

Meeting	Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Title	Report on the summer 2018 results
Date	20 September 2018
Officer	Garem Jackson, Head of Education
Cabinet Member	Councillor Gareth Thomas

1. CONTEXT

Comparative data

The content of this report is different to previous years due to Welsh Government introducing significant changes to how performance measures are reported. Following Welsh Government consultation on future publication of teacher assessments, Welsh Government no longer publish comparative Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 data at school, local authority and consortia level and therefore beyond a comparison with national averages, there is no comparative nor benchmarking information available.

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.

KS4 and KS5

It must be stressed that the initial information regarding KS4 results will be shared but there is no access thus far to comparative and benchmarking data. We intend to update the information below when we have the full information to hand.

Therefore, care is needed when considering the information as neither the analyses nor the comparisons will be completed on a national level until the beginning of next year. Information regarding KS5 will be included when the value added comparative data is released.

2. STANDARDS

PRIMARY

FOUNDATION PHASE

Table 1

Percentage of pupils who achieve the Foundation Phase Indicator (FPI)

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Gwynedd	86.8%	86.8%	86.6%	81.7%
Wales	86.8%	87.0%	87.3%	82.6%

* Comparisons of Foundation Phase outcomes with previous years at school level should be avoided as they are not measured on a comparable basis.

This year's results in the Foundation Phase shows a national decrease when compared to previous years. The main reason for this is the fact that new outcomes from the FP Assessment Framework have been used in language and mathematics. Many teachers are under the impression that there are higher expectations to achieve an Outcome and this is one factor that has led to less pupils achieving Outcome 5.

This national decrease in the results is reflected in Gwynedd's results. GwE presumed this and has focused on improving provision in the Nursery and Reception classes, which will provide a robust base for achieving higher outcomes by the time the pupils reach the end of the Key Stage.

The report commissioned by Gwynedd on the 2017 FP results identify the likely reasons for the fact that Outcome 5+ results were slightly lower than expected in Gwynedd. One of the main reasons for this, which shows the strength of Gwynedd's language policy, is that many pupils that do not speak Welsh at home are assessed through the medium of Welsh in Year 2; this is reflected in this year's Welsh Language assessment to an extent, where Gwynedd's result is slightly lower than the national percentage.

The commissioned report identifies several other factors that could have contributed to lower results and GwE has designed a development plan as an attachment to the 2018-19 business plan that responds to these findings.

Gwynedd's higher outcome, Outcome 6+ results, remain relatively good. Even though there are higher expectations to achieve this Outcome this year, the schools have raised the level of challenge to meet the new requirements.

The good news, therefore, is that there are more of Gwynedd's pupils that achieve Outcome 6 than there are nationally if they have achieved the expected Outcome in the first instance. GwE's guidance for FP teachers on how to target pupils that are on the border between O5/6 has contributed towards securing this result.

The performance difference between boys and girls has remained consistent in the Foundation Phase over the last few years and that pattern has continued despite the changes to the assessment requirements; the girls continue to perform around 6% higher than the boys.

KS2

Table 2

Percentage of pupils who have achieved the Core Subjects Indicator (CSI) at the end of KS2

CSI	2015	2016	2017	2018
Gwynedd	89.5%	89.8%	92.1%	91.2%
Wales	87.7%	88.6%	89.5%	89.5%

Gwynedd's KS2 results remain strong. The expected level 4 performance in every subject is better than the national results. The higher level 5+ performance is also strong and higher than Wales' results in every subject.

Strengths and successes

- Foundation Phase Higher Outcome (Outcome 6+) comparative results.
- KS2 results, particularly in the higher levels.

Areas for Improvement

- Implement the relevant recommendations of Gwynedd's Foundation Phase report.

KS3

Percentage of pupils who achieve the Core Subjects Indicator (CSI) at the end of KS3

CSI	2015	2016	2017	2018
Gwynedd	91.3%	92.0%	92.8%	92.8%
Wales	83.9%	85.9%	87.4%	88.1%

Performance across the main indicators in KS3 is once again strong this year. As for the CSI indicator, Gwynedd's performance has remained consistent and the performance is higher than the national average. There was a decrease in the percentage of FSM pupils that achieved the CSI indicator. There is no national data available at the moment.

Welsh: the performance on the expected level has decreased slightly this year, but remains higher than the 2016 performance. As for the national comparison, Gwynedd's performance is slightly lower but the size of the local cohort must be taken into consideration. The performance one level above the expected level has increased over the course of three years and is higher than the national average.

English: the performance on the expected level in English has increased over the course of three years and again this year, and is higher than the national average. A similar pattern can be seen one level

above the expected level, with further progress this year and performance that is significantly higher than the national average.

Mathematics: the performance on the expected level in Mathematics has increased again this year and over the course of three years, and is higher than the national average. A small decrease can be seen in Gwynedd's performance, one level above the expected level, but it remains above Wales' average.

Science: a small decrease in the performance on the expected level but it remains high, and higher than the national percentage. The performance one level above the expected level has remained high, and significantly higher than the national percentage.

Strengths and successes

- Gwynedd's performance in Key Stage 3 has remained high, and higher than almost every indicator compared with the national performance.

Areas for Improvement

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

KS4

Contextual information for 2018 examinations

Following the changes in 2016-17 there remains significant volatility in GCSE outcomes. Significant changes to the pattern and numbers of pupils sitting exams in the Summer 2018 has had an impact on results as demonstrated in the proportion of grades across all subjects in the A+ to C range in Wales decreasing by 1.2pp to 61.6%.

GCSEs are being reformed and 15 updated subjects were sat this summer for the first time.

The new GCSE suite of qualifications in Science was examined for the first time in 2018, and coincides with the changes to the performance indications at KS4, to include only GCSE results for Science, as two measures in the capped 9 indicator. As a result, comparison with historical data is not applicable. Schools were able to select pathways from a triple Science route, Double award Science, Double award Applied Science and Single award Applied Science. As the capped 9 indicator includes two Science measures, the majority of schools followed the triple and double award pathways.

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

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

Initial Analysis

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

GWYNEDD LA	2017	2018	+ / -
TL2+	58.1	55.0	-3.1
TL2	70.0	69.3	-0.7
TL1	97.3	95.4	-1.9
ENGLISH	63.5	51.4	-12.1
WELSH	72.1	71.2	-0.9
MATHEMATICS	56.4	55.9	-0.5
NUMERACY	59.6	58.5	-1.1
MATHEMATICS (Best of the 2)	62.9	61.5	-1.4
SCIENCE	72.8	65.8	-7.0
5A*/A	20.6	18.0	-2.6
CAPPED 9 SCORE	365.8	312.7	-53.1

Performance in Welsh has remained consistently high, but there is a worrying gap forming between performance in English and Welsh. L2 English performance has decreased 12.1%, with performance decreasing significantly in the schools that performed the best in 2017.

A small decrease in Mathematics, Numeracy and the percentage of learners that achieved one of the two has affected the expected progress in the TL2+ indicator.

Because of the changes in the Science qualification, comparison with 2017 performance is not possible. Science performance is encouraging, with many schools in reach of their targets.

Further collating work needs to be done on the Capped 9 Score in order to ensure that the data reflects the qualifications of Gwynedd's learners.

Strengths and successes

- Inclusive schools and strong performance on L1. It is also noted that there is strong collaboration to develop an extensive and balanced curriculum and provision.
- Welsh (first language) performance is consistently high.
- Significant improvements in specific schools with regard to some indicators.

Areas for Improvement

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

3. INSPECTION PROFILE

The inspection profile is good across both sectors in Gwynedd. During academic year 2017-2018, Estyn undertook an inspection in 19 schools (14 primary schools, 4 secondary schools and 1 special school).

In 16 schools [%], it was announced that no follow-up action was needed and the other three schools were awarded the least intensive follow-up category [Estyn Review].

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

Primary Profile	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
IA1: Standards	0%	93.3%	6.7%	0%
IA2: Well-being and attitudes to learning	26.7%	73.3%	0%	0%
IA3: Teaching and learning experiences	0%	86.7%	13.3%	0%
IA4: Care support and guidance	6.7%	86.6%	6.7%	0%
IA5: Leadership and management	6.7%	80.0%	13.3%	0%

Secondary Profile	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
IA1: Standards	0%	50.0%	50.0%	0%
IA2: Well-being and attitudes to learning	25.0%	75.0%	0%	0%
IA3: Teaching and learning experiences	0%	75.0%	25.0%	0%
IA4: Care support and guidance	25.0%	75.0%	0%	0%
IA5: Leadership and management	0%	75.0%	25.0%	0%

4. TARGET SETTING

In May 2018, the Cabinet Secretary for Education published a [Written Statement](#) providing an update on Key Stage 4 school performance measures arrangements for 2019 onwards.

This announced the introduction of new 'interim' Key Stage 4 performance measures to be reported against from September 2019 (2018/19 cohort data). These 'interim' measures, based on point scores, will replace the existing suite of Key Stage 4 performance measures, including the Level 1 and Level 2 inclusive measures, from 2019.

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

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

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

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

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

Key Stage 2 (Year 6 pupils)	Key Stage 3 (Year 9 pupils)	Key Stage 4 (Year 11 pupils)
Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in English	Percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 or above in English	Percentage of pupils achieving the Level 2 Threshold including English/Welsh and Mathematics
Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in Welsh first language	Percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 or above in Welsh first language	Percentage of pupils achieving the Level 1 Threshold
Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in Mathematics	Percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 or above in Science	
Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in Science	Percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 or above in Mathematics	
<i>Local Target 1</i>	<i>Local Target 1</i>	<i>Local Target 1</i>
<i>Local Target 2</i>	<i>Local Target 2</i>	<i>Local Target 2</i>
<i>Local Target 3</i>	<i>Local Target 3</i>	<i>Local Target 3</i>
<i>*Local Targets should reflect priorities identified through self-evaluation</i>		

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

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

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

Way forward

Effective self-evaluation, target-setting and planning for improvement is at the core of ensuring improved outcomes for pupils.

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

Setting targets allows schools to focus on what they currently do and the improvements they wish to bring about. It contributes to school effectiveness but only when it is carried out as part of the process of planning for improvement.

What is key is that schools identify and set appropriate **improvement targets linked to their improvement priorities**. These should be set as **local targets** prescribed in the table above and may include specific and measurable goals when appropriate.

However, **not all improvement targets can be quantitative**. If we asked schools to set clear improvement targets, then it would allow the **local target** as at present to be either quantitative or qualitative.

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

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