

SCRUTINY REPORT Flintshire

2018

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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. It would therefore be inappropriate to publish school level data in a public report.

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

When benchmarked against the national averages, the performance of Flintshire schools has been strong this year. Pupil outcomes in all core subjects, at both the expected and higher levels are above the national averages.

This year's results in Foundation Phase reflect a decrease in the percentage of pupils achieving the expected outcomes across Wales. The Wales average for FPOI has reduced by 4.7% to 82.6%. The percentage of pupils in Flintshire achieving the FPOI has dropped by 3.9% to 85.6%. The main reason for this is the implementation of new outcomes in the Foundation Phase Assessment Framework that have been used in language and mathematics. Many teachers were under the impression that there were higher expectations to achieve an Outcome and this is one factor that has led to fewer pupils achieving Outcome 5.

GwE anticipated the dip in pupil performance data and has focused on improving provision in Nursery and Reception classes, which will provide a robust base on which pupils will build and achieve higher outcomes by the time they reach the end of Foundation Phase. The Foundation Phase training sessions led by GwE advisers have been particularly well attended by Flintshire teachers.

KS2

Flintshire's KS2 results remain strong. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected and higher levels is above the national average for all core subjects. Although the percentage of pupils achieving L4+ in English, maths and science dipped slightly this year, they remain above the national averages. The variance in CSI performance between FSM and non-FSM pupils reduced, as did the variance between boys and girls.

Strengths and successes

- End of key stage pupil performance is above the national average in all core subjects at the expected and higher outcomes and levels.
- The variance between boys and girls achieving the FPOI has continued to decrease.
- The percentage of KS2 pupils achieving Welsh first language has increased both at the expected and higher outcomes (L5+).

Areas for Improvement

- To continue to reduce the gender variance.
- To narrow the gap in performance between FSM and non-FSM pupils.

KS3

Performance across the main indicators in KS3 is largely good this year. On the CSI indicator, Flintshire's performance dropped slightly this year but performance is higher than the national average. There was a decrease in the percentage of FSM pupils achieving the CSI indicator.

Welsh: performance at the expected level has increased significantly this year and is higher than performance nationally. Performance at both one and two levels above the expected level both improved too; outcomes at level 6 are below the national average and outcomes at level 7 above.

English: performance at the expected level in English decreased this year but is still higher than regional and national averages. There was a also a drop at level 6 while at level 7 there was an increase in performance which is still above the national averages.

Mathematics: performance at the expected level in Mathematics has increased again this year as it has consistently over the course of the last three years. Performance continues to exceed national averages. Performance also increased at levels 6 and 7 and remains above the national average on both measures.

Science: performance at the expected level increased again in 2018, and remains above the national average. Similarly, performance also increased at level 6. At level 7 performance fell, although this followed a big rise in 2017. Performance here is below national averages.

Strengths and successes

- Flintshire performance in Key Stage 3 has remained high in most indicators, and higher than most indicators compared with the national performance.

Areas for Improvement

- Level 5 and 6 in English
- A broader discussion about levelling and approaches.

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*-C range in Wales decreasing by 1.2% 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 Flintshire schools data in English 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 an increase in performance on most main indicators in comparison with 2017, particularly in maths subjects. There was a decrease in performance in English – around 3% - (currently the subject of ongoing discussions with Qualifications Wales and WJEC, following serious concerns raised by schools across the region) where the performance of schools has been impacted by the timing of entry and the increase in requirements for grade boundaries in the summer sitting. This has had an impact on performance at level 2+ too, where English is a key component of the measure.

Most performance indicators are above national averages (based on provisional data)

FLINTSHIRE (results are still provisional)	2017	2018
L2+	57	57
L2	66	69
L1	93	95
Capped Points	347	350
English	66.5	63
Welsh First	72	77
Numeracy	63	64
Maths	62	65
Best of maths	67.5	69
Science*	-	69
5 A*/A	14.5	16
Welsh Bacc Nat	-	54
Welsh Bacc Found	-	77.5

Performance in maths and numeracy have both increased this year, as has performance on other key indicators such as the % of pupils achieving five A*/A grades and the Capped Points Score. Because of the changes in the Science qualification, a

direct comparison with 2017 performance is not possible. Performance in this subject is encouraging, with many schools in reach of their targets. This is the first year the Welsh Baccalaureate has been included in the measure.

Strengths and successes

- Good outcomes in maths and Science.
- Improvements on several key indicators.

Areas for Improvement

- Ensure that a full analysis and enquiry is undertaken to verify why there has been a significant decrease in the English A*-C percentages.
- Five A*/A achievement has improved and remains an area of focus

3. INSPECTION PROFILE

The inspection profile is good across both sectors in Flintshire. During academic year 2017-2018, Estyn undertook an inspection in 11 schools (9 primary schools, 1 secondary school and 1 special school). In eight schools (73%), it was determined that no follow-up action was needed and the remaining three schools were awarded the least intensive follow-up category (Estyn Review). Furthermore, two high schools were removed from statutory categories during the year and one from 'Estyn monitoring'.

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

Primary Profile	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
IA1: Standards	11.1%	88.9%	0%	0%
IA2: Well-being and attitudes to learning	22.2%	77.8%	0%	0%
IA3: Teaching and learning experiences	11.1%	77.8%	11.1%	0%
IA4: Care support and guidance	33.3%	66.7%	0%	0%
IA5: Leadership and management	22.2%	66.7%	11.1%	0%

Secondary Profile	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
IA1: Standards	0%	100%	0%	0%
IA2: Well-being and attitudes to learning	100%	0%	0%	0%
IA3: Teaching and learning experiences	0%	100%	0%	0%
IA4: Care support and guidance	100%	0%	0%	0%
IA5: Leadership and management	0%	100%	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.

Current Target Setting Requirements

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.