

# Estyn Recommendations: Progress Report

## July 2017

**R1: Ensure that the school improvement service uses data, target setting and tracking procedures more effectively to challenge and support schools in order to improve performance of all learners across schools and local authorities, particularly at key stage 4**

Over the last three years GwE relationship with schools has improved as the organisation has found a better balance between the need to support and challenge schools. The *GwE Challenge and Support Programme* has taken full account of Welsh Government's guidelines as outlined in the guidance document '*National Model for Regional Working*' [November 2015]. However, between 2013 and 2016 the pattern of improvement across the region has been inconsistent, and concerns remain over the performance and inspection profiles of a significant percentage of schools in the secondary sector. During 2015-16, the support programme for both sectors was revised and whilst this led to improvements in the resilience and quality of leadership and teaching and learning experiences in the primary sector, little impact was seen on standards and outcomes in a significant number of secondary schools. In general, the pace of improvement in the main indicators at KS4 has been too slow compared to the rest of Wales and improving performance of secondary schools is the consortium's main priority.

The underperformance of too many of the secondary schools clearly highlighted the need to review the challenge and support programme and establish an alternative method for supporting, challenging and securing accountability on all levels. A new secondary challenge and support model has therefore been established. The new model has ensured that better use is made of the expertise and experiences of GwE Senior Leaders, Challenge Advisers and School Senior Leaders so as to provide high quality assistance and support using an approach that is consistent across the region. The 3 hub model has been abolished and a secondary regional team established to ensure greater consistency. The quality of the challenge advisers has also improved with all members having senior leadership experience and a proven track record of improving schools.

Key roles within GwE have been restructured and a Senior Secondary Lead appointed to lead the new regional secondary team. Six Secondary Core Leads have also been appointed each of whom are linked to one of the six Local Authorities. They will be responsible for line managing and quality assuring the work of the Challenge Advisers. The secondary team will be accountable to the GwE Management Board through the *Regional Quality Board*. It will also be accountable on a local level to the *Standards Quality Board* [SQB] in the respective authorities. It will be the responsibility of the SQB to report on the action taken and progress made locally to the Education Department's Management Team, and to respond to any inquiries arising from scrutiny carried out by elected members. The outcomes of local scrutiny in the 6 authorities will then be cascaded to the GwE Joint Committee, who will consider action and progress on regional level. This has clarified and greatly strengthened the accountability lines at all levels.

*Portfolio Leaders* have also been identified to ensure that consistent and high quality guidance and information is provided to all schools in the region. Moving to a distributed leadership model has ensured a more enhanced support model with better ownership of key decisions by team members. Team members are accountable for evaluating developments and progress against their areas of responsibility, again leading to a better ownership of outcomes.

Core subject Challenge Advisers also form part of the team and challenge and support underperforming departments and also offer support for literacy and numeracy development. They have facilitated core subject networks for sharing effective practice across the region. Their work has impacted on the performance of targeted schools and departments as exemplified by the case studies. A comprehensive strategy to improve standards of English, Maths, Science and Welsh across the region has been developed within the Business Plans. Lead practitioners facilitate a range of professional networks to share good practice in non-core subjects. However, support for non-core subjects need to be further developed and best practice more effectively identified and shared across the region.

A risk assessment has been undertaken for each secondary school to identify regional and local needs for

support and development. All secondary schools have received a *Support Programme* highlighting the nature of the assistance and support that they need. In undertaking a structured programme of review and support visits, GwE has more effectively and robustly identified areas for improvement and development in targeted schools. GwE prioritised the Wrexham secondary schools during the Summer Term. There will be an additional expectation on all schools in the *Amber/Red* support category to establish a *Standards Board* to monitor progress towards the expected outcomes. Membership will include the Headteacher, the link CA, the Education Officer and representation from the Governing Body. Progress reports will be presented to the attention of the *Regional Standards Board*.

GwE have also identified partner schools as part of the challenge and support programme using peers to help other schools on their improvement journey. The head teacher is also acting as a Challenge Adviser for the schools. This work has quickly led to substantial changes to structures, systems and processes within these schools which now need to be embedded so that they impact on standards.

The developments described above are providing a more effective structure to challenge and support schools to improve their performance. It is also enabling the school improvement service to use data, target setting and tracking procedures more effectively.

Work is currently being undertaken to develop a school dashboard which will be operational in all schools from September 2017 that will provide current and ongoing data. This will facilitate a higher level of communication, support and challenge between key stakeholders and will allow GwE to more effectively and timely monitor the impact of its work and the progress of the schools against agreed priorities. In addition, GwE are developing a virtual school which will model best practice on all aspects of school life. The information management system will greatly improve the use of data and information received from allowing GwE to make more effective use of 'live' data and up to date progress reports to better target and utilise its resources. It will enable:

- excellent/good practice that has been quality assured to be shared
- access to a menu of bespoke and relevant professional development opportunities for schools
- access to 'live' data to inform and allow Head teachers to put in place timely and more effective intervention
- access to 'real time' information about schools and their progress
- access to a self-evaluation tool for mapping and supporting the school's readiness for Successful Futures (identifying current needs and supporting future planning)
- clearly identified milestones for school to deliver individual *Areas of Learning and Experiences* within the new curriculum
- ease of access to all key documents and information
- potential access to all relevant data and information to key stakeholders such as governors
- schools to evaluate whether they complying with statutory requirements
- greater consistency in the work of Challenge Advisers and more effective quality assurance processes in place
- an opportunity to develop an open loop system to facilitate collaboration and school to school working
- access to a one stop shop for schools, LA and GwE

As part of the recent GwE restructuring, a regional Quality and Data Unit Lead has been appointed. This is a senior post responsible for ensuring more effective use of data and analytics to improve the performance of all learners and schools across the region. An enhanced data capturing process via the Data Unit allows full access to all Challenge Advisers and LA Officers to data on an individual school, LA and regional level. The capacity of the Data Unit has been increased with the appointment of an Assistant Data Manager allowing more effective management and analysis of data. There is a more robust process for target setting and tracking system in place at a regional level for monitoring progress data from all schools throughout the academic year [including the tracking of groups of learners]. This is

been further strengthened for September 2017 onwards. However, there is still a low correlation in many secondary schools between targets, projections and final performance suggesting significant issues in terms of improving target setting, assessment, tracking and intervention programmes. This is an area that is continuing to be addressed within the current Business Plans.

There is also an in depth analysis on the performance of group of learners. In general, the pace of improvement in the performance of eFSM learners in the main indicators at KS4 has been too slow compared to the rest of Wales. Improving the performance of eFSM learners remains a key priority for the region. Issues are addressed through the Level 3 Business Plans and individual LA Business Plans focus on closing the gap between the performances of different groups of learners and improving the achievement of MAT pupils. During GwE challenge and monitoring visits, the Challenge Advisers monitor the use of the Education Improvement Grant (EIG) and Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) in all schools. Focus is given to tracking outcomes for eFSM learners to ensure that more effective and timely use is made of available funding streams to support the development of effective teaching and learning strategies that is differentiated to meet the needs of the pupils. However, further work is needed to ensure that all schools set challenging targets for different groups of learners. Schools must also be more robustly challenged on how they use their PDG to improve outcomes for eFSM learners. GwE is also reviewing the use of regional funding for supporting Looked After Children.

As part of the recent GwE restructuring, a regional Wellbeing Lead has been appointed and a strategy for improving standards of wellbeing is being developed. This includes the use of data to track progress in other aspects relating to wellbeing beyond academic performance and achievement.

Schools, Local Authorities and GwE have acknowledged that in the past there was an element of confusion when applying 'best-fit' in teachers' assessment of learners. Schools received mixed messages when awarding a level to a learner at the end of a key stage, thus leading to a lack of clarity. Work plans have been put in place to improve the consistency and reliability of teacher assessments with a guidance document shared with schools to clarify 'best fit' descriptors and judgements. This year, it has impacted positively on the performance of pupils at Key Stage 2. However, further work is needed in the Foundation Phase to improve the quality of provision and accuracy of teacher assessments. This is being addressed within the GwE Business Plans.

Access to and use of data by GwE SLT and Management Board has therefore greatly improved. This is ensuring that regional/LA areas of concern are identified and addressed sooner and more effectively. All secondary schools that underperform in the key indicators have been identified and support plans are in place to improve their performance. Greater emphasize on the use of 'live' data and up to date progress reports will allow the organisation to more effectively allocate resources across the region to ensure an accelerated pace of improvement. GwE is working closely with Bangor University on the "Collaborative Institute for Education Research, Evidence and Impact" (CIEREI) Project to establish more effective systems to evaluate the impact of its work. Evaluative data and analysis will allow the organisation to better judge value for money and inform future developments. Currently, the secondary challenge and support programme and some of the professional learning leadership programmes are been evaluated.

**Progress:**

## **R2: Improve the quality of evaluation in the delivery of school improvement services.**

Self-evaluation and improvement planning is strongly incorporated in GwE and is a fundamental building block in GwE's commitment to sustained improvement. It is a cyclical and ongoing process which enables GwE to identify areas of good performance and areas for development in order to improve the educational experiences and outcomes for learners. It is continuous, embedded and drives improvement planning which contributes to the effective management of individuals and teams in order to achieve

high levels of personal and organisational performance.

Key roles within GwE have been restructured. This has clarified and greatly strengthened the accountability lines at all levels. *Portfolio Leaders* have also been identified to lead on key priority areas. Moving to a distributed leadership model has ensured a more enhanced support model with better ownership of key decisions by team members. Team members are accountable for evaluating developments and progress against their areas of responsibility, again leading to a better ownership and accountability for delivering against outcomes.

The clear and robust accountability framework is an important strength in GwE. Detailed plans at several levels deal with all aspects of the GwE's work. All the plans have nominated designated officers and each of them clearly input to the business plan. There are detailed self-evaluation arrangements that are based on this framework. Challenge Advisers review their plans each quarter and evaluate progress and impact. These reviews steer the evaluation of the business plan that systematically feeds into the quarterly service evaluation so that there is a clear trail of team evaluation in the corporate review. Then, new priorities from the service review are rapidly incorporated in team plans.

It is based on reflection, challenge and support among practitioners and professionals. Through this process, we have set ourselves challenging objectives by 2020 to ensure that we meet our priorities to improve standards, curriculum and assessment, leadership, wellbeing, teaching, business support and make strong progress against Estyn recommendations. The objectives are clearly defined within the Level 1 Business Plan, e.g., for Standards:

- The percentage of learners achieving the L2+ will grow at 1.5 the rate for the rest of Wales
- The percentage of school performing on or above the modelled outcome for the L2+ will increase to 55%
- The percentage of schools performing above the median in the FSM benchmarking for the L2+ will increase to 55%
- The gap between the highest and lowest performing Local Authority in the L2+ will reduce to no more than 7%
- The percentage of learners achieving 5A\*-A GCSE's or equivalent will grow at 1.5 the rate for the rest of Wales
- The percentage of learners achieving the FPI will grow at 1.5 the rate for the rest of Wales
- The percentage of learners achieving the higher outcomes at the end of FP will grow at 1.5 the rate for the rest of Wales
- Standards in literacy will improve so that at least 20% of all pupils achieve standardized scores >115 in national tests in all key stages
- Standards in numeracy will improve so that at least 20% of all pupils achieve standardized scores >115 in national tests in all key stages
- The gap between our eFSM learners and non-FSM learners will be reduced by at least 5% in the L2+ and FPI

GwE is working closely with Bangor University on the "Collaborative Institute for Education Research, Evidence and Impact" (CIEREI) Project to establish more effective systems to evaluate the impact of its work. Evaluative data and analysis will allow the organisation to better judge value for money and inform future developments. Currently, the secondary challenge and support programme and some of the professional learning leadership programmes are being evaluated.

Work is currently being undertaken to develop a school dashboard which will be operational in all schools from September 2017 that will provide current and ongoing data. This will facilitate a higher level of communication, support and challenge between key stakeholders and will allow GwE to more effectively and timely monitor the impact of its work and the progress of the schools against agreed priorities. The dashboard will allow more effective use of data and analytics to evaluate the quality of delivery and its impact on the performance of all learners and schools across the region. It will also allow

the school improvement service to more effectively target its resources to meet its priorities and rapidly adapt and redirect resources when things are not working.

**Progress:**

**R3: Improve the rigour of the arrangements for identifying and managing risk.**

The risk management processes has been reviewed.

A review of the arrangements in place to manage risk has led to a new and enhanced process. The GwE Risk Register has been re-developed in partnership with the North Wales Economic Ambition Board and has during its development been discussed by the Advisory Boards and Management Board.

The following risk matrix has been followed in determining the residual risk status:

Risk Matrix					
Probability	Almost Certain	Low (4)	Medium (8)	High (12)	High (16)
	Likely	Low (3)	Medium (6)	Medium (9)	High (12)
	Possible	Low (2)	Low (4)	Medium (6)	Medium (8)
	Unlikely	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)
		Low	Medium	High	Extreme
Impact					

Effective management of the region’s risk will enable us to support the organisation’s objectives, make effective use of resources and deliver outcomes as intended.

Quarterly updates are made bringing together the risks of the six LAs and GwE to make sure that the processes are effectively working together rather than avoiding or missing issues.

The Risk Register is a standing item on SLT, Management Board & Joint Committee and is systematically evaluated by the Joint Committee or other groups to which they are assigned.

**Progress:**

**R4: Ensure that business and operational plans contain clear success criteria and that progress against these is monitored effectively.**

GwE’s planning and performance management structure steers the direction of the Consortium’s services. The high level strategy plan links into more detailed team plans, with specific measurable improvement targets and clear success criteria in order to measure progress within the region accurately. All the GwE team’s plans follow this pattern and their performance is managed in detail. There are clear lines of accountability between all levels of planning across GwE.

GwE have set themselves challenging and measurable objectives by 2020 to improve standards, curriculum and assessment, leadership, wellbeing and teaching which are incorporated into the business

plans at all levels. The plans contain clear success criteria and milestones for reaching those objectives. There are also robust monitoring processes in place with clear lines of accountability and appropriate scrutiny at both local and regional level.

The clear and robust accountability framework (Appendix 1) is an important strength in GwE. Detailed plans at several levels deal with all aspects of the GwE's work. All the plans have nominated designated officers and each of them clearly input to the business plan. There are detailed self-evaluation arrangements that are based on this framework. Challenge Adviser review their plans each quarter and evaluate progress and impact. These reviews steer the evaluation of the business plan that systematically feeds into the quarterly service evaluation so that there is a clear trail of team evaluation in the corporate review. Then, new priorities from the service review are rapidly incorporated in team plans.

The Challenge Advisers have a good grasp of their responsibility for continuous improvement and accountability for improvement in their fields. Sharing plans and evaluations in a clear manner brings cohesion to teams and drives the strong collaboration that has led to provision of better services and an improvement in school standards and leadership

Self-evaluation is strongly incorporated in GwE. There is a strong focus on accountability and continuous review and a constant emphasis on achieving progress in accordance with priorities. This focus on evaluation and review will lead to significant improvement.

This culture has stemmed from successful practice within GwE. Challenge Advisors must justify underperformance and identify possible risk areas including overspend. There are clearly defined lines of accountability.

**Progress:**

#### **R5: Clarify the strategic role of the regional networks and their accountability to the Joint Committee.**

The current regional networks have been reviewed – purpose, scope and membership.

Following a review of the current structure, the following recommendations were made:

- Eliminate the concept of 'A sponsoring Director'.
- Change to 'Sub-groups' rather than 'Networks', as follows:
  - Standards:
    - Welsh
    - Digital Framework
    - Well-being
    - ALN
    - Governors
  - Business:
    - Finance / Grants
    - Human Resources
    - ITC – MIS
- The Sub-groups to prepare a Business Plan.
- The Sub-groups to prepare a quarterly monitoring/progress report and analyse the report based on achievement and further risk.
- In accordance with the agreed procedure, matters that require attention will be referred to Regional Quality Board for further consideration.
- The Sub-groups to contribute to planning and recommend implementation measures to the

Regional Quality Board on regional grants and resources.

This accountability framework for all the sub-groups aligns with the new business planning process and accountability model.

It also ensures that the sub-groups fully align with the region's priorities and that appropriate regional structures are in place to deliver all requirements of the National Model.

**Progress:**

**R6: Develop an appropriate framework to assess value for money; ensure that the business plan is accompanied by a medium-term financial plan and that work-streams are fully costed.**

The consortium generally has effective financial management processes in place. Communication and consultation about financial arrangements are effective with both core funding and grant expenditure kept under regular review by GwE staff, the host local authority and the joint committee.

We are now improving our financial analysis to support the delivery of our revised three-year business plan. A medium-term financial plan and workforce plan is being aligned to its business plan. By increasingly effective use of data to identify our key priorities, the link between the business planning process and financial planning decisions is being strengthened because the workstreams that underpin the business plan identify clearly the resources to be used.

Detailed work has been undertaken to align grant allocations with our priorities, although progress to date has been limited. Challenge advisers now challenge schools on their use of grant funding with a clear set of criteria to assess the use of this funding and this has reduced the inconsistencies between schools about identifying the impact of the use of grant funding on pupil outcomes.

We now systematically collate the information gathered on schools' use of grant funding and therefore opportunities to share effective practice and wider learning are being better exploited.

A formal framework has been developed to assess the wider value for money that GwE provides. There is now a consistent view across all stakeholders of how the value for money of GwE's activities can be measured within the business plan structure and objectives.

We now regularly evaluate and review our services and initiatives during their implementation phase to identify areas for improvement and value for money.

**ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH**

**Background**

Organisational Health is a measure of how well an organisation is aligned, able to execute, and renew itself over time – so it can learn from the past & innovate for the future.

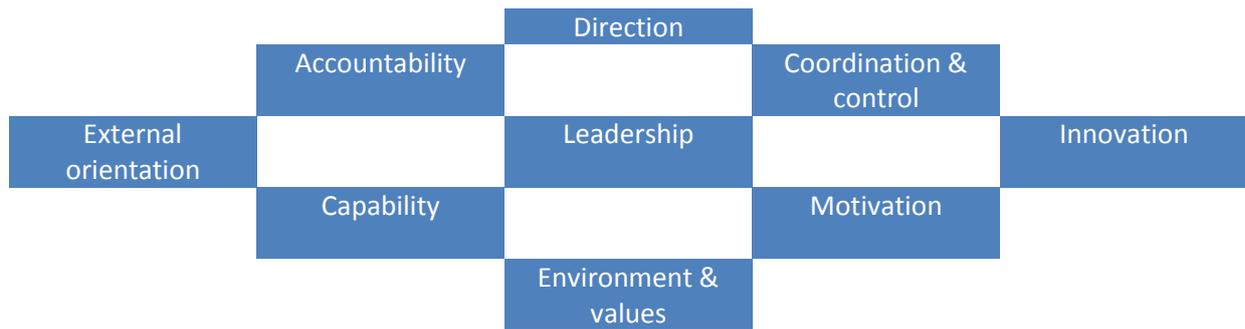
Research has proven that the healthiest companies are more than twice as likely to outperform their peers. Healthy organisations have employees who:

- Understand the big picture – they know the vision and strategy, and how you plan to get there
- Can make it happen – they have the tools, skills, motivation and support to put those plans into action
- Stay ahead of the curve – they are encouraged to innovate and adapt to keep you competitive

**Linking organisation health & performance in GwE**

The Organisational Health Index (OHI) Solution will provide detailed finding for how GwE is performing

on the nine elements of health (see below), related to performance.



This will provide a thorough picture of how healthy the organisation is, and allows the results to be benchmarked against others. It will also allow us to diagnose the organisation's current strengths and development needs, and help understand where we might need to take action to sustain the current levels or improve over time.

#### Moving the organisation toward higher performance

- Assess underlying mindsets and behaviours that impact performance
- Benchmark the organisation's health index against public and private sector benchmarks
- Understand the organisation's archetype to identify the six to seven 'must have' practices for success
- Prioritise intervention programmes needed to improve health
- Periodically track health to ensure ongoing progress and catch potential issues early

#### Proposed Way forward

1. To conduct an OHI survey before the end of this term
2. Evaluate the findings and key learnings
3. Reflect the key learnings in organisational behaviour & use to influence business & workforce planning
4. Conduct an OHI survey periodically in order to track progress & identify new learning.

**Progress:**

# PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PLANS

LEVEL 1

REGIONAL BUSINESS PLAN

LEVEL 2

2.1 PRIMARY

2.2 SECONDARY

2.3 SUCCESSFUL FUTURES

2.4 INDIVIDUAL LA  
BUSINESS PLANS

2.5 WELSH

LEVEL 3

3.1 CURRICULUM AND  
ASSESSMENT

3.2 LEADERSHIP

3.3 TEACHING

3.4 WELLBEING

3.5 BUSINESS

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3.1.1 Tracking &  
assessment

3.2.1 Developing  
Leadership

3.3.1 Teaching &  
Learning

3.4.1 Wellbeing/  
PDG/ LAC

3.5.1 GwE School

3.1.2. Welsh and  
Literacy

3.2.2 Middle Leaders

3.3.2 Lead  
Subject  
Methodology

3.4.2 ALN/  
Inclusion

3.5.2 Dashboard

3.1.3 English & Literacy

3.2.3 New  
Headteachers

3.3.3 ITE

3.4.3 Health &  
Fitness

3.5.3 GwE Staff  
Professional Development  
& Digital Capacity/The  
Organisation's Health &  
workplace Plans

3.1.4 Mathematics &  
Numeracy

3.2.4 Management /  
Compliance

3.4.4 PRU

3.5.4 Finance

3.1.5 Science

3.2.5 Governor  
Support

3.5.5 Performance  
Management and  
Governance

3.1.6 Digital Capacity

3.2.6 Small Rural  
Schools

3.5.6 Communications  
/ Marketing

3.1.7 BAC

3.2.7 Assistants

3.5.7 Human Resources

3.1.8 GCSE Project

3.2.8 Evaluation and  
research

3.1.10 Foundation  
Phase

