



APPENDIX 1

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT DENBIGHSHIRE

2018

(DRAFT)

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1. STANDARDS - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

FOUNDATION PHASE

This year's results in the Foundation Phase shows a national decrease when compared to previous years. The main reason for this is the fact that new outcomes from the FP Assessment Framework have been used in language and mathematics. Many teachers are under the impression that there are higher expectations to achieve an Outcome and this is one factor that has led to less pupils achieving Outcome 5. This national decrease in the results is reflected in Denbighshire results. GwE anticipated this and has focused on improving provision in the Nursery and Reception classes, which will provide a robust base for achieving higher outcomes by the time the pupils reach the end of the Key Stage.

Foundation Phase outcomes for 2018 show a decrease when compared to previous years. The main reason for this is the fact that new, more challenging outcome descriptors from the Foundation Phase Assessment Framework have been used in language and mathematics. This national decrease in the results is reflected in Denbighshire's results. GwE anticipated this and has focused on improving provision in the Nursery and Reception classes, which will provide a robust base for achieving higher outcomes by the time the pupils reach the end of the Key Stage. The decrease in the percentage of pupils attaining the FPI in Denbighshire was significantly less than the dip nationally.

Denbighshire's performance at the higher than expected outcomes (outcome 6) in LLC(W) and PSD continues to be strong. Even though there are higher expectations to achieve this Outcome this year, the schools have raised the level of challenge to meet the new requirements. GwE's training and guidance for Foundation Phase teachers on how to target pupils that are on the border between O5/6 has contributed positively towards securing this result.

The performance difference between boys and girls has remained consistent in the Foundation Phase over the last few years and that pattern has continued despite the changes to the assessment requirements. The performance gap between the boys and the girls in Denbighshire is lower than the national average, but higher than the previous year.

The Foundation Phase Profile was introduced in September 2015 and it is statutory for schools to use the Profile to undertake baseline assessments of children at the start of Reception Year. When comparing end of phase assessments with the baseline assessment data (Foundation Phase Profile), Denbighshire pupils make above expected progress in all four areas.

Key Stage 2

Denbighshire's KS2 results at the expected level (level 4+) have continuously improved for the past six years. This year, Denbighshire's and the national performance is similar. Performance at the higher than expected levels is better than the previous year in Welsh and Maths.

Comparing end of Key Stage 2 data with end of Foundation Phase data, Denbighshire pupils make above expected progress in Welsh, English and Mathematics.

Strengths and Successes

- Foundation Phase Higher Outcomes (Outcome 6+) in Welsh and PSD.
- Schools have responded well to the various Foundation Phase training programmes provided. This is evidenced by the decrease in performance this year being considerably lower than nationally.
- Attendance at network meetings for Foundation Phase has been good and this has, and will continue to improve provision and standards in Denbighshire schools.
- Key stage 2 performance at the expected level over time.

Areas for Improvement

- Tackling the impact of deprivation on educational attainment continues to be a priority.
- Improve provision and standards at the expected levels in Foundation Phase LLC.
- Improve provision and standards at the higher than expected levels in Foundation Phase mathematical development and English and science at Key Stage 2.
- Further strengthen cluster working to promote collaboration and to share good practice.

Key Stage 3

Performance across the main indicators in KS3 is once again strong this year. As for the CSI indicator, Denbighshire's performance has increased by 1.6% to 87.2%, and as a result reduced the gap in comparison to the National average to only 0.9%. There was a decrease in the percentage of FSM pupils that achieved the CSI indicator. There is no national data available at the moment.

Welsh First Language: the performance on the expected level has increased significantly. As for the national comparison, performance is higher, but the size of the local cohort must be taken into consideration. The performance one level above the expected level has also increased over the course of three years and is higher than the national average.

English: the performance on the expected level in English has continued to increase slightly over the course of three years and again this year, but is still slightly lower than the national average. A similar pattern can be seen one level above the expected level, with further progress this year and performance is relatively in line with the national average.

Mathematics: the performance on the expected level in Mathematics saw a slight decrease this year and a small three-year decrease; as a result, performance is below the national average. There is also a small decrease can be seen in Denbighshire performance, one level above the expected level, and remains slightly below the Wales' average.

Science: a small decrease in the performance on the expected level but it remains high and slightly below the national percentage. The performance one level above the expected level has increased slightly and is broadly in line with the national percentage.

Strengths and successes

- Denbighshire performance in Key Stage 3 has remained constant and is broadly in line with national performance. The trend in performance in Welsh First language is encouraging

Areas for Improvement

- Increase the performance of FSM pupils on the expected levels in the core subjects.

Key Stage 4

Contextual information for 2018 examinations

Following the changes in 2016-17 there remains significant volatility in GCSE outcomes. Significant changes to the pattern and numbers of pupils sitting exams in the Summer 2018 has had an impact on results as demonstrated in the proportion of grades across all subjects in the A+ to C range in Wales decreasing by 1.2pp to 61.6%. GCSEs are being reformed and 15 updated subjects were sat this summer for the first time. The new GCSE suite of qualifications in Science was examined for the first time in 2018, and coincides with the changes to the performance indications at KS4, to include only GCSE results for Science, as two measures in the capped 9 indicator. As a result, comparison with historical data is not applicable. Schools were able to select pathways from a triple Science route, Double award Science, Double award Applied Science and Single award Applied Science. As the capped 9 indicator includes two Science measures, the majority of schools followed the triple and double award pathways.

There has been significant change to grade boundaries since the Summer of 2017 and November 2017 compared to the Summer of 2018, particularly at C grade in English and mathematics. This has made it difficult for schools to ensure accurate projections and target setting. Initial analysis suggests that schools data has been significantly influenced by registration decisions.

School performance should be considered against its own performance trajectory as it is not appropriate to compare schools against each other due to the different contexts and stages of improvement.

Initial Analysis

In 2018, there was a decrease in the percentage of each main indicator in comparison with 2017, particularly in Science and the Capped 9 Score.

	2017	2018	+ / -
TL2+	50.0	47.5	-2.5
TL2	63.6	59.8	-3.8
TL1	90.2	87	-3.2
ENGLISH	59.2	55.8	-3.4
WELSH	79.3	77.6	-1.7
MATHEMATICS	53.5	50.8	-2.7
NUMERACY	55.6	54	-1.6
MATHEMATICS (Best of the 2)	58.4	57.0	-1.4
SCIENCE	66.8	54.3	-12.5
5A*/A	14.4	12.3	-2.1
CAPPED 9 SCORE	333.9	323.5	-10.4

Performance in Welsh has remained consistently high. L2 English performance has decreased 3.4% but Denbighshire performance has been significantly hit by a significant spike in 2018 Summer English grade boundaries.

Although 2018 saw a similar and significant increase in mathematics and numeracy grade boundaries, in Denbighshire there is a smaller decrease in Mathematics. As a result, Numeracy and the percentage of learners that achieved one of the two has affected the expected progress in the TL2+ indicator.

Because of the changes in the Science qualification, comparison with 2017 performance is not possible.

Strengths and successes

- Inclusive schools, it is also noted that there is strong collaboration to develop an extensive and balanced curriculum and provision for all learners.
- Welsh (first language) performance is consistently high.
- Significant improvements in specific schools with regard to some indicators.

Areas for Improvement

- Ensure that a forensic analysis is undertaken to verify why there has been a significant decrease in the English A*-C percentages.
- Improve Mathematics and Science performance.
- In specific schools, continue to improve the quality of departmental expertise and leadership in the core subjects.
- Reduce in school variance particularly across core subjects

2. INSPECTION PROFILE

The inspection profile is good across the primary sector in Denbighshire during academic year 2017-2018, no secondary schools were inspected last year. One Estyn undertook an inspection in 9 schools (8 primary schools, no secondary schools and 1 special school). In 8 schools [%], it was announced that no follow-up action was needed and one schools required intensive follow-up category of Estyn Review.

The judgement profile across the 5 inspection areas are indicated below:

Primary Profile	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
IA1: Standards		7	1	
IA2: Well-being and attitudes to learning	1	6	1	
IA3: Teaching and learning experiences		6	1	
IA4: Care support and guidance		8		
IA5: Leadership and management	1	6	1	

Special School Profile	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
IA1: Standards		1		
IA2: Well-being and attitudes to learning		1		
IA3: Teaching and learning experiences		1		
IA4: Care support and guidance		1		
IA5: Leadership and management		1		

3. TARGET SETTING

In May 2018, the Cabinet Secretary for Education published a [Written Statement](#) providing an update on Key Stage 4 school performance measures arrangements for 2019 onwards. This announced the introduction of new 'interim' Key Stage 4 performance measures to be reported against from September 2019 (2018/19 cohort data). These 'interim' measures, based on point scores, will replace the existing suite of Key Stage 4 performance measures, including the Level 1 and Level 2 inclusive measures, from 2019.

In the other key stages, Welsh Government has already legislated to:

- discontinue the routine publication of the Teacher Assessment and National Reading and Numeracy Test data at a school and regional level from 2018/19; and
- ensure that the 2016/17 publication of this data at a school and regional level to the public, partners, stakeholders and policy makers will be the last year that this is done.

Welsh Government (WG) have been urgently considering the school target setting requirements, in view of the changes being brought in, and have been engaging with the sector on how these arrangements could be managed in the short term. However, the required legislative procedure hasn't allowed WG to align the statutory requirements as immediately as desired.

At Key Stage 4, schools are required to set final, reviewed and provisional targets against the percentage of pupils achieving the Level 1 and Level 2 inclusive measures, along with three targets based on self-evaluation. These targets need to be submitted to, and agreed by, the Local Authority no later than 31 December. Given our move away from threshold measures, we recognise that it no longer make sense to require schools to set targets against what will soon become obsolete school performance measures.

The table below sets out the current target setting statutory requirements for the relevant key stages:

Key Stage 2 (Year 6 pupils)	Key Stage 3 (Year 9 pupils)	Key Stage 4 (Year 11 pupils)
Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in English	Percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 or above in English	Percentage of pupils achieving the Level 2 Threshold including English/Welsh and Mathematics
Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in Welsh first language	Percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 or above in Welsh first language	Percentage of pupils achieving the Level 1 Threshold

Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in Mathematics	Percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 or above in Science	
Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in Science	Percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 or above in Mathematics	
<i>Local Target 1</i>	<i>Local Target 1</i>	<i>Local Target 1</i>
<i>Local Target 2</i>	<i>Local Target 2</i>	<i>Local Target 2</i>
<i>Local Target 3</i>	<i>Local Target 3</i>	<i>Local Target 3</i>
<i>*Local Targets should reflect priorities identified through self-evaluation</i>		

Welsh Government (WG) are working towards removing the prescriptive nature of targets (including Level 1 and Level 2 inclusive at Key Stage 4) in favour of increasing the **number of non-prescriptive targets based on the outcome of self-evaluation**.

The required legislative process means it will be impossible for WG to implement the proposed changes prior to 31 December 2018, when targets are required to have been set by schools and agreed by the Local Authority. There will, therefore, be a period where the requirements of the regulations do not reflect WG intentions or expectations in terms of target setting.

During this transitional period, schools and Local Authorities will need to consider what targets would be most appropriate to set this year.

Way forward

Effective self-evaluation, target-setting and planning for improvement is at the core of ensuring improved outcomes for pupils. The raising of standards requires the profession to critically evaluate and, if necessary, change what they do and how they do it. Effective target-setting plays a key role in raising standards, and must be undertaken at the same time as planning for improvement.

Setting targets allows schools to focus on what they currently do and the improvements they wish to bring about. It contributes to school effectiveness but only when it is carried out as part of the process of planning for improvement. What is key is that schools identify and set appropriate **improvement targets linked to their improvement priorities**. These should be set as **local targets** prescribed in the table above and may include specific and measurable goals when appropriate. However, **not all improvement targets can be quantitative**. If we asked schools to set clear improvement targets, then it would allow the **local target** as at present to be either quantitative or qualitative.

Schools would only share their key improvement targets (or Local Targets) with the LA/Consortium. Local Authorities would still hold the statutory responsibility for signing off the improvement targets set by the schools. This process is usually quality assured by school improvement staff on behalf of the LAs. Local Targets would not be aggregated on an LA or regional basis.

In the interim, schools will also have to report against the prescribed statutory targets described in the table above until they are removed by legislation.