



Complete Agenda

Democratic Services
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Meeting

EDUCATION AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time

10.30 am, THURSDAY, 19TH MARCH, 2020

Location

Siambwr Hywel Dda, Council Offices, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 1SH

*** NOTE**

This meeting will be webcast

https://gwynedd.public-i.tv/core//en_GB/portal/home

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(DISTRIBUTED 12/3/20)

EDUCATION AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP (18)

Plaid Cymru (10)

Councillors

Steve Collings
E. Selwyn Griffiths
Elin Walker Jones
Huw Gruffydd Wyn Jones
Mair Rowlands

Aled Ll. Evans
Judith Mary Humphreys
Gareth Jones
Olaf Cai Larsen
Paul John Rowlinson

Independent (5)

Councillors

Freya Bentham
Beth Lawton
Elfed Powell Roberts

Elwyn Jones
Dewi Wyn Roberts

Llais Gwynedd (2)

Councillors

Alwyn Gruffydd

Gareth Williams

Gwynedd United Independents (1)

Councillor
Dewi Owen

Ex-officio Members

Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council

Other Invited Members

CO-OPTED MEMBERS:

With a vote on education matters only

Anest Gray Frazer

Church in Wales

[vacant seat]

The Catholic Church

Dylan Davies

Meirionnydd Parent/Governors
Representative

Karen Vaughan Jones

Dwyfor Parent/Governors'
Representative

[vacant seat]

Arfon Parent/Governors' Representative

Without a Vote

Dilwyn Ellis Hughes

UCAC

Neil Foden

NEU

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declarations of personal interest.

3. URGENT BUSINESS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

4. MINUTES

6 - 9

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 23rd January, 2020 be signed as a true record (attached).

5. REPORT ON OUTCOMES 2019 AND EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

10 - 64

Cabinet Member – Councillor Cemlyn Williams

To consider a report on the above (attached).

*10.30am – 11.30am

6. EDUCATION TRANSPORT

65 - 68

Cabinet Member – Councillor Cemlyn Williams

To consider a report on the above (attached).

*11.30am – 12.15pm

7. SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION INTO THE IMPACT OF NEW BUILDING DEVELOPMENTS FOR SCHOOLS ON THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

69 - 100

Cabinet Member – Councillor Cemlyn Williams

To consider the draft final report of the Scrutiny Investigation (attached)

*12.15pm – 12:45pm

An informal session will be held for members at the close of the meeting.

EDUCATION AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23/01/20

Present: Councillor Paul Rowlinson (Chair)
Councillor Elwyn Jones (Vice-chair)

Councillors: Freya Bentham, Steve Collings, Aled Evans, Selwyn Griffiths, Alwyn Gruffydd, Judith Humphreys, Elin Walker Jones, Gareth Jones, Huw Wyn Jones, Cai Larsen, Beth Lawton, Dewi Roberts and Gareth Williams.

Officers present: Vera Jones (Democratic and Language Services Manager) and Eirian Roberts (Democratic Services Officer).

Present for item 5 below:

Councillor Dilwyn Morgan (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People)
Nia Morris (Youth Service Manager)

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors: Dewi Owen, Elfed Roberts and Mair Rowlands.
Anest Gray Frazer (Church in Wales), Dilwyn Elis Hughes (UCAC) and David Healey (ATL)

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

3. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

4. MINUTES

Referring to item 7 in the minutes of the previous meeting - The Education and Economy and Community Departments' Savings Proposals, a member noted that she did not believe that the final sentence of the minute regarding the discussion and decision (b), despite being correct, was a true reflection of the nature of the discussion, bearing in mind that the committee had accepted the report, but had not approved its contents.

In response to the comment, the Chair noted that he was of the opinion that the paragraphs above the decision made it clear that the committee did not accept that the cuts were reasonable. The committee's opinion had been submitted to the Cabinet, which had later decided that it would not implement the savings.

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 21 November, 2019 as a true record.

5. UPDATE REPORT ON REMODELLING THE YOUTH SERVICE

Submitted - the report of the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People providing the committee with an update on progress during the first year of remodelling.

The Cabinet Member set out the context, noting that the pre-report gave the narrative - the story of the journey – while the appendix, which in his opinion was the most important part,

detailed what had happened during the first year of remodelling, i.e. what had gone well and what had not gone so well. He explained that the main conclusion was that the work programme had been completed, but that the service remained on a long and constantly changing journey. That journey, in addition to being steered by legislation, was also steered by the young people of Gwynedd, and this was at the core of the entire journey. He further noted that one of the greatest problems was the challenge faced in terms of staff recruitment, especially workers for the community clubs. In terms of the impact assessment of the change, the report highlighted that no negative impacts had been identified. There was a great deal of work ongoing with groups such as the Urdd and a number of other third sector organisations, e.g. Frân Wen, and the partnership with those organisations was developing on a daily basis. He also noted that the incorporation of the Youth Service within the Children and Families Department had opened a number of doors to the service, which now collaborated far more with other departments within the Council, in addition to other agencies involved with young people's well-being.

During the discussion the following matters were raised:-

- Referring to paragraph 3.9 of the report, a member drew attention to the fact that a club had now been established at Brynchrug.
- In response to the local member's request for the service's help in finding a suitable location for the Penygroes Youth Club, it was noted that the service was aware of the challenges and was very willing to provide support. There had already been discussions held with the Education department, etc., and the intention was to attempt to hold further discussions, e.g., with the Byw'n Iach Centre.
- In response to a question, it was explained that the problem around recruiting staff for the community clubs derived from the fact that the clubs could not offer sufficient hours to make the positions full time posts, or even close to it. It also appeared that the nature of the work did not attract a high number of applicants for the posts.
- In terms of numbers, it was explained that each club required two members of staff, but that the aim was to have three at each location, to avoid having to close the club for a night due to illness. In such cases, there would always be an attempt to fill the gap with someone from Gwynedd Youth Club. However, they were not always available due to having arranged other activities.
- In terms of the provision in Pwllheli it was explained that the new model, as in other areas, would be visiting the town to run activities for a period of time. It was the young people themselves who chose the activities. Some of the community clubs had seen what was being offered in their communities by Gwynedd Youth Club and had decided that it was sufficient. It also appeared that young people were very prepared to travel to the clubs, and the service had purchased two vehicles to transport young people who had difficulty travelling; although it was acknowledged that this was far from sufficient. The new service also visited communities where there had been no previous activity.
- It was suggested that the service should contact the local members to let them know of what was happening in their wards so that they could promote the events and attend some of the evenings to socialise with the young people, should they wish to do so. In response, it was agreed that the idea of contact with the local member was a good one, and it was suggested that the service should undertake a piece of work on this.
- It was expressed that the report conveyed a very Utopian world, but that there was no reference contained to Wales Care Inspectorate's observations in its report published in September the previous year, which raised questions as to the method of implementing the service in its new form. The report noted that the service did not comply with the Well-being Act, or even with the principles of Ffordd Gwynedd.

Although the report brought before the Audit and Governance Committee noted that there were further discussions being held with the Inspectorate, there was no reference to this or to the result of the discussions included in the report to this committee. In response, it was noted that the service did not claim to have achieved perfection. It had been a very challenging time for the service's staff, and the service acknowledged that it was continuing on a journey in which the pathway was constantly changing. In terms of the report, it was noted that no official response had been received from the Care Inspectorate with regard to the challenge submitted. It was emphasised that the Inspectorate had not looked at the service from the perspective of what had been achieved for young people, but rather from the perspective of what consideration had been given to the Well-being Act in remodelling the service. It was explained that there were significant steps being taken to rectify this, and as the Youth Service was now part of the Children's Service, the Well-being Act was very high on its list of priorities.

- The partnership with other agencies was welcomed and enquiries were made as to whether there were any more creative ways of collaborating with those agencies in order to attract staff. In response, it was noted that the service was aware of the challenges and that it was looking at all possible ways of attracting people. Obviously, health and safety and data protection requirements, and so forth, added to the challenge.
- A member noted that he/she would like to know more about the situation in Bangor e.g. was there any collaboration with the schools and if so, which schools in particular? In response, it was noted that a general programme of the activities could be sent to the members to make them aware of what was happening in their areas.
- It was suggested that a task and finish group should be established to support the service in realising some of the objectives. It was noted that this was a matter to be raised in the informal meeting at the conclusion of this committee.
- In response to a question, it was explained that it was youth workers who arranged and paid for locations for activities bought by the Gwynedd service, and it was emphasised that the local member's support was very important in this respect.
- In response to an observation, it was agreed that engaging with those young people who did not use the service was a challenge, but that it was the role of the professional community worker to ask and find out what the wishes of the young people were. The schools were also very supportive in terms of engagement with the young people and this linked well with the work of tracking NEETS young people (namely those not in work, education or training). It was also noted that youth workers were prepared to arrange anything should a cohort of young people approach them.
- In response to a question, the Cabinet Member noted that he was satisfied that the service was consistent across the county and that the same opportunities were available to young people everywhere. As this was a mobile service, it went to all kinds of small places and reached young people in those rural communities which had been impossible to cover previously.
- Disappointment was expressed regarding the failure to establish a club in Porthmadog. In response, it was noted that the service and Porthmadog Town Council had made a considerable effort to establish a club in the town, but had been unsuccessful in recruiting staff to run it.
- It was suggested that the service should release a Monthly Events Calendar, rather than the weekly version currently produced, as this would make it easier for the young people to plan ahead.

- It was noted that the service was working in an environment of cuts, and an enquiry was made as to whether best practice in other councils / organisations had been looked at, and whether this had been successful. In response, it was noted that there was a constant process of looking at arrangements elsewhere, but as a result of having to remodel the Gwynedd service in 2018, it was believed that youth services across Wales now looked at this Council's arrangements. It was trusted that the service in Gwynedd would continue to change and continue to respond to the challenges facing it.
- An enquiry was made as to whether there were plans to extend the Language Charter to youth clubs. In response, it was noted that all the youth workers led the activities through the medium of Welsh, but that the point regarding the adoption of the Language Charter was something the service should look at.
- It was noted that it was important to bear in mind when providing the service that the Assembly had voted to lower the voting age in Wales to 16. In response, it was agreed that this was timely, and it was noted that the Democratic Services Committee was looking at this. It was also noted that a pilot scheme had been established in Y Bala, in which officers went to the secondary school to initiate the discussion with young people; not only those who would be voting, but also the youngest pupils.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member and the Youth Service Manager for the report, summarising the main conclusions of the report as follows:-

- The recruitment of workers had been, and continued to be, an evident problem.
- There was a need to ensure better contact with local members in order for them to be a means of promoting the service.
- The Events Calendar should be published monthly rather than weekly.
- The service should look at adopting the Language Charter.

RESOLVED to accept the report.

The Cabinet Member thanked the committee for its support and the discussion, and extended an invitation for members to get in touch with any further observations or ideas.

The meeting commenced at 11.00 am and concluded at 12.20 pm

CHAIRMAN

Agenda Item 5

Committee	Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Title of Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report on Outcomes 2019• Education Annual Report 2018/19
Date of meeting	21 March 2019
Author	Garem Jackson, Head of Education
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Cemlyn Rees Williams

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee is already aware of the changes in the way we are able to report on results, and that we are unable, for example, to compare performance with other Local Authorities across Wales.

1.2 As a result of these changes, this is the first time that the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee have received a report on the outcomes of 2019. As a result, in order to ensure appropriate scrutiny of the outcomes, they are presented as a separate document to the Departments Annual Report, and can be seen in Appendix 1.

1.3 In accordance with the request of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee, the Education Department has drawn up an Annual Report to enable scrutinisers to have an overview of the Department's work. (apart from the 2019 outcomes which are presented in a separate document). The Annual Report can be seen in Appendix 2.

1.2 The Education Department acknowledges that ensuring effective scrutiny of a lengthy document at a committee meeting is not an easy task, and as a result, has formulated a brief Summary Report, which draws attention to the Department's main work, positive features, along with fields that need attention over the next period.

1.3 The Education Department also acknowledges that the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee already has a system to identify significant individual items to be scrutinised, and ensures detailed and effective scrutiny of those individual matters.

1.4 Consequently, it is not possible to draw the attention of the Scrutiny Committee to any specific section in the Annual Report that is causing concern.

1.5 Therefore we would like to present the following appendices for the attention of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee:

- Appendix 1 – Report on the 2019 Outcomes
- Appendix 2 – Education Annual Report.



Tuag at Ragoriaeth
Towards Excellence

REPORT ON OUTCOMES 2019

Gwynedd



CONTENT

- 1. Background and context**
 - 2. Standards**
 - **Overview of performance in each Local Authority (Individual LA's to be inserted in Appendix 1)**
 - **Estyn School Inspection Profile**
 - **National Categorisation**
 - 3. Emerging Questions To Help The Joint Committee, LA Officers And Scrutiny Committees To Evaluate Pupil Progress, Standards And Performance**
 - 4. 2019-20 Business Plan Priorities**
 - 5. Appendix 1 - Report on standards for each individual LA**
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1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Welsh Government alongside several partners and experts has undertaken a fundamental review of the accountability system for schools in Wales.

Findings highlighted that the existing system and its use of performance measures has many negative unintended consequences, such as:

- narrowing curriculum choice;
- disproportionate focus on particular groups of learners;
- the way in which benchmarking is used driving competition between schools rather than encouraging collaboration;
- an increased and unnecessary workload for teachers and others in the system, without the necessary impact or benefit for learners; and
- an aggregation of data for *accountability* purposes where it was designed for *improvement* purposes.

As a result, schools have heard conflicting messages from the various parts of the system about what matters. This has often diverted effort from learning and teaching and moved us towards a culture of compliance and bureaucracy.

A joint communication from **Welsh Government, the WLGA and Estyn** to Chairs of Scrutiny, Cabinet Members, Directors of Education, Chief Executive Officers, and Managing Directors of Regional Education Consortia, published on **16 July 2019** stated that:

“It is counter-productive for schools to be placed under disproportionate pressure on the basis of individual measures. It is not in the interest of school improvement and risks undermining the ongoing change in culture that we are working together to achieve. We expect local authorities and regional consortia to support schools to make appropriate decisions about their curriculum to avoid narrowing choice for learners.

Collectively, we have agreed that this is the right approach to take and strongly advise you to use a broad range of un-aggregated data and information to enable you to discharge your duties when reporting on school performance. Evaluating the performance of individual schools rather than generating aggregated data at local authority level will be more helpful to supporting and challenging individual schools with their improvement.”

This report on performance across North Wales will adhere to this guidance.

Reporting on Teacher Assessments (Foundation Phase to Key Stage 3)

National changes in the reporting of teacher assessments has been introduced over the past two years. It supports the key objectives of the Welsh Government document: ‘Our National Mission,’ in delivering robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements to support a self-improving system.

International evidence suggests that for all learners to achieve their full potential, there should be a coherent assessment and accountability system. The primary purpose of assessment is to provide information that guides decisions about how best to progress pupils’ learning.

There is now a greater focus on the use of data in school self-evaluation. In the reformed system, schools are evaluated according to the difference they make to the progress of every child.

Data and information that is available to schools to measure this progress includes: end of key stage data, baseline entry data, pupil progress data over time, value added data between baseline and key stages, reading and numeracy diagnostic test data, action research and specific testing data as well as ESTYN inspection outcomes.

Data that has traditionally been aggregated upwards for comparison has been removed. All benchmarking, comparisons with other establishments, reading and numeracy test data, placing schools and Local Authorities in rank order is no longer acceptable or possible. As of last year, the only comparative data available to Local Authorities in these key stages are the National averages for end of these key stages.

In addition, the Minister for Education published a statement on school performance targets in June 2019. She stated:

‘ , I want to be absolutely clear that school targets should only be used to support self-evaluation and should not be aggregated up to a local authority measure of performance to hold schools to account.’

These recent changes in assessment reporting requirements will strengthen the accuracy of assessment. It will reduce inflated levels and gaming and will ensure that every school looks closely at every learner and not just borderline learners who influence whether a school achieves a narrow measure or not.

National arrangements will have a renewed emphasis on Assessment for Learning as an essential and integral feature of learning and teaching; it is a significant move away from gathering information about young people’s performance on a school-by-school basis for accountability purposes.

Teacher assessment data and National Reading and Numeracy Test data at a school, local authority and consortia level will no longer be published. This applies to the Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 in all maintained primary and secondary schools.

Arrangements that will remain:

- National Reading and Numeracy Tests and Teacher Assessments for individual learners, however no national school level benchmark information will be published.
- Headteachers are required to report school performance to parents and adult learners each school year.
- Governing bodies are required to produce annual reports to parents, school prospectuses, school development plans, and set performance and absence targets.
- Schools, governing bodies and local authorities still have access to their own data (alongside national level data) for self-evaluation purposes.
- The Welsh Government continue to collect individual learner level data to ensure transparency at a national performance level and to inform policy.

Arrangements that will change:

- No comparative information about teacher assessments and tests, in relation to other schools within a local authority or ‘family of schools’, will be published.
- The Welsh Government no longer produce or publish School Comparative Reports and All Wales Core Data Sets for schools and local authorities in respect of teacher assessment data.
- The My Local School website no longer includes teacher assessment data below the national level (from 2018).

Changes to Areas of Learning in the Foundation Phase

In October 2014 the Foundation Phase Areas of Learning (AoL) for Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and Mathematical Development were revised to align them with the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) as well as make them more demanding. In line with this the Foundation Phase outcomes were recalibrated to align with the increased expectations of the revised Areas of Learning.

The revised AoL were introduced on a statutory basis from September 2015. This means that the cohort of children that started Reception in September 2015 were the first children to be formally assessed against the revised outcomes at the end of the Foundation Phase in the summer of 2018. Comparisons of Foundation Phase outcomes with previous years at school level should, therefore, be avoided as they are not measured on a comparable basis.

Reporting on KS4 results

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. The data provided regionally for individual school and LAs will also 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.

The table below shows the new interim measures and the methodology used for calculating. It also demonstrates the key differences with previous years.

Interim Measure	How it is calculated	Differences from previous years, and why comparisons cannot be made
Capped 9	<p>The Capped 9 Points Score is a performance measure calculating the average of the scores for the best awards for all individual pupils in the cohort, capped at a specified volume of GCSEs or equivalent qualifications.</p> <p>Three of the nine slots require the awards of specific subjects and qualifications in order to contribute any points towards the measure. These slots are each one GCSE in size, specifying requirements in literacy, numeracy and science GCSEs only.</p> <p>The best grade from any of the literature or first language Welsh or English GCSEs can contribute towards the literacy slot.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Only a pupil's first entry will count ✓ WJEC Science GCSE only

	<p>The best grade from either of the mathematics or mathematics – numeracy GCSEs can contribute towards the numeracy slot.</p> <p>The best grade from a science GCSE can contribute towards the science slot (currently this is limited to awards in the WJEC suite of science GCSE qualifications currently available to learners: biology, chemistry, physics, science (double award) applied science (double award) and applied science (single award).</p> <p>The remaining six qualifications will include the pupil's best performance in either GCSE and/or vocational equivalent.</p>	
Literacy measure	Calculating the average of the scores for all individual pupils in the cohort, taking the best grade from any of the literature or first language Welsh or English GCSEs awarded to a pupil.	New 2019 measure, first entry only will count, with Literature also accepted within this measure
Numeracy measure	Calculating the average of the scores for all individual pupils in the cohort, taking the best grade from either of the mathematics or mathematics – numeracy GCSEs awarded to a pupil	New 2019 measure, first entry only will count
Science measure	Calculating the average of the scores for all individual pupils in the cohort, taking the best grade from a science GCSE awarded to a learner (currently this is limited to awards in the WJEC suite of science GCSE qualifications available to learners: biology, chemistry, physics, science (double award) applied science (double award) and applied science (single award) - these are identified as being able to contribute towards science measures.	New 2019 measure, first entry only will count
The Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate measure	Calculates the average of the scores for the Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate awards for all individual learners in the cohort, whether it is the Foundation (Level 1) or the National (Level 2) award.	Reported separately as a main indicator for the first time in 2019

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.

Scrutinising Individual School Performance

Regular fortnightly Local Quality Board meetings are held between the GwE Core Lead and each LA. Any schools causing concern are discussed and any strengths and areas for improvement are noted. This links to the regular meetings held by the core lead with Supporting Improvement Advisers to discuss school progress. The regular communication between LA and GwE officers ensures shared intelligence about the capacity to improve of schools, and where concerns are identified that all parties work in partnership to review the standards and provision in the school and to set and monitor clear targets for improvement.

Each LA has its own monitoring processes to scrutinise the performance of individual schools. This includes the use of 'Accelerated Improvement Boards' for school's causing concern.

Each LA's monitoring arrangements is described within their individual standards report.

Schools Causing Concern

All schools are on an improvement journey and thus require differentiated and appropriate support and challenge to varying degrees. A few schools will require more intense targeted intervention.

The label 'schools causing concern' is very wide ranging and in its broader term has not been clearly defined in national guidance. For our own purpose within GwE, we have come up with the following definitions:

- Schools that need support to maintain or improve upon standards [i.e. moving from 'good' to 'excellent' or 'coasting schools'];
- Schools that are improving but need further support to sustain their improvement trajectory and/or further reduce within school variability;
- Schools that need more specific targeted support and intervention to prevent them being a cause of significant concern;
- Schools that have been identified as causing significant concerns and/or are in a statutory category.

GwE and the local authorities have an overall good track record in effectively supporting schools and specifically those causing concern. All secondary schools have a bespoke 'Support Plan' which ensures that GwE support is closely aligned with their SDP priorities. This allows for more effective deployment of resource, regional expertise and best practice.

High challenge and support is targeted in a timely and effective approach leading, in most instances, to an acceleration of the improvement journey in the identified schools, and, where relevant, their removal from Estyn follow-up category.

Local Quality Standards Board meetings are held on a regular basis between LA and GwE senior officer and used to share information around school performance and progress and to agree on any required adaptations to support plans. Interim Accelerated Improvement Boards provide challenge and intervention to those schools in serious categories of concern. Where concerns remain, escalated action is taken which could include the use of powers of intervention as defined by national guidance.

Current regional situation

The primary and special school inspection profile has been continuously strong and compares well with the Estyn profile for schools across Wales. All primary schools placed in a category over the past three years have been removed promptly as a result of the targeted high challenge and support.

Standards in the secondary sector remains a cause for concern. Over the past 18 months, GwE has:

- re-profiled its service to ensure that additional resource is targeted towards the secondary sector;
- strengthened its team of link secondary SIAs to ensure relevant experience and expertise;
- ensured all secondary schools have access to a generic and bespoke programme of support;
- facilitated access to curriculum, MAT, post 16 and subject networks to disseminate good practice;
- adopted a targeted 'wave' support for ensuring continued improvements in core subjects;
- enhanced the GwE offer of professional development opportunities [and especially for experienced, new and potential leaders of the future];
- led the *Assessment for Learning* regional initiative to improve teaching and learning with Shirley Clarke;
- ensured further support for head teachers via strategic forum meetings and for participating schools through the *Excellence and Innovation* forum;
- supported 12 regional schools to research and address in-school variance by improving data tracking and intervention. Lessons extracted from the pilot will be transferable to all schools across the LA;
- provided financial support for a more diagnostic approach to securing improvements at KS4 English and Mathematics via PIXL;
- provided specific training at behest of schools for curriculum middle leaders and pastoral leaders;
- supported bespoke training for targeted schools and departments to improve aspects of the teaching and learning, e.g., with Tom Sherrington, Olevi ITP and OTP.

In addition to the bespoke support delivered for secondary schools in the core subjects, generic regional and local guidance has also been available via subject networks and forums. Some of the key areas addressed include:

- English: A Level study support, Accelerated Reader training, developing literacy across the curriculum, improving oracy to support writing, improving tracking and intervention at KS4, improving standards of writing at KS4, guidance on MAT provision in English, development of resources e.g. *'Fix-it' resource to support the repair work required to address identified weak skills, Mastery Packs for KS4, Gothic SOW with grammar focus for Y7*
- Mathematics: leadership guidance and up-dates for new curriculum, sharing of best practice from Whiterose Maths Academies on the development of pedagogy within their cluster of schools, developing departmental pedagogy by 'deepening thinking', developing pedagogy at A level, supporting collaboration between numeracy co-ordinators to identify best practice in developing skills across the curriculum, develop leadership of numeracy co-ordinators who are within the first two years of being in post, developing understanding of the changes to the Numeracy Procedural tests.
- Science: excelling at GCSE Science – sharing best practice, sharing successful intervention strategies at KS4, developing scientific literacy – evidence based Research from Bangor University, developing strategies to engage learners in Science, working with schools to build scientific knowledge and supporting pupils in learning scientific concepts,

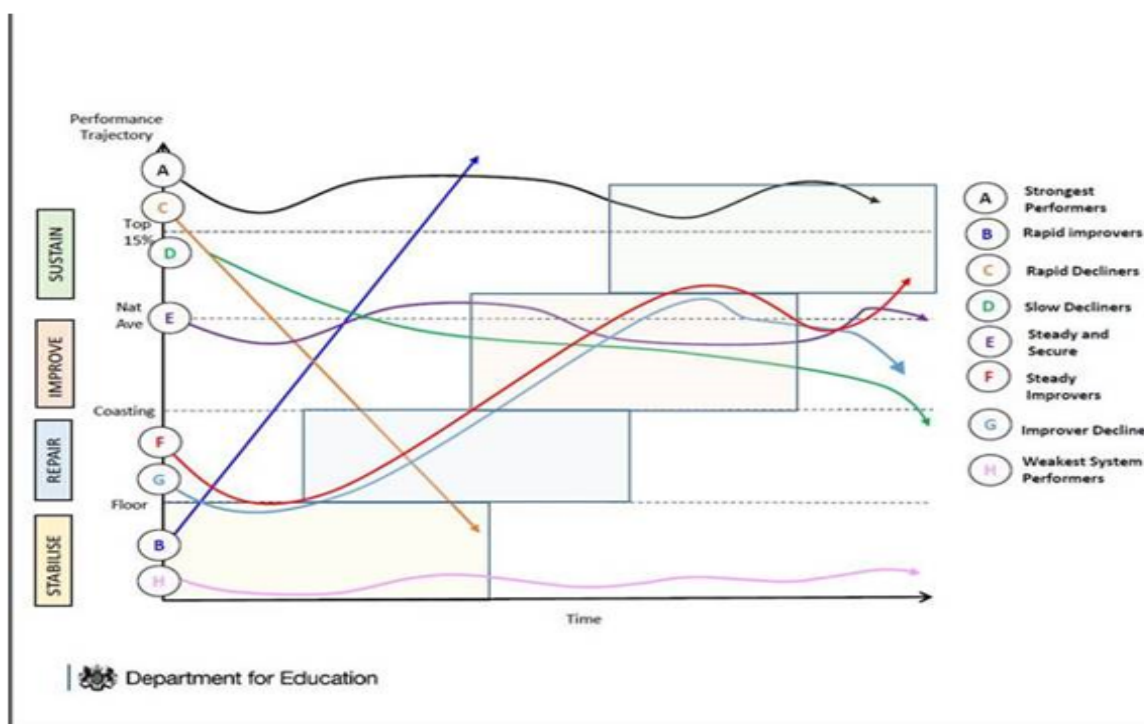
developing reading skills in Science, sharing 'how to learn strategies' and retrieval practice, developing reading skills and the understanding of command and tier two words, developing deeper understanding of the GCSE specifications.

Moving Forward

We recognise that all schools are on a continuum of improvement. Some are emerging and developing, others developing and strengthening whilst our strongest schools are more autonomous and empowered.

As a service we are often asked to synthesise a myriad of school improvement metrics into a single definition. However, it is just as important to capture the journey and not just the 'snapshot' of a school's position on that journey.

The following diagram, developed by the DfE in England, looks to define the stages of a school's journey and begins to define the trajectory of school improvement:



We feel that this type of diagrammatic trajectory representation is a more useful tool when discussing with schools the required level and nature of support required. Its application can also be an effective strategy to capture schools at the beginning of any 'downward' trajectory thus mitigating any need for them to be identified as *'causing concern'*.

We also believe that peer engagement and support should be an integral part of school improvement. Welsh Government's vision for an evaluation, improvement and accountability system is one that is fair, coherent, proportionate, transparent, and based on shared values for Welsh education. The National Mission commits us to work with Welsh Government and other key stakeholders to establish new evaluation and improvement arrangements at all levels. These arrangements will need to be robust and strong enough to bring about the required improvements and especially so within the secondary sector. There is a clear

expectation that within these arrangements schools develop not only the required capacity and skills to effectively challenge themselves, but also the ability to work collaboratively and systemically in a school improvement model founded on professional peer review.

GwE and the six regional local authorities has undertaken a consultation process with head teacher representation around the various aspects of the *National Reform Journey*. In terms of developing a regional framework for peer-to-peer engagement and support, head teachers suggested the following principles:

- a peer review approach should be adopted regionally to further drive progress towards a self-improving system;
- the peer-review model should not be developed to deliver a *pseudo-inspection* system;
- all stakeholders should work effectively together to ensure that we create the right conditions for effective peer review;
- we should agree and adopt a regional set of principles and technical language for our model;
- we should agree framework parameters which will allow flexibility for schools to operate a range of models;
- schools should have the freedom and flexibility to choose their peers;
- the model should involve peer engagement at all levels within a school;
- the model should promote trust, honesty, transparency and professional confidence;
- engagement should be a supportive and sustainable process and not a one-off imposition event;
- the model should support a cultural shift towards collegiate responsibility

Steve Munby and Michael Fullen (2016) in their paper '*Inside-out and downside-up*' outline the critical success factors for an effective system-wide school collaboration as follows:

- the purpose of collaboration must be to improve outcomes;
- the partnership must be founded on a clearly articulated shared moral purpose;
- transparency, trust and honesty are crucial;
- a commitment to and capacity for effective peer review form the engine that drives improvement;
- peer review needs to be carried out within a long-term relationship and a commitment to continuously improving practice and systems through cycles of collaborative enquiry;
- the partnership must have a plan to move from collaboration to co-responsibility to a position of shared professional accountability;
- the partnership should go beyond school leaders and engage with students, teachers, families and communities;
- partnerships welcome scrutiny and support from other partnerships as their contribution to a connected local, regional and national system.

We firmly believe that peer engagement should underpin a rigorous cycle of continuous improvement and include:

- **Self-review:** effective peer review should start with how well the school knows itself and be led by the school being reviewed. The national self-evaluation toolkit developed by Estyn/OECD and the profession should play a key role in this aspect. Self-evaluation should focus on the learner, their achievements, progress and experiences in school and focus on learning and teaching, leadership, the development of a learning organisation culture, well-being of pupils and staff, equity and inclusion. In moving forward, the self-evaluation should also focus on the four purposes of the new curriculum and evaluate the progress the school is making towards realising the new curriculum. The self-evaluation processes should allow the school to identify areas of strengths and priorities for

improvement. It should also identify aspects of their improvement journey that require peer support to aid improvement.

- **Peer-review:** the most effective peer reviews have an agreed focus. The purpose of the collaboration must be to improve outcomes and any agreed focus should be based on strong evidence of what's needed to improve and what outcomes would be most benefit to the school. Peer reviewers working as a team or trio work best where they can triangulate evidence and jointly analyse their findings. They are not there to pass judgement but to seek evidence and agree findings to be shared with the school. It is imperative that the peer review process does not become a *pseudo-inspection* system. The partnership must be founded on a clearly articulated shared moral purpose with transparency, trust and honesty crucial and integral to the process. The peer review should also provide professional development opportunities and include leaders at all levels.
- **School-to-school support:** if peer review is going to be a vehicle for ongoing improvement in school systems, then it must go further than the review itself and involve school to school or cluster support. Where the outcomes are owned by the staff, the long-term and sustainable impact will be greater. This helps to further build capacity and increased resilience within a self-improving system. The partnerships built should therefore go beyond school leaders and engage with students, teachers, families and communities.

GwE and the six regional local authorities are currently working with schools to establish a regional peer engagement model which fully reflects the principles and values that have been identified by head teachers and which also harvests from best practice nationally and beyond. Supporting Improvement Advisers are central to the facilitation and the development of this model.

This articulates our approach within the 'accountability' aspect of the reform journey. It details how peer engagement can be used to underpin a rigorous cycle of continuous development and improvement. We believe that peer engagement and support should be an integral part of school improvement in moving to a self-improving system whilst also supporting those schools that are causing concern.

2. STANDARDS

OVERVIEW OF PERFORMANCE IN EACH LOCAL AUTHORITY

See Appendix 1 for individual LA report that includes the following:

Evaluation of performance and emerging questions:

- Foundation Phase
- Key Stage 2
- Key Stage 3
- Key Stage 4
- Key Stage 5

LA's Estyn Profile

LA's Categorisation Profile

LA's monitoring arrangements for scrutinising individual school's performance

LA's Main areas for improvement to be included in Level 2 Business Plans

ESTYN SCHOOL INSPECTION PROFILE

The overall inspection profile across the region is strong.

Combined School inspections Sept 2017- July 2019.

Year	Region	No Inspected	No Follow Up		Estyn Review		Significant Improvement		Special Measures	
			%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
17/18	GwE	69	82.6	57	14.5	10	1.4	1	1.4	1
17/18	Wales	237	75.1	178	17.3	41	4.6	11	3.0	7
18/19	GwE	64	79.7	51	17.2	11	1.6	1	1.6	1
18/19	Wales	227	75.8	172	19.8	45	1.8	4	2.6	6

Judgements all schools 2018-19

	Standards		Wellbeing		Teaching		Support		Leadership	
	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales
Excellent	18.8	11.5	25.0	19.8	17.2	11.9	23.4	18.9	28.1	17.2
Good	62.5	65.2	67.2	67.4	62.5	62.1	71.9	70.9	51.6	58.6
Adequate	15.6	21.1	7.8	12.3	20.3	24.2	4.7	8.4	18.8	20.7
Unsatisfactory	3.1	2.2	0.0	0.4	0.0	1.8	0.0	1.8	1.6	3.6

Primary School inspections Sept 2017- July 2019

Year	Region	No Inspected	No Follow Up		Estyn Review		Significant Improvement		Special Measures	
			%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
17/18	GwE	59	86.4	51	11.9	7	1.7	1	0.0	0
17/18	Wales	200	80.5	161	14.5	29	3.5	7	1.5	3
18/19	GwE	54	88.9	48	11.1	6	0.0	0	0.0	0
18/19	Wales	188	80.9	152	16.5	31	0.5	1	2.1	4

Secondary / All Age School inspections Sept 2017- July 2019

Year	Region	No Inspected	No Follow Up		Estyn Review		Significant Improvement		Special Measures	
			%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
17/18	GwE	7	57.1	4	28.6	2	0.0	0	14.3	1
17/18	Wales	30	50.0	15	33.3	10	10.0	3	6.7	2
18/19	GwE	8	12.5	1	62.5	5	12.5	1	12.5	1
18/19	Wales	32	43.8	14	40.6	13	9.4	3	6.3	2

Special School / PRU inspections Sept 2017- July 2019

Year	Region	No Inspected	No Follow Up		Estyn Review		Significant Improvement		Special Measures	
			%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
17/18	GwE	3	66.7	2	33.3	1	0.0	0	0.0	0
17/18	Wales	7	28.6	2	28.6	2	14.3	1	28.6	2
18/19	GwE	2	100.0	2	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
18/19	Wales	7	85.7	6	14.3	1	0.0	0	0.0	0

Primary Judgements 2018-19

	Standards		Wellbeing		Teaching		Support		Leadership	
	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales
Excellent	20.4	10.1	27.8	19.1	18.5	11.2	25.9	17.6	31.5	17.6
Good	70.4	71.3	68.5	72.3	72.2	66.5	72.2	76.1	57.4	63.3
Adequate	9.3	18.1	3.7	8.5	9.3	21.3	1.9	4.8	11.1	16.5
Unsatisfactory	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	1.6	0.0	2.7

Primary – Out of the 54 primary schools inspected in 2018/19 48 (88.9%) were adjudged that no follow-up action was needed compared to 86.4% in 2017/18 and is significantly higher than the national average of 80.9%. 6 schools (11.1%) required follow up action compared to 13.6% in 2017-18 and all were awarded the least intensive follow-up category of Estyn Review. There are currently 8 schools in a follow-up category with only 1 schools currently in a Statutory Category (significant improvement). The percentage of schools receiving excellent judgements increase significantly from 13.2% in 2017/18 to 24.8% in 2018/19.

Secondary - of the 8 schools inspected no-follow-up was required in one, five were judged to require the least intensive follow-up [estyn review], whilst two were placed in special measures [one SI and one SM]. Both of these schools had already been identified within our profile as 'high risk'. Five schools were awarded a 'good' judgement for inspection area 2 [wellbeing and attitudes to learning] whilst 6 schools were judged 'good' for inspection area 4 [care, support and guidance]. One school received an 'inadequate' judgement for inspection area 5 [leadership]. No school was awarded an 'excellent' judgement for any of the inspection areas.

The current regional profile sees 6 secondary schools in statutory category. Each school has a comprehensive PIAP and the LA support plan have been ratified by Estyn. All schools are currently demonstrating steady progress against most of their recommendations. All schools are also receiving regular monitoring visits and the respective local authority officers are kept informed of progress and made fully aware of any concerns that arise. There are a further 7 in a follow up category of Estyn Review with a clear expectation that 3 of the schools will be taken out of category by the end of November.

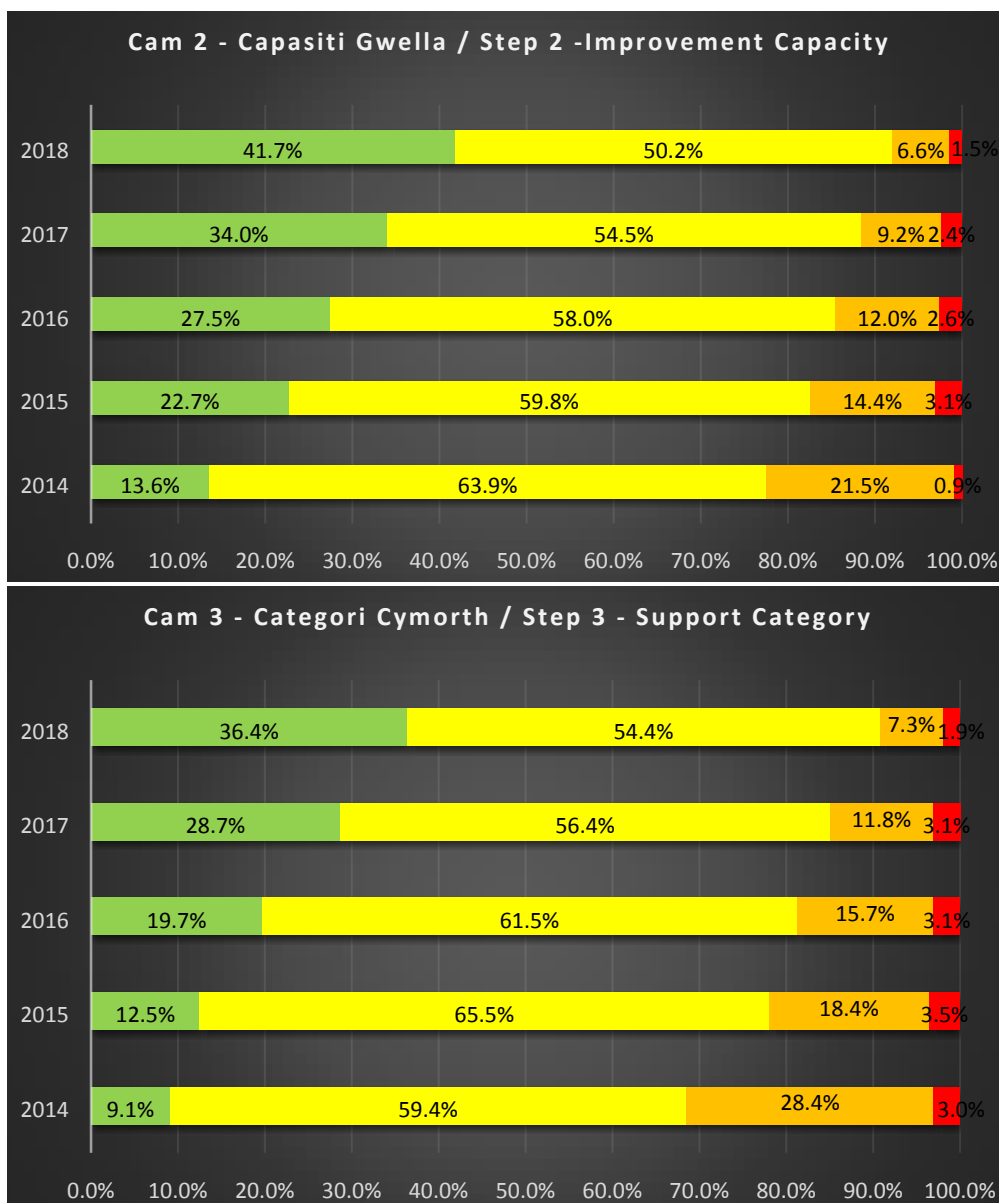
Special – Strong profile across the inspection areas with the one school inspected in 2018/19 adjudged 'good' in all areas and not placed in a follow up category. One school remains in an Estyn review follow up category.

NATIONAL CATEGORISATION

All schools

The percentage of schools categorised as Grade C and D for Step 2 has continued to decrease from 14.6% in 16/17, 11.6% in 17/18 to 8.0% in 18/19. The percentage categorised as a D fell from 2.4% in 17/18 to 1.5% in 18/19. The percentage categorised as Grade A has increased from 27.5% in 16/17, 34.0% in 17/18 to 41.7% in 18/19.

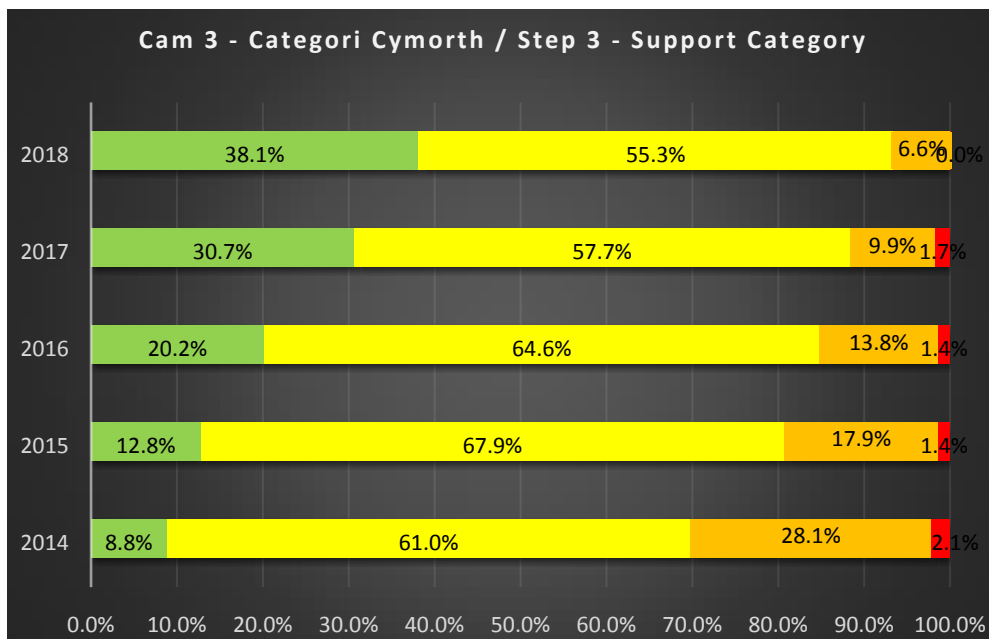
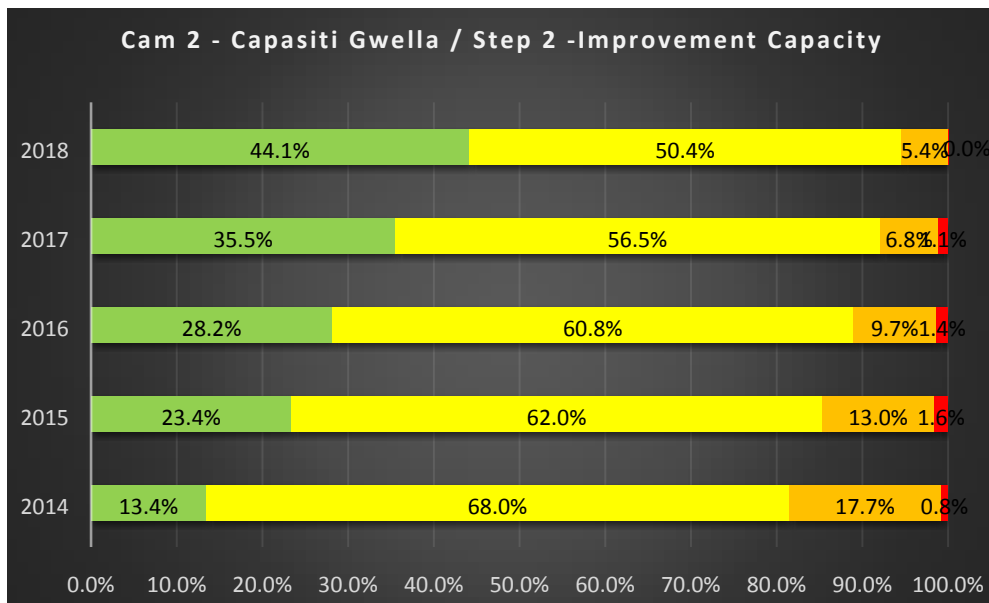
The percentage of schools categorised as red and amber for Step 3 has again decreased from 18.8% in 16/17, 14.9% in 17/18 to 9.2% in 18/19. The percentage categorised as a red fell from 3.1% in 17/18 to 1.9% in 18/19. The percentage categorised as green has continued to increase from 19.7% in 16/17 to 36.4% in 18/19.



Primary

The percentage of schools categorised as Grade C and D for Step 2 has continued to decrease from 11.0% in 16/17, 8.0% in 17/18 to 5.4% in 18/19. The percentage categorised as a D has fallen from 1.4% in 16/17 to 0% in 18/19. The percentage categorised as Grade A has increased significantly from 28.2% in 16/17, 35.5% in 17/18 to 44.1% in 18/19.

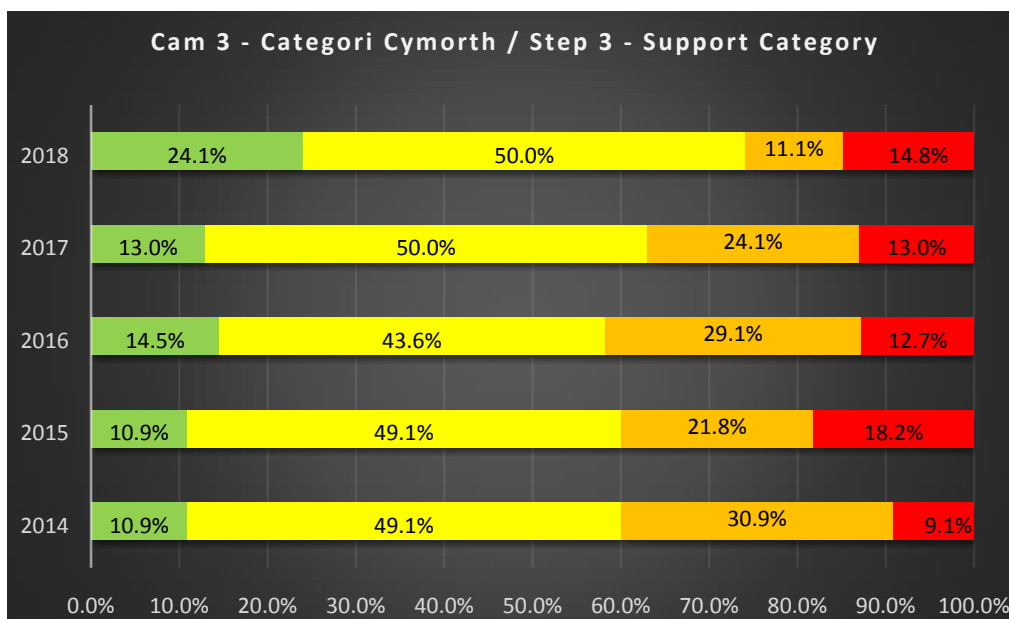
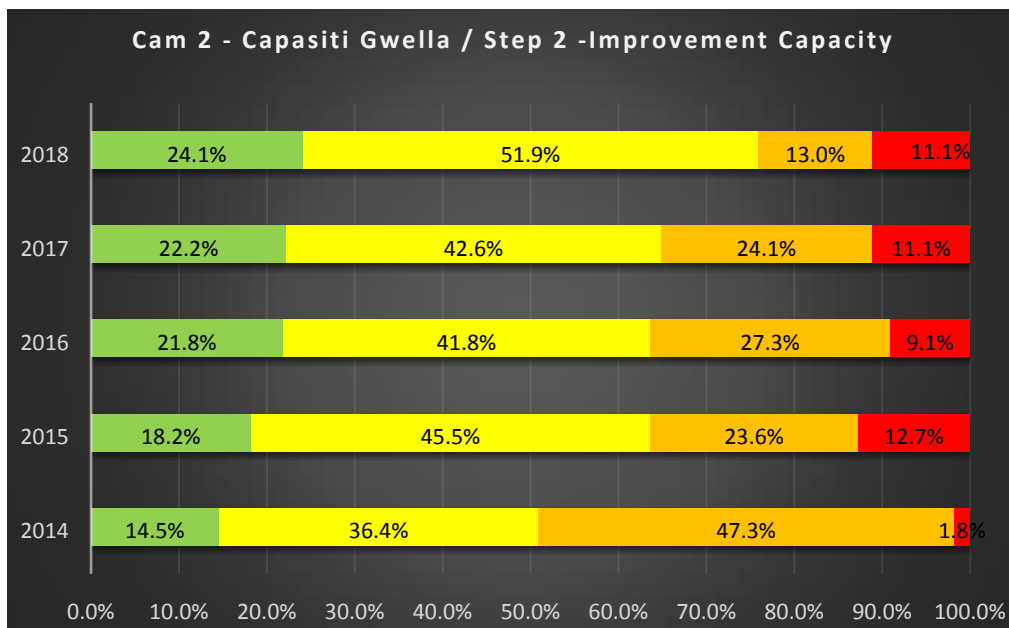
The percentage of schools categorised as red and amber for Step 3 has again decreased from 15.2% in 16/17, 11.6% in 17/18 to 6.6% in 18/19. The percentage categorised as a red decreased from 1.7% in 17/18 to 0.0% in 18/19. The percentage categorised as green has increased significantly from 20.2% in 16/17, 30.7% in 17/18 to 38.1% in 18/19.



Secondary

The percentage of schools categorised as Grade C and D for Step 2 has decreased from 36.4% in 16/17, 35.2% in 17/18 to 24.1% in 18/19. The percentage categorised as a D has remained fairly constant 9.1% in 16/17 (5 schools), 11.1% (6 schools) in 17/18 and 11.1% (6 schools) in 18/19. The percentage categorised as Grade A has increased from 21.8% in 16/17 to 24.1% in 18/19.

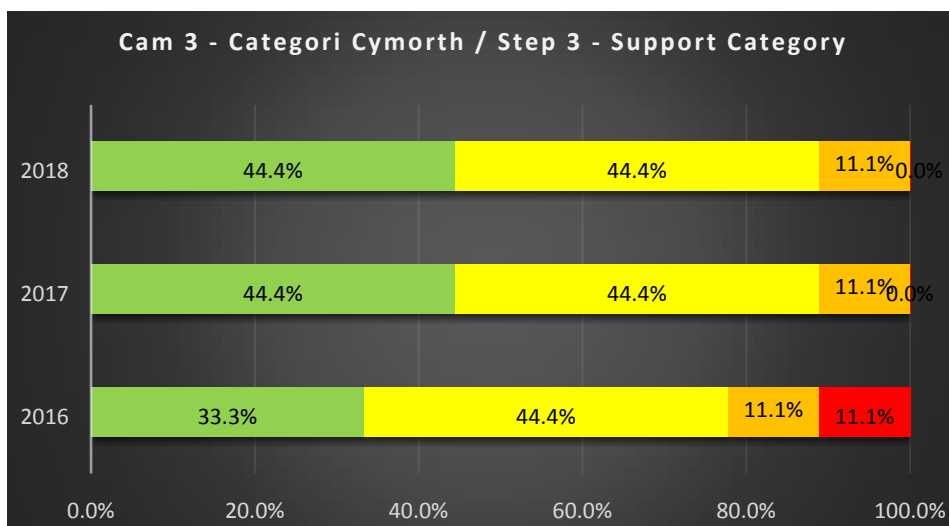
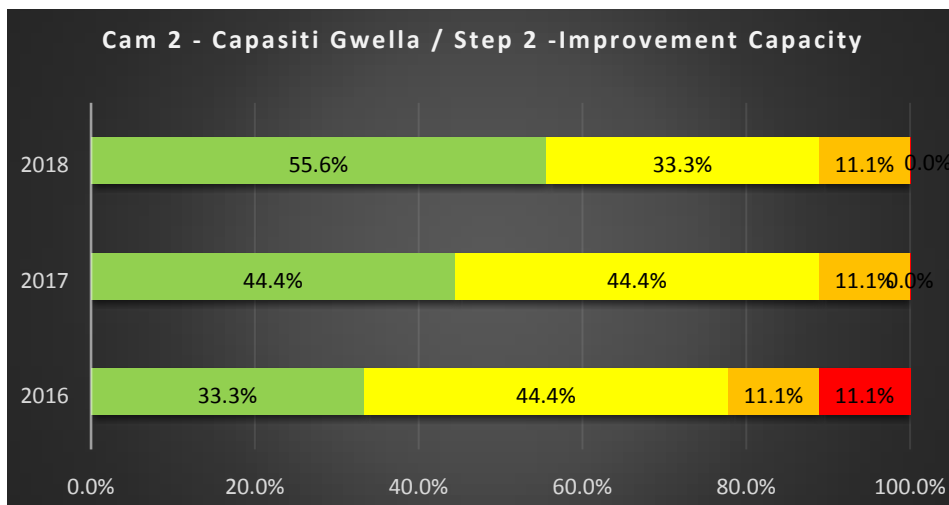
The percentage of schools categorised as red and amber for Step 3 has decreased from 37.0% in 17/18 to 25.9% in 18/19. The percentage categorised as red increased slightly from 13.0% in 17/18 (7 schools) to 14.8% in 18/19 (8 schools). The percentage categorised as green increased significantly from 13.0% (7 schools) in 17/18 to 24.1% (13 schools) in 18/19.



Special

The percentage of schools categorised as Grade C and D for Step 2 remains at 11.1% (1 school) having decreased from 22.2% (2 schools) in 2016-17. No special school was categorised as a D in 17/18 and in 18/19. The percentage categorised as Grade A has continued to increase from 33.3% (3 schools) in 16/17 to 44.4% (4 schools) in 17/18 to 55.6% (5 schools) in 18/19.

The percentage of schools categorised as red and amber for Step 3 remains at 11.1% having decreased from 22.2% (2 schools) in 16/17. No special school was categorised red in 18/19 and in 17/18. The percentage categorised as green remains at 44.4% (4 schools) having increased from 33.3% (3 schools) in 16/17.



3. EMERGING QUESTIONS TO HELP THE JOINT COMMITTEE, LA OFFICERS AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES TO EVALUATE PUPIL PROGRESS, STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE

Teacher assessments

- Why do Foundation Phase, KS2 and KS3 outcomes appear to be lower over the past two years?
- Why does the regional ESTYN profile and GwE intelligence gathering contradict falling outcomes at Foundation Phase?
- How effectively is progress and value added data analysed and reported so as to strengthen performance and improve standards?
- To what extent are schools adopting rigorous assessment tracking for all learners of all ages?
- How do schools use baseline assessment data to target and plan intervention needs?
- Are individual learners and groups of learners correctly identified and effectively supported?
- Have schools developed effective self-evaluation arrangements which go beyond end of key stage performance data to identify what they are doing well and what needs to change?
- What actions are leaders undertaking with classes that consistently underperform?
- How robust are in-school standardisation and cluster moderation procedures in schools?
- What monitoring processes are in place to ensure that schools set appropriate targets?
- Are schools ensuring that there is a broad and balanced curriculum and not fixated on a narrow set of subjects and areas of learning?
- What school data can be used for Local Authority self-evaluation purposes and how can this be presented?

Key Stage 4

- To what extent are all schools embracing the national change in direction and behaviour to maximise the performance of individual pupils across the ability range? Do school leaders have a clear vision for what to change and why?
- Have all schools developed effective self-evaluation arrangements which go beyond examination performance data to identify what they are doing well and what needs to change?
- How appropriate is the schools' curriculum across the region? Have all schools robustly evaluated the impact and contribution of individual non-core subjects into the revised C9 measure? Is this supported by leaders making effective and timely use of Welsh Government bulletin up-dates?
- Are current internal accountability and QA processes robust enough to ensure consistent performance by individual pupils across their option choices i.e. are leaders effectively addressing In School Variance?
- What actions are leaders undertaking with departments that are outperforming the school average and with those that are underperforming?
- To what extent do individual departments forensically analyse the data shared by WJEC on subject performance?
- To what extent do all departmental staff, across the range of subjects, understand the assessment weighting for each specification? How does this effectively impact on their planning and delivery and, where relevant, the understanding of grading, awarding and reporting?

- To what extent are departments making effective use of the Chief Examiner’s annual report which highlights strengths and weaknesses of performance?
- Many schools have members who are WJEC examination markers. To what extent are their expertise fully utilised within and across schools?
- Why has the performance in English dropped significantly in a number of historically strong performing departments?
- Why is there a variance in a number of regional schools between the performance of Mathematics and Maths-Numeracy?
- How well do current 14-19 local strategies ensure that funding is effectively used to deliver appropriate experiences and qualifications for targeted groups of pupils and to what extent do they contribute to the revised interim measures in each local authority?
- Are we confident that the national change in direction has sufficiently impacted on the local provision for EOTAS? To what extent has their performance in 2019 impacted on local authority outcomes?
- Are we confident that the national change in direction has sufficiently impacted on the local provision for Special Schools (145 pupils in Year 11) and Units? To what extent has their performance in 2019 impacted on local authority outcomes?
- Within the region there are 247 EOTAS pupils in year 11 – by grouping them together this is a larger cohort than what we have in any school. To what extent are leaders and staff within PRUs supported and skilled to clearly identify how best to maximise the performance of individual pupils across the revised performance measures?

4. 2019-20 BUSINESS PLAN PRIORITIES

The main areas for development, identified from self-evaluation, are priorities in our Business Plan for 2019-2020.

The Management Board and the GwE Joint Committee have approved our strategic objectives and priorities for improvement for 2019-20. The Business Plan is in 6 sections and is aligned with ‘Education in Wales: Our national mission’, clearly noting the contribution of the service to the transformation agenda.

The Business Plan links with more detailed service plans, with measurable targets for improvement and clear success criteria in order to accurately measure the region’s progress. Progress against the Business Plan is reported on a quarterly basis, in line with the Accountability Framework (Appendix 3).

Each Local Authority has a detailed business plan which has been agreed upon by the head of service and the lead Core Advisers. In each plan, there are details about key issues pertaining to the local authority along with a unique improvement plan to address specific challenges. Progress towards meeting agreed outcomes on a local authority level is reviewed on a regular basis.

Our strategic objectives for 2019-20 are:

1: Developing a high-quality education profession:

- Ensure that all teachers and support staff are equipped to have a clear understanding of what constitutes effective teaching, based on reliable evidence. In addition, the ability to deliver a range of approaches, effectively matching the needs of the learners with the context, to ensure positive impact on learning and achievement is paramount.

2: Inspirational leaders working collaboratively to raise standards:

- Ensure that all leaders have a clear educational vision and can plan strategically to achieve this. Ensure that all learning organisations have the leadership capacity at all levels to inspire, coach, support, share practice and collaborate at all levels to ensure all learners' achieve their potential. Ensure that the principles of distributive leaderships are embedded in all learning organisations across the region.

3: Strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being:

- Create the conditions to ensure that learners develop as healthy, resilient and globally responsible individuals and provide an inclusive, aspirational education system, committed to tackling inequality so that young people achieve their full potential.

4: Robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements supporting a self-improving system:

- Ensure all schools have robust assessment processes in place with strong targeting, tracking and intervention procedures. Ensure that school leaders and teachers have the skills, capacity and commitment to continually learn and improve their practice so that every child achieves their potential.

5: Transformational Curriculum

- To ensure that all schools deliver an engaging curriculum which responds to the statutory requirements of the national curriculum. Ensure that all learners are supported to achieve qualifications which enable them to be ambitious capable learners that reach their potential.

6: Business

- Ensure that GwE has strong governance and effective business and operational support that provides value for money.

Our main priorities for improvement for 2019-20 are:

1: Developing a high-quality education profession:

- 1.1 Support schools to improve performance in the secondary sector
- 1.2 Cymraeg 2050 – A million Welsh speakers
- 1.3 Support Bangor and Chester University to develop high quality ITE provision

2: Inspirational leaders working collaboratively to raise standards:

- 2.1 Provide development programmes across the work force to ensure high quality leadership
- 2.2 Support secondary schools to improve middle leadership performance
- 2.3 Develop peer engagement model and processes with schools to ensure robust self-evaluation and improvement planning at all levels

3: Strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being:

- 3.1 Supporting vulnerable learner's strategy
- 3.2 Further develop LAC strategy
- 3.3 Work with LA and Schools to best prepare for Additional Learning Needs transformation

4: Robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements supporting a self-improving system:

Support schools to improve performance in the secondary sector:

- 4.1 Develop tracking and assessment systems
- 4.2 Develop accountability and management systems
- 4.3 Further develop accountability arrangements and processes for robust self-evaluation and improvement planning

5: Transformational Curriculum:

- 5.1 Preparing a Transformational Curriculum
- 5.2 Improve the quality of teaching, taking account of the 12 pedagogical principles (Successful Futures)

6: Business:

- 6.1 Undertake a budget and workforce review.

Appendix 1

Report on Standards in Gwynedd LA

Changes to the Areas of Learning in the Foundation Phase

In October 2014 the Foundation Phase Areas of Learning (AoL) for Language, Literacy and Communication and Mathematical Development were revised so as to align them with the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) and make them more challenging. In line with this, the Foundation Phase outcomes were recalibrated to align with the increased expectations of the revised Areas of Learning.

The revised AoLs were statutory from September 2015. This means that the cohort of children who started Reception in September 2015 were the first children to be formally assessed against the revised outcomes at the end of the Foundation Phase in the summer of 2018. 2019 was the first year where a comparison can be made with previous performance. However, it is apparent that the re-alignment and re-adapting of the end of Foundation Phase assessment is ongoing, in line with new outcome descriptors. Therefore, as with last year, comparisons of Foundation Phase outcomes in language and maths to previous years at school level should be avoided as they are not measured on a comparable basis. Welsh Government is clear that the focus will be on learner progress from baseline assessment to end of Key Stage. Therefore, for the first time, we will include this in our end of year reporting.

Standards in the Foundation Phase in Gwynedd LA

Overall, taking into account the results of both expected and higher outcomes, learners' progress on their baseline assessment, ESTYN inspection outcomes and that nearly all pupils are assessed through the medium of Welsh, standards in the Foundation Phase in Gwynedd LA are good overall.

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, but the decrease in Gwynedd was slightly more than the average. The Local Authority's performance reflects this in the Foundation Phase Indicator (FPI) and in all Areas of Learning. The percentage of pupils achieving the Foundation Phase Indicator (FPI) is below the national average this year, after being close to the average for the past two years. The scrutiny committee commissioned a report on FPh results in 2017 and the main findings of this report, namely the impact of pupils being assessed through the medium of Welsh in accordance with the Gwynedd Language Policy continues to influence results.

Performance on the higher outcomes paints a better picture. Even though a decrease was seen in the number of learners achieving the higher outcomes in Gwynedd, this is not as much as that seen nationally. Attainment on the higher outcomes remains above the national average in all Areas of Learning, significantly so in Personal and Social Development.

The percentage of eFSM pupils achieving the expected outcomes across Wales decreased in 2018-19. However, in Gwynedd, the decrease was slightly more than the national pattern. Just over half of Gwynedd eFSM pupils have achieved the expected outcome; this percentage is significantly below the results of non-eFSM pupils. The difference in the performance of these two groups has increased in the last 3 years. However, on looking at the results in more detail it can be seen that Gwynedd eFSM pupils have made better than expected progress between their Baseline Assessment in the Reception and the Teacher Assessment at the end of Year 2 - average progress of at least 3.6 Outcomes, in comparison to the expected 3.0

Outcomes. Therefore, it is possible that Gwynedd eFSM pupils in general have a low attainment when they start in school, that they make more than expected progress in the Foundation Phase but that this progress is not enough to meet the Expected Outcomes by the end of Year 2.

The difference between the performance of boys and girls in the FPh in Gwynedd has remained similar during previous years, with girls outperforming boys slightly in all Areas of Learning. The anomaly is at the higher outcomes where boys slightly outperform girls in Mathematical Development. National averages also display a very similar pattern to Gwynedd.

Welsh Government has made it clear that Value Added progress between the baseline and end of Foundation Phase should be the focus when evaluating pupil achievement in the Foundation Phase. The progress of matched pupils from Gwynedd's 2017 Reception cohort between the baseline and end of Foundation Phase 2019 is good. Pupils are expected to make 3.0 outcomes of progress during the Foundation Phase. Gwynedd pupils make progress of about 3.6 outcomes in all areas. This Value Added data confirms that Local Authority schools demonstrate an effective and sustained approach in supporting pupils to make progress throughout the Foundation Phase.

Emerging questions:

- Why are Foundation Phase outcomes lower in all AoLs at the expected outcome over the past two years?
- Why is the difference between FPh outcomes of eFSM pupils and non-eFSM pupils in Gwynedd more than the national difference, and increasing?
- Is baseline assessment in Reception classes and teacher assessment in Year 2 classes in Gwynedd schools accurate and robust?

Standards in Key Stage 2 in Gwynedd LA

Taking into account the results of both expected and higher outcomes, learners' progress in KS2 and ESTYN inspection outcomes, standards in KS2 in Gwynedd LA are very good.

Even though end of Year 6 Core Subject Indicator results (CSI) in Gwynedd reflect the slight national dip this year, they have been high for the past three years and remain above the national average. In terms of individual subjects, results of expected levels are very close to the national average.

Similar to the pattern over a rolling 3-year period, Gwynedd schools' performance on the higher levels in KS2 is above the national average in all subjects. In terms of percentages, there is a slight dip this year, which is very close to the national pattern.

The percentage of Gwynedd eFSM pupils who achieved the expected level in Year 6 increased in 2019. This means that results this year are slightly higher than the national result after being slightly lower last year. A similar pattern is to be seen in terms of eFSM pupils' performance on the higher levels. Gwynedd eFSM pupils' L5+ results in Welsh, English and science are slightly higher than the national average, with mathematics close to the national eFSM result.

In terms of the performance gap between boys and girls in the CSI, girls' results have improved slightly overall whilst boys' performance has decreased slightly. This means that the usual gap over a rolling period has increased somewhat this year to be more than the national gap. The difference in the expected level result for Welsh is the main reason for this. At the higher levels, there is a similar pattern to rolling results in that girls tend to perform better in Welsh and English and slightly better in science. In the last three years the difference is much less

in mathematics on the higher level in comparison to the other subjects. The reason for this is that girls' results are slightly lower and boys' results are higher overall than their comparative results in both languages.

As with the Foundation Phase, Welsh Government has made it clear that Value Added progress between end of Foundation Phase and end of Key Stage 2 should be the focus when evaluating pupil achievement. Progress of matched pupils from Gwynedd's 2015 Foundation Phase cohort to end of Key Stage 2019 is positive. Pupils are expected to make 2 levels of progress during Key Stage 2; on average in Gwynedd pupils made 2.13 levels of progress in mathematics and 2.01 levels of progress in Welsh. This Value Added data confirms that Local Authority schools demonstrate an effective and sustained approach in supporting pupils to make progress throughout Key Stage 2.

Moderation has been verified as being accurate and robust in nearly all Gwynedd primary schools with only a very few schools having any disagreement as regards levels. Individual primary schools track progress data thoroughly and hold staff to account for outcomes.

Emerging questions:

- Why is there a greater gap this year between boys' and girls' CSI results, especially in Welsh?
- Why do girls tend to outperform the boys at the higher levels in both languages but performance is similar to that of the boys in mathematics?
- Why do results show more progress by the end of Year 6 in mathematics than in Welsh?

Key Stage 3

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 using aggregated data sets to hold schools to account.

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

The Gwynedd CSI is higher than the national average with a decrease of 1.2% in comparison to 2018 performance [-1.9% nationally]. The performance of the 2019 cohort at the expected level was higher than national average in all core subjects.

At the higher levels, performance in mathematics and science was better than in 2018, but fell slightly in Welsh and English. With the exception of English, performance in the core subjects is higher than the national average for 2019 on the higher levels.

There was a slight decrease in girls' performance in the CSI and across core subjects. This reflects national patterns where there was also a decrease in each indicator. Their performance is also above the national average in all core subjects, with the exception of Welsh (-0.4). There was a decrease overall in girls' performance on the higher levels, with the exception of science. In line with the national pattern there was a decrease in boys' performance in the CSI, and it is slightly below the national average for 2019. However, boys' performance in each core subject is above the national average. On the higher levels, with the exception of mathematics, there was a slight decrease in boys' performance in the core subjects. With the exception of science, the gender gap increased in each indicator on the expected level, but narrowed on the higher levels.

Overall, there was an increase in the percentage of eFSM pupils who achieved the expected outcomes in Gwynedd in 2019, namely in the CSI, Welsh, mathematics and science. There was a 1.1% decrease in English. On the higher levels, there were improvements in each core subject. The eFSM/non-dFSM performance gap also reduced across indicators.

Emerging questions:

- At the higher levels, performance in mathematics and science was better than in 2018, but fell slightly in Welsh and English.
- What has been noted as having had an impact on the improvement in the performance standards of eFSM pupils, especially so on the higher levels?
- What aspects of best practice in the highest performing departments/classrooms need to be cascaded, and how best do we facilitate this process?

Key Stage 4

Context

The Year 11 school cohort included:

- 32 pupils in PRU/EOTAS provision [performance of group included in all LA data]
- each secondary school in Gwynedd has an eFSM % that is lower than the national average of 16.5%. 5 schools are in the 0-10% FSM group and 9 schools are in the 10-15% group
- 104 eFSM pupils. Numbers in individual schools varied from 1 to 21. The size of the cohort should naturally be taken into consideration when analysing performance at individual school level.

Capped 9

LA performance in the main indicator [Capped 9] is 8.1pt higher than the national average of 353.3pt. Performance in individual schools against the measure is very strong overall. It should be remembered that the LA aggregated % includes the performance data of the 32 pupils who are either in a PRU or educated otherwise than at school (EOTAS). However, performance in 2019 is slightly below the expected performance of -1.6pt.

When comparing to national averages it should be taken into consideration that no secondary school in Gwynedd has an eFSM % that is higher than the national average. The performance of boys is considerably higher than the national average for 2019 (+13.8pt) whilst girls' performance is also higher than the national average (+2.8pt).

The performance of eFSM pupils and non-eFSM pupils is also higher than the national average, more so eFSM pupils (+24.3 pt) which means that the gap has reduced considerably and is significantly below the national average (-58.0pt in comparison to -77.1pt nationally).

In 2019, 14 schools performed above the national average, with the performance of 6 better than the expected performance, and significantly higher in 5 of the schools. In comparison to expected performance, performance in 4 schools is a concern, with gaps in performance varying between -3pt and -53.7pt.

The performance of boys was higher than the national average of 337.3pt in 11 schools, with the gap in 2 schools a concern. The performance of girls was better than the national average of 370.4pt in 10 schools, with the gap significant in only 2 schools. The gender gap in 5 schools is more than the national average. Girls outperformed the boys in each school.

The performance of eFSM pupils was higher than the national average of 298.3pt in 8 schools, but below the national average in 6 other schools. The eFSM/non-eFSM performance gap is

below the national gap in 8 schools, but the gap remains significantly higher in 2 schools (it should be remembered that numbers in some schools are very low).

Literacy Indicator

LA performance in this indicator is 1.9pt above the national average of 39.0pt, and is slightly above the expected performance (+0.2pt). The performance of both boys and girls is above the national average for 2019 (+2.4pt and +1.6pt respectively). The gender gap is also slightly below the national average. The performance of e-FSM pupils and non-eFSM pupils is also slightly above the national average (+3.2pt and +1.6pt).

Of the 14 secondary schools, one only was below the national average, with several schools significantly above. The performance of half of schools was on a par with or above expected performance, with three significantly above. The performance of 2 schools is a concern.

The performance of boys was higher than the national average of 36.3pt in 13 schools, with one school -2.4pt below the national average. The performance of girls was slightly higher than the national average of 41.8pt in 13 schools and below in 1 school, but not significantly so. Girls' performance in several schools was extremely high. The gap is more than the national average of 5.5pt in 6 schools. The performance of eFSM pupils was above the national average of 32.5pt in 9 schools.

The eFSM/non-eFSM performance gap is better than the national average of 8.9pt in 8 schools.

Performance in the subjects contributing to the literacy indicator

In the average points score for English, Gwynedd performance was on a par with the national average with a -3.8pt gender gap in comparison to a national gap of -5.2pt. The performance of e-FSM pupils was better than their national peers by 2.3pt. In English Literature, performance was 0.4pt above the national average with a -3.1pt gender gap [-4.2pt nationally]. The performance of eFSM pupils was 2.9pt above the national average.

In Welsh First Language, performance was slightly lower in comparison to the national average of -0.5pt. There was a -4.3pt gender gap in comparison to -4.0pt nationally. The performance of e-FSM pupils was 0.1pt below that of their national peers. The average points score for Welsh Literature was also lower than the national figure of -1.8pt, even though the gender gap is below the national figure. The performance of e-FSM pupils was slightly lower than the national average [-0.5pt].

Performance in 5 schools was higher than the national average in English Language but in 2 schools only in English Literature [Schools C and D]. The gender gap was wider than the national average in 4 schools in Language and Literacy. The widest gap, in both indicators, was in School B. In terms of eFSM pupils, 5 schools were above the national average in Language and Literacy. In Schools A and B, the performance of e-FSM pupils was below the national average in both indicators.

Numeracy Indicator

LA performance in this indicator is -0.1pt below the national average of 37.1pt, and 1.7pt below expected performance. Boys' performance is slightly above the national average and girls' performance is slightly below in 2019 [+0.6pt and -0.8pt respectively]. There is no gender gap in Gwynedd in comparison to a national average of -1.4pt. The performance of eFSM pupils is +1.0pt above the national average [29.4pt] and non-eFSM -0.7pt below. The eFSM/non-

eFSM performance gap is below the national average (-8.5pt in comparison to -10.3pt nationally).

Of the 14 secondary schools, 9 were above the national average, with 4 better than expected performance. Performance in 3 schools was significantly lower. The performance of boys was higher than the national average of 36.4pt in 8 schools, and very close in 2 other schools.

The performance of girls was higher than the national average of 37.8pt in 7 schools. Boys outperformed girls in 7 schools. The performance of eFSM pupils was above the national average of 29.4pt in 9 schools. The weakest performance was 5.4pt below the national average. The eFSM/non-eFSM performance gap is better than the national average of -10.3pt in 10 schools.

Performance in the subjects contributing to the numeracy indicator

In the average points score for mathematics, performance was -0.6pt below the national average with a -1.0pt gender gap compared to a national average of -2.1pt. The performance of eFSM pupils (28.5 pt) was slightly higher than the national average of 27.3pt and the eFSM/non-eFSM performance gap was less in Gwynedd than in Wales.

In mathematics-numeracy, the performance of the authority was 0.9pt above the national average of 34.2pt, with boys outperforming the girls. The performance of e-FSM pupils was also higher than the national average of 26.1pt (+2.2pt).

The Science Indicator

LA performance in this indicator is slightly above the national average of 36.8pt, with boys' performance (+2.4pt) and girls' performance (+0.8pt) higher than that of their national peers. The gender gap (-1.1pt) is also less than the national average of -2.7pt. The performance of eFSM pupils is considerably higher than the national average of 28.2pt, and the eFSM/non-eFSM performance gap is also better than the national average [-8.5pt in comparison to -11.6pt nationally].

Of the 14 secondary schools, 9 were above the national average. The performance of boys was higher than the national average of 35.5pt in 9 schools, with the gap in the other 5 schools varying between -0.7pt and -5.6pt. The performance of girls was above the national average of 38.2pt in 9 schools, but with no specific pattern, with a range of 0.1pt-1.6pt in the 5 schools below the national average. There is concern about science results in a few schools.

The performance of eFSM pupils was above the national average of 28.2pt in 10 of the 14 schools. The eFSM/non-eFSM performance gap is also below the national average in 10 schools.

Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate Indicator

LA performance in this indicator is -0.4pt below the national average of 36.4pt and 1.9pt below expected performance. The performance of both boys and girls is on a par with the national average. The performance of eFSM pupils is +2pt higher than the national average [29.5pt], and the eFSM/non-eFSM performance gap is also less than the national average [-6.7pt in comparison to -9.6pt nationally].

Of the 14 secondary schools, 10 were above the national average, but did not necessarily follow the patterns of other indicators. Only 5 schools were better than their expected performance. The performance of boys was above the national average of 33.5pt in 9 schools.

The performance of girls was higher than the national average of 39.5pt in 12 schools. Consequently the gender gap is wider than the national average in 6 schools, and is 4pt above the national average at its widest.

The performance of eFSM pupils was above the national average of 29.5pt in 10 schools, and the eFSM/non-eFSM performance gap was also better than the national average in 9 schools.

Emerging questions:

Whole schools:

- Why are there such great variances in performance between individual schools in Gwynedd when the eFSM percentage in each school is below the national average?
- In terms of the contribution to the literacy and numeracy measure, why in Gwynedd have Welsh and numeracy contributed much more than English and mathematics in 2019?
- How confident are we that all Gwynedd schools effectively evaluate the impact and contribution of individual non-core subjects in the revised C9 measure, and to what extent do their accountability processes robustly challenge In School Variance?
- What are the effective actions currently being taken by leaders with departments that are outperforming the school average and with those that are underperforming? How may it be ensured that schools learn from each other?
- To what extent do individual departments within schools forensically analyse the data shared by WJEC on subject performance, and to what extent do all departmental staff, across the range of subjects, understand the assessment weighting for each specification? How does this effectively impact on their planning and delivery and, where relevant, the understanding of grading, awarding and reporting?
- How appropriate is the provision across schools for boys, in particular those in danger of becoming disengaged?
- How well do current 14-19 local strategies ensure that funding is effectively used to deliver appropriate experiences and qualifications for targeted groups of pupils, and to what extent do they contribute to the revised interim measures in each local authority?
- In terms of PRU/EOTAS learners, how can we effectively ensure that leaders and staff within PRUs are supported and that they have the skills to clearly identify how best to maximise the performance of individual pupils across the range of revised performance measures?

Literacy:

- How effectively do schools develop 'higher-order writing skills' to improve performance?
- How can we best support classroom teachers and departments to improve the teaching of examination skills?
- What are the most effective strategies to further reduce the gender gap?
- Do all departments have a common and effective approach to the teaching of writing?
- How can we further empower Heads of Departments to lead teaching and learning?
- How can we improve the quality of Literacy Intervention in KS3, especially intervention for eFSM learners?
- How can we support departments in increasing the level of challenge in KS3?

Numeracy:

- How can we best support classroom teachers and departments to improve the teaching of examination skills?
- What are the most effective strategies to further reduce the gender gap?
- How can we support departments in increasing the level of challenge in KS3?
- How can we further improve the teaching of numeracy and mathematics in KS3?

- How can we best support collaborative working in KS4?
- Schools have participated effectively in the MEI TGM programme in the last few years. How can we further support teachers within the county?

Science:

- How can we more effectively support the development of numeracy skills (30% assessment of numeracy skills in science across the GCSEs)?
- How can we more effectively develop literacy skills so as to support lower ability learners to deal with the high volume of text in examination papers?
- What are the most effective strategies to further reduce the gender gap?
- How can we implement more effective action research in classrooms to improve teaching and learning?
- What are the best strategies for engaging boys in science?
- What are the best strategies for engaging girls in science?
- What is the most effective way to start a science lesson? (linked to EEF research project)
- How can we use modelling to raise attainment in science?

Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate Indicator

- Why is there such a gender gap in this measure?

Key Stage 5

293 pupils sat A levels in Gwynedd (an increase of 264 on the previous year).

There was an improvement in outcomes on A*/A, A*-B, A*-C and A*-E grades (+4.1%, +7.8% +5.1% and 0.4% respectively).

Performance is higher than national performance in the A*-B (+2.5%) and A*-C (+0.6%) indicators, but slightly below in the A*/A (-0.1%) and A*-E (-0.2%) indicators.

In terms of ALPS analysis, there was an increase in Year 13 GCSE pupils' average points score in 2018-19; 6.10-> 6.18 (highest score in the last 4 years).

The number of pupils with a score in the highest 3rd (+6.40) increased to 43.7% (+5.8% on the previous year and +3.00% above the national average).

Nevertheless, the performance of pupils with A* expectations for A Level is disappointing, with a 6.85 decrease in their UCAS average points score in comparison to the performance of similar pupils in the previous year.

STEM subjects, Welsh First Language, History, Psychology and English Literature are performing well. Excellent progress in value added standards in Sociology and French. Good progress in standards in Art.

There is concern regarding a drop in performance in Religious Education, Business Studies and Drama. Ongoing concerns regarding performance in English Literature and Language, which have been consistently disappointing in two years.

LA's Estyn Profile

Gwynedd

Year group	Wales LA	Number Inspected	Not in Follow-Up		Estyn Review		Significant Improvement		Special Measures	
			%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
2017-2018	Gwynedd	19	84.2	16	15.8	3	0.0	0	0.0	0
2017-2018	Wales	237	75.1	178	17.3	41	4.6	11	3.0	7
2018-2019	Gwynedd	15	93.3	14	0.0	0	0.0	0	6.7	1
2018-2019	Wales	227	75.8	172	19.8	45	1.8	4	2.6	6

Inspection Outcomes 2018-19

	Standards		Wellbeing		Teaching		Support		Leadership	
	Gwynedd	Wales	Gwynedd	Wales	Gwynedd	Wales	Gwynedd	Wales	Gwynedd	Wales
Excellent	26.67	11.45	26.67	19.82	26.67	11.89	26.67	18.94	33.33	17.18
Good	66.67	65.20	66.67	67.40	66.67	62.11	66.67	70.93	60.00	58.59
Adequate	0.00	21.15	6.67	12.33	6.67	24.23	6.67	8.37	0.00	20.70
Unsatisfactory	6.67	2.20	0.00	0.44	0.00	1.76	0.00	1.76	6.67	3.52

Primary

Year group	Wales LA	Number Inspected	Not in Follow-Up		Estyn Review		Significant Improvement		Special Measures	
			%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
2017-2018	Gwynedd	14	92.9	13	7.1	1	0.0	0	0.0	0
2017-2018	Wales	200	80.5	161	14.5	29	3.5	7	1.5	3
2018-2019	Gwynedd	14	100.0	14	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
2018-2019	Wales	188	80.9	152	16.5	31	0.5	1	2.1	4

Lifelong/Secondary

Year group	Wales LA	Number Inspected	Not in Follow-Up		Estyn Review		Significant Improvement		Special Measures	
			%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
2017-2018	Gwynedd	4	75.0	3	25.0	1	0.0	0	0.0	0
2017-2018	Wales	30	50.0	15	33.3	10	10.0	3	6.7	2
2018-2019	Gwynedd	1	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	100.0	1
2018-2019	Wales	32	43.8	14	40.6	13	9.4	3	6.3	2

Special/PRU

Year group	Wales LA	Number Inspected	Not in Follow-Up		Estyn Review		Significant Improvement		Special Measures	
			%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
2017-2018	Gwynedd	1	0.0	0	100.0	1	0.0	0	0.0	0
2017-2018	Wales	7	28.6	2	28.6	2	14.3	1	28.6	2
2018-2019	Gwynedd	0	#DIV/0!	0	#DIV/0!	0	#DIV/0!	0	#DIV/0!	0
2018-2019	Wales	7	85.7	6	14.3	1	0.0	0	0.0	0

Primary

	Standards		Wellbeing		Teaching		Support		Leadership	
	Gwynedd	Wales	Gwynedd	Wales	Gwynedd	Wales	Gwynedd	Wales	Gwynedd	Wales
Excellent	28.57	10.11	28.57	19.15	28.57	11.17	28.57	17.55	35.71	17.55
Good	71.43	71.28	71.43	72.34	71.43	66.49	71.43	76.06	64.29	63.30
Adequate	0.00	18.09	0.00	8.51	0.00	21.28	0.00	4.79	0.00	16.49
Unsatisfactory	0.00	0.53	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.06	0.00	1.60	0.00	2.66

Secondary/Lifelong

	Standards		Wellbeing		Teaching		Support		Leadership	
	Gwynedd	Wales	Gwynedd	Wales	Gwynedd	Wales	Gwynedd	Wales	Gwynedd	Wales
Excellent	0.00	12.50	0.00	18.75	0.00	9.38	0.00	21.88	0.00	9.38
Good	0.00	34.38	0.00	40.63	0.00	40.63	0.00	43.75	0.00	34.38
Adequate	0.00	40.63	100.00	37.50	100.00	43.75	100.00	31.25	0.00	46.88
Unsatisfactory	100.00	12.50	0.00	3.13	0.00	6.25	0.00	3.13	100.00	9.38

LA Categorisation Profile - information to follow.

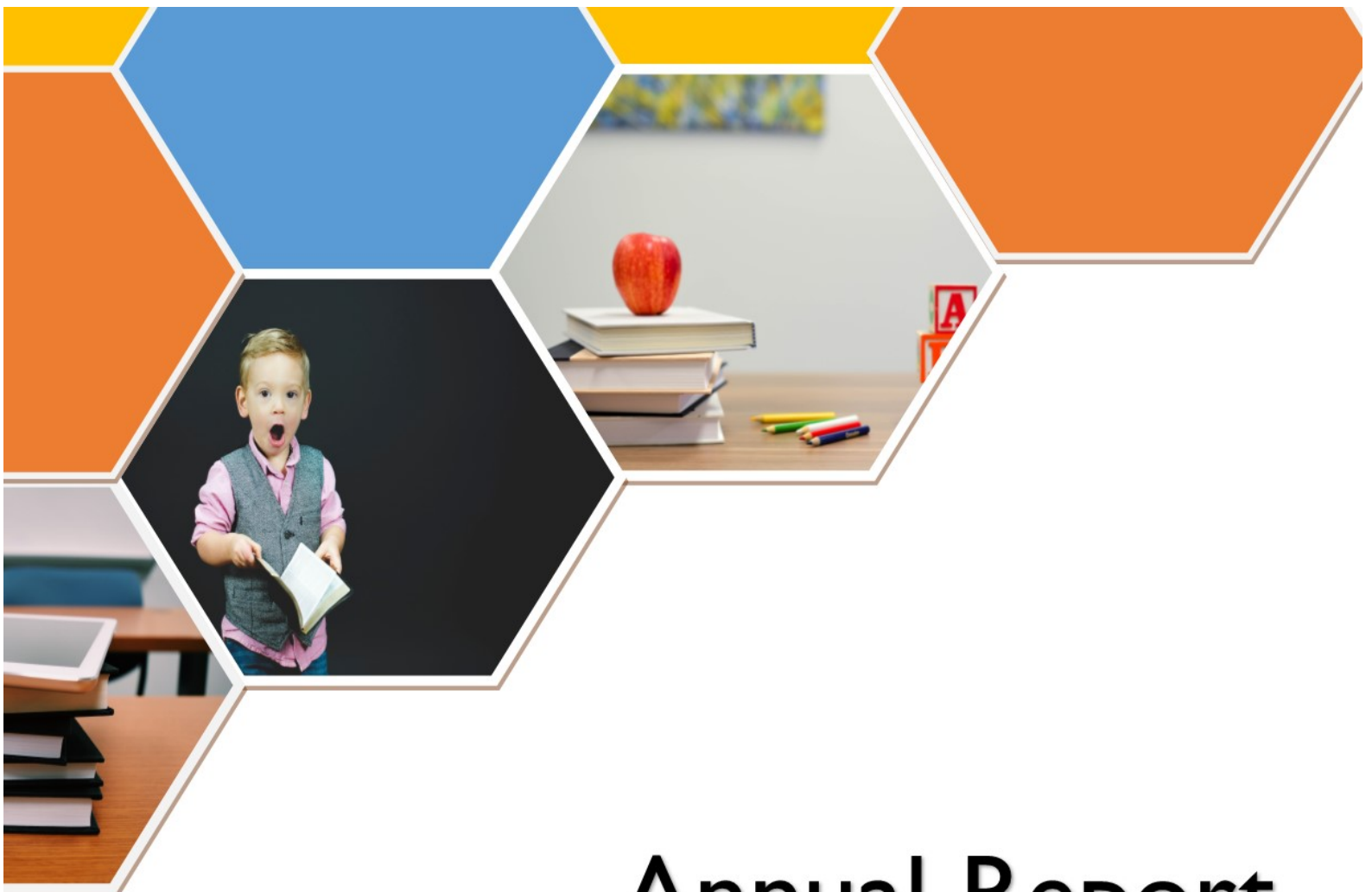
LA's monitoring arrangements for scrutinising individual school's performance

Fortnightly Local Quality Board meetings are held between the GwE Primary and Secondary Core Leads and Gwynedd LA officers. Schools causing concern are discussed and any strengths and areas for improvement noted. Early identification of concerns in schools is also discussed and noted so as to provide early intervention and support. This links to the regular meetings held between the Gwynedd Core Lead and the Supporting Improvement Advisers to discuss progress in all Gwynedd schools. The regular communication between the LA and GwE officers ensures shared intelligence about schools' capacity to improve, and where concerns are identified all parties work in partnership to review standards and provision in the school and to set and monitor clear targets for improvement.

Gwynedd LA have robust monitoring process in place to scrutinise the performance of individual schools. This includes the use of 'School Improvement Boards' in schools causing concern i.e. those schools in ESTYN category and those categorised as Red or Amber in the National Categorisation system. The Improvement Board includes the Headteacher, school governors, LA officers, GwE officers and additional school staff when relevant. Progress against actions and priorities is discussed and evaluated, together with the quality of the support given to the school by GwE and the LA.

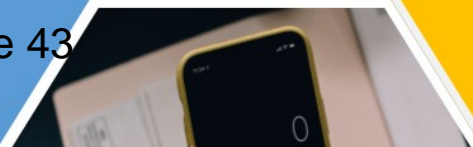
LA's main areas for improvement to be included in Level 2 Business Plans

- Improve performance on the expected levels in the Foundation Phase, in all areas of learning.
- Improve the performance of eFSM pupils in the Foundation Phase
- Improve performance on the higher levels in key stage 3.
- Continue to improve the quality of planning and learning so that all pupils develop their literacy, number and ICT skills.
- Improve performance in English, mathematics and science in key stage 4.
- Improve performance of boys in all key indicators in key stage 4.
- Remove variances in performance between and within departments in specific schools.
- Improve performance on A*-A grades in key stage 5.
- Ensure that statutory category schools make the expected progress within the set timescale.



Annual Report

Education Department



EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

CONTENTS

- 1. CONTEXT**
- 2. THE WELSH LANGUAGE**
- 3. ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND INCLUSION**
- 4. SAFEGUARDING**
- 5. EARLY YEARS**
- 6. EDUCATION MODERNISATION TEAM**
- 7. GWYNEDD AND ISLE OF ANGLESEY POST-16 EDUCATION CONSORTIUM**
- 8. TRAC**
- 9. LEADERSHIP**
- 10. DATA UNIT**
- 11. SCHOOL GOVERNANCE SUPPORT SERVICE**
- 12. CONTRACTS AND PERSONNEL UNIT**
- 13. CATERING AND CLEANING UNIT**
- 14. TRANSPORT**

CONTEXT

THE VISION OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT: Gwynedd children and young people attaining the highest standards in order to maintain the language, culture and economy locally.

PURPOSE: *Promote the achievement and well-being of Gwynedd's children and young people by ensuring effective governance, leadership and management of our schools.*

SERVICES WE PROVIDE: Raising Standards, Support Services, School Staff Salaries and Contracts, Teachers' Pensions, School Catering, School Cleaning, School Transport, Health and Safety, School Admissions, Support for Governors, Financial Support for Schools, Information and Communication Technology, Data Unit, Human Resources Support for Schools and the Education Department, Attendance and Behaviour, Education Welfare Service, Additional Learning Needs, Child Protection, Leadership and Management, Training.

WHAT DOES THE DEPARTMENT DO?

- Support children and young people to attain the highest standards.
- Ensure that pupils with Additional Learning Needs receive the most suitable support.
- Ensure that pupils with emotional and behavioural needs are fully included within Gwynedd schools.
- Ensure that pupils within Gwynedd schools are safe.
- Provide appropriate support services for the Gwynedd Education Service.
- Develop leaders and support the workforce in the schools.
- Support for school governing bodies to enable them to act as effective governors.

There are 83 primary schools, 13 secondary schools, 1 All-through School, 1 Lifelong Learning School and two Special Schools in Gwynedd.

OUR PRINCIPAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
Percentage of 15 year old pupils (on 31 August of the previous year) gaining 5 GCSE grades A* to C, including Welsh or English, and Mathematics (TL2+)
Average point scores for pupils who were 15 years old on the 31 August of the previous year
Percentage of 16 year old pupils who gain 5 GCSE grades A* to C (TL2)
Percentage of 16 year old pupils who gain 5 GCSE grades A* to G (TL1)
Percentage of 16 year old pupils who achieve a Grade C or above, in Welsh or English, Mathematics and Science (CSI)
Percentage of young people aged 16-18 who are not in employment, education or training
Percentage of all pupils, who were 15 years old on the 31 August of the previous year, who leave education, training or work-based learning without a qualification
Percentage of pupils assessed at the end of year 9, and who reach the expected level, in Welsh or English, Mathematics and Science (CSI)
Percentage of pupils assessed at the end of year 6, and who reach the expected level in Welsh or English, Mathematics and Science (CSI)
Percentage of pupils assessed at the end of the Foundation Phase, and who reach the expected level (FPI)
Number of permanent exclusions in secondary schools during the academic year
Number of permanent exclusions in primary schools during the academic year
Percentage of pupil attendance at secondary schools during the academic year
Percentage of pupil attendance at primary schools during the academic year

THE WELSH LANGUAGE

WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN

The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act (2013) places a statutory duty on local authorities to prepare and submit a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan to Welsh Government. These plans outline the way in which local authorities intend to achieve the Welsh Government aims and targets outlined in the following documents:

- Welsh-medium Education Strategy
- Cymraeg 2050
- Education in Wales: Our Nation's Mission (Action Plan 2017-21)
- The Welsh Language in Education: Action Plan 2017-21
- Welsh Language Promotion Plan for Gwynedd 2018-23

Good features

- Performance in Welsh in KS2 and KS3 is consistently good over a rolling period
- Every pupil with additional learning needs (ALN) has access to Welsh-medium services. Welsh-medium and bilingual provisions and services are available for all ranges and varieties of ALN.
- An Audit of the Language Skills of the Education Workforce in Gwynedd has been held
- Pilot plans to support the language skills of the education workforce at Ysgol Uwchradd Tywyn proved to be a success

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT PERIOD:

- Preparing the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan consultation document in order to meet the requirements of the new Regulations which came into force on 1 January 2020.
- Reinforce the principles and methodology of Welsh immersion in the Foundation Phase
- Continue to ensure effective transition between KS2 and KS3
- Give specific attention to language medium in KS4
- Continue to support the workforce of our secondary schools to develop their Welsh language skills and confidence.

GWYNEDD AND ANGLESEY HUB LANGUAGE CHARTER

The action plans and self-assessments documents were revised to:

- Support the principles of the new curriculum, the four core purposes and the requirements of Successful Futures
- Record and define growth in an effective and manageable way
- Form exemplary action plans to inspire ideas to collaborate within catchments and support schools to fulfil the aim
- Meetings were held with Language Co-ordinators in each catchment to give guidance and distribute the most recent documents and resources
- Every school (apart from 2) completed the gwe iaith data in September 2018, and again in the summer term of 2019 so as to measure the growth in the use of Welsh within the school year.
- Every school (on the catchment meeting level) received support to create their action plans in response to the Language Charter

- A number of activities were held on an individual school level as well as in collaboration within the catchment to share good practice.
- 75 evaluations were received and responses were given to the actions identified giving guidance to schools which next steps they should implement.
- Validation visits were held with a third of the schools, and meetings were held to moderate the work.
- 42 schools withheld their gold level standard, whilst 31 schools were awarded the silver level standard.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT PERIOD:

- Discussions have been held with Language Co-ordinators and feedback given on the contents of the validation of every school and the next steps agreed for the year 2019-20
- HWB Google Classrooms Language Charter Catchment platforms have been created to facilitate sharing resources, documents and good practice.
- Language Psychology Training and ways of encouraging pupils to use Welsh will be held.

STRATEGAETH IAITH UWCHRADD

SECONDARY SECTOR LANGUAGE STRATEGY

The vision contained within the Secondary Sector Language Strategy is to ensure a system of secondary schools in the County which promotes the Welsh language in all aspects of their work. The purpose of the Strategy is to ensure continuity and progression in terms of the success of the Primary Schools Language Charter, thereby promoting the social use of Welsh among children and young people and to develop it as an effective medium for all aspects of a school's life and work.

Good features

- Pupils in years 7, 8 and 9 now complete the Language Web every term in order to measure their social and curricular use of Welsh, and schools employ the data as a basis for their implementation targets.
- Every school has developed individual action plans and identified areas for further development in response to the principles contained within the Language Strategy.
- Every School Council/Language Council plans and undertakes activities funded by the LPSP along with other activities throughout the year.
- A review of the language medium in which subjects are taught in Secondary Schools in Key Stages 3 and 4 and post-16 has been completed, and conclusions will be presented soon.
- A joint pilot project is being undertaken with Ysgol Bro Idris in order to look into pupils' language tendencies as they progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3.
- Pupils in the schools have collaborated in producing a video to promote the benefits of bilingual education, and Language Coordinator representatives have been working with the Strategy Coordinator to create resources to support this.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT PERIOD:

- Continue to offer support to enable every secondary school to implement the main priorities of the Language Strategy and to revisit their individual action plans.
- Make meaningful use of the results of the subject language medium questionnaire in order to ensure consistency of provision throughout the County.

- Ensure that the Workforce’s language skills are developed and monitored in accordance with the results of the Language Skills Survey held in the Autumn. Implement Action Plan to support the Ysgol Friars workforce to develop their Welsh language skills.
- Cascade key messages from the Language Psychology Training held with all the schools.
- Ensure that training needs are met e.g. Proficiency Training.
- Ensure that key messages are cascaded effectively across all clusters in the County.
- Hold focus groups with a sample of schools in order to hear the Voice of the Learners in considering the further development of the Language Strategy.

GWYNEDD LANGUAGE CENTRES

The Language Centres are aimed at providing an intensive Welsh language course for incomers to enable them to assimilate with the bilingual society and participate fully in bilingual educational experiences. This provision assists primary and secondary schools to implement the current Language Policy.

Good features

- The table below shows the number of learners who attended the Language Centres in 2018-19:

TERM	Dolgellau	Llangybi	Maesincla	Penrhyn	Total	Uwchradd
CAPACITY	8	16	16	16		
Spring 2018	7	14	15	11	47	15
Summer 2018	7	8	16	14	45	14
Autumn 2018	8	11	16	16	51	15
2018 Total	22	33	47	41	143	44
Spring 2019	9	8	11	16	44	9
Summer 2019	3	7	13	17	40	11

- During the year, consultation was undertaken with staff on restructuring due to a nationwide reduction in the Education Improvement Grant with which the Language Centres are funded. A report was submitted to the Gwynedd Council Cabinet on 2 April 2019, which led to the following resolution:
 - To implement a teacher and assistant staffing structure pilot, increasing the teacher: pupil ratio at one Language Centre for a year, and to monitor it closely to identify whether it affects the quality of the education and the children's attainment.
 - To remove the TLR allowance for teachers at every Language Centre, and incorporate the after-care as a part of the core provision of the Language Centres, thus abolishing the existing after-care post.
 - In order to buy time to consider the findings of the pilot, to approve bridging funding to address the continued deficit after implementing (ii) above, until the findings of the pilot are known.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT PERIOD

- To pilot a teacher and assistant staffing structure within one Language Centre.
- To plan and implement after-care provision as part of the core provision in every primary Language Centre.
- Continue to develop the website for the Language Centres.
- Following implementation of the performance management arrangements, support staff to take advantage of appropriate training and secure continuous professional development opportunities.
- Revisit the Language Centres' admission procedures.

ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND INCLUSION

The Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Integrated Service, provided on a joint basis with Isle of Anglesey County Council, has been operational since September 2017. The purpose of the service is to:

- identify problems / needs early on in the child's life and ensure appropriate intervention;
- ensure early intervention when problems emerge;
- work in a more integrated and multi-agency manner, sharing information and undertaking joint planning for the provision;
- ensure that the skills and understanding of the workforce are developed continuously;
- ensure better and more organised communication with children, young people and their families.

Good features:

- An electronic Individual Development Plan System developed by Cynnal is now being used by all schools, following a successful pilot period. The system facilitates the work of schools and the service significantly.
- The Nurturing Schools project is still operational and demonstrates positive results within the secondary and primary sectors.
- The Phase 2 work of the Strategic Review making good progress and continuing to ensure that Gwynedd is ready for the new ALN legislation in September 2020. The Authority continues to innovate with its preparations.
- The Training Strategy of the service has been finalised, and training is being provided. This has now become an integral part of every team's functions.
- Use of TOMs (Therapy Outcome Measures) is being extended further in order to enable reporting on children's progress on a wider level, as holistic methods are required to show the progress of children and young people with ALN.
- Arrangements for monitoring ALN provision and use of resources are in place as part of work to rationalise the use of ALN Integration Funding. This, in combination with input from the ALN&I Service and the detailed Moderation Panel process, has led to a rationalisation in the demand for ALN funding. This is also part of the ongoing Phase 2 work.
- The number of tribunals remains very low, with tribunals involving provision within Gwynedd schools leading to favourable outcomes for the Authority (i.e. confirming that appropriate provision is in place).
- Schools' inclusivity indicators continue to highlight that Gwynedd schools are especially inclusive – exclusion rates, the number of pupils who receive alternative provision and the numbers being home-schooled voluntarily, and attendance, all paint a very inclusive picture in comparison with nationwide figures.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT PERIOD:

- As the Government has published the Draft Code of Practice for implementing the ALN Legislation from September 2021, we will be focusing on:
 - The quality of Individual Development Plans, and ensuring that the child is central to the process.
 - Consistency in School provision, and the role of the ALN Co-ordinator.
 - Strengthen and streamline the provision paths at 0-3 and 16-25 years.
- Services will also continue to prioritise:

- Training Strategy for Schools and staff - upskilling in preparation for the new legislation
- Progress tracking methods and the effectiveness of interventions within the online IDP.
- Strengthen the behavioural support provision in the secondary sector.

SAFEGUARDING

Purpose

Safeguard the well-being of children and young people.

Good features

- Schools in Gwynedd have received a comprehensive and up-to-date safeguarding pack which includes examples of good practice, ready-to-use templates and policies.
- Have ensured attendance at every Part 4 meeting, where allegations had been made against staff in Gwynedd schools.
- Level 2 training has been provided on a monthly basis throughout the year. Level 1 training has been provided to all school staff, presented by the schools' designated child protection officers.
- Training on taking positive action in response to inappropriate sexualised behaviour was provided in primary and secondary schools in November 2018.
- Collaboration with Social Services to improve the Department's practice in relation to case conferences.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT PERIOD:

- To compile the annual safeguarding report in a more expedient manner, ensuring responses from every school in Gwynedd.
- To review our training package in response to the new guidelines on safeguarding children in education.
- To establish a system of annual quality assurance visits to monitor safeguarding arrangements in every school in Gwynedd.

EARLY YEARS

The Early Years Unit plans to ensure the Authority fulfils the statutory requirement of securing a nursery place for every child from the term after his/her third birthday. From September 2019, nursery education provision is being offered at 61 settings across the county (one of which is temporarily closed at present). All settings have now enlisted with Mudiad Meithrin and are monitored regularly.

Good features:

- Foundation Phase Support Teachers have delivered training to all settings on:
 - Homelink bags – physical literacy
 - Foundation Phase principles, planning, assessment, the Profile and self-evaluation (new Leaders)
 - Foundation Phase principles, planning, assessment, the Profile and self-evaluation (Assistants – optional)
 - Senior teachers have attended Ffordd Gwynedd training
- The Early Years ALN Coordinator has delivered training to all settings on:
 - ALN&I (the impending code)
- All settings that have been subject to joint inspections (CIW/Estyn) since January 2019 received a Good report for each theme, with the content of some reports pointing to aspects of excellence.
- Pilot settings in Bangor have begun to create One Page Profiles for every child
- Other settings throughout Gwynedd are beginning to create One Page Profiles.
- Teaching Advisors took part in a workshop to present effective resources for supporting the needs of young children in all settings.
- Teaching consultants attended a day-long presentation on the Curriculum for Wales – a Curriculum for Life.
- New settings established for Maesywaen, Cylch Meithrin Y Bala and Cylch Llanllechid.
- Good practice continues to be shared between Flying Start teachers and teachers in the Foundation Phase
- A Senior Foundation Phase Teacher has inspected another setting, and will inspect a further two before the end of the academic year.
- The team has shared duties and areas of expertise and this will begin to take root in the next period.
- Ten settings have committed to working on the Mudiad Meithrin Crossing the Rubicon scheme.
- Most settings now make use of the revised planning and assessment sheets.

Priorities for the next period:

- Further developing the team's areas of expertise.
- Begin to prepare settings for the introduction of the Curriculum for Wales – a Curriculum for Life by introducing the terminology of the four purposes
- Introduce the 'enabling steps' in the spring when the document will have been published.
- Continue to provide settings with updates on the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

EDUCATION MODERNISATION TEAM

The work of modernising education in the County continues to successfully contribute to the education system and has attracted over £50m since 2012. The Education Modernisation Team is responsible for ensuring that planning work to provide education aligns with the County's education needs for the future. The Programme is very ambitious in aiming to transform the way children and young people are able to access high quality schools with a learning environment which supports outstanding education. The Council is also determined to develop an education system which enriches learning experiences. The Education Department aims to plan strategically to ensure that the appropriate type and number of schools are located in the correct locations, and to also upgrade the standard of school buildings to establish an estate which is suitable for the twenty-first century. The Programme will continue to fully commit to realising the current vision to *"offer education of the highest possible quality that will give the County's children the experiences, skills and confidence that would enable them to develop to be bilingual, successful and full citizens."*

The main aims of the Programme are to ensure that the current work programme continues to reach the agreed criteria to,

- contribute towards realising the aims of education principles which are fit for purpose to ensure a viable secondary school system, increased non-contact time for primary headteachers and that no more than two age ranges are included within the same class in the primary sector.
- implement the consultation process with parents, staff, governors and stakeholders which complies with the requirements of the statutory process, and which communicates clearly;
- implement an effective system to communicate with relevant Council departments, to monitor and evaluate activities;
- deliver the aims of the Programme to ensure a leadership environment which provides sufficient time for headteachers to lead, the best possible learning environment and quality of buildings for children, a reasonable travelling distance for children and a more effective management of educational resources, including reducing the cost per head in order to ensure the best value for money;
- ensure progress to complete the building work and establish schools which are part of the first financial Band;
- complete background work and update core data to be able to provide the necessary information to senior officers in order to respond proactively to situations as they arise.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT PERIOD:

- Complete the aims of the Bangor project, which includes an investment worth £12.7 million. The new building at Ysgol y Garnedd will open in September 2020 increasing the school's capacity to 420 and offering a place for pupils in Coedmawr and Glanadda schools, subject to parental choice. Work will begin during the year to increase the capacity of Ysgol y Faenol to 315 and improve the suitability and condition of the building, whilst also taking advantage of the opportunity to improve community resources. It is expected that the work will be completed by September 2021.
- Following the decision to adopt education principles, which are fit for purpose, assist the work of the Education Department to realise the vision to develop the system to ensure a high quality education for the children and young people of Gwynedd for the twenty first century.

- Depending on the Cabinet's decision, to arrange local discussions with post-16 education stakeholders to ensure fairness and strong support for all young people in the county to enable them to succeed and realise their potential.
- Following the Cabinet's decision in April 2019 to open discussions on the future of education in the Cricieth area, a series of local meetings have been held to explore the building of a new school in Cricieth. It is anticipated that a further report will be prepared for the Cabinet to outline the results of activities to identify the best option for any development.
- Continue to progress a Band B project to improve the condition and suitability of 30 school buildings in the County, with the first tranche of the project now operational, and continue to develop future annual proposals.
- Ensure the submission of successful business cases to the Welsh Government to attract matched funding for projects included in Band B.
- Collaborate with relevant departments to prepare additional applications to attract money for early years and community elements.
- Undertake processes to monitor that the project benefits have been realised and to assess whether they have been completed successfully. There will be a need to ensure that all necessary procedures are in place to monitor benefits and that they are monitored continuously.

GWYNEDD AND ANGLESEY POST-16 EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

Gwynedd Council is a strategic partner in a Consortium framework which has a complete overview of the post-16 education field across the counties of Gwynedd and Anglesey. Together with Gwynedd, which is the lead partner, there are three other full strategic partners, namely the Isle of Anglesey County Council, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and the secondary schools in the area that have sixth forms. This partnership enables high-level strategic decisions to be made on all aspects affecting post-16 education.

The work of the Consortium encompasses:

- Facilitating a network of good quality post-16 provision and courses at learning settings throughout the Consortium area
- Facilitating transport for the courses
- Managing and co-ordinating the 14-19 network for Gwynedd and Anglesey
- Leading on the Seren scheme to extend experiences for the most able and talented learners in the post-16 cohort and also KS3 on behalf of both Authorities
- Facilitating a professional group of sixth form heads
- Promoting and contributing strategically to the work of STEM Gogledd
- Collaborating with the North Wales Economic Ambition Board in order to identify career paths both locally and throughout the region.

As well as ensuring consistency, clear pathways and excellent quality for the learners while avoiding any duplication in terms of provision and systems, the framework also enables the cost of employing staff to lead on and administrate all relevant elements to be shared.

The work of the Consortium is monitored by a Lead Board which consists of representatives of the Chief Officers of the Partner Organisations and is chaired by the Gwynedd Education Portfolio Holder.

TRAC SCHEME

Purpose

TRAC is a project across the six counties of North Wales. It aims to prevent vulnerable children and young people from disengaging in education and by doing so reduce the likelihood that they will be inactive and unemployed in the future. It is a European-funded project with a total value of £39.6m across the region. The project has been in operation since September 2015 and will end on 31 July 2022.

It is coordinated by Denbighshire County Council, and here in Gwynedd it is led by the Education Department's Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Service. The total value of the project in Gwynedd is £4.6m (£3.3m of which is European funding, with the Council contributing officer time equivalent to £1.3m) and we aim to support at least 1,340 children and young people during the lifetime of the project.

Good features

- 15 members of staff employed (through grant funding) to support vulnerable pupils by providing a range of interventions which complement, *but do not duplicate*, the mainstream education provision, focusing on raising the aspirations of children and young people referred to the project and supporting them to reconnect with their education.
- Being creative in our provision and 'thinking outside the box' in terms of how barriers which prevent all pupils from engaging with their education may be overcome.
- Developing a provision that is unique to the individual and is pupil-focused.
- Able to develop and build effective relationships with the pupils.
- Being consistent, transparent and patient; usually the children and young people we work with have a range of complex challenges in their lives that may impair our ability to succeed.
- Support the provision pupils receive from various agencies (such as the Children's Department, Children and Young People Mental Health Service etc.)
- Intensive support over a specific period to support vulnerable pupils in Year 6 for successful transition to Secondary (in operation since Autumn 2019).
- Working with others to identify the support required by TRAC (and others) to make a real difference to a pupil's future prospects.

Results

- As of the end of January 2020, over 757 pupils have been supported by TRAC Gwynedd. A range of results have been achieved, such as moving on to work or training, improving attendance and behaviour, and support for young people with severe mental health problems.
- During the 2018/19 academic year:
 - Pupils supported (Years 7 to 11): 222
 - Pupils leaving the project with reduced likelihood of being inactive (not in education, employment or training): 98
 - Year 11 pupils moving on to further education: 64
 - Pupils progressing to further education still in need of support 8

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT PERIOD:

- Continue to provide for and support the vulnerable pupils identified by the project
- Develop the Agored Cymru centre in order to create new qualifications and reward attainment
- To be proactive in terms of promoting the work being accomplished
- Plan for an exit strategy for the project, by establishing a sustainable model for transferring the provision to other services within the Education Department.

- Undertake mapping of the TRAC legacy and how the Department may continue to implement this model by mainstreaming into established services
- Identify a methodology to evaluate the project's local impact as a basis for preparing a business case for a possible successor scheme.

LEADERSHIP

Purpose

The aim of the leadership plan is to ensure that all Gwynedd leaders have the ability to ensure that each child under their care is able to reach his or her full potential. The Authority has identified the need *"to work jointly to create a culture that enables leaders to thrive; and can inspire and influence children on all levels"*.

Positive features

- A particular emphasis is being placed on securing a system which is planned and developed to ensure appropriate leaders at all levels.
- A particular emphasis is being placed on ensuring a consistency in the best experiences and opportunities for Gwynedd pupils.
- A particular emphasis is being placed on ensuring that existing leaders are developed using effective methods.
- A particular emphasis is being placed on ensuring that specific conditions enable leaders to thrive.

Middle Leadership Programme

The one-year development programme provides professional learning opportunities for middle leaders throughout Wales. It is a national programme that is provided by regional consortia, and is endorsed by the National Academy for Educational Leadership, with the opportunity for accreditation in partnership with the University of Wales Trinity St David and Bangor University. The programme promotes highly effective leadership by way of self-evaluation and reflection, and by investigating the relationship between leadership, successful schools and the wider community. Through this programme and as part of the professional learning continuum, participants will:

- develop their understanding of the role
- further develop their understanding of the national reform agenda
- develop their practice in accordance with formal leadership standards
- prepare for effective engagement with bespoke elements of specialist knowledge and skills; AOLEs, ALN, Welsh, faith schools, small schools etc.

NPQH Programme (National Professional Qualification for Headship)

All future NPQH candidates will be expected to complete this programme.

This national programme is provided by the regional consortia and their partners, including Local Authorities and Higher Education establishments. The programme has been endorsed by the National Academy for Educational Leadership, with the opportunity for accreditation in partnership with the University of Wales Trinity St David and Bangor University. All future NPQH candidates will be expected to complete this programme.

The programme promotes highly effective leadership by way of self-evaluation and reflection, and by investigating the relationship between leadership, successful schools and the wider community. It will ensure equity of access for practitioners throughout Wales, and increase the number of high-quality candidates for headship positions in schools.

Participants will undertake enrichment activities which will build on their experiences, in order to foster:

- their understanding of an effective head teacher's role
- their skills and attributes by self-evaluating against the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership
- their understanding and ability to apply a range of leadership skills in an effective manner
- their collaboration skills by way of effective participation in peer networks
- their knowledge and skills for developing their schools as learning organisations and ensure the success of the national reform agenda.

The Authority, in collaboration with GwE, is also planning to implement relevant training arrangements to support the career development of future leaders, and to promote the professional development of existing leaders in our schools. As part of the work of this project, a commission will be agreed to ensure that the delivery of GwE's offer is specifically tailored to meet Gwynedd's needs. This will allow individuals to have all the support needed to enable them to become successful leaders and to establish a robust basis for the education system to the future.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT PERIOD

- Ensure that there is appropriate integration between this leadership development plan and the principles adopted by the Cabinet, to ensure that we have suitable arrangements which develop and identify leaders for our existing system and for the future.
- Following the identification of challenges facing leaders relating to the planning of delivery in secondary schools in the Meirionnydd Area as an initial work stream of the Leadership Project, the Education Department is continuing to work collaboratively with stakeholders to ensure opportunities which support and strengthen possible existing arrangements.

EDUCATION DATA UNIT

Purpose

The purpose of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Education Data Unit is to support the Education Department through the provision of high-quality education data infrastructure.

Good features:

- Further developments to the online IDP system have been completed in order to ensure compliance with the Code of Practice. In addition, all schools in Gwynedd and Anglesey (Primary and Secondary) have been live on the system since September 2019.
Demonstration of the online IDP system to other Authorities
- Provision of data for the 'Supporting the Well-being of People' corporate project
- Supporting the Schools Business Centre and the Education Contracts and Personnel Unit to meet PLASC requirements
- Ensure the quality of primary and secondary attendance returns for Welsh Government.
- Schools now receive far more regular updates of applications for admission
- Provision of data in response to the requirements of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. (Gwynedd and Anglesey)
- Provision and presentation of data in response to an Estyn Report on children on the school register in Year 10 not completing their education at any point in year 11
- Analysis and presentation of Gwynedd Schools' 'A' level data
- A project has been launched to improve the quality and consistency of data in the ONE system – work accomplished thus far: FSM in Anglesey Primary Schools, 50% FSM in Gwynedd Primary Schools. Information held on Looked After Children in Anglesey Schools is now consistent with the Children's Services information systems, and a request has been sent to the Gwynedd Children's Services for the same type of information.

PRIORITIES FOR 2019-20

- Continue to develop, embed and support the IDP system
- Transforming the on-line access system and processes as well as improving the customer care element of the process
- Enhanced use of software to provide reports
- Assessment of the ALN&I Service's information sources

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE SUPPORT SERVICE

The purpose of the School Governance Support Service is to:

- Provide support and guidance for headteachers, governors, clerks of governors and Gwynedd schools
- Deliver a training programme for governors
- Prepare training materials/good practices and correspondence for governors and headteachers
- Support Shadow Governing Bodies of new schools

Good features:

- The ability to offer regular mandatory courses throughout the year and courses that encourage good practices for governors, e.g, courses to deal with Excess, along with the development of on-line mandatory courses on a joint basis with other north Wales counties;
- Offering assistance and support to Governing Bodies and their schools as required;
- Upgrading the Governors' Database continuously so that a record can be kept of every governor in all schools updated along with their details, roles, DBS and courses. Work has been done to ensure that the database complies with the requirements of the latest Data Protection legislation, GDPR 2018.
- Continue to improve the quality of governors' work to challenge headteachers so that they understand the meaning of data and understand the real situation of standards in a school
- Developing the role of governors to take on a more strategic role in meetings, encouraging governors to self-evaluate their work and promoting the use of the national self-evaluation procedure.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT PERIOD:

- Consult with Governors in order to revise the training programme;
- Assisting Governing Bodies in the performance of their statutory functions, and advise and serve as a helpline on governance matters for head teachers and governors, including the excess process, complaints etc.;
- Upgrading the Governors' Database system and collaborating with IT to promote self-service for the Database so that the Authority's governing clerks can directly input information.
- Collaborating with the ICT department in establishing a section for Governors on HWB (WG)
- Continuing to support the Shadow Body of Ysgol Godre'r Berwyn until such time that the Body is incorporated during the Autumn Term, and collaborating with the Gwynedd Schools Modernisation Team as required.
- Rationalising the list of School Policies;
- Reviewing the excess process and ensuring a greater understanding among Head teachers and Governors.

CONTRACTS AND PERSONNEL UNIT

Purpose

The Unit provides a range of support to all schools in the county. This varies from providing advice and guidance regarding the terms and conditions of school staff employment to head teachers, governors and the county's officers, processing timesheets for payments, creating contracts, verifying the criminal background of every staff member, advising teachers about their pensions and processing redundancy payments.

Good features:

- Staff in our schools continue to receive their wages correctly and on time every month.
- As a department, we continue to adhere to the level of service for schools fairly and consistently for every school, by following the work schedule throughout the academic year.
- All school staff contracts are issued in accordance with statutory requirements, namely within eight weeks of commencing in post.

Priorities for the next period:

- Update and revise the list of supply teachers on the ONE system in order to devise an app through which schools may 'hire' supply teachers.
- Move to an electronic method of storing staff members' personal files.
- Continue to encourage head teachers to ensure that all teaching staff and Learning Support Assistants are registered with the Education Workforce Council and have completed the DBS process prior to commencing their posts in school.
- Collaborate with the Human Resources unit on creating an electronic statement for Teachers.

CATERING AND CLEANING SERVICE

Purpose

To provide nutritious and healthy food for the pupils of Gwynedd Schools and to keep educational establishments clean and safe to assist pupils to reach their potential.

Good features:

- The lunchtime menu for primary and special schools complies with the 'Healthy Eating in Schools (Nutritional Standards and Requirements) (Wales) Regulations 2013'
- The lunchtime menu of Secondary schools is being worked up towards compliance with the 'Healthy Eating in Schools (Nutritional Standards and Requirements) (Wales) Regulations 2013'
- Tasting/nutrition sessions are held in schools to encourage more pupils to eat school dinners
- Parents who provide lunchboxes for their children are asked if they would like a school dinner on some days of the week
- Thematic lunches are offered to schools on a regular basis
- An on-line payment system for parents makes it easier to pay for different school services such as school dinners, trips, instrument lessons etc.
- Every school which has a nursery group implementing the 30 hour childcare plan can offer a school dinner as part of the provision.
- Keeping schools clean and safe
- Leading on the SHEP (Summer Holidays Enhancement Programme) plan
- Encouraging Secondary Schools to become cash-free by introducing a cashless school dinner system
- Discontinuing the use of plastic 1/3 pint milk bottles in primary schools in favour of pouring milk into cups, which has reduced plastic use by 67%
- Collaborating with secondary school kitchens to reduce plastic use

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT PERIOD

- Provide a different lunchtime menu for primary and special schools for the Summer terms which will comply with the 'Healthy Eating in Schools (Nutritional Standards and Requirements) (Wales) Regulations 2013'
- Cooperate with schools to enable them to become completely cashless
- Continue to encourage parents to choose school dinners for their children
- Assist schools to reduce the school dinners debt levels of parents
- Act on providing packed lunches for school trips
- Review the demand for breakfast club provision in primary schools

TRANSPORT

To arrange transport for Gwynedd pupils to educational establishments, thereby providing them with access to education in order to fulfil their potential.

Good features:

- Transport is arranged for all qualifying pupils
- Transport is arranged for post-16 students
- The ability to purchase a post-16 travel pass by direct debit
- The post-16 user form meets twice a year
- The Gwynedd Transport Policy complies with the 'Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008'

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT PERIOD

- Look at the transport retendering process.
- Extend the post-16 travel pass to include students over 19
- To seek clarification from the ALN & Inclusion Service as to who is entitled to transport under the existing transport policy.

Committee	Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Title of Report	Education Transport
Date of Meeting	19 March 2020
Author of Report	Bethan Griffith, Ancillary Services Manager
Relevant Officer	Garem Jackson, Head of Education
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Cemlyn Rees Williams

1. Background

1.1 There is a statutory requirement on the Authority under the ‘Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008’ regulation

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2008/2/contents/enacted> to provide free transport to learners who live in the County and who have registered in a school maintained by the Council under the following circumstances:

- Learners receiving primary education – for learners who live 2 miles or more from the school in their catchment area, or the nearest school (does not include nursery class pupils)
- Learners receiving secondary education – for learners under 16 years old who live 3 miles or more from the school in their catchment area, or the nearest school
- Learners with additional learning needs or disabilities under 16 years in accordance with the recommendations of the moderation panel.

The Authority is required to assess learner travel needs and the Schools’ Transport Policy is based on these needs.

1.2 In addition to the statutory requirements, the Authority has discretion to provide other additional transport and Gwynedd have extended their policy to include the following:

- Free transport for reception class learners under the same conditions as primary age learners
- 16+ transport for a fee which is £120 term 1, £120 term 2 and £60 term 3
- Empty seats scheme (including nursery learners) for a termly fee of £31 within catchment area and £62 out of catchment area
- Free transport to Language Centres
- Free transport for additional educational learning and inclusion services

2. How is transport arranged?

- 2.1 Applications for regular transport are made by parents wanting to use free transport by filling a form and sending it to the transport unit. For primary learners, a list will be provided to the bus company of eligible free transport learners. For secondary learners, a bus ticket will be provided to each learner which is shown to the bus company when travelling.
- 2.2 In circumstances where the needs of learners divert from the regular process, there will be an assessment of each individual learners needs. In the past, a taxi was provided almost automatically when an application was received and this might not have been the most cost efficient way of providing the service. By now, and by adopting Ffordd Gwynedd ethos, the process has been mapped and the Moderation Panel makes the decision on the appropriate transport to meet the learner's needs. Here, learners' needs are regularly assessed and transport arrangements adapted as the needs change.
- 2.3 An increase in demand has been seen for special transport to colleges on the basis of needs in 2018 and again in 2019. These applications have been approved by the Moderation Panel which shows that there is an increase in demand and that the current allocated budget is inadequate to meet the needs of these learners.

3. Costs

- 3.1 In order to obtain value for money, transport contracts are re-tendered every 3 years. This is undertaken by individual areas and not all at once. The transportation unit have a re-tendering agenda.
- 3.2 If there are savings to be made through re-tendering, the savings are transferred to central funds. In the same way, any additional costs required as a result of re-tendering are provided by central funds. See appendix 1 for a summary of education transport costs.
- 3.3 Note that the heading where most expenditure has exceeded the allocated budget is:
 - College transport –2019/20 budget is £206,110. Expenditure as at 1 February 2020 is £324,632.

Over the years, the Education Department have been making bids for additional resources to meet the demand, however by now, there is an expectation that the department manage the demand within the allocated budget.

- 3.4 In order to manage the expenditure, the following measures have been taken:
 - 16+ Transport

- College Transport Users Forums arranged to understand the needs of customers
- Change in payment pattern from £100 per term to £120 term 1, £120 term 2 and £60 term 3. Note that the demand for transport is lower in term 3 than the other two terms.
- Facilitate easier payment methods for customers by introducing monthly direct debits
- Develop an e-ticket for users to receive directly to their smart phones
- Allocate transport budgets to individual services within education instead of being a central transport budget within education. This will ensure that service managers are better able to manage their budgets and that transport is a consideration when arranging education.
- Reconcile data available in ONE Transport to enable regular reports for service managers.

4. Next Steps

- Continue to assess specific routes to see if they can be provided in a more cost efficient way
- Provide regular reports to service managers on their transport expenditure
- Review ADY packages for each geographical area
- Investigate the reasons why there has been an increase in demand for college transport.

Appendix 1 - Summary of Education Transport Costs

	February 2020	November 2019	November 2018
Transport - Pecyn 25	£ 18,700.00	£ 18,700.00	£ 32,725.00
College Transport	£ 324,632.00	£ 321,396.90	£ 202,614.50
Managed Move Transport			£ 32,631.50
Travellers Transport	£ 3,740.00	£ 3,740.00	£ 3,740.00
Autisitic Units - Transport	£ 7,106.00	£ 7,106.00	£ 19,448.00
ABC Units	£ 83,884.46	£ 83,884.46	£ 188,383.80
Language disorder Units	£ 83,720.60	£ 96,058.60	£ 38,035.80
Primary Language Units	£ 47,110.00	£ 97,350.00	£ 170,834.40
All Through Language Units		£ 14,025.00	
Secondary Language Units	£ 29,753.50	£ 41,166.00	£ 43,020.00
Behaviour Units		£ 30,855.00	£ 36,278.00
Primary Schools	£ 434,021.39	£ 403,014.81	£ 404,215.46
Secondary Schools	£ 326,419.72	£ 321,034.12	£ 300,005.97
Special School - Out of County	£ 24,310.00	£ 24,310.00	£ 32,725.00
Special School - Hafod Lôn	£ 510,566.10	£ 475,765.40	£ 518,925.00
Special School - Pendalar	£ 298,003.20	£ 290,598.00	£ 191,675.00
All Through Schools	£ 180,455.00	£ 180,455.00	£ 157,921.50
Total	£ 2,372,421.97	£ 2,409,459.29	£ 2,373,178.93

Agenda Item 7

MEETING	Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee
DATE	19 th March 2020
SUBJECT	Scrutiny investigation Report into the Impact of New Building Developments for Schools on the Quality of Education
AUTHOR	Councillor Beth Lawton, Chair of the Investigation

1. The draft final Investigation report into the Impact of New Building Developments for Schools on the Quality of Education is presented to the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee.
2. Members of the Scrutiny Committee are requested to
 - Consider the contents of the report
 - Ask questions on the contents of the report to Members of the investigation team
 - Suggest any changes, if required, and then
 - Adopt the report, to be presented formally to the Cabinet Member for Education
3. In addition, members of the committee are asked to consider if any further reports are required on the attainment of the recommendations in the future.
4. The final draft report is attached.

Scrutiny Investigation into the Impact of New Building Developments for Schools on the Quality of Education

Investigation Members:

Councillor Beth Lawton (Chair)

Councillor Steve Collings

Councillor Cai Larsen

Councillor Paul Rowlinson

Officers:

Sion Owen - Business Support Officer (Lead Officer until October 2019)

Democratic Services Officers

Foreword by the Chair

The 21st Century Schools scheme has led to striking new school buildings in many areas in Gwynedd. As Band A of the scheme is coming to an end, it was timely to look at what has been achieved so far and to look at the lessons to be learnt for the future.

The recommendations have derived from the work of the investigation members whilst visiting a selection of new buildings, discussing with Headteachers, staff and pupils, and holding meetings with experts.

We acknowledge the hard work that is undertaken in the schools and the tireless efforts by the staff to provide the best for the pupils. I would like to thank the schools for their warm welcome when we visited them.

I would also like to thank my fellow members for their contributions, the Head of Education Department and its officers, the Housing and Property Department and GwE for their support to the work of the investigation.

Finally, I would like to thank Sion Owen for leading the investigation and to the team of Democratic Services officers for their support in producing this report.

Councillor Beth Lawton
March 2020

Content

1. Introduction	4
2. Purpose of the Scrutiny Investigation	4
3. Methodology	5
4. Policy context	6
5. Good practice	8
6. Quality of Education	8
7. Case Study: Ysgol yr Hendre	10
8. Case Study: Ysgol Craig y Deryn	13
9. Case Study: Ysgol Bro Llifon	15
10. Case Study: Ysgol Glan Cegin	17
11. Visit: Ysgol Trefferthyr	19
12. Conclusion and Recommendations	20
Appendix 1 – Brief of the Investigation	22
Appendix 2 – Main activities	25
Appendix 3 – Clever Classrooms	26

1. Introduction

- 1.1. In 2009, Welsh Government announced the 21st Century Schools Programme, with the aim of offering long-term capital investments in order to improve the learning environment and the outcomes of education. At the same time, in 2009 the Gwynedd Education Modernisation Strategy was published. Like a number of other Councils, Gwynedd Council was eager to take advantage of the opportunity to invest in education and modernise the provision of buildings and organisation.
- 1.2. The Council successfully gained grants from Band A of the 21st Century Schools Scheme; which led to significant investment of approximately £36 million in Gwynedd education, with £18 million in grant funding and £18 million from Council budgets. In addition, the Council has attracted further capital funding on the tail of Band A, funding that is used for the reorganisation of education in Bangor. This means that the total invested in education for children in Gwynedd has risen over £50 million.
- 1.3. By 2018, members of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee decided to investigate into whether there is a positive impact on the quality of education and pupils' experience deriving from the developments and expenditure on new buildings. At the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on 20/9/18, a brief for the investigation was approved, which can be seen in **Appendix 1**.

2. Purpose of the Scrutiny Investigation

- 2.1. The main question to answer in the investigation was: 'What effect has new building development had on schools and the quality of pupil education, and are there lessons to be learnt for the future?'
- 2.2. In addition to this pivotal question, there was a series of other questions to be considered as an evidence base to answer the main question:
 - What are the features of a good education?
 - Are the educational results of the schools in question better/worse/stable after opening the new buildings?
 - How has the pupils' experience changed from the old building to the new building
 - How does the building affect education?
 - What were the success criteria of the developments and were these achieved?
 - What was the general condition of the buildings?
 - What changed from the old school to the new school?
 - How did the teaching staff, the governors and GwE find the building improved the quality of education?
 - Do the developments offer value for money?
 - Are there lessons to be learnt for the future?

3. Methodology

- 3.1. In order to respond to the brief and answer the basic question, 'What effect has new building development had on schools and the quality of pupil education, and are there lessons to be learnt for the future?', it was decided to use the following methodology:
- Research: understand the policy context, identify good practice from any other studies, research the best definition of the quality of education and how to measure it
 - Case Studies: visits to the sites agreed in order to gather qualitative data (the views of the Headteachers, pupils, governors) and quantitative data on measuring progress to see whether there is any impact on education results
 - Recommendations: Produce clear recommendations based on evidence to be submitted to the Cabinet Member
- 3.2. Research: It is important to understand the policy context as background to this work, and a short summary of the main findings is presented in part 4 of the report. In attempting to identify good practice in the field, it emerged early on that not much research has been carried out into the impact of school buildings on the quality of education. It is assumed that this is due to difficulty and complexity in being able to *prove the impact* of a building on the quality of education and pupil attainment. Members of the investigation considered the 'Clever Classrooms' research, a summary of which can be seen in part 5 and **Appendix 3**.
- 3.3. Additionally, members of the investigation considered a thematic report by Estyn, "An evaluation of performance in schools before and after moving into new buildings or significantly refurbished premises" - January 2007. The report noted, amongst its findings, that "better buildings contribute to one or more of the performance areas defined by us (Estyn)..." and "Old school buildings in a poor condition cannot satisfy the new teaching and learning needs." The report was considered, but as it had been published since 2007, there was a feeling that the information was slightly dated.
- 3.4. Additionally, coming to a standard and clear definition of the quality of education and how to measure it was challenging. This was an important factor in order to be able to answer the investigation's core question. Various responses and guidance were received, the details of which can be seen in part 6.
- 3.5. Case Studies: In accordance with the brief, the investigation members visited some schools. It is noted that each new school building development is unique. Case studies were carried out, which compared common themes that emerged from visiting the schools. Qualitative data was gathered by interviewing the Headteachers of the schools, as well as staff, pupils and governors. Their experiences of the new buildings were compared with the old buildings, where possible. A full record of the case study has been shared with the relevant services, and the main messages have been reported in parts 7 - 10.
- 3.6. At the meeting of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee on 20/9/18, the

Head of Education suggested that it may be useful for the investigation to look at the buildings of Penybryn, Tywyn as they were part of the reorganisation scheme that created Ysgol Craig y Deryn. The members of the investigation decided to visit Ysgol Treforthyr rather than Penybryn, Tywyn, in order to see an example of a school that needed a new building.

- 3.7. It was intended to gather quantitative data as well, and although data about individual schools is available through the Council's Education Department or through the StatsWales website, Welsh Government stated in summer 2019 that publishing the details of the performance of individual schools would not be permitted. This meant that it would not be possible to use the data of pupil progress in order to measure a building's impact. Whilst data such as budget per head and pupil numbers for the schools in question is useful to provide a picture of the success of the new buildings, it is not possible to use the attainment data to prove the impact of the building on the quality of education. However, the results of the Estyn inspections are noted in the case studies.
- 3.8. Recommendations: We are of the opinion that following the above methodology has led to gathering important information (acknowledging that a vast majority is qualitative data) which leads us to the conclusion that there are lessons to be learnt for the future. The work's recommendations are presented, based on the above methodology, in part 12.

4. Policy Context

- 4.1. 21st Century Schools. The Welsh Government introduced the 21st Century Schools scheme in 2009, confirming in its business case that there would be a change from a system where grants were allocated to Councils every year in order to be spent on school buildings, and move to a long term procedure that would facilitate a more strategic mindset.

"The main objectives of the programme is to:

- Reduce the number of school buildings that are in a poor condition
- Reduce the surplus capacity
- Reduce running costs to make the most of the available resources to target improvements in terms of learner outcomes
- Deal with specific demand for places in Welsh language provision and faith education"

- 4.2. The scheme commenced in 2014, and the Government funded 50% of the development, with the need for local authorities to seek 50% in match funding. In the meantime, Welsh Government allocated funding in order to support plans that were already in the pipeline.
- 4.3. Schools Organisation Code. When allocating grant funding, the Government sets strict conditions on what the grant can fund. Its aim is to create schools of a consistent

quality across the country and, in order to do so, the grant conditions set specific expectations and restrictions including the size of the schools, the amount of budget that is available per m², timetable requirements for construction, and environmental performance standards (BREEAM). It is considered that the guidelines and restrictions are quite strict. A full explanation of the requirements and the restrictions was given by the Head of Housing and Property Department (Senior Property Manager at the time). In addition, the requirements of Welsh Government have changed as time has gone by, e.g. requirements regarding ensuring community provision within the school's space. There were specific requirements to ensure a community provision (and specific funding to support this) for the earliest schemes, such as the Hendre and Craig y Deryn schools; however, this specific requirement and the funding to support it has since disappeared, such as for Ysgol Bro Lliffon and Ysgol Glancegin.

- 4.4. In 2009, the 'Excellent Primary Education for the Children of Gwynedd' Strategy was adopted, noting the following main objectives:
- "Offer the best possible experiences and opportunities to the children of the County by ensuring **classes of an appropriate size** and **high quality school leadership** in our schools;
 - Aim to **promote and strengthen the Welsh language** - as an educational and social medium - by presenting new proposals for primary education within the County;
 - Respond to the needs and opportunities in the existing primary education system by **being pro-active and creative**, and jointly working with others towards a **long term plan** that will be sustainable and practical;
 - Make the **best possible use of the resources available** - human, technical, financial - so that the children get the greatest benefit from the county's expenditure on education;
 - **Create a first-class learning environment for children and teachers of the County** by improving facilities and buildings
 - Develop our schools to be **establishments that are the focus for community activities.**"
- 4.5. It can be seen that the Council's strategy responds to and incorporates the requirements of the 21st Century Schools Strategy and the Schools Organisation Code.
- 4.6 In the decade since adopting the Strategy, there have been changes in the education policy field. The greatest change by far is a new curriculum presented to educators for observations during 2019, which was developed following the Donaldson review in 2015. Although it is a document that is in the consultative stages as a legislation, schools are being encouraged to change their teaching methods in order to comply with the significant changes that will be proposed in the new curriculum. Although this is not directly relevant to the work of the investigation, it is fair to note that the new requirements should be considered with any future developments.

5. Good Practice

- 5.1. When considering good practice, members of the investigation looked for studies that had been undertaken on the impact of school buildings on the quality of education and educational outcomes. Given all the developments with school buildings, it was astonishing that so few quality studies and research had been undertaken in the field. Although some research has been carried out on the impacts of some specific aspects of buildings on the quality of education, only one study was found to have attempted to assess the impact of each aspect on buildings together, namely *Clever Classrooms*, Salford University, 2015¹.
- 5.2. Although there are restrictions to this research (e.g. sample size and the range of subjects assessed), very important messages have derived from the work. A full summary of the 'Clever Classrooms' report can be found in **Appendix 3**, however the main recommendations that should be considered when designing new school buildings include the need to consider the following factors:
- Naturalness - light, air quality, temperature and noise levels
 - Individuality - the building's flexibility, and ownership by the users
 - Stimulation - an appropriate level of complexity along with an appropriate level of colour
- 5.3. Members of the investigation were of the opinion that very important messages derived from this research, factors to be considered for any design or new building. Following a discussion with the Head of Housing and Property Department, we are glad to understand that these factors receive attention in any development, and we encourage the continuation of this. Furthermore, we understand that Government Grant Regulations also offer such recommendations, and the latest recommendations receive consideration for any new development.
- 5.4. It is also noted that considerations for teachers have been included in this research, and guidance should be given to teachers on how to implement the recommendations of the *Clever Classrooms* report.

6 Quality of Education

- 6.1. As already noted, it emerged that there is no standard definition of what is meant by "good quality education" and how it can be measured. A number of enquiries were made, and various responses were received, although there were common elements to them all.
- 6.2. The Education Department is addressing this work through a Ffordd Gwynedd review. The department had asked many children what mattered to them in terms of their education, and the following points were noted:

1. [*Clever Classrooms: Summary report of the HEAD Project \(Holistic Evidence and Design\)*](#) by Peter Barrett, Yufan Zhang, Fay Davies and Lucinda Barrett, Salford University, Manchester, February 2015

- That the school was a safe place
- Good lessons
- An opportunity to study every subject through the medium of Welsh
- There was much emphasis on core academic subjects, but that the focus on life skills had disappeared.
- Being happy

6.3 Estyn referred to their report 'Improving Teaching' which was published in June 2018.

The report states that good teaching and learning:

- Maintains a consistent focus on the overall purposes of the curriculum
- Challenges all learners by encouraging them to recognise the importance of sustained effort in meeting expectations that are high but achievable for them
- Means employing a blend of approaches including direct teaching
- Means employing a blend of approaches including those that promote problem-solving, creative and critical thinking skills
- Sets tasks and selects resources that build on previous knowledge and experience and engage interest
- Creates authentic contexts for learning
- Means applying assessment for learning principles
- Ranges within and across Areas of Learning and Experience
- Regularly reinforces Cross-curriculum Responsibilities, including literacy, numeracy and digital competence, and provides opportunities to practice them
- Encourages children and young people to take increasing responsibility for their own learning
- Supports social and emotional development and positive relationships
- Encourages collaboration

6.4 Members of the investigation had a conversation with an officer from GwE to discuss the quality of education and the impact of school buildings on the quality of education. In response to the question about the impact of school buildings on the quality of education, it was noted that school buildings did have an impact, but it was likely that this was through improved efficiency and expediency.

6.5 It was also noted that the main factor that impacted on the quality of education in GwE's experience was leadership, and the Headteacher was key to this. He also noted that problems in schools most often derived from problems with the leadership.

6.6 The Headteachers of the schools visited were also asked what they considered to be good quality education. Their observations focused on leadership, staff, developing pupils to their full potential and measuring pupil progress (rather than measuring their attainment at the end of their time in primary school). Although no Headteachers specifically referred to the impact of buildings when considering the quality of education, it was noted that appropriate buildings facilitates the teaching, learning and day to day arrangements in schools.

Case Studies

7 Case Study: Ysgol yr Hendre

BACKGROUND

- 7.1 The first new building plan from the current generation was Ysgol yr Hendre.
- 7.2 Ysgol yr Hendre was opened in its current form in March 2012, with capacity for 450 pupils. The school's former buildings had been designed to hold 200 pupils, and at the time of closing the school, the pupil numbers was 377. The buildings had also reached the end of their lifespan, as they were small and had been modified many times as the needs of the school changed. The available areas to play were small and, as the pupil numbers of the school was over its capacity, space was limited.
- 7.3 The plan to provide new buildings for Ysgol yr Hendre was approved after attracting a grant from Welsh Government's Strategic Capital Investment Fund to develop a new school for the twenty first century in November 2009. In order to satisfy the grant conditions, the timetable was very challenging, where three years' work had to be completed within approximately 18 months.

QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE - STRENGTHS

- 7.4 See below a summary of the main strengths noted by the Headteacher, staff, children or governors during the visit.
- Overall, the buildings have been praised.
 - They are light buildings, with a sense of place and are well laid out.
 - A large and flexible space, where the use of the space can be adapted, e.g. use the wide corridors to hold activities (especially in the foundation phase). It was noted that meeting the requirements of the new curriculum would have been very difficult in the former buildings due to a lack of space.
 - Praise for the large hall - large enough to use as a whole school, physical exercise and the school's community events such as the Christmas show.
 - A suitable space to be able to implement the 'nurture' plan which cares for the children's emotional well-being, with the ability to adapt the space to respond to individual requirements and their emotional well-being (see further explanation in 7.5 below)
 - Year 6 pupils (who were also in the old building when they were in nursery year) noted that they were generally happy with the new space.
- 7.5 Nurture Programme - Ysgol yr Hendre is one of Gwynedd's pilot schools which implements the 'Nurture' Programme due to the social patterns in its catchment area. The plan means that the school is able to look after the emotional and mental well-being of the pupils as well as their academic development, and offer them various levels of support and intervention as the individual children require it. The design of

the school, that has a number of small rooms in addition to the classrooms, facilitates the implementation of the programme, by placing a number of convenient spaces across the school site in order for pupils to have the space that they need. An example was noted of a specific space being painted dark to provide a quiet and calm space for pupils to use if matters became too much for them. It is assumed that such consideration is suitable for schools in providing for children who have additional learning needs.

QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE - MATTERS REQUIRING ATTENTION

7.6 Similarly, see below a summary of the main matters requiring attention that were noted by the Headteacher, staff, children or governors during the visit.

- Although praising the fact that there is enough room available, it was noted that there was also a feeling of a wasted space in the school, e.g. corridors that were not flexible enough to be used other than as a corridor. Members of the investigation note that the long-term should be considered when planning, giving consideration to whether it would be possible to adapt wide corridors into storage space or for computer use. The Head of Housing and Property Department has confirmed that the corridors have been unavoidable on this site as it is on a slope, and that the only way of ensuring that the school is accessible to people with physical needs is to include long corridors on a gradual angle.
- Consideration should also be given to the location of the staff room. As the size of the school has increased, the need for a central location for the staff room was noted, so that it would be convenient for everyone and would enable a sense of one team and working together as one school.
- Some problems with the building work were also noted, mainly that the roof of the hall had been leaking and that the render outside the school had started to collapse in a few places. The Head of Housing and Property has confirmed that work is underway to rectify this and that the original builder is still taking responsibility for the shortcoming on their behalf. Members of the investigation note that consideration should be given to how this can be avoided in any future plans.
- It was noted that lessons had been learnt in context of the outside space, especially due to health and safety matters for the pupils and staff. We understand that the school's original desire was to have a play area surrounded by the building in order to facilitate keeping the children safe and under close supervision. As time went by, a conclusion was reached that this was not practical and that access was required to additional space. Further work has been completed in order to allow this to happen. However, members of the investigation note that the full picture should be considered at the beginning of any project in order to ensure that the best use is made of all resources, including the outside space, and carefully planning and funding this.
- The Ysgol yr Hendre development was one of the developments that had community space requirements (with capital to support the requirement). Members of the investigation note that they feel that there is room to develop the use of this space further.

ESTYN RESULTS

7.7 The results of Estyn's recent inspections are noted below.

AREA	January 2018
Standards	GOOD
Well-being and attitudes to learning	GOOD
Teaching and learning experiences	GOOD
Care, support and guidance	GOOD
Leadership and management	GOOD

Note that the results below (2013) are prior to moving to the new building.

AREA	February 2013
SUMMARY	
The School's current performance	Adequate
The school's improvement prospects	Unsatisfactory
KEY QUESTION	
How good are the outcomes?	Good
How good is the provision?	Adequate
How good are the leadership and management?	Unsatisfactory

8 Case Study: Ysgol Craig y Deryn

- 8.1 *It should be noted that Cllr Beth Lawton, Chair of the Investigation, had taken up her role as Chair of the Governing Body of Ysgol Craig y Deryn during the investigation's visit to the school.*

BACKGROUND

- 8.2 Ysgol Craig y Deryn was created by merging Ysgol Abergynolwyn, Ysgol Bryncrug, Ysgol Llwyngwriil and Ysgol Llanegryn as part of a wider scheme to reorganise education in the Tywyn area. An investment was also made to upgrade the buildings of Ysgol Penybryn, Tywyn as part of the same plan, and closing Ysgol Aberdyfi. Ysgol Craig y Deryn was opened in its current form in September 2013, with capacity for 105 children from reception to year 6.
- 8.3 The consultation period and determining the new school's location whilst reorganising was a very difficult time. Although it is not directly relevant to this investigation, it should be acknowledged that the process of merging schools is difficult, and temporarily affects the quality of education (especially in the final transitional year). Members of the investigation are of the opinion that there is scope to learn lessons from the experience, and to consider how to mitigate this impact with any future developments.

QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE - STRENGTHS

- 8.4 See below a summary of the main strengths noted by the Deputy Headteacher, staff, children or governors during the visit.
- The school is located on a very attractive site with outside space
 - The space is flexible and it has been possible to change the use of the space as time has passed and as requirements change and adapt (e.g. adapt the library and the IT room). This is an essential consideration in order to be able to adapt to new learning and development needs.
 - The design has meant that there is a separate space for some rooms, e.g. the music room. This has led to raising the pupils' confidence and independence.
 - The staff of the schools that were merging had an opportunity to collaborate and plan together for the new school.
 - The children questioned note that they were, overall, happy enough with the new school and everyone considered themselves as 'Craig y Deryn children'.

QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE - MATTERS REQUIRING ATTENTION

- 8.5 Similarly, see below a summary of the main matters requiring attention noted by the Deputy Headteacher, staff, children or governors during the visit.
- Unexpected planning matters brought challenges to the timetable, and there was a time where staff and governors were helping to prepare the school for its

opening, and another time where the school was open and the construction work was ongoing. Members of the investigation note that all the preparation work should be considered and timetabled (including time for things to go wrong) so that all preparations are completed before the site opens. We understand that very unusual circumstances led to this situation at Craig y Deryn, in light of months' delay in the work programme, as the planning decision had been deferred three times. As a result, this meant that there was not enough time left to complete the construction work. The Council had two choices - either to continue to attempt to open as much as possible of the building on time, or to defer the new school's opening date. It was determined that deferring the opening of the school was unacceptable, and therefore an attempt was made to complete as much as possible within the timescale.

- As with Ysgol yr Hendre, problems with the building was also noted, mainly that the roof had been leaking. We are aware that work has been completed to rectify the situation, however members of the investigation note that consideration should be given to how this can be avoided in any future schemes, advising that all developments have a pitch roof or placed at an angle to avoid problems.
- Additionally, it was noted that there was an opportunity to improve the design of the building, mainly the consideration for a sufficient number of toilets and hand-washing basins - for the children and staff and community use.
- It was noted that specific matters had been raised with regards to the maintenance of the site outside, especially in terms of tree felling and hedge-cutting work, rectifying paths or any other problems that arise. In the opinion of the members of the investigation, full consideration needs to be given to all factors at the beginning of any project. The best use should be made of all resources, and this includes planning for the outside space and how to fund maintenance requirements. In response, the Head of the Housing and Property Department noted that extensive green areas had been included in order to satisfy the planning requirements of the National Park and the Government's grant conditions. He noted that this was unavoidable, and he agreed that it was impractical to expect new schools of this kind to be able to fund land maintenance without additional remuneration in their budget.

ESTYN RESULTS

8.6 The results of Estyn's recent inspections are noted below.

AREA	March 2016
SUMMARY	
The School's current performance	GOOD
The school's improvement prospects	GOOD
KEY QUESTION	
How good are the outcomes?	GOOD
How good is the provision?	GOOD
How good are the leadership and management?	GOOD

This is Ysgol Craig y Deryn's first report.

9 Case Study: Ysgol Bro Llifon

BACKGROUND

- 9.1 Ysgol Bro Llifon was opened in 2015 by merging the schools of Groeslon, Carmel and Bron y Foel, with capacity for 172 pupils from reception class to year 6. The buildings of Ysgol y Groeslon had come to the end of their lifespan, and the pupils were being taught in mobile units. Although repair and modification work was required, the buildings of Ysgol Carmel and Ysgol Bron y Foel were in a better condition. However, there were high numbers of vacancies in these schools.

QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE - STRENGTHS

- 9.2 See below a summary of the main strengths noted by the Headteacher, staff, children or governors during the visit.
- As a result of setting up a shadow governing body, the Headteacher and the shadow Governors received an opportunity to provide input into the plans that led to influencing some changes. They also had an opportunity to visit other new developments.
 - A gradual change was made, working jointly between the three schools initially, where all staff members got to know each other and worked as one team before moving to the new location.
 - Useful storage spaces have been planned into the space, so that things can be stored separately.
 - There is sufficient outdoor space outside the classrooms
 - The school received a slate roof, which has avoided the problems of having a leaking roof.
 - The pupils who had attended one of the three small schools before Ysgol Bro Llifon noted that they were happy with the school and that having everything on the same site was beneficial.

QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE - MATTERS REQUIRING ATTENTION

- 9.3 Similarly, see below a summary of the main matters requiring attention that were noted by the Headteacher, staff, children or governors during the visit.
- It was noted that problems had arisen with the playing field due to problems by the contractor who carried out the work. Although these are problems that cannot be anticipated and are beyond control, being unable to use the field for a long time is something that should be avoided.
- 9.4 Although it is not part of the brief, members of the investigation are aware that pupil numbers dropped temporarily, which led to the situation of over-staffing after a year, before the numbers increased once again. Members of the investigation note the need to carefully plan and work with the community in order to attempt to avoid a

situation where pupil numbers temporarily drop before increasing again, and to work with the Education Department to consider bridging funding for such a situation.

ESTYN RESULTS

9.5 The results of Estyn's recent inspections are noted below.

AREA	November 2018
Standards	GOOD
Well-being and attitudes to learning	GOOD
Teaching and learning experiences	GOOD
Care, support and guidance	GOOD
Leadership and management	GOOD

This is Ysgol Bro Llifon's first report.

10 Case Study: Ysgol Glancegin

BACKGROUND

- 10.1 The new buildings of Ysgol Glancegin were opened in September 2017, with capacity for 210 pupils from the reception class to year 6. The school's buildings had come to the end of their lifespan, and it was not cost-effective to continue repairing them. As a context, it is also important to note that the school has originally been designed for approximately 300 pupils, but with a drop in numbers to approximately 220 pupils, this meant that there was much space available. The additional space was being used and adapted by the staff as and when necessary.
- 10.2 The new buildings were built on the same site as the old school, on the playground and fields at the bottom of the site. Consequently, the school had to live with a building site for the 18 months from the construction period and the loss of the use of the playground and the field in the meantime. The Headteacher noted that there had been good collaboration with the construction contractor and the Property Service.

QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE - STRENGTHS

- 10.3 See below a summary of the main strengths noted by the Headteacher, staff, children or governors during the visit.
- The space has been relatively flexible, with changes having already been made to the use of resources in some places (e.g. pegs in the classroom have been moved to the corridors)
 - The construction and demolishing period of the old building was managed well, and although there was no outside provision temporarily, the school worked with the contractor in order to develop outside areas that would be ready from the outset. The school also kept reserve funding specifically to be spent on the outside area. As a result of the economic planning and effective collaboration, the most developed and complete outside areas, of the schools visited by the members of the investigation, were observed at Glancegin.
 - Once again, the pupils noted that they were generally happy with the new building, although they noted that the hall was smaller than at the old school.

QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE - MATTERS REQUIRING ATTENTION

- 10.4 Similarly, see below a summary of the main matters requiring attention noted by the Headteacher, staff, children or governors during the visit.
- The corridors are light and wide, however no educational use has been made of the corridors due to fire safety regulations and the lack of supervision resources outside the classrooms. As has already been seen, members of the investigation note that the long-term should be considered when planning, giving consideration to whether it would be possible to adapt wide corridors into storage space or for computer use.

- Concern was also noted about pupil safety with two specific matters and, although the matters were addressed, the members of the investigation note that lessons need to be learnt for the future in order to prevent such matters from arising again.
- No community space is part of the provision at Ysgol Glancegin in accordance with the grant provision and requirements and, although members of the investigation understand that money is scarce, they note that it is a shame that this requirement has now been withdrawn from the grant provision.

10.5 Although it is not part of the brief, members of the investigation are aware that there is frustration in light of the grant terms that controls the size of new developments, as the agenda of vacancies is a priority for Welsh Government. The school's pupil numbers are now higher than the capacity for which the school was built. We are pleased to understand that the Education Department and the Property Department had given consideration to the possibility of an increase in the pupil numbers whilst planning, although they had to operate within the grant conditions at the time. The school's design was created appropriately, identifying an easy way of erecting an extension at the side of the building without impairing on the rest of the provision should the need arise.

10.6 Members of the investigation note that they are very glad that appropriate consideration has been given to the situation in order to be able to adapt easily. However, frustration that the building needs to be adapted so early on was also noted by the members of the investigation. Members of the investigation note the need to lobby Welsh Government to attempt to slacken the grant conditions and planning for the longer term.

ESTYN RESULTS

10.7 The results of Estyn's recent inspections are noted below.

AREA	February 2013
SUMMARY	
The School's current performance	GOOD
The school's improvement prospects	GOOD
KEY QUESTION	
How good are the outcomes?	ADEQUATE
How good is the provision?	GOOD
How good are the leadership and management?	GOOD

11 Visit: Ysgol Trefferthyr

- 11.1 As noted in section 3.5 of the report, the members of the investigation decided to visit a site that required new buildings in order to be able to compare somewhat with the Case Studies seen.
- 11.2 Ysgol Trefferthyr is located in Cricieth and is a mixture of a turn of the 20th century building with extensions added in the 1970s, and a cabin that has been placed there more recently. The part of the building that was constructed in the 1970s has now reached the end of its lifespan, and is of the same construction as the buildings of Ysgol y Groeslon and Ysgol Glancegin. Recently, the Council has spent substantial amounts on the buildings in order to safeguard them in the short term. In April 2019, the Cabinet decided to open discussions on the future of education in the Cricieth area in order to look at the whole catchment area, with the intention of constructing a new school in Cricieth. A number of meetings have been held locally to identify the best option for any development with consideration given to possible locations.
- 11.3 The visit to Ysgol Trefferthyr highlighted considerable differences compared to the new buildings of the other schools. Although the school is very homely, it was clear that considerable work has had to be done over the years in order to provide for and meet the requirements of modern education. There were challenges with the access, such as stairs leading from one part of the school to the other, and although this can be seen in new buildings as well, there was no alternative way of going from one level to the other. This then created access problems to the school as well as increase the health and safety risks. There were also challenges with the areas for the foundation phase, especially for the outside space.
- 11.4 The Headteacher noted that she was looking forward to having new buildings, hoping that the location of the new school would be just as pleasant and central, with a suitable outside space to provide outdoor activities, such as a forest.

12 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 12.1 Members of the investigation wish to thank everyone for their input into the work, especially the welcome received at the schools visited. It can be seen that the new buildings offer flexible, safe facilities of a high standard that will not require any substantial maintenance for a long time. The opportunities and the spaces that have been created facilitate education provision in Gwynedd, and the pupils have reported that they are very proud of the facilities and the investment in their areas.
- 12.2 It became clear that it was difficult to prove the impact of the new buildings on the quality of education, and the conclusion was reached that the buildings was one element that contributes towards the quality of education.
- 12.3 However, we are pleased to see that the investment has brought more flexible learning conditions to our schools, as well as pride amongst the pupils, the staff and within the communities.
- 12.4 However, we are of the opinion that lessons can be learnt of the qualitative evidence gathered which has led to presenting the recommendations below.

13 Field: Design and planning

- 13.1 **Recommendation:**
That the Education Modernisation Service continues to evaluate projects by learning lessons whilst delivering them, and adapt in light of those lessons. The following points should be considered alongside the lessons learnt.
- 13.2 Members of the investigation note that the long-term should be considered when planning any new development, ensuring that users are consulted as soon as possible in the process, and designing flexible buildings and adaptable spaces. Attention should continue to be given to the latest construction guidelines produced, and to the principles included in Clever Classrooms.
- 13.3 Members of the investigation note that the full picture should be considered at the beginning of any project in order to ensure that the best use is made of all resources, including all considerations for the outside space and any other community provision.
- 13.4 Particular attention should be given to ensure that every effort is made to avoid delay when preparing land and playing fields for new school buildings. Additionally, there is a need to support the schools to ensure a sufficient budget to maintain the external resources.
- 13.5 Whilst it is understood that grant conditions have changed over the years, if a community provision was part of the conditions, or if this is raised again in future, the needs of the community should be considered as well as the means by which the school could fulfil them, and this should be provided during the design stage, as well

as promoting the provision more effectively and ensuring that the responsibility and management of the provision is clear to the relevant stakeholders.

14 Field: 21st Century Schools' grant guidelines

14.1 Recommendation:

That the Cabinet Member makes a formal request to Welsh Government in order to slacken the guidelines and 21st Century grant conditions somewhat, giving consideration to the methods of projecting the population of individual schools in the longer term.

14.2 The case studies demonstrated that pupil numbers had changed during the initial phase of any new school. The pupil numbers for the four new schools in question have increased since the buildings opened; however, grant conditions mean that it is not possible to plan for more than 10% of empty spaces. Members of the investigation note their frustration that it is not possible to plan for the longer term when designing a new school building.

14.3 Conversely, some cases can be contentious, creating an unsettling time in the short term, with the numbers temporarily dropping. Members of the investigation note that consideration be given to allocating bridging funding for a period (approximately 3 years) or until the staffing level is maintained according to the pupil numbers projection.

15 Field: Evidence of the impact of buildings on the quality of education

15.1 Recommendation:

That the Cabinet Member for Education makes a formal request to Welsh Government to carry out a study across the whole of Wales on the impact of new school buildings on the quality of education.

15.2 There has been a considerable investment throughout Wales through the 21st Century Schools scheme over the years. Members of the investigation note that they have faced a challenge when attempting to answer the question, 'What effect has new building development had on the quality of pupil education, and are there lessons to be learnt for the future?' Whilst we have identified lessons to be learnt, it is assumed that Welsh Government is in the best position to carry out further research to prove the impact of new building developments on the quality of education.

Throughout the case studies and the meetings with the experts in the field of education, the impact of good leadership on the quality of education became apparent, and therefore the members of the investigation note the importance of aiming towards strong leadership also.

THE BRIEF OF THE INVESTIGATION

**THE "IMPACT OF NEW BUILDING DEVELOPMENTS ON THE QUALITY OF
EDUCATION" INVESTIGATION**

BRIEF – 20 September 2018

A	<p>What is the matter being considered as a scrutiny item?</p> <p>Several members have asked whether we are able to ascertain a positive effect on the education of pupils as a result of recent developments in the structuring of schools in the County - be they new building developments for schools, and/or the development of new schools.</p> <p>Their questions focus on the effect the new provision has on the quality of the education and pupil experience, and ask</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - whether the financial investment has led to an improvement in the quality - whether good practice or lessons can be learnt as the development programme continues. <p>With all the development work that has taken place to date, the time is right to look at what impact (if at all) the new buildings have had in Gwynedd.</p> <p>The opportunity should be taken to identify any good practices and any lessons/changes for the developments in future.</p> <p>Research into the field will look at the effect of new school developments / buildings on the following elements, which are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Quality of the Education ➤ Educational results ➤ Experience of the users in the new buildings ➤ Value for money
B	<p>Aim of the Investigation</p> <p>The main question to address is</p> <p>'What effect has new building development had on schools and the quality of pupil education, and are there lessons to be learnt for the future?'</p> <p>This will be achieved by asking the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the features of a good education? - Are the educational results of the schools in question better/worse/stable after opening the new buildings? - How has the pupils' experience changed from the old building to the new building - How does the building affect education? - What were the success criteria of the developments? Were these achieved? - What was the general condition of the buildings?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What changed from the old school to the new school? - How did the teaching staff, the governors and GwE find the building improved the quality of education? - Do the developments offer value for money? - Are there lessons to be learnt for the future?
C	<p>Background</p> <p>There has been considerable investment in developing educational buildings in Gwynedd recently. Among the developments are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ysgol yr Hendre, Caernarfon • Ysgol Craig y Deryn • Investing in improvements and renovations at Ysgol O M Edwards, Llanuwchllyn in 2013. • Ysgol Bro Llifon • Ysgol Hafod Lon, Penrhyndeudraeth • Ysgol Bro Idris, Dolgellau on six sites. <p>The programme continues with developments that are already in the pipeline in the areas of Bala and Bangor.</p>
CH	<p>Good Practice and Lessons to be Learnt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use the case study method, therefore it is intended to identify the necessary information and evidence (as noted below in Section D) and analyse it in accordance with the strategic context and the context of the individual developments.
D	<p>Gathering Evidence</p> <p>The questions will be answered using case study methodology for three or four developments. By combining recent and less recent developments, the intention is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To gather data to measure the effect the building has on the experience of pupils of recent developments, since the change is still fresh in the mind • To measure the impact of less recent developments on quality, since time has elapsed and quantitative data can be generated. <p>It is also intended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigate the success criteria of the schools reorganisation/building schemes - Analyse the schools' situation before the development (using category/Estyn/GwE/results) - Gather qualitative data from school leaders, teaching staff, governors and GwE. - How can the quality of education be measured - what are the characteristics of good quality education? - Have results improved because of the change? <p>Bro Llifon, Craig y Deryn, Glancegin, and Hendre schools will be looked at.</p>

DD	<p>Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider whether the developments have delivered on the success criteria of their business plans, the aims of the education modernising strategy, and the aims of the 21st Century schools plan - As regards value for money, improving the quality of education is what drives the modernisation programme and this must be borne in mind. It is, however, a valid question given the current financial climate.
E	<p>Writing the Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note and provide evidence of the main findings - Note recommendations - Discuss and agree on the draft report with relevant stakeholders - Submit the final draft report to the Committee - Publish the report
F	<p>Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dependent on the results of the investigation
FF	<p>Track Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dependent on the results of the investigation

Main Activities

The main activities of the investigation are noted below:

Date	Location	Purpose
23/1/18	Siambr Hywel Dda, Council Offices	Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee - Commission the investigation and receive a draft brief
20/9/18	Siambr Hywel Dda, Council Offices	Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee - Receive the full brief.
9/10/18	Ystafell Gwyrfai, Council Offices	Receive a presentation on the field by Dafydd Gibbard (Senior Corporate Property Manager) and Hedd Tomos (Education Modernisation Unit Manager) and draw up a work programme.
22/10/18	Ystafell Gwyrfai, Council Offices	Receive a presentation from Gwern ap Rhisiart and Diane Jones (Area Education Officers) on the features of good quality education
12/11/18	Ystafell Ogwen, Council Offices	Discuss school visits, the direction of enquiries and possible questions
23/5/19	Siambr Hywel Dda, Council Offices	Final preparations before visiting the schools
4/6/19	Ysgol yr Hendre, Caernarfon	School visit
13/6/19	Ysgol Bro Llifon, Y Groeslon	School visit
17/6/19	Ysgol Craig y Deryn, Llanegryn	School visit
26/6/19	Ysgol Glancegin, Bangor	School visit
9/7/19	Ysgol Treferthyr, Cricieth	School visit
25/7/19	Siambr Hywel Dda, Council Offices	Consider the themes that emerged from the school visits and discuss next steps, including arrangements to have another discussion with Dafydd Gibbard
9/9/19	Ystafell Gwyrfai, Council Offices,	A discussion with Dafydd Gibbard following the school visits. A discussion with Geraint Evans (Core Leader - Primary) about GwE's viewpoint on the schools in question
24/10/19	Ystafell Gwyrfai, Council Offices	Discuss the first draft of the investigation report
4/11/19	Ystafell Gwyrfai, Council Offices	Discuss a further draft of the investigation report
March 2020		Confirm the final draft investigation report

Clever Classrooms

- 1 Members of the investigation decided to look for other studies on the impact of school buildings on the quality of education/educational outcomes. Given all the developments in the field, it was astonishing that so few quality studies and research had been undertaken in the field. Although some research has been carried out on the impacts of some specific aspects of buildings on the outcomes, there was only one study that attempted to assess the impact of each aspect on buildings together, namely *Clever Classrooms*, Salford University, 2015².

- 2 In this study, surveys were held on 3,766 pupils in 153 classes in 27 very different primary schools in three education authorities in England; namely Blackpool, Hampshire and London Borough of Ealing. The investigators describe their methodology as a "novel approach" namely addressing the complexities in two ways:

First the "holistic" aspect of the practical experience of a space was taken fully on board. Second, a multilevel statistical modelling approach was used to isolate effects at the classroom level.³

- 3 Performance statistics were gathered from pupil records over the year, teacher-assessed grades. This data was not available for the investigation, and therefore it was not possible to conduct a similar analysis on pupil progress in the schools in question in Gwynedd. Data was received for only three subjects, namely reading, writing and mathematics; therefore, extensive parts of the curriculum were not included in the research. It is important to keep this in mind. The study came to the following conclusion:

"clear evidence has been found that well-designed primary schools boost children's academic performance in reading writing and maths. Differences in the physical characteristics of classrooms explain 16% of the variation in learning progress over a year ... it is estimated that the impact of moving an 'average' child from the least effective to the most effective space would be around 1.3 sub-levels, a big impact when pupils typically make 2 sub-levels progress a year.⁴

- 4 The physical features of the classrooms were assessed to see which ones were the most important, and research-based recommendations were made on future schools planning. Dafydd Gibbard has reported that Gwynedd Council naturally considers all factors that are part of the report when considering any design. The Property Service also receives regular builders' bulletins which contain the latest recommendations on designs as well, which are considered for any new developments.

² [Clever Classrooms: Summary report of the HEAD Project \(Holistic Evidence and Design\)](#) by Peter Barrett, Yufan Zhang, Fay Davies and Lucinda Barrett, Salford University, Manchester, February 2015

³ *Clever Classrooms*, Page 7

⁴ *Clever Classrooms*, Page 3

5 Three groups of factors were considered: naturalness; namely light, noise, temperature, air quality, and contact with nature - is responsible for half the impact on learning; Individualism; namely ownership, flexibility and connection - is responsible for around a quarter; and an appropriate level of stimulation; namely complexity and colour - is also responsible for around a quarter.

6 The report noted:

“A surprising finding is that physical design factors at the school level of analysis did not come through as being of sufficient importance to appear amongst the main factors at all. These covered the size of the school, the provision of shared specialist rooms, routes through the school, the scale and quality of external spaces, etc.”⁵

7 As a result of this, when designing a school, it should mostly be ensured that each individual classroom is well-designed. A situation where the impact of the design of various classes on the learning of the pupils is varied should be avoided; for example, the direction they are facing, putting some classes under a disadvantage.

“It is easy to over-stimulate pupils with vibrant colours and overly busy displays, but a white box is not the answer either.”⁶

8 Minor changes, at very low or no cost at all, can make a major difference; for example, changing the layout of a room, the displays or the wall colours. Therefore, there are some matters that require attention when designing a school, and there are other matters that the teachers can address.

9 It was found that there were three relatively trivial planning parameters; namely noise, contact with nature and connection between rooms, compared to the seven other parameters above.

10 **Naturalness**

11 **Light:** In addition to ensuring that pupils can see, good natural lighting creates a comfortable atmosphere. According to the study: “Of all the design parameters considered, lighting has the strongest individual impact.”⁷ There should be a great deal of natural light, and glare from natural sunlight should be avoided by using suitable blinds.

12 *Recommendations for designers:* large, north-facing windows should be installed in classrooms, and they should be avoided in south-facing rooms. If south-facing rooms have large windows, shade should be created on the external side.

5 *Clever Classrooms*, Page 15

6 *Clever Classrooms*, Page 15

7 *Clever Classrooms*, Page 18

- 13 *Recommendations for teachers:* too many displays should not be placed on windows, and large furniture should not be placed in front of them, especially external windows. If glare is a problem, it should be managed by using internal blinds with convenient controls. When there is no glare, the blinds should be opened rather than turning on the light in order to improve the quality of the lighting and to save energy.
- 14 Hedges could be planted or plant pots could be placed outside south-facing windows in order to avoid excessive lighting.
- 15 **Air quality:** Children are more sensitive to all types of pollutants, and in schools there are many of them in a restricted space. Poor air quality is a common problem in schools, and research is quoted which shows better performance amongst pupils when rooms are well ventilated⁸. Poor air quality is defined as 1000 ppm CO₂ or more. With 30 pupils, in unventilated rooms, it was seen that CO₂ levels reached this measure after 30 minutes in 'medium-sized' rooms (181 m³) and 55 minutes in a very large room (300 m³).
- 16 *Recommendations for designers:* Regulations restrict the floor surface area of classrooms, and therefore, if possible, a higher ceiling should be obtained. Even with the largest rooms, ventilation is required and it should be ensured that windows can be opened, on different levels, especially those in the roof, with convenient controls. Should this not be possible (e.g. due to noise or safety), a mechanical ventilation system will be required and teachers will need to be trained on how to use it properly.
- 17 *Recommendations for teachers:* with 30 pupils, a window will need to be opened before the end of a lesson. Should this not be possible, windows should be opened between lessons. Items that prevent access to the windows should be avoided. Installing a CO₂ sensor could help teachers and possibly pupils to know when they should open the windows.
- 18 **Temperature:** Extensive research shows that performance deteriorates if the room is too hot. According to the NASUWT Union:

“Excessive heat in classrooms has also been shown in many studies to impact on pupils’ learning, with a 1°C increase in temperatures linked to a 2% decline in learning. The effects of extreme temperatures are even more striking, when considering that each additional school day with a temperature in the 30s (°C) reduces pupil achievement by one sixth of a percent of a year’s worth of learning. Disadvantaged pupils also suffer up to three times the impact of excessive temperatures than other pupils.”⁹

8 Bakó-Biró, Z., D. J. Clements-Cromme, N. Kochhar, H. Awbi, M. Williams, “Ventilation rates in schools and pupils’ performance,” *Building and Environment* 48(2012): 215-223 – quoted in *Clever Classrooms*, Page 20

9 <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/advice/health-safety/excessive-working-temperatures.html> quoting Goodman, J., Hurwitz, M., Park, J. and Smith, J. (2018). *Heat and Learning*. National Bureau of Economic Research. Accessed 13.10.2019

- 19 According to the *Clever Classrooms* report, the most important factor was that a teacher could manage the temperature in his/her classroom¹⁰.
- 20 *Recommendations for designers:* radiators with a thermostat in each room enables teachers to control the temperature and keep it at a comfortable level. Rooms facing the north, east or west in Gwynedd are not likely to overheat. For the south-facing rooms, shade will be required, e.g. a canopy or overhang.
- 21 *Recommendations for teachers:* if they can control the temperature, e.g. with a thermostat, the best conditions for learning is a mild but comfortable temperature. If the sun is too hot, hedges could be planted or plant pots could be placed outside windows, or blinds could be used with ventilation.
- 22 **Noise (less important):** Although the research does not show that noise is an important factor, apart from potentially for pupils with additional learning needs, steps should be taken to manage it.
- 23 *Recommendations for designers:* the school should be located far away from busy roads or other noise sources. Classes could be located further away from external noise sources, e.g. by locating toilets, storage rooms and corridors between them. Rectangular rooms provide more flexibility to teachers for presentations compared to square rooms. A false ceiling with acoustic tiles could be installed.
- 24 *Recommendations for teachers:* the internal noise could be reduced by placing rubber feet on mobile furniture such as chairs, using textiles such as noise absorbing carpets.
- 25 **Contact with nature (less important):** Although the research finds that this is less important than the other factors, it could be beneficial for creative writing, and it is certainly important for the Foundation Phase and the new curriculum.
- 26 *Recommendations for designers:* It should be ensured that the pupils can go outside immediately to see natural things such as grass, gardens, ponds and trees. Windows should be installed at their eye-level.
- 27 *Recommendations for teachers:* too many displays should not be placed on external windows, and large furniture should not be placed in front of them. Natural items should be placed in the classroom such as plants and timber desks and chairs.
- 28 **Individuality**
- 29 **Flexibility:** Flexible classrooms can offer a variety of different learning methods. Adaptation will be required in future as pedagogy methods, and educational programmes and strategies develop. The research found that the following elements had a positive impact on performance:

10 *Clever Classrooms*, Page 22

- spaces for small groups or one-to-one teaching - clear spaces in the room or adjacent rooms. Areas in corridors or separate from the classroom were not effective
- storage - in the classroom or on corridors
- learning areas - especially for young pupils
- the room's shape and surface area - a complicated shape helps to create different areas for activities with young pupils; squarer rooms work better with older pupils
- walls - large, accessible walls provide flexible opportunities to display information and pupils' work.

30 *Recommendations for designers:* enclosed spaces should be created for small groups or for one-to-one teaching. Sufficient storage is required, including coat pegs, and wide corridors could be used for this. A complicated shape is useful for Foundation Phase rooms, with squarer rooms for Key Stage 2. A large wall, without a window and door, is useful for displays.

31 *Recommendations for teachers:* young pupils need clear and varied learning spaces. If the furniture is low, there will be more room available on the walls for displays.

32 **Ownership:** namely features that help pupils to feel that the classroom belongs to them.

33 *Recommendations for designers:* rooms should have distinctive features, so that the pupils can relate to *their* room. E.g. shape, design, distinctive ceiling, interesting furniture.

34 *Recommendations for teachers:* the classroom can be made different to other rooms and promote a sense of ownership by including displays by the pupils and elements such as lockers, pegs, drawers and the names/photos of the children.

35 **Connection (less important):** because, in primary schools, the pupils spend most of their time learning in one room, rather than moving through the school.

36 *Recommendations for designers:* wide corridors, with distinctive features, help pupils to move safely through the school, especially if there are windows. They could provide cupboards and pegs and save space in the classrooms. Providing library facilities in a natural place could help with progress in reading.

37 *Recommendations for teachers:* corridors should be kept clear with clear sightlines and landmarks to help pupils see where they are.

38 **Stimulation**

39 **An appropriate level of complexity:** Complexity can make it more difficult to focus on a task, but it can also stimulate pupils to collaborate. The study noted: "high or low

levels of complexity produced poorer learning conditions, whereas an intermediate level of visual complexity was optimal.”¹¹

40 *Recommendations for designers:* the shape and form of the floor plan of the classroom can create a reasonable level of visual interest - without being uninteresting but without being too exciting. The complexity could be increased or decreased by designing the ceiling.

41 *Recommendations for teachers:* the wall displays should be vibrant but not cluttered. Approximately 20-50% of the walls' surface area should be left clear, and using the windows should be avoided for this purpose. The complexity level of the room should be considered when determining the complexity level of the displays.

42 **An appropriate level of colour:** Bright colours create a higher level of stimulation and, once again, similarly to complexity, the best learning is gained with a medium level of colour. According to the study: “Large, brightly coloured areas rated poorly as did white walls with few colour elements. The intermediate case with light walls generally, plus a feature wall in a brighter colour was found to be most effective for learning.”¹². There should be a great deal of natural light, and glare from natural sunlight should be avoided by using suitable blinds.

43 *Recommendations for designers:* an appropriate level of stimulation can be achieved with light coloured walls and a feature wall in a brighter colour. Colour can be added with carpets and furniture.

44 *Recommendations for teachers:* colour elements that cannot be easily changed should be assessed, and then it should be decided how many bright colours should be introduced, e.g. in the background for displays. The stimulation should be increased if there is not enough, or it should be reduced if it is already a little bright.

45 **Conclusion**

46 The study demonstrated how buildings affect the performance of pupils, and a summary of the recommendations for designers can be found on pages 40-41, and recommendations for teachers are on pages 42-43 of the *Clever Classrooms* report. The research was carried out in England, where a different education system is used, especially in the Foundation Phase, and only reading, writing and mathematics were considered. Although this should be borne in mind, we believe that the recommendations are valuable and designers or teachers should consider them when planning their learning rooms.

11 *Clever Classrooms*, Page 34

12 *Clever Classrooms*, Page 36