

<b>Report to</b>	<b>Performance Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>30 January 2020</b>
<b>Lead Member / Officer</b>	<b>Lead Member for Education / Head of Education</b>
<b>Report author</b>	<b>Principal Education Manager</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>School performance and verified L2 examination results</b>

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

The Performance of Denbighshire schools teacher assessments and external examination results at Key Stage 4 and Post 16. The report also provides results against national information and performance.

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

To provide information regarding the performance and monitoring of Denbighshire schools in the 2019 and Estyn inspections.

## **3. What are the Recommendations?**

That members review and comment on the performance of schools and identify any potential areas for improvement.

## **4. Report details**

### **Background and Context**

#### **Foundation Phase Standards**

The percentage of pupils achieving the Foundation Phase Indicator (FPI) is below the national average, whereas previously it was generally above. As widely anticipated, following the implementation of the new Foundation Phase Framework, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected outcomes across Wales decreased in

2018-19, the Local Authority's performance reflected this in the FPI and in all Areas of Learning.

The number of learners achieving the higher outcomes also decreased nationally and again this was reflected in Denbighshire LA schools' outcomes. Outcomes in Denbighshire schools were slightly below the national average in all Areas of Learning (AoL) except for Language and Communication with Welsh (LCW), which was slightly above. (Appendix 1)

### **Key Stage 2 Standards**

The percentage of pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator (CSI) is below the national average. Over the last four years, this has been a fluctuating picture. The 2019 cohort performed below the national average in all core subjects, except Welsh Language. Standards of attainment in Welsh second language is below the regional average. No National average is currently available for Welsh second language.

Performance of Denbighshire schools at the higher levels reflected performance at the expected levels, all below the national average except Welsh Language.

### **Key Stage 3 Standards**

This year's results are beginning to reflect the national changes, whereby the prime focus of teacher assessments has started to shift back to the progress and attainment of individual learners and away from aggregated data sets used to hold schools to account. (Appendix 2)

Nationally, the percentage of pupils achieving at least the expected level was lower than in 2018 in the CSI and in all core subjects.

The Denbighshire CSI is slightly lower than the national average with a decrease of -2.3% in comparison to 2018 performance [-1.9% nationally]. The 2019 cohort performed in line with national averages at the expected level for English and Science and 0.9% below for Mathematics, and -3.2% below for Welsh.

### **Key Stage 4 Standards**

New interim KS4 measures have been introduced for 2019 as part of the significant education reform programme in Wales. National data capture for individual schools will be based on first entry results. JCQ/WJEC have published their data and press

release based on the 'best outcome' obtained by 16 year olds across both the November and summer series. There will be differences between first entry and best outcome data. As a result, across several indicators, it will not be possible to compare 2019 figures with previous performance.

Appendix 2 shows the verified results for the new interim measures which show a slight increase on the provisional results previously reported. It also demonstrates the key differences with previous years. In this context, the data should be analysed on a local level and as a starting point to question local priorities.

**Although 2019 data is currently available on historical performance measures (L1, L2, L2+ and 5A\*-A), comparison with previous years is not valid because of the first entry counting rather than best outcome.**

## **5. Individual School Performance**

The Capped 9 is the new main indicator for school and LA performance. In 2019 it is 334.7 points which is below the national average of 353.8 points. Performance in individual schools against the measure is generally good with four schools achieving a higher points score, and three below the national average. The aggregated local authority percentage includes performance data for the 54 pupils who are either in the (Pupil Referral Unit) PRU or (Educated other than at school) EOTAS.

Four schools performed above the national average points score for the Capped 9 measure of 353.8 and four schools are under, with Blessed Edward Jones performing significantly below and Ysgol Brynhyfryd and St.Brigid's significantly above. The performance of both boys and girls is below the national average for 2019 by 17 points (boys) and 19 points (girls). There is 33 point gap between boys and girls, which is slightly less than 2018. The gap in the performance of eFSM (free school meals) and non-FSM pupils is higher than the national average and is significant, 365.59 compared to 285.96.

## **6. A Level and Welsh Bac**

Six out of eight Denbighshire schools provide post 16 provision. In 2019, 12.9% of post 16 learners in schools gained at least 3A\*-A at A Level or equivalence up from 10.3% in 2018, this is 0.2 below the Wales average. It is the highest performance over the last five years. 2019 shows a 9.1% (62.5%) increase in the number of students

gaining 3A\*-C grades at A level, this is the first time in recent years that this is above the Welsh average (57.6%).

The number of learners gaining 3A\*-A has also increased from 10.3% in 2018 to 12.9% in 2019, however this continues to be below the Welsh average of 13.1%, the gap between Denbighshire and the national average continues to close.

There has been a significant increase in the number of post 16 learners gaining the Welsh Bac Skills Challenge from 38.9% in 2018 to 69.9% in 2019, this is below the national average of 71.6%. (Appendix 3)

## **7. Attendance**

Primary attendance (**Appendix 4**) has improved from 84.5% in 2018 to 97.8% in 2019, this is above the Welsh average of 94.7%. Over the last three years there has been little difference between the genders and the FSM/non-FSM difference has narrowed during this time. Secondary attendance (**Appendix 5**) has improved by 0.1% in the last year from 93.5% in 2018 to 93.6%, in 2019. This places the LA 0.2% below the Welsh average of 93.8%, the Welsh average declined by 0.1% this year.

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

This report contributes to the Young People Corporate Priority which aims to ensure that every child achieves the expected standard at the end of their statutory education journey and have the skills for life and work. Members need to be aware of the performance of schools and the LA against national benchmarks.

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

N/A

## **10. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?**

*A prosperous Denbighshire  
A resilient Denbighshire  
A healthier Denbighshire  
A more equal Denbighshire  
A Denbighshire of cohesive communities  
A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language  
A globally responsible Denbighshire*

## **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?**

- The LA and GwE will continue to challenge Headteachers and managers in schools to ensure that schools are taking appropriate action to improve standards. To reduce any risks to school support and challenge in Denbighshire schools, Education Officers within the Authority monitor and assess the quality of the regional education service (GwE).
- Ensuring improvement in external examination results.
- Ensure continued improvement against the reduction in 14-19 Learning Pathways Grant and ESF TRAC funding.

## **14. Power to make the decision**

Scrutiny's powers with respect to reviewing performance and policy objectives is outlined in Section 7.4.2(b) of the Council's Constitution.

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