

Committee	Services Scrutiny Committee
Title of report	Report responding to specific enquiries made by the committee
Date of meeting	17 November 2016
Author	Elfyn V Jones, GwE Senior Challenge and Support Adviser
Relevant Officer	Arwyn Thomas
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Gareth Thomas

Enquiry 1: An explanation of the nature of the agreement between the Authority and GwE – its cost and contents

Gwynedd's contribution to the regional services in 2015-16 was £651,557. This was a contribution of 17.7% to the model based on the agreed formula between the authorities. The contributions of the other authorities were as follows: Anglesey 10.1%; Conwy 15.5%; Denbighshire 15.2%; Wrexham 18.8% and Flintshire 22.5%. Gwynedd, as one of the two authorities in the Gwynedd/Anglesey Hub, is served by the equivalent of 10 full-time CAs, and the team provides support and guidance across 163 establishments in the sub-region. Based on the 2015-16 school categorisation profile, Gwynedd schools had access to up to 1,113 days of support. This was in addition to the training sessions and collective development programmes, including leadership development programmes, delivered to representatives from both sectors. Full details on the impact of the support and guidance are provided in the response to the members' second enquiry [below].

An explanation of the nature of the agreement is provided in Welsh Government's guidance document, '*National Model for Regional Working*' [number 126/2014]. The document highlights and defines structures for the partnership between the Government, Authorities and the Regional Service with regard to school improvement. Whilst retaining statutory responsibilities for schools and school improvement, the authorities delegate responsibilities for leading these improvements to the regional consortia [including GwE]. GwE, on behalf of the authorities, works to lead, organise and co-ordinate improvements in schools' performance with the aim of:

- ✓ improving learning outcomes for all young people
- ✓ ensuring high quality teaching and learning
- ✓ enabling school leaders to lead their establishments more effectively

The scope of GwE's service encompasses a wide range of responsibilities and areas, including:

- leading the monitoring, intervention, challenge and support strategies that will improve the quality of teaching and learning within the classroom
- supporting the development of school leadership on all levels, to include delivering an annual range of leadership programmes
- collecting, analysing and applying data from local authorities and schools, and using data to benchmark and challenge schools' performances
- supporting leaders and governors to thoroughly evaluate their schools' performances and to plan further improvements appropriately
- supporting schools to set challenging targets for improvements
- working with leaders to broker and commission support for individual schools according to their needs and support categories
- monitoring schools' use of grants, e.g. SIG/PDG
- promoting, encouraging and motivating 'school to school' collaboration, ensuring that the best practice is cascaded and disseminated
- ensuring that the Literacy and Numeracy Framework is delivered effectively across all schools, and coordinating and assuring the quality of the training and development provision offered to this purpose

- ensuring that all schools are 'ready for Estyn' in terms of standards, the quality of teaching/learning, provision and leadership
- supervising schools before, during and following an inspection
- ensuring that all schools in a post-inspection follow-up category make the expected progress within the agreed timeframe
- working with the authorities and establishment leaders to categorise schools according to the national categorisation procedure
- ensuring that authorities receive information promptly where there is concern over underperformance or lack of progress in specific schools, and supporting the authority in cases where statutory powers need to be called upon
- supporting the authority in the process of recruiting and appointing leaders
- preparing pre-inspection reports and pre-follow-up visit reports for Estyn on behalf of the Head of Education
- responding to Welsh Government's requirements with regard to driving national priorities regionally.

The main aspects of the Challenge Adviser's work include:

- supporting and challenging schools in the task of raising standards
- supporting schools with self-evaluation and self-improvement
- ensuring high quality teaching and learning
- brokering effective support and intervention
- developing school leadership
- building school-to-school capacity

Under the guidance of the Joint-committee, Management Board, Senior Leadership Team and the Authorities' quality assurance teams, accountability and quality assurance procedures for GwE are implemented on many levels. A good working relationship exists with officers in the Gwynedd Authority and the steps taken to strengthen the partnership have led to further improvements in outcomes in 2015-16 [details in full below]. The following local accountability and quality assurance procedures for the action are in place:

- A detailed specification is presented by the Head of Education to the Senior Challenge and Support Adviser [SCSA] to highlight the expectations and requirements for the action taken locally by GwE.
- The SCSA prepares a detailed *Business Plan* [L3] to highlight how exactly GwE will satisfy and respond to the requirements of the specification.
- The Cabinet Member for Education [Councillor Gareth Thomas] is a member of the GwE Joint-committee and scrutinises action and progress.
- The Head of Education is a member of the GwE Management Board.
- Quarterly monitoring reports on the action taken against the specification/Business Plan are presented to the LA and monthly progress reports are presented in speech to the Education Team or SLB.
- Regular meetings are held between the SCSA and the Assistant Senior Challenge and Support Adviser [ASCSA] and the Authority officers to discuss progress/lack of progress in schools that are causing concern. Where relevant other officers and/or Challenge Advisers [CA] are invited to attend to give attention to specific aspects or schools.
- The SCSA and/or ASCSA attend Gwynedd Education Department's Management Team meetings. Where relevant other CAs are invited to attend to give attention to specific schools.
- Relevant officers are included in correspondence between GwE and schools.
- Officers are given access to all GwE reports on schools.

- Officers receive copies of the GwE weekly bulletin, which provides details on developments.
- Senior officers from the 6 authorities and SCSAs from the three hubs form the Regional School Improvement Network, which meets on a monthly basis and ensures joint ownership for the improvement agenda.
- The SCSA is responsible for drafting the Annual Report on the Education Service and presents it to the Senior Management Team for discussion.
- The SCSA is responsible for responding to any requests for additional scrutiny by scrutiny committees.

Enquiry 2: An analysis of the ‘school to school’ model is required, due to doubts regarding its effectiveness

Tables 1-7 below provide details on the impact of the model on performance across all key stages and on inspection and categorisation profiles in Gwynedd. We hope that members’ concerns will be alleviated from scrutinising the significant improvements that have taken place over recent years. The positive comments made on improvements in education in the Autumn 2016 Gwynedd Council Chief Executive’s Bulletin are also highlighted [Table 8 below].

Background information on the ‘school to school’ model:

Schools are at the heart of the new national model, and the Welsh Government newsletter number 126/2014 identifies the responsibilities of governors, school leaders, teachers and other staff members with regard to:

- setting high expectations for pupils
- making a continuous effort to improve the standard of teaching and learning
- raising performance standards
- sharing good practice and learning from each other through genuine partnerships and school-to-school support arrangements

The guidance for regional consortia also clearly states that those schools that are able to lead their own improvements using their own resources should be encouraged and enabled to do so. With regard to schools that are at risk of causing concern or are causing concern, it is the consortium’s responsibility to help match and broker the required support. As a result, many of the available resources need to be targeted in order to monitor and support those schools that most need support. However, last year following an expression of local concern by Headteachers and other stakeholders as to the increasing demand on the most resilient and successful schools, the model was adapted and evolved through consultation with school leaders. Appendix 1 [below] presents full details to members on our method of implementation within the 3-model programme.

Evaluation of the impact of the model on standards of achievement and performance in the key stages [Table 1]:

- **FPh:** improvements were seen over the 2014-16 rolling period, but progress is lower than the national progress and performance has stalled this year. The authority’s position against the expected FSM ranking over the rolling period is disappointing. Improving performance in the FPh is a priority area that is further highlighted in this year’s specification.
- **KS2:** improvements were seen over the rolling period; progress is higher than the corresponding national progress, and performance in 2015 and 2016 is higher than the national average. However, the progress made in 2015-16 is higher in Wales, and the position against the expected FSM ranking is disappointing.

- **KS3:** excellent performance over the rolling period, with the authority highest out of all of Wales's authorities over a 5-year rolling period until 2016 [ranked 2nd].
- **KS4:** significant improvements over the rolling period with the 2016 performance the highest ever for the authority. The authority performs close to or higher than the expected FSM ranking in most indicators over the rolling period, and has been highest out of all of Wales's authorities for the last 2 years in the CPS and L1. Performance in English and Maths has improved over the rolling period, with particularly significant progress seen in Maths. Performance in Welsh continues to be above English; however, after a very strong performance last year, a fall was seen in 2016. With regard to the performances of individual schools, the 2015 and 2016 data highlight better consistency in the performances of the vast majority of establishments [particularly the smaller schools], since the degree of polarization and oscillation that was such a concerning feature during the period leading up to the authority's previous inspection was not seen. 2016 saw the best performance in history in most schools, in particular:
 - ✓ **L2+:** 11 schools improved on the corresponding figure for 2015; the performance of 7 schools broke 70%+ and 7 schools ensured improvements for the third consecutive year.
 - ✓ **L2:** 8 schools improved on the corresponding figure for 2015 and the performance of 4 schools broke 95%+.
 - ✓ **L1:** 14 schools achieved a performance of 100% and 10 schools were able to maintain or improve performance for the third consecutive year.
 - ✓ **English:** 9 schools improved on the corresponding figure for 2015; the performance of 9 schools broke 70%+; the performance of 5 schools broke 80%+ and 5 schools ensured improvements for the third consecutive year.
 - ✓ **Maths:** 11 schools improved on the corresponding figure for 2015; the performance of 11 schools broke 70%+; the performance of 2 schools broke 80%+ and 5 schools ensured improvements for the third consecutive year.
 - ✓ **Welsh:** 4 schools improved on the corresponding figure for 2015; the performance of 11 schools broke 70%+ and the performance of 4 schools broke 80%+.

Details on the authority's performance are provided in full in the Annual Report on standards and performance.

Evaluation of the impact of the model on the inspection profiles of Gwynedd schools between Autumn 2015 and Autumn 2016 [Tables 2/3/4/5]

Significant improvements were seen in the inspection profiles of the authority's schools, and the current profile is strong. In 2016-16 [until November 2016] 18 primary schools and 1 secondary school were inspected. In comparison to the 2014-15 profile, the following improvements were seen:

- significant progress in the % of schools receiving a judgement of *Excellent* or *Good* for each key question/overall judgement
- clear progress in the % of school receiving a judgement of *Excellent* for each key question/overall judgement
- no school has been judged *Unsatisfactory* for any indicator
- by now no school is in a *Significant Improvement/Special Measures* statutory category
- significant decrease in the % of schools in the *Estyn Monitoring* category [from 9.2% to 1.8%]
- significant decrease in the % of schools in the *Local Authority Monitoring* category [from 5.5% to 1.8%]
- in comparison to November 2015, the % of schools in follow-up categories has fallen from 17.4% to 3.6%

- each of the 4 schools that are still in a follow-up category have made the expected progress and are ready to be removed from the category

Evaluation of the impact of the model on the categorisation profile of Gwynedd schools [Tables 6 and 7]

- Since 2014-15 a significant increase was seen in the % of schools placed in the *Green/Yellow* support categories [71.2% in 2014-15 to 87.0% in 2016-17], and an increase from 9.0% to 19.2% was seen in the percentage of schools in the *Green* support category.
- Since 2014-15 a significant decrease was seen in the % of schools placed in the *Amber/Red* support categories – this figure has fallen from 28.8% to 12.8%.
- Clear improvements were seen in the quality of leadership and the quality of teaching and learning, with 89.5% of primary schools and 78.5% of secondary schools receiving one of the higher judgements [A or B] at step 2 of the national categorisation system. This compares to corresponding figures of 73.7% and 28.5% in 2014-15.
- A significant decrease was seen in the % of schools receiving one of the lower judgements [C or D] at step 2 of the national categorisation system. The figure for primary has fallen from 26.3% in 2014-15 to 10.5% in 2016-17, and for secondary from 71.4% to 21.4%.

Table 1: Rolling Period Performance Profile for all Main Indicators in each Key Stage

CS : DCS	2014		2015		2016		Progress	
	%	rank	%	rank	%	rank	15->16	14->16
Gwynedd	85.2	10	86.8	10	86.8	14	+0.0	+1.6
Wales	85.2		86.8		87.0		+0.2	+1.8

KS2 : CSI	2014		2015		2016		Progress	
	%	rank	%	rank	%	rank	15->16	14->16
Gwynedd	86.0	14	89.5	6	89.8	7	+0.3	+3.8
Wales	86.1		87.7		88.6		+0.9	+2.5

KS3 : CSI	2014		2015		2016		Progress	
	%	rank	%	rank	%	rank	15->16	14->16
Gwynedd	89.1	1	91.3	1	92.0	2	+0.7	+2.9
Wales	81.0		83.9		85.9		+2.0	+4.9

KS4	2014		2015		2016		Progress	
	%	rank	%	rank	%	rank	15->16	14->16
L2+	61.1	5	63.3	5	69.0	4	+5.7	+7.9
CPS	361.8	1	362.0	1	363.7		+1.7	+1.9
CSI	60.5	2	62.4	3	64.4		+1.0	+3.9
L2	87.9	4	89.0	6	89.5		+0.5	+1.6
L1	97.3	1	98.0	1	98.9		+0.9	+1.6
Welsh	72.4	9	78.9	4	76.3		-2.6	+3.9
English	69.2	7	72.1	6	74.3		+2.2	+5.1
Maths	65.0	7	67.0	8	73.2		+6.2	+8.2

*KS4 based on cohort of learners in schools [not including EOTAS]

Table 2: Gwynedd Inspection Profiles Autumn 2015 - Autumn 2016

Schools	Date	KS1	KS2	KS3	BG1	BG2	Follow-up
School 1	Autumn 2015	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Local Authority Monitoring
School 2	Autumn 2015	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	No follow-up
School 3	Autumn 2015	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	No follow-up
School 4	Autumn 2015	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	No follow-up
School 5	Spring 2016	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Local Authority Monitoring
School 6	Spring 2016	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	No follow-up
School 7	Spring 2016	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	No follow-up
School 8	Spring 2016	Good	Good	Excellent	Good	Excellent	No follow-up
School 9	Spring 2016	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Local Authority Monitoring
School 10	Summer 2016	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	No follow-up
School 11	Summer 2016	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Estyn Monitoring
School 12	Summer 2016	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	No follow-up
School 13	Autumn 2016	Good	Good	Excellent	Good	Excellent	No follow-up
School 14	Autumn 2016	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Estyn Monitoring
School 15	Autumn 2016	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	No follow-up
School 16	Autumn 2016	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	No follow-up
School 17	Autumn 2016	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	No follow-up
School 18	Autumn 2016	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	No follow-up
School 19 [U]	Spring 2016	Adequate	Good	Good	Adequate	Good	Estyn Monitoring

Table 3: Current Profile of Follow-up Category Schools

Category	Number of schools	% of schools
Local Authority Monitoring	2	1.8%
Estyn Monitoring	2	1.8%
Significant Improvement	0	0%
Special Measures	0	0%

Table 4: Comparison between November 2015 and November 2016 Inspection Profiles

Category	November 2015		November 2016	
	Number	%	Number	%
Local Authority Monitoring	6	5.5%	2	1.8%
Estyn Monitoring	10	9.2%	2	1.8%
Significant Improvement	1	0.9%	0	0%
Special Measures	2	1.8%	0	0%
All categories	19	17.4%	4	3.6%

Table 5: Comparison between 2014-15 and 2015-16 Primary Inspection Judgement Profiles [and up to November 2016]

Indicators	2014-15 [16 primary schools]			
	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Unsatisfactory
Key Question 1	0%	56.2%	43.8%	0%
Key Question 2	0%	68.7%	31.3%	0%
Key Question 3	6.2%	50.0%	37.6%	6.2%
Overall Judgement 1 : Current Performance	0%	56.2%	43.8%	0%
Overall Judgement 2 : Improvement Capacity	6.2%	50.0%	37.6%	6.2%

2015-16 [18 primary schools]				
Indicators	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Unsatisfactory
Key Question 1	11.1%	77.8%	11.1%	0%
Key Question 2	11.1%	77.8%	11.1%	0%
Key Question 3	22.2%	66.7%	11.1%	0%
Overall Judgement 1 : Current Performance	11.1%	77.8%	11.1%	0%
Overall Judgement 2 : Improvement Capacity	22.2%	66.7%	11.1%	0%

Indicators	2014-15		2015-16 [and up to November 2016]	
	Excellent/Good	Adequate/Unsatisfactory	Excellent/Good	Adequate/Unsatisfactory
Key Question 1	56.2%	43.8%	88.9%	11.1%
Key Question 2	68.7%	31.3%	88.9%	11.1%
Key Question 3	56.2%	43.7%	88.9%	11.1%
Overall Judgement 1	56.2%	43.8%	88.9%	11.1%
Overall Judgement 2	56.2%	43.8%	88.9%	11.1%

Table 6: 2014-2016 Categorisation Profile Comparison

2014-15	Green		Yellow		Amber		Red	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
	10	9.0%	69	62.2%	29	26.1%	3	2.7%
2015-16	Green		Yellow		Amber		Red	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
	17	15.5%	73	66.9%	16	15.0%	3	2.7%
2016-17	Green		Yellow		Amber		Red	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
	21	19.2%	74	67.8%	12	11.0%	2	1.8%

Table 7: 2014-2016 Categorisation Step 2 Profile Comparison [Quality of Leadership/Teaching and Learning]

2014-15 Primary	A		B		C		D	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
	20	20.2%	53	53.5%	25	25.3%	1	1.0%
2015-16 Primary	A		B		C		D	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
	27	28.4%	55	57.9%	13	13.7%	0	0%
2016-17 Primary	A		B		C		D	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
	28	29.5%	57	60.0%	8	8.4%	2	2.1%

2014-15 Secondary	A		B		C		D	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
	1	7.1%	3	21.4%	9	64.3%	1	7.1%
2015-16 Secondary	A		B		C		D	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
	1	7.1%	7	50.0%	4	28.6%	2	14.2%
2016-17 Secondary	A		B		C		D	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
	1	7.1%	10	71.4%	3	21.4%	0	0%

Table 8: The Chief Executive's Bulletin [Autumn 2016] referring to the success seen in education

Celebrating our performance

We recently received the encouraging news that Gwynedd Council is among the best in Wales in terms of national performance, although care must be taken when using 'league tables'.

The Council came fourth out of all Welsh councils according to the Local Authorities Performance Bulletin 2015/16, with the report noting that Gwynedd had performed higher than the national average in 55% (22 out of 40) of the measures assessed, with Education performing particularly well.

Initial figures this year show that this tradition is continuing in spite of the financial pressures upon us, with 68.5% of children achieving 5 GCSEs A*-C grade including first language Welsh/English and Mathematics (Level 2+ Threshold). I know there are similar stories within other services.

The national data clearly shows that we as a Council are continuing to maintain and improve the services we provide for the people of Gwynedd, despite the financial situation.

After seeing our resources diminish to such an extent in recent years, it is clear to me that the successes and improvements we are seeing in these results are down to your efforts as staff, our most important resource.

I'd like to take the opportunity therefore to thank you for your commitment to achieving for the people of Gwynedd despite the current climate, and to acknowledge the outstanding work that goes on within our teams which enables us to deliver the best possible services for our residents.

If you would like to know more about the results, you can visit: <https://timau/safle/perff/AmdanomNi/SitePages/Data%20Cenedlaethol.aspx>



Enquiry 3: The concern that too much focus is placed on schools in the amber/red categories, and that green schools need to be supervised to prevent them from slipping

Whilst accepting the concern expressed by the members, the requirements of the national model place a clear expectation on consortia to encourage and enable the schools that are able to lead their own improvements to do so using their own resources. With regard to schools that are at risk of causing concern or are causing concern, it is the consortium's responsibility to ensure that they are provided early access to a support programme that is necessary for their journey towards improvement. Therefore, it is expected for these duties to be applied proportionally, i.e. those schools most in need of support will be given access to more comprehensive provision and will be monitored more regularly. Welsh Government's guidance clearly states that this should be the main focus of the CA's activity.

However, as specified above in the response to the members' second enquiry, following an expression of local concern as to the increasing demand on the most resilient and successful schools, last year the model was adapted and evolved through consultation with school leaders. By now we feel that our action across schools in the different support categories is better balanced, and that the link CA's role with *Green and Yellow* schools in particular has been strengthened.

There is no recent evidence to suggest that the focus on the more vulnerable schools has led to a decline or lapse in the more resilient schools. Since 2014-15 a significant increase was seen in the % of schools placed in the *Green/Yellow* support categories [71.2% in 2014-15 to 87.0% in 2016-17] and an increase from 9.0% to 19.2% in the percentage of schools in

the Green support category. Clear improvements were also seen in the quality of leadership and the quality of teaching and learning across all school categories, with 89.5% of primary schools and 78.5% of secondary schools receiving one of the higher two judgements [A or B] at step 2 of the national categorisation system. This compares to corresponding figures of 73.7% and 28.5% in 2014-15.

Looking specifically at the performance of secondary schools that are currently, or have previously been, in the *Green* support category [Table 9 below] gives us an insight into the significant progress made in Gwynedd in comparison to the regional situation. Between 2015 and 2016 there was an increase of +3.6% in the local *Green* category schools [compared to a fall of -1.6% regionally], and an even more significant increase of +5.3% between 2014 and 2016 [in comparison to a fall of -2.1% regionally]. When combining data for *Green* and *Yellow* schools, the progress is equally striking [+4.0% and +5.1%]. Table 10 [below] provides details on performance over the rolling period in the two schools that have been in the *Green* support category over the last 3 years. Progress is seen across almost all indicators, with significant progress in some indicators.

Table 9: L2+ rolling performance, according to support categories

All GwE Secondary Schools								
	2014	2015	2016	2015>2016	2014>2016		2015>2016	2014>2016
	66.5	66.0	64.3	-1.6	-2.1			
	63.5	63.9	65.8	+2.0	+2.3		+1.4%	+1.6%
	50.2	54.9	56.3	+1.5	+6.1			
	53.0	49.8	56.3	+6.4	+3.3		+3.6%	+4.9%
Average	59.1	59.6	62.0	+2.4	+2.9	Average	+2.5%	+2.9%
Gwynedd Secondary Schools								
	64.5%	66.2%	69.8%	+3.6%	+5.3%			
	63.7%	64.7%	68.7%	+4.0%	+5.0%		+4.0%	+5.1%
	55.6%	64.3%	70.1%	+5.8%	+14.5%			
	62.3%	59.0%	70.6%	+11.6%	+8.3%		+8.0%	+12.5%
Average	61.7%	63.9%	69.3%	+5.4%	+7.6%	Average	+5.4%	+7.6%

Table 10: Rolling performance of secondary schools that have been in the green category since 2014-2016

School 1	Green Category	Green Category	Green Category	+/- 2014-2016
Indicators	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	
L2+	64.5%	66.2%	69.8%	+5.3%
L1	100%	100%	100%	+0%
L2	95.2%	96.9%	98.1%	+2.9%
CPS	379.0	380.0	381.0	+2.0
Welsh	73.8%	81.3%	78.4%	+4.6%
English	64.5%	78.5%	79.3%	+14.8%
Maths	71.0%	67.7%	73.6%	+2.6%

School 2	Green Category	Yellow Category	Yellow Category	+/- 2014-2016
Indicators	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	
L2+	48.8%	60.7%	67.9%	+18.8%
L1	100%	100%	100%	+0%
L2	96.3%	94.6%	90.6%	-5.7%
CPS	364.0	371.0	369.0	+5.0
Welsh	69.2%	80.0%	76.9%	+7.7%
English	56.3%	69.6%	67.9%	+11.6%
Maths	51.3%	62.5%	75.5%	+24.2%

Enquiry 4: There is concern over the fact that headteachers/teachers are moving to GwE. Whilst understanding that this happens due to the need for bilingual staff, schools are being deprived of staff, which has a detrimental impact on standards of teaching in the authority.

Whilst fully understanding and sympathising with the concern behind this comment, the increasing accountability on the service, and specifically the duties of the CA, means that every effort must be made to recruit experienced individuals with a strong track record of leading schools successfully, who understand how to implement school improvement procedures effectively. We must also ensure that the CA has the required credibility and respect to work with leaders and wider stakeholders. Naturally, the need to secure individuals who are proficient in both languages means that the recruitment pool is especially limited, but we have been extremely lucky over the years to ensure that each appointment has further enriched the team's expertise and skills. As members of a team that works across authorities, their influence and impact on the standards of leadership and the standards of attainment is far-reaching. It should also be noted that:

- each permanent position is advertised nationally, and all individuals are free to put forward an application;
- individuals appointed on a secondment basis gain a range of experiences and skills that will up-skill them before returning to their original post

In response to the concern as to schools being deprived of staff, we have agreed to collaborate with the authority's officers to provide a support programme that will identify and support '*leaders of the future*'. We will thus be able to ensure that the authority and schools have access to a wider pool of skilful and confident leaders. We also agree not to finalise secondments to the service without first discussing the obligations and impact of appointments on the circumstances of individual schools with the authority.

The Challenge and Support programme for schools according to support category and needs: A 3-Model Programme

Model 1: Schools in the Green support category and those recognised as strong or well established 'Yellow' schools

The programme for schools in the green and strong yellow support categories is based on the principle of school leaders working together and taking the lead responsibility for their standards and improvement programmes. GwE expects schools to be innovative and to push the boundaries in the way they challenge and support each other. The programme for *Green and strong Yellow* schools aims to:

- further empower school leaders to challenge and support other school leaders to lead their schools even more effectively
- ensure that every child and young person benefits from excellent teaching and learning
- lead to improved learner outcomes
- develop increased autonomy through the National Categorisation process
- build a stronger resilience at all leadership levels in our schools.

School leaders work together in groups with the challenge adviser to sustain and grow excellence by:

- developing a system of co-challenge and co-support
- sharing opportunities for professional development and excellent practice
- developing robust systems within each other's schools
- aiming for innovative and inspirational practices and high standards for all pupils
- using the National Model for Categorisation as a springboard for continued improvement
- co-owning responsibility for improving standards, provision and leadership in each other's schools.

Schools will:

- take co-ownership for all the schools in the group and work together to support and challenge each other
- work together in Peer Review Groups. The groups will consist of between 5 and 7 schools. All members of the group need to agree to work together and agree to maintain the ethos of the programme.
- share their current SIP, SER, performance targets and details of use of the Pupil Deprivation Grant [PDG] and Continuous Professional Development [CPD] activities with each other and their CA
- participate in 'school-to-school' support during the year for an aspect(s) that has been identified as an area for improvement. The peer review group will be the first point of contact in providing or brokering support for improvement but schools are encouraged to work with other schools outside the group. Schools will develop and share effective practice as a sustainable approach towards achieving excellence.
- use their Education Improvement Grant [EIG] to fund any meetings and prioritise this work as a key school improvement strategy
- carry out specific independent reviews during the year and the outcomes will be incorporated into the next phase of the programme and the documentation will be updated accordingly.

Outline of the programme over the year

- All schools will receive a visit in the Autumn Term by the CA to complete a National Categorisation School Report, and to confirm performance targets for 2016-17 and discuss the use of the PDG.
- The school shares its current Self-evaluation Assessment, School Improvement Plan, performance targets and details of the use of the PDG and CPD with all headteachers in the group prior to the peer review meeting.
- The autumn term challenge and review meetings will be arranged by the challenge adviser and each headteacher within the group will be responsible for preparing a peer review presentation for the peer review meeting. This may happen on a whole group basis or pairs/triads may be created from within the main group to challenge and support each other.
- All schools in the group to provide full access to relevant data for peers.
- Other leadership team members expected to be an integral part of the review process and meetings.
- During the year, schools will participate in school-to-school support for an aspect(s) that has been identified in the autumn meeting as an area(s) for improvement. CA to be present in some of the school to school collaboration sessions to offer support and quality assure the process during the year.
- Schools to invite the CA to take part in the school's monitoring procedures by scrutinising books etc.
- All schools will be equal partners in the process and fully involved in the peer review meetings. The process should be reciprocal with all schools benefiting from the support and challenge.
- The school and the challenge adviser will review progress towards the school's targets in the spring term, and each school is expected to write an update on progress of '*school to school collaboration*'.
- A review meeting will be held during the summer to discuss progress against the areas for development. The group is expected to use a wide range of evidence sources while discussing the quality of leadership and teaching and learning, and to share best practice.
- The challenge adviser will make an initial judgement on the school's 'improvement capacity' category following the summer review meeting and complete a draft version of the '*Improvement Capacity*' section of the National Categorisation School Report. Schools and CAs also evaluate the use and impact of the PDG.
- CAs may arrange an additional visit to an individual school at any time of the year should more evidence be required to make a judgement on standards, the quality of teaching and learning or the quality of leadership.

Model 2: Schools in the Yellow support category

The majority of Yellow support category schools will work with their link challenge adviser to focus on performance, strengths and aspects for improvement. Following the initial review meeting in the autumn term, schools will engage in collaborative activities with other schools that have similar priorities for improvement [as part of pair/triad or larger group working]. School-to-school support, challenge and partnership working are key elements of the programme for schools in the Yellow support category. During the summer term, the school and the challenge adviser will carry out a formal evaluation of the progress the school has made in making planned improvements.

Schools will:

- share their current School Improvement Plan, Self-evaluation Assessment, performance targets and details of use of the PDG and CPD activities with their CA
- participate in school-to-school support during the year for aspects that have been identified as improvement priorities

- develop and share effective practice as a sustainable approach towards achieving excellence
- review and evaluate progress during the year
- invite the challenge adviser to participate in the school's monitoring processes through book scrutiny, etc.
- use their EIG to fund any meetings and prioritise this work as a key school improvement strategy

Outline of the programme over the year

- All schools will receive a visit [review meeting] during the autumn term by the challenge adviser. The National Categorisation School Report will be completed as part of the review meeting and the support category agreed with the school.
- The school shares its current Self-evaluation Assessment, School Improvement Plan and performance targets as well as details of the use of the PDG and CPD activity with the CA.
- The CA and the school identify other schools with similar improvement priorities and schools with effective practice in the priority areas. Following discussion with the school, the challenge adviser will help to broker and commission appropriate support.
- During the year, schools will work with other schools with similar improvement priorities and share effective practice.
- The challenge adviser may attend some of the school-to-school collaborative sessions to offer support and to quality assure the process during the year.
- Each school will write a progress report on school-to-school collaboration and its impact.
- The CA will carry out a summer review meeting to discuss progress against priorities and targets, including an evaluation of the use and impact of the PDG and CPD activities.
- The CA will make an initial judgement on the school's '*improvement capacity*' category following the summer review meeting and complete a draft version of the '*Improvement Capacity*' section of the National Categorisation School Report. Schools and CAs will also evaluate the use and impact of the PDG and CPD activities.
- The challenge adviser may arrange an additional visit to an individual school should further evidence be required to complete the Categorisation report.
- The challenge adviser may arrange an additional visit to an individual school at any time of the year should more evidence be required to make a judgement on standards, the quality of teaching and learning or the quality of leadership.

Model 3: Schools in the Amber and Red support categories

Schools in the *Amber and Red* support categories will work with their challenge adviser on their school improvement priorities. Schools in the *Amber* support category will receive bespoke support, challenge and intervention according to need, and will receive short-term, time-limited, focused support to address areas in need of improvement or aspects of performance that are not improving quickly enough. *Amber* schools that have already made significant progress and developed their capacity to improve may be ready to adopt, with support, some of the strategies in the programme for schools in the *Yellow* category. Schools in the *Red* category will have a more directed approach and will receive intensive support from GwE and may be subject to intervention involving collaboration between GwE and their local authority. School-to-school support to access and share effective improvement practice is a central feature of the programme for schools in the amber and red support categories. The Support Plan is a key document, supplementing the SIP. The *Challenge and Support Programme* for schools in amber and red categories is a team endeavour between schools and CAs to improve performance and build capacity for

improvement, leading to schools having more autonomy for their own improvement in the future. A SCSA, or their representative, will be responsible for quality assurance and external scrutiny to ensure there is capacity-building and improvement in schools causing concern, and will liaise regularly with local authorities.

Outline of the programme over the year

- The CA will provide support for the process of self-evaluation and improvement planning as well as challenge to assure the integrity of the process, particularly for those schools that are at risk of causing concern or that are causing concern.
- All schools will receive a visit [review meeting] in the autumn term by the challenge adviser [see Appendix 2 below]. The National Categorisation School Report will be completed as part of the review meeting and the support category agreed with the school.
- The school shares its current Self-evaluation Assessment, School Improvement Plan and performance targets as well as details of the use of the PDG and CPD activity with the CA.
- Leadership teams should be an integral part of the review process and meetings with the challenge adviser.
- Following the autumn term review meeting, the school will identify the additional support it requires, beyond its own internal resources, to help achieve the priorities of its improvement plan.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and the challenge adviser will draw up and agree a Support Plan [see Appendix 1 below]. This may include CA support/external adviser support/school to school support/peer headteacher support.
- The expectation is that each school uses its own resources such as its EIG as well as requesting GwE to commission support according to need which may result in the allocation of additional days of support. This additional support could be delivered by a range of providers as listed above.
- The programme includes reviewing and evaluating progress in making planned improvements throughout the year [see Appendix 3 below]. The CA will arrange in-depth reviews of the evidence for planned progress [about every ten weeks in red category schools, termly in amber category schools]. These may involve external school or GwE peers, as appropriate, working together with the challenge adviser and senior and middle leaders to look at particular issues. Areas for review will be those identified as improvement priorities and may include standards of work in pupils' books; the quality of teaching, learning and assessment; attendance, behaviour and inclusion; the quality of leadership, line management and accountability; the progress of specific groups of pupils, e.g. Pupils who are eligible for free school meals [FSM].
- The school will provide an evaluation of the impact of its planned improvement work and the support it has received in advance of these review meetings, identifying to what degree it has achieved its improvement objectives. This process makes evaluation an integral part of the support and challenge process and school improvement planning cycle.
- The challenge adviser will facilitate this meeting and be responsible for writing the record of this meeting for the school. A SCSA, or a representative from the authority, may attend to provide external monitoring.
- Following this meeting, the school will present its evaluation of progress and the latest progress report to the group of governors responsible for standards and quality for information and challenge. In primary schools, the report may go straight to the Governing Body. A SCSA, or representative, will attend this meeting and a representative of the local authority, and/or diocesan authority, where appropriate, will be invited to attend if the school is causing concern. The report and the minutes of this meeting will go to the full Governing Body.

- Schools causing concern will be monitored and supported intensively. Where schools are making strong progress, monitoring and support will be less intensive. In certain circumstances, the local authority may ask GwE to undertake an extended monitoring visit.
- The CA may arrange an additional visit to an individual school should further evidence be required to complete the Categorisation report.
- The CA may arrange an additional visit to an individual school at any time of the year should more evidence be required to make a judgement on standards, the quality of teaching and learning or the quality of leadership.