In Denbighshire English has also declined from 64.2% in 2013 to 62.9%(-1.45) and mathematics has declined from 61.48% in 2013 to 59.9% in 2014 (-1.58). In Denbighshire the rate of decline was less than the Welsh average. Welsh 1<sup>st</sup> Language increased from 69.69% in 2013 to 72.7% in 2014. Nationally Welsh has increased by 1.1% in 2014, in Denbighshire it increased by 3.10% in 2014.

The Level 2 Threshold including E/W and M increased in all secondary schools except for Blessed Edward Jones Catholic High School and Rhyl High School. Denbigh High School and St.Brigid's School made the greatest improvement, both increasing by over 7%.

Most pupils in both special schools met their expected grades this summer. 7.1% of pupils at Ysgol Plas Brondyfryn achieved a A\*-C grade and 21.4% gained an A\*-G in maths. In addition 28% achieved a A\*-G in science. Most pupils in Ysgol Plas Brondyfryn and Ysgol Tir Morfa gained at least one vocational qualification.

There is a significant improvement in examination performance of Looked After Children (LAC) pupils compared to 2013. All LAC pupils except for one gained at least a Level 1 qualification and one pupil gained 10 GCSE A\*-C grades including an A\*. All pupils except for one gained at least a Level 1 GCSE grade in English or Welsh and maths. The majority of LAC pupils also gained a range of vocational qualifications at Level 2. One pupil is in sixth form pursuing A Levels and all the remaining LAC pupils are in college gaining vocational qualifications.

All results at key stage 4 are provisional, verified results will be available from in November and benchmarked data in December.

## **6. Level 3 threshold results (A Level and vocational equivalent)**

The performance indicator for post 16 is the Level 3 Threshold which equates to 2 A levels or vocational equivalents. The percentage of candidates achieving the Level 3 Threshold has improved from 98% in 2013 to 99% in 2014.

In addition to the A Level results, 99.4% students were awarded the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification's Advanced Diploma in 2014, this is a 5% improvement on 2013.

The performance of students in the Rhyl 6<sup>th</sup> has improved this year with 91% students gaining the Level 3 Threshold and 95% achieved the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification's Advanced Diploma. The Rhyl 6<sup>th</sup> results are not included in the local authority averages.

## **7. National Reading and Numeracy Tests**

For the second year all eligible learners in maintained schools sat the National Reading and Numeracy Tests for all learners in Years 2 to 9 (7 -13 year olds). This year, learners were required to take the National Reading Test and the procedural element of the National Numeracy Test.

For the English reading test in 2014, Denbighshire achieved 82.7% which is below the Welsh average of 83.2% and places the local authority 14<sup>th</sup> in Wales. This has declined from 85.9% and 11<sup>th</sup> in Wales in 2013.

The LA is ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in Wales for Cymraeg at 87.4% which is above the Welsh average of 84.4%. However this is a decline on 2013 (93.4%) when Denbighshire was placed 6<sup>th</sup> in Wales.

In the National Numeracy Procedural Test the LA is ranked 15<sup>th</sup> at 81.9% and

is below the Welsh average of 82.8%. In 2013 the schools achieved 85.4% and the LA was placed 8<sup>th</sup> in Wales. In the new Numeracy Reasoning test schools achieved 82.5% which is below the Welsh average of 82.2% and places the school 15<sup>th</sup> in Wales. This test was not sat in 2013.

**8. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

Modernising the education service to achieve a high level of performance across the county is one of the corporate priorities. The raising of attainment at all key stages particularly key stage 4 is a key objective.

**9. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

*N/A*

**10. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.**

Early indications show that boys and girls performed above the Welsh averages at all key stages and for the Level 2 Threshold including English/Welsh and Maths. At this time analysis of gender and Free School Meal (FSM) performance in the national literacy and numeracy tests has not taken place.

**11. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

*N/A*

**12. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

*N/A*

**13. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

There is detailed analysis for the reasons for underachievement and targeting support for underperforming schools from LA and GwE. The school classification process ensures underperforming and high risk schools are regularly monitored and are provided with additional support.

There will be a new regional programme to strengthen the moderation process for Teacher Assessments in 2015. This should ensure continuity and parity of Teacher Assessments across North Wales.

There is continued uncertainty of the continuation 14-19 Learning Pathways Grant and ESF 'Potensial' funding after 2014, which has successfully supported improvements at KS4.

**14. Power to make the Decision**

Scrutiny's powers with respect to reviewing performance and policy objective is outlined in Article 6.3.4(b) of the Council's Constitution.

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