

ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017



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1. VISION

Our vision states that in GwE we will have:

Outstanding schools naturally collaborating and jointly identifying direction for improvement which will deliver excellent standards and wellbeing for their pupils.

To achieve this vision we will set ourselves and schools minimum or required expectations.

These expectations are:

- Good leadership and management;
- Good teaching;
- Eradicate in school variation;
- None of GwE schools to feature in Estyn statutory categories;
- Pupils learning and wellbeing at least good; and
- Successful Futures in place

To achieve our vision and expectations we have defined service and personal values which will help guide us in our work. These include:

- Trust;
- Show no bias;
- Fairness;
- Respect diversity;
- Supportive and collaborative;
- Bilingual;
- Objectivity;
- Demand high standard;
- Integrity.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

STANDARDS

Performance strengths:

- Key Stage 2 - the progress in the percentage of pupils achieving in the Core Subject Indicator [CSI] between 2014 and 2016 is higher than the progress seen on national level. In 2016, the greatest progress was seen in Flintshire. In 2016, 3 out of the 6 authorities performed better or similarly to their FSM ranking.
- In 2016 at Key Stage 3, further progress was seen in the percentage of pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator [CSI]. The region's performance in the CSI continues to be the highest of the four consortia with each authority, with the exception of Wrexham, performing higher/close to FSM ranking.
- At the higher levels [level 6+] in Key Stage 3, progress was seen in each of the core subjects. The regional progress was higher than the national progress for Welsh. Performance in maths is the best out of the four consortia, with the other three core subjects second best.
- Key Stage 4 - in 2016, Gwynedd and Denbighshire performed as expected in the L2+. Generally this year, Gwynedd, Denbighshire and Anglesey perform as expected in the majority of the indicators.

Areas where performance needs to improve include:

- Pace of improvement in the Foundation Phase has been slower than that seen on a national level. Raising standards in the Foundation Phase is a key priority for improvement for the consortium.
- In general, the pace of improvement in the main indicators at KS4 has been too slow compared to the rest of Wales and improving its performance is the consortium's main priority. Too many schools across the consortium are performing well below modelled expectations in the L2+. Inspection profile for the secondary schools needs attention.
- At Key Stage 4, the performance of individual local authorities varies considerably across the region. Flintshire are below expectation in all, with Wrexham and Conwy significantly so. Improving standards in those local authorities that are performing lower than their comparative FSM ranking is a major priority.
- Higher outcomes across the key stages need to improve at a faster rate.
- Performance of pupils eligible for free school meals - over a three year period the rate of improvement has been too slow and is lower than the national average increase. In 2016, the performance of eFSM learners was 4.4 points lower than the national average in the Capped Point Score although the gap between eFSM and non-FSM learners decreased by 3.2 points.

PROVISION

Strengths:

- Increased emphasis was placed during 2016-17 on improving the quality of leadership, focusing on improving the quality of evaluation and planning for improvement. There is clear evidence that leadership workshops delivered to primary school leaders, has led to improvements in outcomes and to a stronger resilience within schools to drive their own improvement journey.
- GwE is providing a range of professional learning programmes for practitioners ranging from Higher Level Teaching Assistants to experienced Headteachers.
- The Senior Challenge and Support Adviser for each hub operated much more effectively in quality assuring all aspects of the work of Challenge Advisers within their respective teams. Positive feedback was received by Estyn on the quality of pre-inspection and re-inspection reports which was the strongest of all 4 consortia.
- Improving standards and provision in the Foundation Phase is one of our priorities. This year, we offered a regional Foundation Phase support programme for the first time, targeting planning, Teaching, assessment and leadership. The focus was on planning challenging and differentiating activities for year 1 and 2 pupils across all areas of teaching in accordance with Foundation Phase principles and pedagogy.
- The team of Literacy & Numeracy Challenge Advisers have provided an extensive range of support and development programmes across the region to ensure the quality of planning and provision in both the primary and secondary sectors. All schools in an amber or red support category have received a bespoke programme of support tailored to their specific development needs. This support has been instrumental in removing eight schools from Estyn categories and in assisting twenty seven schools in the improvement of their support category status. In addition to this direct school support, a broad development programme has been provided for schools targeting both national and local priorities.
- Processes put in place over the past two years have led to a more consistent approach to assessment across the region. The standard of cluster moderation has improved significantly through the upskilling of assessment leads and training of practitioners. Through reports from the Challenge Advisers we can identify much good practise across the region in both Primary and Secondary schools.
- As part of Successful Futures offer, work with all schools to appoint a Successful Futures lead within all clusters of schools across the region and plan for their first upskilling. We will continue to develop work on OECD Schools as a Learning Organisation and work collaboratively with the new Welsh Education Leadership Academy. We need to integrate the Successful Futures agenda regularly into the work of the wider GWE team.

Areas requiring development include:

- Robust business plans that respond more acutely to the development needs of authorities and individual schools and that have been discussed and agreed with stakeholders.

- Ensure that the revised secondary model is established and is effective in its operation.
- That all secondary schools and all amber/red support category schools have appropriately tailored support plans in place.
- Ensure that CAs, LA Officers and schools have ease of access to a wider range of data and live information about progress and that effective and timely use of the information is applied consistently across all levels of operation
- CPD programmes to further upskill challenge advisers.
- That schools have access to a richer range of developmental programmes at specific regional, LA and cluster/group level.
- More effective deployment of successful headteachers to bolster team expertise and skill base.
- More effective deployment of subject CAs and use of subject networks to strengthen departmental collaboration.
- That schools act on the regional guidance regarding what is expected in terms of 'best fit' for teacher assessments.
- Effective targeting of guidance for leaders in key strategic areas [self-evaluation, improvement planning, challenging assessments etc.

LEADERSHIP

Since GwE's inception in 2013, there has been a significant increase in the expectations of the role of the Consortia. A further review of the National Model is imminent and it is clear that there is a commitment from Welsh Government to increase the breadth of responsibilities even further into the areas of Wellbeing, Equity and potentially Additional Learning Needs.

Strengths:

- 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. Primary support and challenge is generally good and access to training and development programmes has improved and become clearer.
- The scrutiny function has matured in areas across the Region. Local scrutiny members have a better understanding of what is GwE's purpose and what it is trying to achieve. In the best instances members of a scrutiny committee have been out in schools seeking headteachers views about how well GwE is supporting and challenging schools. They have brought their findings back to the Committee and held a triangulation meeting with GwE hub lead and LA officers to identify strengths and areas to develop.
- 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.

- The business planning process has recently been greatly improved and is now much more robust. Senior leaders from within the consortium and the Local Authorities have greater responsibility and ownership over the process. The accountability structure is clearer and the monitoring processes more robust.
- GwE work well to promote Welsh Government's priorities and have made good progress in understanding and initial delivery of the Successful Futures agenda. As a result, GwE are well placed to continue to promote and deliver against national priorities. There are an increased number of Pioneer schools across the GwE region and there is now a well-planned timely approach to engage with all schools using a range of effective communication channels.

Areas requiring development include:

- The secondary sector - due to the 80:20 entitlement model which is operating at present and the difficulty in recruiting full time good quality advisers, there has and is a lack of access to effective full time secondary Challenge Advisers. This is especially acute in priority areas such as leadership at different levels, Mathematics and English. This lack of capacity in the secondary sector hinders the ability of GwE to make immediate impact.
- The scrutiny function - further work will be undertaken as members will shadow GwE challenge advisers in different functions of their role to further deepen their understanding.
- Improve 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.

3. BUSINESS PLAN PRIORITIES FOR 2017-18

1. **Standards** – to ensure the highest standards at all key stages and that all learners make appropriate progress in literacy and numeracy from one key stage to another. That all learners achieve qualifications relevant to their ability and potential and are working towards being bilingual by the age of sixteen.
2. **Curriculum and assessment** – to ensure that all schools deliver an engaging curriculum which responds to the statutory requirements of the national curriculum. Ensure that all learners are supported to achieve qualifications which enable them to be ambitious capable learners that reach their potential. Ensure all schools have robust assessment processes in place with strong targeting, tracking and intervention procedures.
3. **Leadership** – to ensure that all leaders have a clear educational vision and can plan strategically to achieve this. Ensure that all learning organisations have the leadership capacity at all levels to inspire, coach, support, share practice and collaborate at all

levels to ensure all learners' achieve their potential. Ensure that the principles of distributive leaderships are embedded in all learning organisations across the region.

4. **Wellbeing** – create the conditions to ensure that learners develop as healthy, resilient and globally responsible individuals and provide an inclusive, aspirational education system, committed to tackling inequality so that young people achieve their full potential.
5. **Teaching** – to ensure that all teachers and support staff are equipped to have a clear understanding of what constitutes effective teaching, based on reliable evidence. In addition, the ability to deliver a range of approaches, effectively matching the needs of the learners with the context, to ensure positive impact on learning and achievement is paramount.
6. **Business** – to ensure that GwE has strong governance and effective business and operational support that provides resource for money.
7. **Estyn recommendations** – to ensure that necessary progress is made against all recommendations within the expected timeframe:
 - 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.
 - R2:** Improve the quality of evaluation in the delivery of school improvement services.
 - R3:** Improve the rigour of the arrangements for identifying and managing risk.
 - R4:** Ensure that business and operational plans contain clear success criteria and that progress against these is monitored effectively.
 - R5:** Clarify the strategic role of the regional networks and their accountability to the Joint Committee.
 - 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.

4. STANDARDS

Context

Table 1 shows the % of pupils of statutory school age entitled to free school meals over the last four years in comparison to Wales and the individual authorities.

The ranking indicates the authorities' positions in comparison to the Welsh authorities, with the highest ranking indicating the smallest cohort of 5-15 year old pupils receiving FSM. The region's FSM % is the lowest out of the 4 consortia. The Table suggests that, providing that the right to free school meals is an appropriate measure of deprivation, Anglesey's performance in 2016, for instance, should be around tenth of all of the Welsh authorities, i.e. corresponding to the free school meal ranking.

Table 1: % pupils of statutory school age entitled to free school meals [FSM]

	2013		2014		2015		2016	
	%	Rank	%	R	%	R	%	R
Anglesey	20.5	13	18.5	11	17.4	11	17.0	10
Gwynedd	13.7	5	12.9	4	13.3	4	13.0	4
Conwy	18.3	9	18.1	10	17.1	9	16.2	8

Denbighshire	19.1	11	19.4	13	19.0	13	19.1	14
Flintshire	13.5	4	13.9	5	14.9	6	15.0	6
Wrexham	18.1	8	18.0	9	16.6	8	16.4	9
GwE	16.7	1	16.4	1	16.1	1	15.9	1
Wales	19.5		19.1		18.8			

The tables below show progress over a rolling period in the main indicators for each key stage.

Table 2 summarises the rankings of the authorities in comparison to the Welsh authorities in the main indicator at each key stage. The number in brackets indicates the authority's comparative ranking based on the percentage of 5-15 year old pupils receiving FSM [see Table 1]. This is discussed in more detail in this report in the commentaries on each key stage.

Table 2: summary of the authorities' rankings in the main indicator for each key stage [Foundation Phase, KS2, KS3 and KS4]

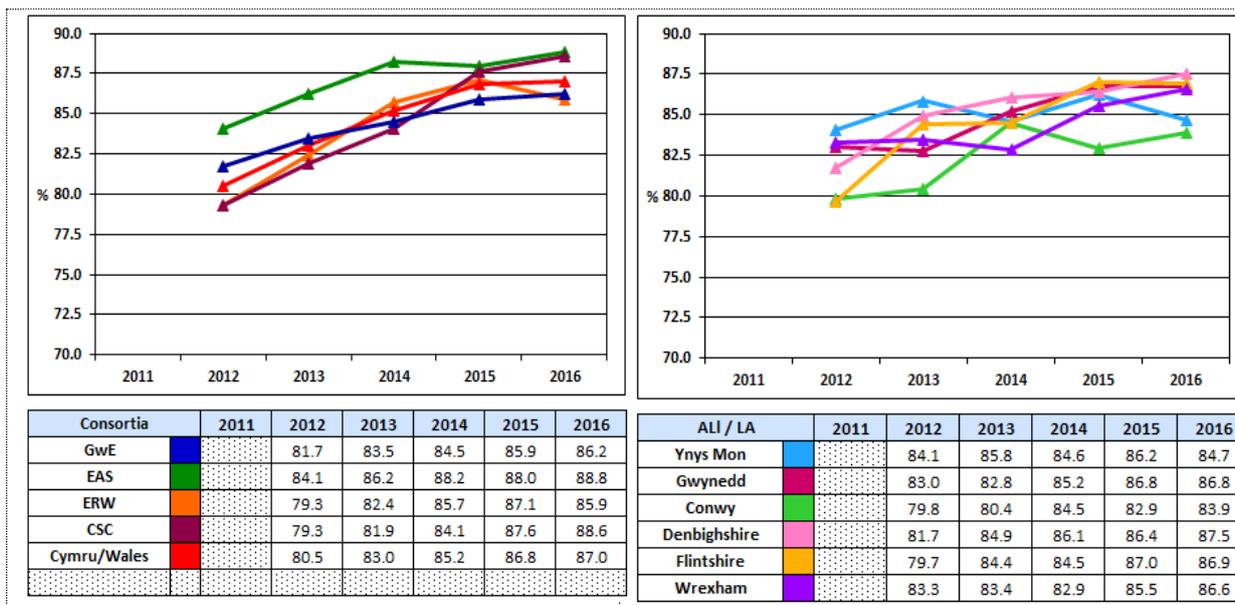
	2014				2015				2016			
	FPI	CSI KS2	CSI KS3	L2+	FPI	CSI KS2	CSI KS3	L2+	FPI	CSI KS2	CSI KS3	L2+
Anglesey (10)	12	7	9	14	15	3	9	12	20	9	7	13
Gwynedd (4)	10	14	1	5	11	6	1	5	14	7	2	4
Conwy (8)	13	17	8	11	21	19	6	18	21	20	9	17
Denbighshire (14)	9	10	10	10	13	12	12	14	10	14	12	14
Flintshire (6)	14	13	5	3	9	11	7	8	13	5	6	10
Wrexham (9)	20	19	16	18	19	14	19	20	15	18	16	18
GwE (1)	3	4	1	2	4	2	1	3	3	3	1	3

*Number in brackets is the FSM ranking (1 year)

The performance of individual local authorities relative to their FSM rankings in the main indicators varies considerably across the region. In 2016, only Denbighshire perform well in the main indicator in all key stages and the performance of Gwynedd is good at Key Stage 3 and 4. The performance of Wrexham and Conwy are significantly below their FSM rankings in the main indicator at all key stages (with the exception of Conwy at KS3).

Foundation Phase

Table 3: % learners achieving in the Foundation Phase Indicator [FPI]



The pace of improvement in the Foundation Phase has been slower than that seen on a national level. Raising standards in the Foundation Phase is a key priority for improvement for the consortium.

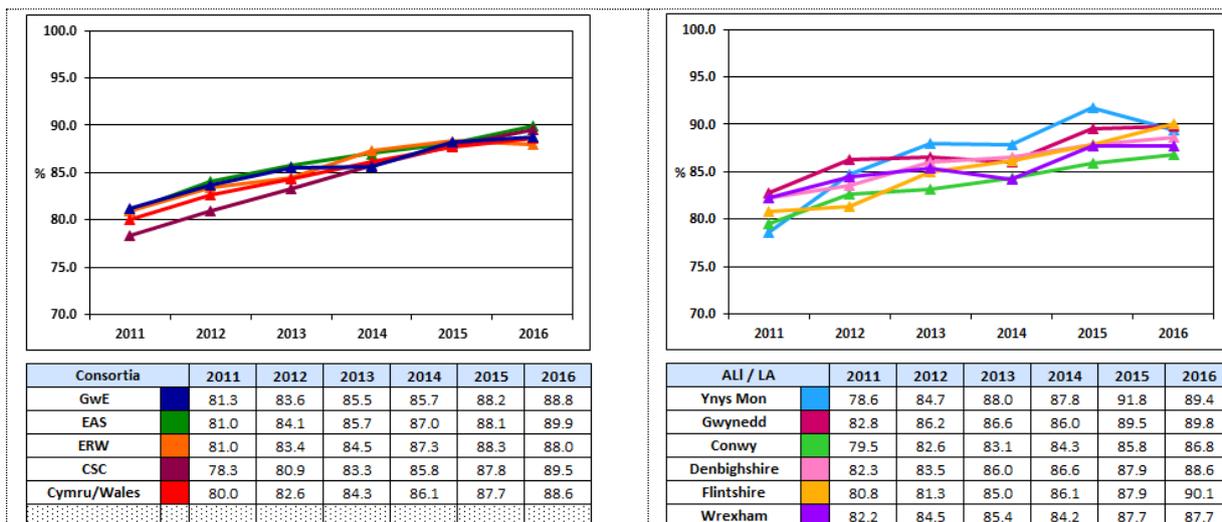
GwE performance in the Foundation Phase Indicator (FPI) is ranked 3rd of the 4 regional consortia with 5 out of 6 Local Authorities performing lower than expected in relation to their free school meal ranking (Denbighshire being the only LA performing above modelled expectations). The 2016 teacher assessments saw a slight increase in the percentage of FSM learners achieving the FPI. Regionally, support for the Foundation Phase has historically been led by the Foundation Phase Network.

Next Steps:

- ensure that Foundation Phase pedagogy is delivered effectively and teaching is generally good;
- eradicate the inconsistent approach to ‘best fit’ across the consortium; and
- ensure that end of Foundation Phase teacher assessments provide a clear reflection of the standards of individual pupils.

Key Stage 2

Table 4: % learners achieving in the Core Subject Indicator [CSI] at key stage 2 [KS2]



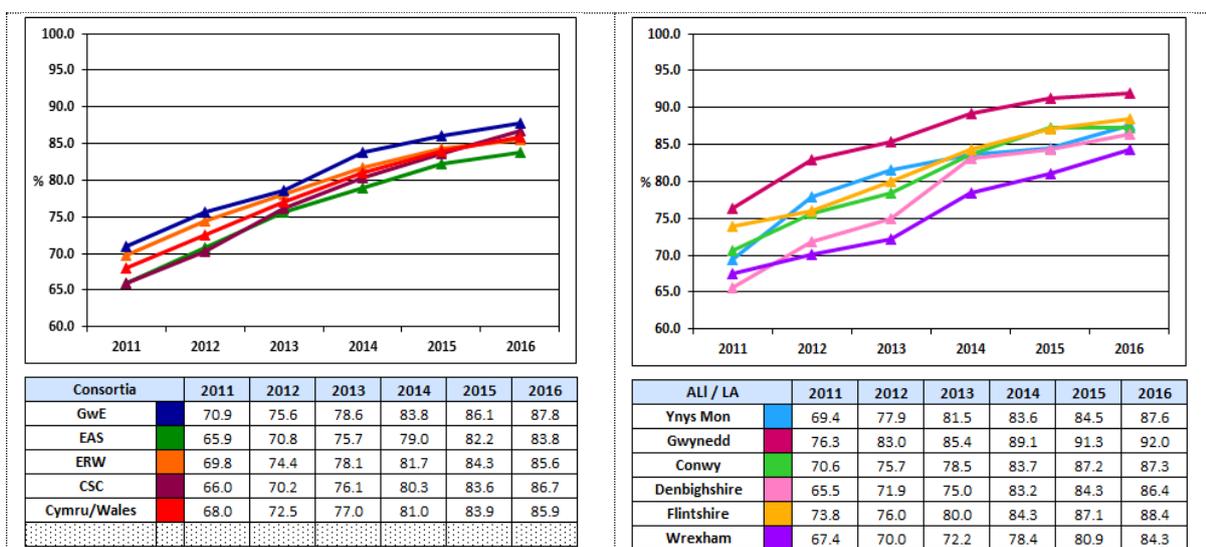
At Key Stage 2, the progress of pupils in the consortium achieving in the Core Subject Indicator [CSI] between 2014 and 2016 is higher than the progress seen on national level. However, there was slightly less progress this year [0.6% compared to 0.9% nationally]. In 2016, the greatest progress was seen in Flintshire, with Anglesey the only authority that decreased. In 2016, 3 out of the 6 authorities performed better or similarly to their FSM ranking with only 2 authorities [Conwy and Wrexham] performing much lower than their expected FSM ranking. Progress was seen in the percentage of FSM learners achieving in the CSI and in the 4 core subjects at the expected level. However, the performance of FSM learners on the higher levels is an area for improvement.

Next steps:

- improve school performance in Conwy and Wrexham;
- raise expectations by challenging school targets to improve performance; and
- ensure robust cluster moderation procedures to ensure that assessments accurately reflect the standards of individual learners.

Key Stage 3

Table 5: % learners achieving in the Core Subject Indicator [CSI] at key stage 3 [KS3]



In 2016 at Key Stage 3, further progress was seen in the percentage of pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator [CSI]. The region's performance in the CSI continues to be the highest of the four consortia with each authority, with the exception of Wrexham, performing higher/close to FSM ranking. In 2016, at the expected level, the region's performance is the highest of the 4 consortia in each of the core subjects. At the higher levels, progress is seen in all of the core subjects. However, although the regional progress is higher than the national progress in Welsh First Language, it is lower for the other core subjects and in some local authorities the performance at the higher levels (especially in relation to the performance of boys) need to be further improved. Significant progress is seen in the percentage of FSM pupils achieving the CSI. FSM progress is also seen in each of the 4 core subjects at the expected and higher levels. However, performance of FSM learners in particular authorities is still a cause of concern.

Next Steps:

- improve performance of Wrexham local authority and individual schools across the region;
- improve teaching; and
- improve provision for literacy and numeracy skills.

Key Stage 4

In general, the pace of improvement in the main indicators at KS4 has been too slow compared to the rest of Wales and improving its performance is the consortium's main priority.

Table 6a: % learners achieving in the Level 2 Inclusive Threshold [L2+] without 'Other EOTAS'

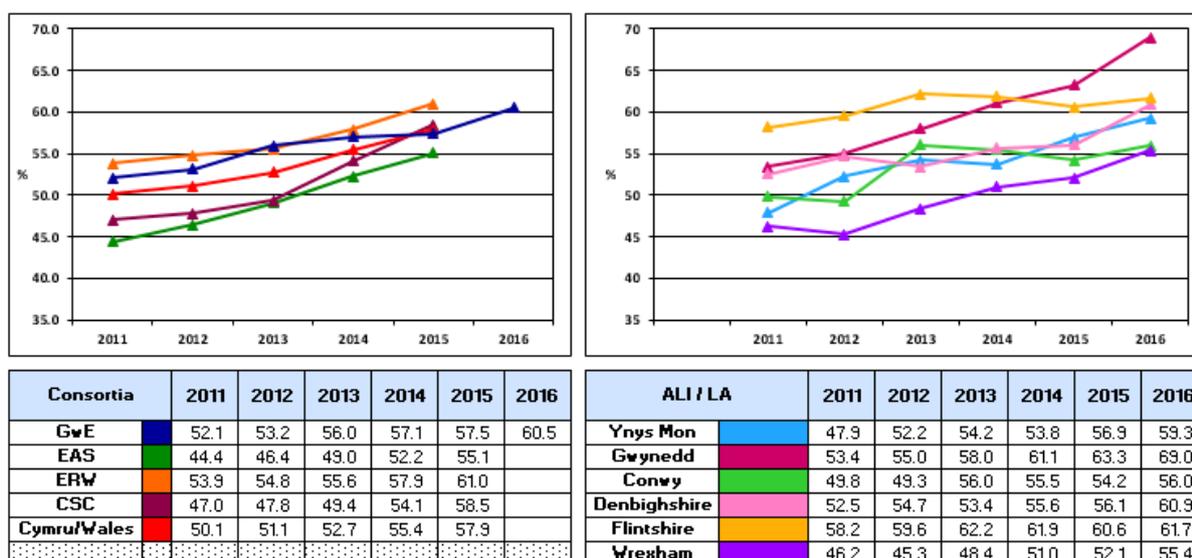
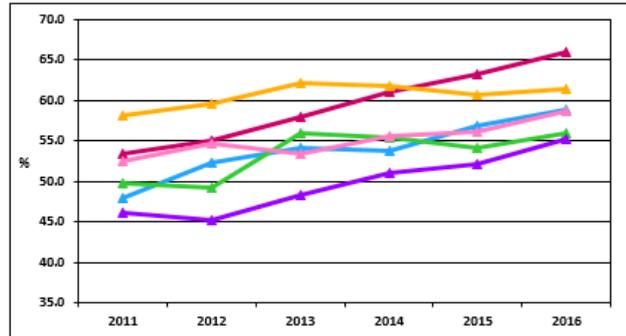
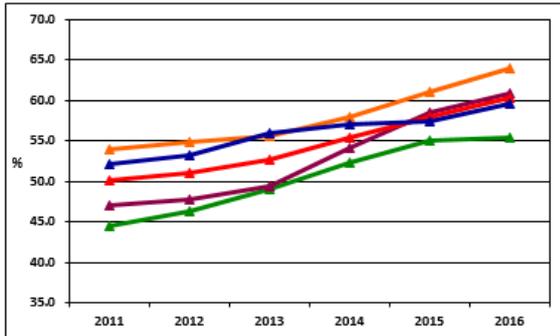


Table 6b: % learners achieving in the Level 2 Inclusive Threshold [L2+] with 'Other EOTAS'



Consortia	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
GwE	52.1	53.2	56.0	57.1	57.5	59.6
EAS	44.4	46.4	49.0	52.2	55.1	55.5
ERW	53.9	54.8	55.6	57.9	61.0	64.0
CSC	47.0	47.8	49.4	54.1	58.5	60.9
Cymru/Wales	50.1	51.1	52.7	55.4	57.9	60.3

ALI / LA	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Ynys Mon	47.9	52.2	54.2	53.8	56.9	58.8
Gwynedd	53.4	55.0	58.0	61.1	63.3	65.9
Conwy	49.8	49.3	56.0	55.5	54.2	55.9
Denbighshire	52.5	54.7	53.4	55.6	56.1	58.7
Flintshire	58.2	59.6	62.2	61.9	60.6	61.5
Wrexham	46.2	45.3	48.4	51.0	52.1	55.3

The progress in the percentage of pupils achieving the Level 2 inclusive [L2+] is significantly higher this year [+2.1% or +3.0% without 'Other Eotas'] compared to the progress seen in 2015 [0.4%]. In 2016, each of the 6 authorities has made progress in the L2+, with the greatest progress seen in Gwynedd and Denbighshire. However, too many schools across the consortium are performing well below modelled expectations in the L2+.

Table 7 ranks each LA's performance in the key performance indicators [Level 2+, Level 1, Level 2, Capped Points Score and 5A*-A] in comparison with all 22 Local Authorities across Wales.

Table 7: summary of the authorities' rankings in the key performance indicators at KS4

	2014					2015					2016				
	L2+	L1	L2	CPS	5A*-A	L2+	L1	L2	CPS	5A*-A	L2+	L1	L2	CPS	5A*-A
Anglesey (10)	14	6	9	3	10	12	8	16	9	13	13	5	15	11	10
Gwynedd (4)	5	1	4	1	2	5	1	6	1	3	4	1	10	4	8
Conwy (8)	11	8	8	11	8	18	14	14	17	16	17	18	17	17	19
Denbighshire (14)	10	11	2	5	9	14	17	11	10	8	14	20	14	16	14
Flintshire (6)	3	14	15	13	19	8	18	15	15	15	10	13	16	15	12
Wrexham (9)	18	21	21	20	20	20	20	22	21	20	18	19	21	18	21
GwE (1)	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

The performance of individual local authorities varies considerably across the region. In 2016, Gwynedd and Denbighshire are the only two authorities that perform as expected in the L2+. Generally this year, Gwynedd, Denbighshire and Anglesey perform as expected in the majority of the indicators; Flintshire are below expectation in all, with Wrexham and Conwy significantly so. Improving standards in those local authorities that are performing lower than their comparative FSM ranking is a major priority.

There has been strong progress in the percentage of pupils successfully achieving grades A*-C in English in Anglesey, Gwynedd and Denbighshire. However, only slight progress was seen in Conwy with a fall in Wrexham and Flintshire. There has been progress in the percentage of pupils successfully achieving grades A*-C in Mathematics in each of the 6 authorities. However, progress varies significantly between the authorities with the lowest progress in Conwy and Flintshire. The performance in Welsh First Language remains good across the region and is based on the number of candidates rather than all the year's cohort. However, there was a reduction in the percentage achieving A*-C in Welsh First Language in Gwynedd (the authority with the highest percentage of its cohort following Welsh First Language). The percentage of learners achieving Level 2 Science in the region is lower this year. This reduction is also apparent on a national level as more schools enter pupils to follow GCSE Science rather than vocational qualifications. The largest decrease in the L2 Science was in Conwy with a significant increase in Wrexham.

In 2016, around a third of all schools were within 1% of their final projections for the L2+; around two thirds achieved their projection or were within 5%; and only 6 schools (11%) where performance was 10% below their projection. This is an improvement on the situation in 2015 where too many schools were below their final projections. However, it remains an area that needs further improvement. Generally in 2016, too many schools across the region perform below the median in the FSM benchmarking for the key performance indicators (except at Level 1) and in English and mathematics. This is a cause for concern. The performance of individual schools varies significantly within and across Local Authorities. Whilst the FSM benchmarking profiles for Gwynedd, Denbighshire and Anglesey are generally as expected or better, the profiles for Conwy, Flintshire and Wrexham are a cause for concern with too many schools below the median in most if not all key indicators.

Next Steps:

- introduce a coherent targeted programme in around half of our secondary schools to improve standards, curriculum design and leadership; and
- match national initiatives closely to local school improvement needs.

Key Stage 5

The model of delivery for Key Stage 5 varies within authorities and across the region. Provision is delivered by either individual schools, 6th form colleges, further education colleges or schools (and colleges) collaborating within the consortium. As a result, it is difficult to come to a meaningful conclusion on Key Stage 5 performance in schools within the region. Nonetheless, the data collected from schools show that schools' performance on the higher grades (A*-A) is an aspect that requires improvement.

Next Steps:

- appoint regional lead for A-Level and post-16;
- review challenge and support for post 16 school provision; and
- improve performance at the higher grades.

Standards of Literacy

Strong progress has been made with the development of literacy across the region in targeted programmes. A revised strategy was successfully implemented which focused clearly on improving the performance of learners in targeted schools. All schools in an amber or red support category received a tailored and bespoke programme of Literacy support which led directly to eight schools within the region being removed successfully from an Estyn category and to twenty seven making an improvement in their support category. The Primary Literacy Challenge and support advisers also worked effectively with seventy three schools from across the region that had been identified as historically performing in the lower FSM benchmark quarters for English and / or Welsh and also therefore also the Core subject indicator. These collaborative workshops with peers used direct evidence from the books of target pupils to focus on:

1. improving the provision to appropriately meet the needs of learners at each level
2. Using the programmes of study as a planning document
3. Providing appropriate feedback for learners to identify & target their next steps in learning
4. Ensuring accurate assessment practices.

Analysis of the second predictions gathered from schools when compared to initial targets shows that the average increase in CSI for schools receiving this intervention stood at 3.23% compared to an average increase of 0.76% for schools who had not received this support. Similarly, at the higher levels this effective support provided an average increase of 6.27% in English L5+ compared to 2.08% in other schools. This pattern was also replicated for schools receiving Welsh 1st language support who achieved an average increase of 4.79% in L5+, 3.54% higher than the schools who didn't receive this support. With a total expenditure per school of £256.10, this programme of support represents good value for money.

The English national reading test results for 2016 show that the region has consistently maintained a profile where the results for SS<85 are lower than the expected proportion of 16%. However performance for SS>115 has fallen by 0.9% over three years to a position below the expected proportion of 16% in 2016. Regional performance for SS>85 is ranked 3rd for SS>85 and 4th for SS>115. Results in the English Reading tests show that the percentage achieving a SS<85 are noticeably lower than for the Welsh reading tests in each key stage. Performance at SS>115 have fallen marginally over a three year period in both KS2 and KS3 whilst FP results have fluctuated during the same timescale falling from a three year high of 16.4% in 2015 to 15.7% this year. The Welsh national reading test results for SS<85 have remained below the expected proportions for the last three years whilst the

results for SS>115 have also remained above the expected proportion. As a result the regional performance in 2016 is ranked 3rd for SS>85 and 2nd for SS>115 in 2016. KS3 performed strongly in the Welsh reading tests when compared to the other stages both at <85 and >115. However performance at SS>115 for all key stages has fallen by an average of 2.2% over the last three years.

Next Steps:

- Increase the challenge level and variety of the text types used in years 1 & 2 and KS2 to enable pupils to reach the expected level of understanding.
- Developing the Response and Analysis aspect of the English POS for Reading within KS2 and KS3 classrooms.
- Guided Reading, as a targeted and discreet method of teaching 'reading to learn', needs to be further developed across the region in KS2 and KS3.
- Develop a half termly programme of literacy leader network meetings to focus on the delivery of key Literacy & Numeracy messages and expectations.

Standards of Numeracy

Strong progress has been made with the development of Numeracy across the region in targeted programmes. Through the implementation of a regional Numeracy strategy effective support was provided for all schools in an amber or red support category. These bespoke programmes resulted in eight schools being successfully removed from an Estyn category and in twenty seven improving their support category status. The Numeracy Challenge and Support Advisers worked closely and effectively with seventy three schools from across the region whose profile of performance was rooted in the lower FSM benchmark quarters. This beneficial support programme focused on improving the provision to appropriately meet the needs of learners at each level by using the programmes of study effectively as a planning document and by providing appropriate feedback for learners to identify & target their next steps in learning. Allied to ensuring accurate assessment practices this effective programme of collaborative workshops encouraged peer to peer working and was rooted in the evidence in pupil books. As a direct result, schools involved in the programme displayed an average increase of 3.99% in L4+ mathematics (from initial target to second prediction), 2.37% greater than for all other schools. Similarly the average increase in Mathematics for L5+ of 5.96% in schools receiving the support is considerably higher than the 2.53% seen in all other schools.

Regional performance in the National Procedural tests has remained below the expected proportion of 16% for SS<85 for the last three years. Performance for SS>115 has fallen by 0.9% over the last three years and has remained below the expected proportion during that period. Performance at SS<85 in the National Reasoning tests have remained at least 4.2% lower than the expected proportions. Regional performance for SS>115 have been higher than the expected proportion during the last two years. Following a 2% gain in 2015 the regional result has fallen by 1.5% to 16.3% in 2016. In 2016 regional performance is ranked 2nd for SS>85 and 3rd for SS>115. Performance at the higher level of SS>115 is noticeably higher in the FP at 17% than in the other two key stages. Over a three year period FP results have averaged at 17.2% whilst both KS2 and KS3 have an average score below the expected proportion for the same period. Results for SS<85 in the reasoning tests have remained lower than the expected proportion over a three year period. Both the FP and KS2 have achieved an average standardised score greater than 100.

Next Steps:

- Improving the procedural skills of pupils of all learners in Primary. Ensuring a suitable challenge, the importance of mental maths skills and the ability to apply concepts due to deep learning.
- Developing Numerical reasoning and the understanding of a systematic reasoning process when solving problems in FP settings.
- Developing Numerical reasoning in KS2 and KS3 and the understanding of a systematic reasoning process when solving problems.
- Ensure the planning of purposeful, challenging, interesting and rich numeracy tasks that are linked to standards, to ensure all learners reach their full potential.
- Develop a half termly programme of numeracy leader network meetings to focus on the delivery of key Literacy & Numeracy messages and expectations.

Standards in Welsh

GwE has the highest percentage of end of key stage pupils (Y2, 6, 9 and 11) receiving a Welsh first language assessment in Wales. The percentage has remained consistent over the last 5 years (31.7% in 2016). The percentage across Wales has risen 1% over the same period from 18.3% to 19.3%. There is considerable variance across the region in the provision, ranging from Gwynedd at 89.7%, being the highest in Wales, to 5.3% in Flintshire, the fourth lowest.

At key stage 4, the percentage attaining A*-C in Welsh First Language has been good over a rolling period, despite falling slightly in 2016. Of the full cohort, 28.4% sat the Welsh first language examination in 2016, compared to 29.2% in 2015. At key stage 3, the percentage attaining the expected level in Welsh has risen to 92.9% with GwE performing best out of all the regions. In 2016, the percentage attaining level 6 or higher in Welsh has increased to 61.3% and higher than the national percentage.

At key stage 2, the percentage attaining the expected level in Welsh has fallen with GwE being the lowest out of all the regions. The percentage attaining level 5 or higher has also fallen with GwE performing second highest out of all the regions. In the Foundation Phase, the percentage attaining the expected outcome and the higher outcome in Welsh fell in 2016.

Next Steps:

- increase standards of Welsh against the language continuum; and
- increase opportunities for learners of all ages to practise their Welsh outside the classroom; and
- implement local plans to deliver million Welsh speakers.

5. STANDARDS - GROUPS OF LEARNERS

Boys and Girls

The performance of boys and girls continues to improve from year to year in the main indicators at every key stage. However girls continue to perform better than boys, and the gap between the performance of the girls and boys continues. The gap between the performances of boys and girls across the range of indicators varies greatly in the individual authorities.

Free School Meals (FSM)

In general, the pace of improvement in the performance of FSM 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.

The number of pupils across the region eligible for free school meals' is continuing to fall. In 2016, 15.9% of all pupils of a statutory age in the region were eligible for free school meals compared to 17.1% in 2011. This was lower than the national percentage of 18.8% in 2016. This trend is continuing in 2017 with a further reduction of 0.4% to 15.5%.

The performance of pupils eligible for free school meals continues to improve year on year with the gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils falling in the main indicators at every stage. In 2016, the performance of eFSM learners in the L2+ improved by 4.2% regionally. This was greater than the national increase (4.0%). However, over a three year period the rate of improvement has been too slow and is lower than the national average increase. In 2016, the gap between eFSM and non-FSM in the L1 Threshold was reduced from 5.9% to 1.9% with the performance of eFSM learners increasing by 2.3% with the region performing higher than the national average (92.7% compared to 92.0% nationally). In 2016, the performance of eFSM learners was 4.4 points lower than the national average in the Capped Point Score although the gap between eFSM and non-FSM learners decreased by 3.2 points.

In 2016, there was significant increase in the percentage of eFSM learners achieving the CSI at KS3 (5.7% compared to 3.5% nationally) with GwE continuing to be the best performing region. The gap between eFSM and non-FSM is also continuing to close at KS3, KS2 and the Foundation Phase. However, generally over three years the performance of eFSM learners at Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 has not improved at the same rate as that seen on a national level at both the expected or higher levels.

Looked After Children (LAC)

The numbers of looked after children across the region is small – between 0.6% and 1% of the cohorts in 2016 therefore performance can vary substantially based on the performance of one individual. Overall, the performance of LAC continues to improve year on year in the main indicators. The exception is the Foundation Phase. In 2016, in Key Stage 4, the performance of LAC in L2+ has fallen slightly to 21.7% compared to 22.4% the previous year.

English as an additional language (EAL)

The number of pupils recorded across the region as having English as an additional language is fairly small – between 1.0% and 4.9% of the cohorts in 2016 therefore performance can vary substantially based on the performance of a small number of children. The performance of children with English as an additional language has fallen in 2016 in the main indicators for every stage. In key stage 4, the percentage of EAL learners achieving L2+ has fallen in 2016 (28.6% compared to 36.2% in 2015).

Special Education Needs – Pupils on Statement or School Action plus

The performance of children on a statement or School Action plus in the main indicators varies across the stages. In key stage 4, the percentage of children on a statement or School action plus attaining L2+ has fallen in 2016 (18.0% compared to 18.8% in 2015). In 2016, in key stages 2 and 3, the number of pupils on a statement or on School Action Plus

attaining the Core Subject Indicator increased. However, in the Foundation Phase, the percentage attaining the Foundation Phase Indicator fell.

Performance according to Ethnic origin

The performance of children of a non-White/British ethnic origin has generally improved in the main indicators, but is lower than the percentages seen for White/British pupils. In key stage 4, the percentage of children from a non-White/British ethnic origin attaining L2+ has increased slightly (60.9% in 2016 compared to 60.2% in 2015). In 2016, this represented 4.6% of the full cohort.

Gypsies and Travellers

The number in this cohort is relatively small across the region. In 2016, there were 5 pupils in Year 11 across the region. The percentage attaining L2+ has fallen to 20.0% in 2016 (compared to 33.3% in 2015 and 20% in 2014). The cohort is also small in other key stages and the percentage attaining the main indicator in every key stage has fallen.

More Able and Talented

At the higher outcomes [expected outcome +1] in the Foundation Phase, progress was seen in the English Language, Mathematical Development and Personal Development indicators, which was higher than or similar to the national progress. There was a decrease in the percentage of learners achieving the Welsh Language indicator. The performance of individual authorities across the region varies significantly.

At the higher levels [level 5+] in Key Stage 2, progress was seen in English, maths and science but only for science was this progress higher than the national progress. The region's performance at the higher levels is not as good as expected and this is an aspect that requires improvement [Anglesey: Welsh and science; Conwy: English, maths and science; Denbighshire: maths and English; Flintshire: Welsh, maths and science; Wrexham: Welsh, English and maths].

At the higher levels [level 6+] in Key Stage 3, progress was seen in each of the core subjects. The regional progress was higher than the national progress for Welsh, but lower for the other core subjects. Performance in maths is the best out of the four consortia, with the other three core subjects second best. The authorities' performances are better or similar to their FSM rankings with the exception of: Anglesey in science; Gwynedd in Welsh [where numbers following Welsh Language are significantly higher than other authorities on national level]; Flintshire in science and Wrexham in English, maths and science.

In Key Stage 4, the performance of pupils at 5A*-A has fallen to below the national average and is a priority for improvement across the region.

Next Steps:

- Ensure that the individual LA Business Plans, when relevant, focus on closing the gap between the performance of different groups of learners and improve the achievement of MAT pupils.
- Ensure the effective use of data to improve the performance of all groups of pupils.
- Appoint regional lead for wellbeing and vulnerable learners;

- Ensure that all schools set challenging targets for different groups of learners.
- Ensure that all schools are robustly challenged on how they use their PDG to improve outcomes for FSM learners.
- Review the use of regional funding for supporting Looked After Children and the role of GwE and the Local Authorities; and
- strengthen and develop the links between GwE and local authority services to improve the standards achieved by ALN pupils.

6. ESTYN SCHOOL INSPECTION PROFILE

The inspection profile for Primary schools is positive and indicates sound improvements. In 2015-16, 70% or more of the schools inspected (48 schools), were judged as being good or better in all key judgements. These results compare favourably with all Wales results. The profile for Secondary schools is less positive with only 44.4 % of schools inspected (9 schools), judged as being good or better in all key judgements. These results are better than the all Wales results. However, in 2015-16 the percentage of Secondary schools deemed unsatisfactory for four of the five key judgments (22.2%) is significantly higher than the all Wales results. Three of the five 5 schools placed in 'Significant' Improvement' or 'Special Measures' since September 2015 are secondary schools (published inspections up to February half term 2017). Two PRU's are also in 'Significant Improvement'.

Of the Primary inspections already undertaken in 2016-17, the figures for all Key Judgments have risen significantly. During 2016-17 (up to and including February 2017), a total of 24 Educational Establishments (22 Primary / 2 Secondary) were inspected by ESTYN and their inspection reports published, of these:

- 19 schools (79.2%) were judged as Good or better on their current performance, an improvement of 15.2% when compared with 2015-16
- 1 school (Secondary) was judged as Unsatisfactory on their current performance.
- 18 schools (75%) were judged as Good or better on their prospects for improvement, an improvement of 6.2% when compared with 2015-16
- no school was judged as Unsatisfactory on their prospects for improvement
- 75% of schools (18) were not placed in any 'follow-up' category.
- One school (Secondary) has been placed in 'Significant Improvement' and no school has been placed in the 'Special Measures' category
- Standards (KQ1) were judged good or better in 19 schools (79.2%), an improvement of 15.2% when compared with 2015-16
- Provision (KQ2) was judged good or better in 20 schools (83.3%), an improvement of 7.5% when compared with 2015-16
- Leadership (KQ3) was judged good or better in 18 schools (75%), an improvement of 6.2% when compared with 2015-16
- No school was deemed Unsatisfactory for Provision and Leadership

Next steps:

- Reduce the number of secondary schools who are at risk of falling into Estyn statutory category.

7. NATIONAL CATEGORISATION

As noted in Estyn's report, the consortium knows its schools increasingly well. Pre-inspection reports for schools provided by the local authority, following advice from the consortium, are largely found to be consistent with inspection outcomes. Inspectors have fewer concerns about these reports than in other regions in Wales. Inspection outcomes also show that schools are, in the main, categorised appropriately.

An increase was seen in the percentage of primary schools in standard group 1 or 2 in Stage 1 of the process – an increase from 58.8% in 2015-16 to 66.8% in 2016-17. In addition, an increase was seen in the percentage of primary schools receiving the top awards [A or B] in Stage 2 of the process – an increase from 85.3% in 2015-16 to 89.0% in 2016-17.

Consequently, an increase was seen in the percentage of primary schools in the Green and Yellow categories – an increase of 80.7% in 2015-16 to 84.8% in 2016-17.

Overall, the primary support category profile for every authority has improved compared to 2015 with an increase in the numbers of schools designated as being green in every authority. The percentage categorised as being amber or red has fallen in 4 or 6 authorities; has remained consistent in Denbighshire; and has increased from 11.9% to 15.5% in Wrexham.

Nevertheless, no such pattern of improvement is to be seen in the secondary profile. Over the same period, the distribution of percentages in the standards groups has stayed relatively consistent with an increase of 1.8% in 2016 in those schools in group 1 and 2. The percentage of school in the Green/Yellow support category has slipped from 60.0% in 2015-16 to 58.2% in 2016-17. However, the percentage being awarded the top judgements [A or B] in Stage 2 of the process remained constant over the period [36.4%].

The changes in the secondary schools' support category are mixed for the individual authorities. The number of green schools has fallen in Anglesey (from 1 to 0), has stayed consistent in Gwynedd and Conwy and has increased in the other three authorities. The number categorised as being amber or red has fallen in Anglesey, Gwynedd and Denbighshire, but has increased in the other three authorities. There are no schools in the red category in Anglesey, Gwynedd and Conwy, and the number has also fallen in Denbighshire, Wrexham, however has increased in Flintshire.

Next steps:

- In response to the concerns about secondary schools' performance, the service will completely revise the working model from Easter 2017 onwards.

8. PROVISION

How well do we provide support, challenge and intervention in our schools?

Support

Specific and differentiated models of operation were developed this year with schools in the Green/Yellow; Yellow and Amber/Red support categories. By now, schools in the green support category who need least GwE support have more responsibility for their own improvement. Schools in the red category who need most support receive more intensive help to develop their ability to improve. This action has led to better consistency in the quality of support and guidance for schools across the region and towards ensuring that support plans, tailored according to specific circumstances and needs, are operational in every school in the most intensive categories.

Schools, across the various categories of support, are given access to programmes at 3 levels:

- generic regional programmes;
- local hub-based programmes; and
- programmes specifically for the needs of the school itself.

Impact of support programmes

Increased emphasis was placed during 2016-17 on improving the quality of leadership. This built on very successful workshops delivered last year to targeted schools, focusing on improving the quality of evaluation and planning for improvement. There is clear evidence the action that the leadership workshops delivered to primary school senior leaders has led to improvements in outcomes and to a stronger resilience within schools to drive their own improvement journey. An increase was seen in the percentage of primary schools categorised in the Green and Yellow categories – an increase from 80.7% in 2015-16 to 84.8% in 2016-17. In addition, an increase was seen in the percentage of schools attaining the highest levels [A or B] at Stage 2 of the process – an increase from 85.3% in 2015-16 to 89.0% in 2016-17. The profile of Estyn inspections in the primary sector is also positive and highlights marked improvements. In 2015-16, 75.0% of schools inspected [48 schools] were categorized as being good or better for their quality of leadership. Of the inspections already undertaken in 2016-17 [20 schools], the figure has risen further to 80.0%. In 2015-16 the quality of leadership was judged to be Unsatisfactory in 4.2% of the primary schools inspected. In 2016-17 no school was judged unsatisfactory. However, neither impact nor influence is totally consistent across all areas of the Consortia. Specific action has been taken to tackle this. The most positive effect was in the primary sector in Gwynedd, Conwy and Denbigh authorities.

Over the same period, in the secondary sector, the percentage of schools in the Green/Yellow support category has slipped from 60.0% in 2015-16 to 58.2% in 2016-17. Even so, the percentage achieving the highest categories [A or B] at Stage 2 of the process remained stable during the period [36.4%]. The profile of secondary inspections during 2015-16 highlighted concerns, with over 44.0% receiving adequate or unsatisfactory for quality of leadership. Although a more positive pattern now exists in some authorities, further substantial work needs to be undertaken to ensure that inspection outcomes improve in the secondary sector. In response to the situation that was causing concern with secondary school performance, the service will completely revise the model of working from Easter 2017 onwards whilst ensuring that a significantly higher percentage of link Challenge Advisers working in the sector will be drawn from a pool of headteachers who have recent successful experiences of leading school improvement.

Monitoring, Challenging and Intervention

Priority was given to achieving consistency in the quality of monitoring and challenge across the 3 hubs. An intensive programme of support was introduced for the team of Challenge Advisers. In addition to the training programme, a supporting handbook was provided, defining and highlighting expectations. A very detailed induction programme for new staff was put in place. The Senior Challenge and Support Adviser for each hub were more effective in quality assuring all aspects of the work of Challenge Advisers within their respective teams. Positive feedback was received by Estyn on the quality of pre-inspection and re-inspection reports. Between 2014-2016 Estyn noted that there were significant or major concerns about judgements in 16.1% of the reports received from GwE. This figure was the lowest of all 4 consortia and significantly lower than the corresponding figure for 2 of the consortia.. For 2016 the percentage of reports where Estyn expressed significant or major concerns about the validity of judgements had been reduced significantly to 6.7%. This is evidence that supports the effectiveness of the QA processes undertaken.

The quality of monitoring visits and subsequent reports has significantly improved. In the best and most effective practices, Challenge Advisers were seen to provide challenge and support planning by:

- using a wide and timely range of data and information;
- scrutinising evidence from pupils' work and lesson observations to monitor progress towards performance targets;
- researching alongside school leaders into the quality of performance and provision at whole school level, various subjects, year groups and groups of pupils;
- comparing the progress of individual pupils and/or groups and the progress made against those in similar schools;
- identifying the areas of underperformance and gaps in attainment ;
- confirming, with headteachers, what areas are to be prioritized for improvement;
- commissioning specific support to drive improvements;
- agreeing on challenging targets and outcomes for schools;
- encouraging schools to take full advantage of the regional and local provision;
- investing time in building capacity of the senior management team and middle management in the affiliated schools; and
- attending meetings with the governing bodies to report on progress.

This, together with the fact that best practice is cascaded more regularly and effectively across the hubs, has led to better consistency of approach. A firmer and more robust programme of monitoring, challenge and intervention is in place. Schools where there is concern about a lack or slow progress are being directed earlier to the attention of the local quality boards of the individual authorities. Following the strengthening and synchronization of arrangements for communication and accountability, an effective working relationship exists between GwE Senior Challenge Advisers and officers of the authorities. As a result, the authorities' officers are in a more mature position to make decisions regarding the need to use the range of powers available to them. Establishing the regional forum, the School Improvement Forum, chaired by one of the Directors of Education, has also led to consistency of practice and expectations across the six authorities. As part of the evolving regional model, the regional board will be further strengthened and honed during 2016-17 and specifically to ensure that pace of action, and, ultimately, pace of improvement is significantly accelerated within the secondary sector.

Next steps:

- robust business plans agreed with stakeholders that respond more acutely to the development needs of authorities and individual schools;
- that the revised secondary model will be effective in its operation
- that all secondary schools and all amber/red support category primary schools have appropriately tailored support plans in place;
- that CAs, LA Officers and schools have ease of access to a wider range of data and live information about progress and that effective and timely use of the information is applied consistently across all levels of operation;
- more effective monitoring of progress against individual school targets by every link challenge adviser;
- a CPD programmes to further upskill challenge advisers ;
- that schools have access to a richer range of developmental programmes at specific regional, LA and cluster/group level;
- more effective deployment via secondments of successful headteachers;
- more effective deployment of subject CAs and use of subject networks to strengthen departmental collaboration;

- effective targeting of support and guidance for leaders in key strategic areas.

Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment

Improving standards and provision in the Foundation Phase is one of our priorities. This year, we offered a regional Foundation Phase support programme for the first time, targeting planning, Teaching, assessment and leadership. The focus was on planning challenging and differentiating activities for year 1 and 2 pupils across all areas of teaching in accordance with Foundation Phase principles and pedagogy. Regional support was offered to teachers and assistants on targeting the higher-order skills of pupils in years 1 and 2 together with workshops focusing on matching skills with the revised outcome statements of the Foundation Phase. 305 practitioners (67% of all schools) attended the Foundation Phase planning and challenging activities workshops and 289 practitioners (63% of schools) attended the familiarisation of the revised Foundation phase outcomes and planning provision workshops. 236 Head teachers (52%) attended Foundation Phase Leadership workshops focusing on what constitutes good or better provision and standards within the Foundation Phase. As a result, headteachers, teachers and assistants have a sounder understanding of effective provision and good or better standards within the Foundation Phase. Projected outcomes for 2016/17 (as of Easter 2017 based on schools' input at projection point 2) shows that FPI is likely to increase from 86.2 in 2016 to 87.2 in 2017 (+1%) and higher outcomes are likely to improve in Language Literacy Communication English (+0.2%), Language Literacy Communication Welsh (+2.4%), Mathematical Development (+1.55%).

The next steps regarding a regional programme will involve continuing to target raising standards, together with targeting specific aspects of the provision and leadership identified as areas for improvement. The regional programme will also incorporate priorities for implementing the 'Welsh Government's Foundation Phase Action Plan'.

The team of Literacy & Numeracy Challenge Advisers has provided an extensive range of programmes across the region to support the improvement of planning and provision in both the primary and secondary sectors. All schools in an amber or red support category have received a bespoke programme of support tailored to their specific development needs. This support has been instrumental in removing eight schools from Estyn categories and in assisting twenty seven schools in the improvement of their support category status. In addition to this direct school support, a broad development programme has been provided for schools targeting both national and local priorities.

A regional programme of Leadership training was provided for leaders of Literacy and Numeracy. The programme focused effectively on generic leadership skills as well as specialist Literacy and Numeracy leadership. As a result delegates from 108 schools across the region have developed their practice through the successful completion of specific tasks to improve effective tracking and targeting procedures that impact directly on the teaching and learning.

Raising the profile of Reading for Pleasure across the primary phase has been enhanced. We cascaded current research linking successful literacy to early reading for pleasure in order to conduct further research. One hundred and ninety three leaders of literacy have been developed over 2 years – 137 in year 1 and 56 in year 2. The fifty six Leaders of Literacy enrolled in this year's programme will be reporting on the impact of their reading projects in June 2017. We will use this feedback to inform future projects across the region.

Literacy provision for More Able and Talented learners was targeted through a series of regional 2 part workshops, aiming to raise standards of provision in Oracy, Reading and Writing. One hundred and eighty two teachers registered across the region for Welsh or English medium sessions.

A series of cross curricular numeracy planning workshops were provided, targeting schools with mixed year groups (year 3/4, 5/6 and whole KS2 within the same class) to enhance cross curricular numeracy provision, ensuring challenging, rich and engaging tasks aimed at progressing learners of all abilities. A specific focus was placed on the use of 'Big Questions', ensuring attendees benefited from practical opportunities to implement differentiated planning effectively for the mixed age groups in their own classes. The successful implementation of this planning was reviewed by either the Numeracy or School's Challenge adviser during follow up school visits and reports.

Mental mathematics workshops were provided for KS2 teachers to enhance daily mental mathematics provision, ensuring opportunities to review, consolidate and build on children's developing mental calculation skills. Specific focus on challenging, differentiated and engaging questions aimed at progressing learners of all abilities.

Regional training workshops were made available for all KS2 teachers taking place over two half day sessions, around one month apart. They focused on the following aspects:

- introduce and explore maths topics in practical, open-ended ways;
- improve the depth and quality of mathematical discussions;
- use equipment, images and bar modelling to strengthen understanding;
- develop a shared language for promoting positive attitudes to maths;
- embed efficient, high-impact assessment for learning strategies; and
- Deepening mathematical understanding by using a range of rich tasks.

In total 199 teachers attended from 158 schools across the region that are now able to include the best practice seen in their own planning and teaching. During the period September 2016 to Easter 2017 a further 1197 practitioners (both teachers and TAs) attended a broad range of Literacy and Numeracy training events for both Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2. CSI is likely to increase from 88.8 in 2016 to 90.0 in 2017 (+1.2%). Higher outcomes are likely to improve in English (+2.8%), Welsh (+2.3%), Maths (+4.0%) and Science (+3%). Key Stage 2 variance across the six local authorities has reduced from 5% in 2016 to 3% at the Easter 2017 projection (-2%)

ESTYN inspections during the period September 2016 and Easter 2017 also indicates and improvement in the quality of provision and standards within the region's primary schools.

- Key Question 1 shows an improvement from 71% good or better in 2015/6 to 76% in 2016/17 (+5%)
- Key Question 2 shows an improvement from 77% good or better in 2015/16 to 84% in 2016/17 (+7%)
- Key Question 3 shows an increase of schools gaining excellence in Leadership from 4% to 12% (+8%)
- There has been a decrease in the number of schools in Statutory Category between 2015/16 and 2016/17 from 7% to 4% (-3%)
- There has been an increase in schools not put in any category from 42% in 2015/16 to 72% in 2016/17 (+30%)

Support for secondary schools to successfully implement the revised GCSE specifications and revised Welsh Baccalaureate has taken place during the year. Secondary schools have had access to specialist subject support in mathematics, English, Welsh 1st Language and science in Key Stage 4 through specialised Challenge Adviser support across the region for all core subjects. There is a comprehensive strategy to improve standards of English, Maths,

Science and Welsh across the region. Through local networks for Head of Departments, secondary school to school support programme for the Core Subjects at KS4 has been established.

Specialised subject challenge advisers have provided effective support and specialist guidance on a three tier basis:

- core subject networks for all the authority's departmental heads [meetings every term] in order to focus on leading the learning and teaching effectively; assessing, tracking and effective interventions and to check the readiness of departments in terms of the new specifications and indicators;
- grouping schools to collaborate on common elements requiring attention; and
- targeting support for specific schools.

Activities include:

- Collaborative programmes for teachers to develop innovation in the teaching of Mathematics at KS4;
- Developing the teaching of problem solving skills in Mathematics at KS4 and
- Sharing of best practice in terms of curriculum and pedagogy with heads of department in all core subjects in KS4.

Next Steps:

- Develop a new model of working with Secondary Schools that will increase the capacity of challenge and support at KS4.
- Ensure that the planning and development of the curriculum is aligned within KS3 and the new specifications for GCSE at KS4.
- Ensure that all schools are appropriately prepared to respond to the needs of the new Digital Competency Framework and the forthcoming new curriculum.

Assessment

GwE aim to ensure that there is greater consistency in assessment, standardisation and moderation across the region. Processes put in place over the past two years have led to a more consistent approach to assessment across the region. The standard of cluster moderation has improved significantly through the upskilling of assessment leads and training of practitioners. The quality of discussion around teacher assessment has strengthened with nearly all schools assessment profiles being of good standard. Those schools who have not provided sufficient evidence or have provided incorrect assessments have been notified and then supported to strengthen practice. Examples of good practice were reported on by Estyn while undertaking their Remit Report.

During the spring and summer terms GwE have taken steps to ensure that all schools and clusters across the region have robust systems in place to assure the quality, consistency and reliability of teacher assessment. This project has responded to the Welsh Government plan 'Strengthening confidence in teacher assessment; end-to-end process to ensure quality, consistency and reliability'. Lead assessment co-ordinators have been trained to deliver quality cluster moderation sessions and disseminate relevant information to all end of key stage teachers. There are 51 clusters across the region with GwE Challenge Advisers attending at least one cluster moderation meeting within each cluster. During this year's cluster moderation meetings, nearly all schools within the region were represented. Many clusters set aside half a day for moderation, therefore adhering to the national guidance in terms of time allotted for each meeting. Nearly all schools brought learner profiles/collection

of learner's works (mostly pupils' books) at the expected level and higher than expected level. Overall, there was an agreement on the best fit levels of most schools. A very few schools didn't bring sufficient evidence to award an end of key stage level. This tended to be in English and Welsh (oracy and reading). Overall the quality of the moderation of most clusters was good with a minority showing examples of very good practice. Where the process was most effective, there was strong leadership and organization where teachers shared a full range of evidence in pupils' books and visual records. The presence of Challenge Advisers and advisory Welsh teachers in the meetings has strengthened the process.

Challenge and Support Advisers have held standardisation workshops where Year 2 and 6 teachers have collaboratively levelled learners' work and planned next steps for pupils. A targeted approach was taken when identifying schools to attend these programmes. In addition to this, GwE have ensured that there is clear guidance to all schools on the standardisation and moderation process at Foundation Phase as well as disseminating information on the revised changes to Foundation Phase outcomes.

Next steps:

- Continue with collaborative planning, assessment and intervention training for end of key stage teachers to ensure a more consistent approach to levelling and standardisation of work across the region especially in the Foundation Phase.
- Most clusters have established effective moderation processes. Continue to develop this further by reviewing their own practice and possibly concentrating on 'borderline' pupils as recommended by Estyn in their recent thematic report. (The four regions did not recommend this this time).
- Ensure that all schools use the GwE regional statement as part of schools' own assessment processes and during cluster moderation.

Groups of learners including vulnerable learners

GwE have developed a number of strategies to support all learners, with additional focus on vulnerable learners such as children who are looked after and learners who are eligible for free school meals. Through reports from the Challenge Advisers we can identify much good practice across the region in both Primary and Secondary schools. The most effective examples include:

- Effective and robust tracking of vulnerable learners enabling schools to identify the most effective intervention/s to be used.
- Appropriate and time limited interventions in both literacy & numeracy which show clear impact in pupil achievement. This was particularly evident in the primary sector via the "analysis of the impact to date of KS2 Borderline interventions groups" report of impact.
- The implementation of "Growth Mindset" materials within primary & some secondary schools within the region and its initial impact on developing greater aspirations and emotional resilience amongst learners. Evidence within the pilot pre and post evaluation shows that learners are better focused, more positive in terms of self-awareness and more adaptable to the learning environment. We will target secondary schools during 2017-18.
- A good range of effective differentiated regional, cluster and school based training programmes aimed at supporting vulnerable learners. All programmes linked to the PDG of children who are looked after have been evaluated to show improvement in both learner's soft outcomes as well as key performance indicators within the school

and local authority. The programme, which is recognised for its good practise has been shared with other regional consortia's.

- Training courses delivered is of a good standard in terms of content and organisation, and are highly valued, with LACE coordinators and school staff praising the guidance provided and been given the opportunity to keep up to date and share effective practise. Teacher's especially welcomed the guidance on behaviour management and links with attachment theories.
- Support for LACE coordinators across the 6 local authorities to provide and deliver education support for looked after children has been good. During 2017-18 we will focus on having a consistent approach in terms of all LA's job descriptions.
- Nearly all schools across the region have a dedicated "champion" for identified vulnerable learners to ensure targeted support and provision is identified with the focus on raising educational attainment. We aim to share good practise across the region and ensure consistency of role and impact.
- The majority of schools and stakeholders have accessed GwE's website for further information on good practise case studies for vulnerable learners, in addition to regional and national information and research. We will develop this element further in line with Ysgol GwE strategy.
- The majority of secondary and primary schools have accessed trauma/attachment training for looked after children programme during 2016-17 that has resulted in teaching staff being more confident in dealing with learners and identifying suitable support and provision.
- In general Challenge Advisers work well in schools to undertake an analysis of their PDG grant and to identify the effectiveness on FSM learners achievements/data. However more robust systems is required to ensure consistency across the region and improve outcomes at KS4 and the Early Years indicator with children who are looked after.
- GwE have supported local authorities to good effect to identify pilot approaches that could lead to sector leading practise within the region in the role of an FSM LA champion. We will evaluate the approach and its impact with the authority during 2017-18 and roll out the good practise identified across the region.
- In one local authority learners who are in the More Able And Talented Group are supported to work towards higher outcomes in KS3 & 4 via a lead secondary practitioner role. We will work with the local authority to monitor both impact and achievements.
- Emerging good practise is the action based research "Head sprout" project utilised in a few schools to target parent's involvement to support learners to improve outcomes and engagement with schools.
- In a few schools Teaching Assistants have a better understanding on the impact / purpose of effective tracking and targeting to identify the appropriate support and provision for vulnerable learners. This will be further developed during the next business plan phase.
- In collaboration with the University of Wales, Bangor via a secondment post, GwE have supported 3 schools to start developing a new system to record, track and evaluate impact of interventions for FSM learners. This will be evaluated during 2017-18 in line with the company's evaluation process/cycle.

Next steps:

During 2017/18 GwE will be developing and implementing a revised strategy, taking into account the evaluation and impact of services during 2016/17 for vulnerable learners and in line with GwE's 2017-20 Business Plan and regional priorities and values. We have developed a regional business strategy /plan that have measuring performance indicators & impact, it includes the following actions:

- Continue to work towards a self-improving system where schools and Early Years providers will take increasing responsibility for their own progress and impact supported by the regional consortium.
- We will ensure Challenge Advisers have improvement target to support schools to further support Early Years Intervention / KS4 learners in terms of the PDG funding .We will look at key performance indicators as the baseline measure.
- Work with 6 Local Authorities to complete a robust business plan in regard to children who are looked after and the PDG.
- Robust partnership agreements in place to develop more effective strategic and operational partnership working with partners such as Public Health Wales, Betsi Cadwalader Health Board, North Wales Economic Ambition Board, key employers and the third sector. Support key transition planning within schools so that vulnerable learners are well supported at key transition stages, for example early years to foundation phase, primary to secondary.
- Support identified/targeted schools to use the Youth Engagement & Progression Framework early intervention tracking system. The LPT - Learner Profile Tool is a robust KS 3 & 4 tracking system, which includes eFSM as a key indicator at pupil level that will enable schools to monitor that all pupils achieve their potential.
- Develop robust systems for evaluating the impact of support/provision for vulnerable learners across the region in order to identify sector leading practise as part of the Ysgol GwE strategy.
- Develop a wide range of evaluation and impact activities to demonstrate distance travelled by learners in terms of soft and hard outcomes.
- Continue to work with all schools to ensure that their SDP / improvement plans have clear and challenging targets for improving outcomes for vulnerable learners e.g. children who are looked after, ALN, supported by coherent professional development plans.
- Strengthen the strategic use of evaluation reports and robust data to plan improvements of outcomes for learners and identify good practise and value for money.
- Work with Challenge Advisers to make effective contribution to the quality assurance of support for vulnerable learners within schools.
- Identify current leading practice and facilitate school-to-school support focussed on tackling the impact of deprivation on attainment. This will be strengthened by Challenge Advisers recognising excellent practice in their schools.
- Provide greater focus on facilitating joint, cross phase planning so that vulnerable learners are well supported at key transition points.
- Build on the good practise developed during the year, for example Growth Mindset programme and ensure we have robust evaluation systems in place to measure distance travelled by all learners within key indicators across all programmes. This will form the baseline for more in depth regional targets and tracking of emotional, social, health and wellbeing outcomes of learners.
- Analyse and map all current support, provision for vulnerable learners and identify good practise and any gaps in provision. We aim to produce an overall PDG eLearning prospectus that will identify good practise, bilingual bespoke support and provision that would be used by the Challenge Advisers, schools and LAs.
- Share good practice across the region, arrange a regional focus group for staff undertaking similar roles and responsibilities that will include stakeholder and key partners.

Support for leadership, management and governance

Professional Learning Programmes

GwE has developed a range of programmes for practitioners ranging from Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTA) to experienced Headteachers (Headteacher Development Programme - HDP). The development programmes promote school to school collaboration with effective practitioners from schools co-delivering sessions with GwE staff.. This further develops the notion of developing a self-improving system across North Wales.

GwE's Leadership Development Programmes aim to:

- embrace and action the Wales' Career Development Pathway
- build the capacity for leadership within all of our schools
- improve and advance teacher's leadership and management skills in North Wales schools
- grow and develop leadership practices for all staff in primary, secondary and special schools
- encourage, facilitate and provide opportunities for school to school collaboration
- contribute to the development of a self-improving system
- ensure effective workforce development

Overall satisfaction with the GwE Development Programmes (GDP) is very high with over 90% reporting that the programmes had effectively met their needs. 95% have been given more responsibilities as a result of attending specific programmes, with 25% being promoted to more senior posts. Candidates note that their knowledge of leading teams and their confidence have increased, with key benefits of the programmes including:

- enabling candidates to gain knowledge about leadership,
- giving candidates opportunities to reflect on their current practice, resulting in making changes and improvements;
- Improved and advanced leadership and management skills amongst practitioners;
- growth and development of leadership practices;
- increasing leadership capacity leadership across the region;
- a greater culture of learning being developed, aligned to the school's vision, that addresses the needs of all learners;
- improved standards in a specific area of school development/ improvement.

GwE has collaborated with Welsh Government and the other consortia whilst developing the programmes. Following a request from the National Leadership Development Board (NLDB) for consortia to lead on developing specific areas of the Career Development Pathway, GwE took the lead on developing effective professional development for middle leaders and Headteachers in post. An external consultant evaluated the middle leadership and Headteacher development programmes. Progress and lessons learnt have been shared nationally. As a result:

- 9 practitioners from ERW attended the GwE Middle Leadership Development Programme,
- ERW adopted the GwE 2016 / 2017 NPQH Development Programme; and
- CSC adopted elements of the Headteacher development programme.

Further programmes are offered on a more local basis depending on the specific needs of individual or groups of schools. A range of leadership workshops have been delivered to senior leaders in all primary schools in every hub, with a follow-up planned over the next term. The provision builds on the workshops delivered to target schools last year and

focuses on improving the quality of evaluation and improvement planning. Actions in 2015-16 have seen an increase in the percentage of schools in the Green and Yellow categories – an increase of 80.7% in 2015-16 to 84.8% in 2016-17. Furthermore, there has been an increase in the % of schools being awarded the top grades [A or B] in Stage 2 of the process – an increase of 85.3% in 2015-16 to 89.0% in 2016-17.

Estyn's primary inspection profile is also positive and indicates firm improvements. In 2015-16, 75.0% of the schools inspected [48 schools] were judged as being *good or better* for the quality of leadership. Of the inspections already undertaken in 2016-17 [20 schools], the figure has risen further to 80.0%. In 2015-16, the quality of leadership was judged as being *Unsatisfactory* in 4.2% of the primary schools inspected. In 2016-17, no school has been awarded an *Unsatisfactory* judgement.

Effective generic and tailored support programmes have been provided for GwE staff development. The development programmes include:

- A whole team approach, e.g., a programme for developing the coaching and mentoring skills of all challenge advisers;
- Extensive support for new challenge advisers;
- Training and development for external consultants who are deployed as challenge advisers;
- Training and development for subject challenge advisers.

As a result of the GwE Staff Development Programme, the consistency and quality of challenge and support to schools has considerably improved and there have been measureable improvements in individual challenge adviser's work.

To date over 1200 practitioners across North Wales have participated in GwE development programmes with impact to be seen at individual, school and system levels. Ultimately all programmes focus on developing individuals in order to ensure the best possible education and opportunities for children and young people, and therefore raise standards across each key stage.

Individual schools are also contributing to the Leadership Programme. These include:

- the Improving Teacher Programme (ITP) -
- the Outstanding Teacher Programme (OTP) -
- the Toyota Leadership Programme – “Lean Management in Schools” –

Next Steps:

- Continue to ensure an effective integration of national priorities to support local developments.
- Work with Universities to investigate the possibility of accrediting the development programmes;
- Future Continuous Professional Developments (CPD) need to address the five improvement objectives noted in Welsh Government's Qualified for Life 2:
 - Wellbeing
 - Teaching and Learning (Pedagogy)
 - Curriculum and Assessment which is underpinned by the Four Purposes described in Successful Futures
 - Leadership
 - A Self Improving system

- Further work is needed in order to target resources and ensure that bespoke development programmes address the needs of individual or groups of schools, especially in the secondary sector.
- Review the GwE Staff Development Programme to meet changes in future service reorganization;
- Further improve the evaluation and impact of the programmes.

Promotion and delivery of the Welsh Government's priorities

GwE work well to promote Welsh Government's priorities and have made good progress in understanding and initial delivery of the Successful Futures agenda. As a result, GwE are well placed to continue to promote and deliver against national priorities. There are an increased number of Pioneer schools across the GwE region and there is now a well-planned timely approach to engage with all schools using a range of effective communication channels.

GwE have enhanced the delivery of Successful Futures and work with all schools across the region by appointing:

- 1 x Senior Challenge and Support Adviser with strategic lead on a 12 month secondment;
- 1 x Challenge Adviser working on Pioneer schools/ Welsh BAC / Global Futures) Having focus on more than Welsh Government priority so as to ensure efficiencies of resources and avoid duplication of work; and
- 2 x seconded teachers (1.6 FTE) Pioneer Network Coordinators.

The role of the GwE Pioneer team is to support the work of the Pioneer schools and to engage and communicate effectively with all Pioneer-Partner schools across the region.

Impact can be demonstrated by further additional capacity within the region built in through GwE staff facilitating 4 of the 6 Areas of Learning and Experience national groups:

- i) Maths & Numeracy,
- ii) Health & Wellbeing,
- iii) Languages, Literacy & Communication and
- iv) Science & Technology.

This has resulted in an informed picture of the AOLE development across the GwE staff and regular discussion has allowed the sharing of consistent approaches and messages. Furthermore, a small team of Challenge Advisers attended the European Curriculum Conference in Stirling which has increased the awareness of the Successful Futures agenda and in particular how to approach curriculum development. Feedback systems within hubs are now in place and consistent messages sought.

A key role of the GwE Pioneer team is to develop a communication and engagement strategy for all schools across the region. As part of this, 9 members of GwE have successfully completed APMG Change Management training – Foundation level which proved highly practical and relevant to the Successful Futures agenda. Following on from this, the team is working with 3 Pioneer schools to develop a draft Change Delivery Framework. This will include a 1 day training programme of change management principles and include a practical toolkit and resources to support all schools to evaluate their readiness for the new curriculum.

Welsh Government officials have engaged in good discussion with GwE on the potential national role of change management and as a consequence have run bespoke 1 day training, 3 members of GwE Senior Management Team have attended this which has increased awareness of the scale of the education reform and allowed consistency of messaging to be discussed for schools and Challenge Advisers across the region.

The first of the curriculum engagement activities have taken place across the region with 6 Successful Futures workshops in all Local Authorities. 117 teachers from 100 schools across the region attended and evaluation reflects that 82% agreed that the workshop will be useful to their work. Most attendees valued the opportunity to network and to discuss their own school's work in light of national developments. The second series of workshops has taken place and an increased demand on places has been clear to see across the region with 206 teachers registered. This is an increase of 76% and whilst evaluation forms are being processed, initial feedback shows a clear increase in awareness of curriculum reform amongst teachers. The Pioneer team have also delivered awareness sessions during other planned sessions to NQTs and Literacy leaders so that a consistent message is heard.

All Pioneer schools within GwE have come together to work as one single network to improve communication between Professional Learning, Curriculum and Digital Learning. This has led to Pioneer schools reporting that they feel more aware of other strands of work and it is important that we continue with this as Pioneer schools' work progress and report back their findings and developments.

The number of Pioneer schools across GwE working to develop the new curriculum has increased significantly from 12 schools to 25 schools. This curriculum work has now moved to Strand 2 of development, namely looking to develop the 6 Areas of Learning and Experience and GwE now has a very good representation in all Areas in particular secondary schools in both English and Welsh mediums.

The work of the Digital Pioneer schools has also progressed very well and has been supported by the appointment of 4 x Digital Leads through the ICT regional network. There has been a wide range of both awareness raising sessions and training to support teachers on understanding and implementing the draft Digital Competency Framework (DCF) which became available to all schools in September 2016. Demand for DCF has been very high with over 900 school representatives signing up for past and future events published to date. Nearly all head teachers have attended events to receive an overview of the DCF and of the support that GwE can offer school. There has also been training offered to support staff within the Foundation Phase, using Support staff with recognised good practice within digital learning, to promote and share good practice further whilst developing competence and confidence of support staff. Across the region, 10 primary schools have also been appointed to become lead schools for online safety to develop their own schools further and then work to lead their cluster of schools. Currently, Digital Leaders are working with secondary ICT coordinators across the region to support planning and the implementation of the DCF across the curriculum. This is done through a series of 3 'half day' sessions. Secondary Digital Leads' 3 days training has been successful in establishing networks, so much so that the individuals have now requested and initiated further meetings in September 2017. 26 teachers have completed the Middle Leaders Development programme and 100% of the cohort report increased confidence in all areas including reviewing and evaluating impact on improved learner outcomes and ensuring value for money.

Professional Learning schools have been working on developing a range of pilot studies including working with OECD on the 7 dimensions of Schools as a Learning Organisation, Digital Learning Professional Learning offer and also trialling the new draft Professional Teaching Standards which will be out for consultation in March 2017. In November 2016,

GwE successfully held 3 sessions across the region where Professor Graham Donaldson was able to share his report and Professor Mick Waters was able to offer further information on how the Professional Teaching Standards fit into this agenda. Across the region, 175 people from schools, Local Authorities and GwE attended and again feedback from these sessions show that schools were inspired and motivated and furthermore, had a better understanding of the National priorities within their local context.

IMPACT: Professional Teaching Standards consultation has closed and the response shows whilst there is clear support for the ethos of the 5 dimensions contained within, some wording is unclear and changes have been made to the both teaching and leadership standards. Consortia are working collaboratively to ensure support for schools will be in place for Newly Qualified Teachers from September 2017.

Pioneer schools and Pioneer-Partner schools have also had the opportunity to develop effective pedagogy in a variety of ways. There has been work completed on developing training for Outstanding Teachers and Teacher Assistants, developing practice to share as part of GwE's training and Career Development Pathway and working in collaboration with Curee to use action research to create a route map on how to improve teaching and learning within the classroom working with specific groups of pupils.

GwE have been working collaboratively with the National Leadership Development Board (NLDB) developing the Career Development Pathway and advising WG regarding specific leadership areas that needed to be developed nationally. The remit of the NLDB has now finished, however, GwE are continuing to work closely with WG regarding leadership developments, in particular the developments and the priorities noted by the new Welsh Education Leadership Academy.

Next steps:

- As part of Successful Futures offer, work with all schools to appoint a Successful Futures lead within all clusters of schools across the region and plan for their first upskilling
- Continue to plan relevant and timely training sessions with Challenge Advisers and ensure regular updates to all Headteacher forums across the region
- Work collaboratively with the digital learning approach to ensure training is available to all school practitioners to include coding clubs and building capacity within the region to deliver at secondary school level
- To develop work on OECD Schools as a Learning Organisation and promote Survey 2 with the 78 schools across GwE invited to participate;
- To continue to work collaboratively with the new Welsh Education Leadership Academy; and
- Integrate the Successful Futures agenda regularly into the work of the wider GwE team.

9. LEADERSHIP

Since GwE's inception in 2013, there has been a significant increase in the expectations of the role of the Consortia. A further review of the National Model is imminent and it is clear that there is a commitment from Welsh Government to increase the breadth of responsibilities even further into the areas of Wellbeing, Equity and potentially Additional Learning Needs.

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. Primary

support and challenge is generally good and access to training and development programmes has improved and become clearer.

Overall, there is a growing strength in the primary sector with the Estyn inspection profile been generally good. This is down to two main factors:

- there is a significant 80:20 bias in the National Model as implemented in GwE towards the primary sector; and
- there is a significantly greater experience and successful track record at senior leadership level in the primary sector amongst members of the team.

However, the picture is different in the secondary sector. Due to the 80:20 entitlement model which is operating at present and the difficulty in recruiting full time good quality advisers, there has and is a lack of access to effective full time secondary Challenge Advisers. This is especially acute in priority areas such as leadership at different levels, Mathematics and English. This lack of capacity in the secondary sector hinders the ability of GwE to make immediate impact.

At present, Challenge Advisers feel that their roles are being too constrained by the present operational model. Too much of their time is tied up in the generic challenge adviser role working mainly on school categorisation. As a result, Challenge Advisers do not give strategic lead on educational matters that would benefit the delivery of the Consortia and individual LA priorities. As a result, individually and collectively they are not being developed sufficiently and their expertise is not being put to best use to lead on educational issues across hubs and the region.

A thorough knowledge of schools at leadership level has developed well over time. This is due in no small part to the National Categorisation process. However, there is a growing feeling that the categorisation process needs to be refined at a national level.

GwE's role has been unclear and inconsistent when appointing senior posts in schools. A regional protocol for appointing school staff has recently been approved by Joint Committee. This gives greater clarity to GwE's role in partnership with the LA to ensure that appointments are effective. There is currently no coherent regional strategy to upskill and develop working relationships with Governing Bodies and Management Boards.

The links between GwE and local authority services such as ALN and Inclusion especially in the area of raising standards of vulnerable learners and appropriate provision is underdeveloped. The introduction of a range of new legislation would merit a closer working and a more regional approach in this area.

Generally, there is now a good working relationship between all hub leads and individual LAs. The Challenge and Support Senior Adviser and deputy model is generally effective and provides a good balance to each hub. There is now a better flow of information being exchanged and in the best instances a clear understanding of one another's role in driving the improvement agenda. These meetings can be challenging in trying to find the best solution but the strength of the dialogue and the co-ownership of the improvement agenda are strong success factors in the best instances.

There are examples of good practice in each hub, but this practice is not shared effectively across the Region. As a result, there is too much variability in what GwE can offer schools depending on their geographical location and skills base of staff. The Regional Quality Assurance Board is beginning to bring regional consistency to individual hub practice through identifying best practice and sharing this across the Region.

Individual LA plans previously referred to as Annexes have improved and are generally good. There is significantly more detail identified to improve co-identified areas even down to individual school level. This has allowed greater focus to monitoring meetings and stronger accountability of individual challenge advisers for delivering. However, more work needs to be done on the overall monitoring process to ensure a consistent approach across the Region.

The scrutiny function has matured across the Region. Local scrutiny members have a better understanding of what is GwE's purpose and what it is trying to achieve. In the best instances members of a scrutiny committee have been out in schools seeking headteachers views about how well GwE is supporting and challenging schools. They have brought their findings back to the Committee and held a triangulation meeting with GwE hub lead and LA officers to identify strengths and areas to develop. As a result, further work will be undertaken as members will shadow GwE challenge advisers in different functions of their role to further deepen their understanding. Scrutiny members understanding of standards in schools and GwE provision in their schools have been developed through detailed reports from Senior Challenge and support Adviser. Their presence in these meetings has helped address perceptions and sort out any issues member wish to raise and help manage local expectations through explaining their role in detail.

In the past, the business plan did not meet the challenges to tackle priority areas. However, the business planning process has recently been greatly improved and is now much more robust. Senior leaders from within the consortium and the Local Authorities have greater responsibility and ownership over the process. The accountability structure is clearer and the monitoring processes more robust.

The present accountability structure at officer level is unclear. It is unclear which officer is the lead role regarding accountability to the Joint Committee. Lead Chief Executive, Lead Director and Managing Director all have roles but this is not distinguished clearly enough in day to day operation. This leads to a number of issues including a single point of contact with Welsh Government and lack of clarity how fellow Directors can be actively involved in shaping developing direction between meetings.

Links between national and local priorities are not clear. Much work needs to be done to ensure that future National developments support local priorities. Also, a clearer picture needs to be established on each individual school's journey to be ready for the challenges of Qualified for Life.

Wellbeing and Equity are being introduced into Qualified for Life 2. This potentially will lead to a review of the present National Model. This could include further elements of the present Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion services which currently sit within LAs.

In April 2016, GwE was inspected as part of a programme of inspections looking at the progress of Regional Consortia. The following were left as recommendations.

- 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.
- R2:** Improve the quality of evaluation in the delivery of school improvement services.
- R3:** Improve the rigour of the arrangements for identifying and managing risk.
- R4:** Ensure that business and operational plans contain clear success criteria and that progress against these is monitored effectively.

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

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.

Next steps:

- Restructure the organisation to address current shortcomings;
- Develop a distributive leadership model that will give more staff leadership roles and give them opportunities to develop their own skills;
- Change the present operating model to ensure that there is a clear focus on improving performance in secondary schools especially at Key Stage 4;
- Implement a service and individual performance management model that will help address the Estyn recommendations;
- Individual LAs to review their present capacity and ability to work in partnership with GwE to ensure performance is improved;
- Review the Governance structures alongside the next review of the National Model;
- Develop clarity between National and Local priorities so that they complement one another and do not compete;
- Further review the business plan so that GwE priorities are understood by all;
- Clarify the roles of staff especially senior staff so that priorities are delivered; and
- Review the operational business support model of GwE.

Partnership Working

Partnership working has improved with GwE now working in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders in order to raise standards and improve outcomes for all learners.

GwE has strengthened its partnership with the 6 Local Authorities. Work has already been undertaken to strengthen business planning within the Level 2 and Level 3 Business Plans. Priorities for improvement are clearly defined within the plans, whilst including challenging outcomes and success criteria has facilitated a more robust monitoring process. Resources are more effectively allocated across the region to ensure an accelerated pace of improvement.

GwE has moved rapidly to strengthen its collaboration, discussions and accountability lines with the Local Authorities. Fortnightly meetings are held between the lead officer in each LA and the LA senior link from GwE. This ensures an on-going discussion and challenge as to the effectiveness of the work undertaken by GwE. An additional element will also be introduced where senior officers of the authority will meet with GwE on a half termly basis to ensure that much more effective and timely decisions are taken about schools and their leaders where progress is of concern.

The Local Authorities have also established County Quality Boards (CQB) or Schools Causing Concern Boards to focus on schools in need of rapid improvement. These Boards meet regularly and include key officers of the LA and GwE. There is emerging evidence of impact but further work needs to be done to ensure that best practice across the region is embedded and that action impacts more rapidly on pupil outcomes. Discussions and information received from the half termly meetings with GwE and will be the main levers in determining whether the authority should issue warning notices and use its statutory powers of intervention. Each CQB reports to the Regional Quality Board where an exception report is produced for the Management Board.

The working relationship between GwE and Welsh Government has been strengthened further during this year as part of much of the Successful Futures work. All 4 regional consortia have worked collaboratively to offer a joint proposal to Welsh Government to work closely with the developments of the curriculum, in particular the new Areas of Learning and Experience where regional leads are working effectively with Welsh Government leads to strengthen the process. Professional Learning opportunities have also developed the working relationship with Welsh Government further. The OECD Schools as a Learning Organisation pilot work, the collaborative work on developing the new Professional Teaching Standards and the new Leadership Standards, and the revised NPQH model are all examples of this. Regional consortia have been instrumental in ensuring schools are part of these important developments. GwE have successfully facilitated communication between officials in Welsh Government and schools to ensure developments reflect current needs. Although attending meetings across Wales has been an important element of this work, use of video conferencing is actively encouraged to ensure best use of GwE resources.

Collaboration between consortia is developing effectively. A national approach with regional delivery model has been adopted with specific regional school improvement consortia work plans now operational focusing on:

- Business Planning and VfM
- Scrutiny
- Leadership development
- Successful Futures delivery
- Vulnerable Learners
- Communications
- Teacher Assessment

The relationship between GwE and Bangor University, Glyndwr University and Chester University is developing with GwE instrumental in the Universities proposed work regarding the Initial Teacher Education as they respond to the Welsh Government and John Furlong report - "Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers". Next steps include establishing a North Wales ITE institute.

The "Collaborative Institute for Education Research, Evidence and Impact" (CIEREI) between GwE and Bangor University will mean that both organisations work together to look at establishing effective evaluation systems within our organisation. As part of the collaboration, we are examining the development of active research regarding wellbeing elements, and also research into the elements of effective leadership.

Effective work is also on going between Bangor University and GwE regarding promoting evidence-based strategies to improve outcomes, for example, the NorthWORTS-SP project with Bangor University Schools of Psychology & Education.

GwE has collaborated closely with the Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE) to provide effective support on the development of research practice for a range of schools and selected Challenge Advisers from across the region. The collaboration successfully developed a route map of research and evidence based approaches. Practitioners have utilised the route map to inform their approaches to literacy across the curriculum, STEM subjects, improving feedback and increasing the level of appropriate challenge in lessons.

Effective collaboration has also been planned between the region and renowned educationalist Shirley Clarke. GwE are in the process of selecting 16 schools to collaborate closely with Shirley Clarke to develop evidence based approaches to the effective use of

formative assessment to transform learning. These Schools will develop their own action based research projects and will then disseminate their best practice the following year with a further 256 schools from across the region. Case studies of these evidence based approaches will then be made available for all schools.

Next steps:

- develop an information management system to analyse and inform best practice;
- appoint regional Quality and Data Lead;
- further develop a programme of LA scrutiny and accountability on the work of GwE.
- continue to develop working relationship to align local and national priorities;
- Continue to develop partnership working to develop action research opportunities for schools across the region
- Continue to strengthen links with wide range of partners in line with the development of the new curriculum and share resources with increasing number of schools

Value for Money

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.

Appendix 1 - Standards

Foundation Phase Summary

- The progress in the percentage of pupils achieving the Foundation Phase Indicator [FPI] between 2014 and 2016 is similar to the progress seen on national level.
- In 2016, GwE's performance in the CSI is lower than expected [3rd out of the 4 consortia], providing that the right to free school meals is an appropriate measure of deprivation. 5 out of 6 of the authorities perform lower than expected in relation to their free school meal ranking [FSM] (with Denbighshire performing better).
- In 2016 on the expected outcomes, a decrease is seen on regional level in the percentage achieving in the Welsh Language and Personal and Social Development indicators, and a slight increase in English Language and Mathematical Development. With the exception of Denbighshire, the authorities generally perform lower than their expected FSM rankings.
- On the higher outcomes [expected outcome +1], progress is seen in the English Language, Mathematical Development and Personal Development indicators, which is higher than or similar to the national progress. There was a decrease in the percentage of learners achieving in the Welsh Language indicator. The performance of individual authorities across the region varies significantly.
- The region's performance is below target for the FPI. With the exception of Welsh Language, performance is above target for the indicators on the expected and higher outcomes. Attention is required to ensure that targets are more challenging and aim for a performance that will rank authorities similarly to or better than their FSM ranking.
- However, performance is below target on the higher levels and especially for the language subjects.
- The performance of FSM learners varies. A slight increase is seen in the percentage of FSM learners achieving in the FPI, English Language and Mathematical Development (on the expected outcome and +1 outcome). However, there are still significant gaps between the performance of FSM and non-FSM pupils in several authorities across the range of indicators. In the FPI, the greatest gaps are seen in Anglesey, Flintshire and Conwy.
- The difference between the performances of the genders in the FPI is similar to what is seen on national level, with the greatest gap seen in Conwy and Denbighshire. However, the size of the gap between the performances of boys and girls across the range of indicators varies significantly in the individual authorities.

KS2 Summary

- The progress in the percentage of pupils achieving in the Core Subject Indicator [CSI] between 2014 and 2016 is higher than the progress seen on national level. However, there was less progress this year [0.6% compared to 0.9% nationally]. In 2016, the greatest progress was seen in Flintshire, with Anglesey the only authority where a decrease was seen.
- In 2016, GwE's performance in the CSI has fallen to 3rd position out of the four consortia. 3 out of the 6 authorities perform better or similarly to their FSM ranking. 2 out of the 6 authorities [Conwy and Wrexham] perform significantly lower than their expected FSM ranking.
- In 2016 on the expected levels, there is a decrease on regional level in the percentage achieving in Welsh and maths, with slight progress in English and no change in Science.

- In 2016 on the higher levels [level 5+], progress was seen in English, maths and science but only for science is this progress higher than the national progress. The region's performance on the higher levels is not as good as expected and this is an aspect that requires attention [Anglesey: Welsh and science; Conwy: English, maths and science; Denbighshire: maths and English; Flintshire: Welsh, maths and science; Wrexham: Welsh, English and maths].
- With the exception of Welsh on the expected level, the region's performance is close to or above target and projection. However, performance varies greatly on the level of individual authority. In general, more challenging targets need to be set to aim for performances that will rank the authorities similarly to or above their FSM rankings.
- Progress is seen in the percentage of FSM learners achieving in the CSI and in the 4 core subjects on the expected level. However, the performance of FSM learners on the higher levels is a matter requiring attention, with an increase in the gap between the performances of FSM and non-FSM learners in English, maths and science.
- On regional level, the difference between the performances of the genders in the CSI is slightly higher than on national level, with the greatest gap seen in Anglesey and Denbighshire. The regional gap is smaller on the higher levels for maths and science, but slightly greater for English and significantly greater for Welsh. The gap between the performances of boys and girls across the range of indicators varies greatly in the individual authorities.

KS3 Summary

- In 2016, further progress was seen in the percentage of pupils achieving in the Core Subject Indicator [CSI]. The region's performance continues to be the best out of the four consortia with each authority except Wrexham performing better than or similarly to their FSM ranking.
- In 2016 on the expected level, the region's performance is the highest in each of the core subjects despite a slight decrease in the percentage achieving in Welsh.
- In 2016 on the higher levels [level 6+], progress is seen in each of the core subjects. The regional progress is higher than the national progress for Welsh, but lower for the other core subjects. Performance in maths is the best out of the four consortia, with the other three core subjects second best. The authorities' performances are better or similar to their FSM rankings with the exception of: Anglesey in science; Gwynedd in Welsh [where numbers following Welsh Language are significantly higher than other authorities on national level]; Flintshire in science and Wrexham in English, maths and science.
- The region's performance is close to or above target on the expected level. However, performance on the higher levels is generally below target especially in the language subjects.
- Significant progress is seen in the percentage of FSM pupils achieving in the CSI. Progress is also seen in each of the 4 core subjects on the expected and higher levels. However, further attention is required to improve the performance of FSM learners in particular authorities where performance has fallen in some of the core subjects.
- In 2016 on regional level, the difference between the performances of the genders in the CSI is lower than the difference seen on national level. The greatest gap continues in Anglesey. The gap is smaller on regional level for the four core subjects on the expected level. On the higher levels, the regional gap is greater than the national gap for Welsh, English and maths, with science the only subject where the gap is smaller. The gap between the performances of boys and girls across the range of indicators on the higher levels varies significantly in the individual authorities.

KS4 Summary

Key Performance Indicators

The progress in the percentage of pupils achieving the Level 2 inclusive [L2+] is significantly higher this year [+2.0% or +3.0% without 'Other Eotas'] compared to the progress seen in 2015 [0.4%]. In 2016, each of the 6 authorities has made progress in the L2+, with the greatest progress seen in Gwynedd and Denbighshire.

Table 2a: % learners achieving in the Level 2 Inclusive Threshold [L2+] without 'Other EOTAS'

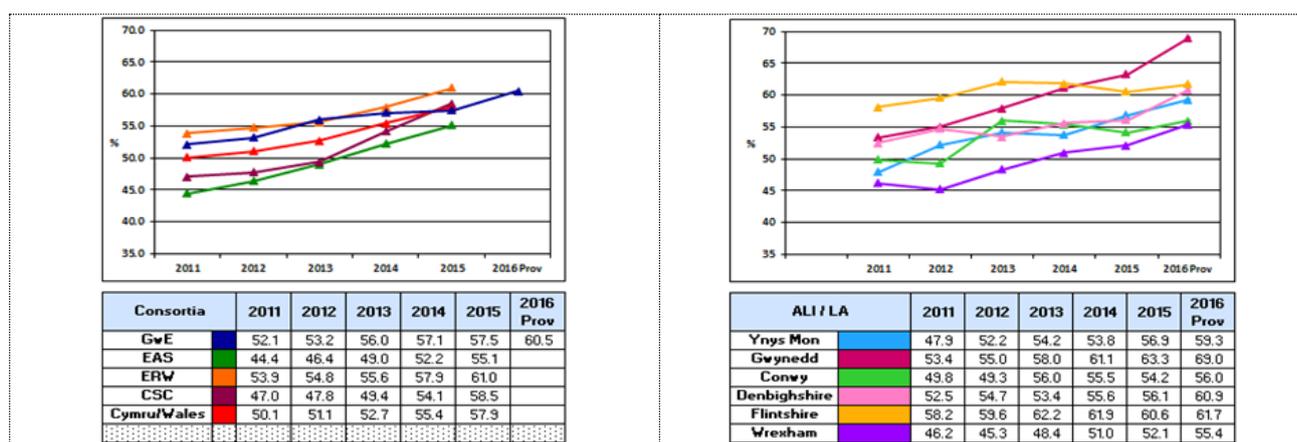


Table 2b: % learners achieving in the Level 2 Inclusive Threshold [L2+] with 'Other EOTAS'

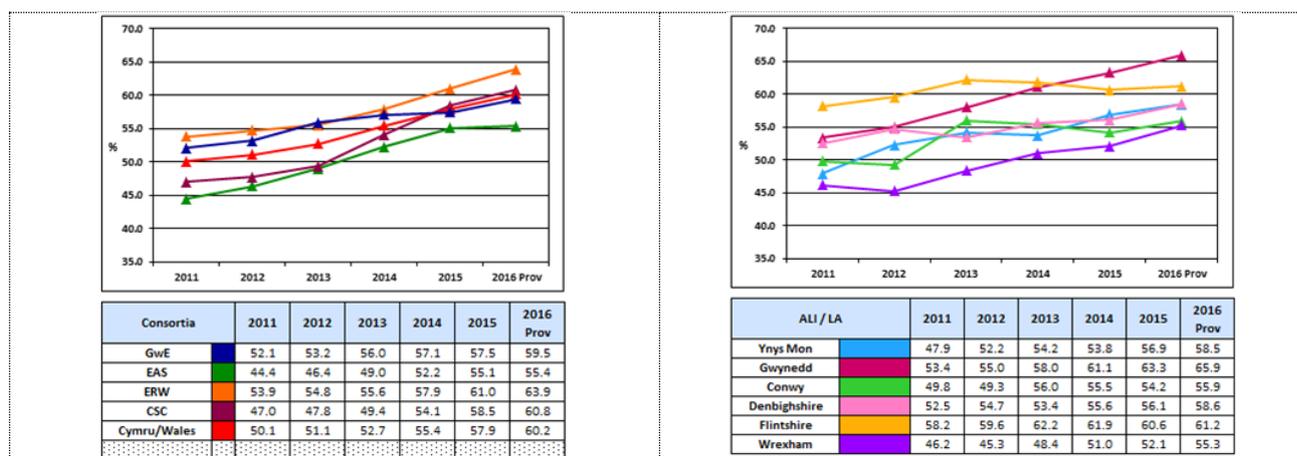


Table 3 ranks each LA's performance in the key performance indicators [Level 2+, Level 1, Level 2, Capped Points Score and 5A*-A] in comparison with all 22 Local Authorities across Wales.

Table 3: summary of the authorities' rankings in the key performance indicators at KS4

	2014					2015					2016				
	L2+	L1	L2	CPS	5A*-A	L2+	L1	L2	CPS	5A*-A	L2+	L1	L2	CPS	5A*-A
Anglesey (10)	14	6	9	3	10	12	8	16	9	13	14	5	15	11	10
Gwynedd (4)	5	1	4	1	2	5	1	6	1	3	4	1	9	4	8
Conwy (8)	11	8	8	11	8	18	14	14	17	16	17	17	16	17	19
Denbighshire (14)	10	11	2	5	9	14	17	10	11	8	13	20	14	16	14

Flintshire (6)	3	14	15	13	19	8	18	15	15	15	10	13	17	15	12
Wrexham (9)	18	21	21	20	20	20	20	22	21	20	18	19	21	18	20
GwE (1)	2	2	2	2		3	3	3	3		3	-	-	3	

The performance of individual local authorities varies considerably across the region. In 2016, Gwynedd and Denbighshire are the only two authorities that perform as expected in the L2+. Generally this year, Gwynedd, Denbighshire and Anglesey perform as expected in the majority of the indicators; Flintshire are below expectation in all, with Wrexham and Conwy significantly so. Improving standards in those local authorities that are performing lower than their comparative FSM ranking is a major priority.

Core Subjects

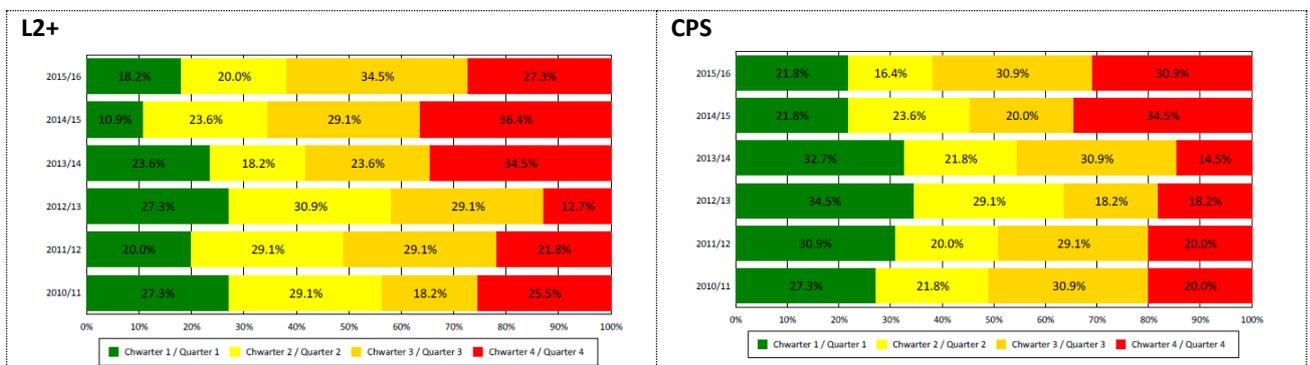
There has been strong progress in the percentage of pupils successfully achieving grades A*-C in English in Anglesey, Gwynedd and Denbighshire. However, only slight progress was seen in Conwy with a fall in Wrexham and Flintshire. There has been progress in the percentage of pupils successfully achieving grades A*-C in Mathematics in each of the 6 authorities. However, progress varies significantly between the authorities with the lowest progress in Conwy and Flintshire. The performance in Welsh First Language remains good across the region and is based on the number of candidates rather than all the year's cohort. However, there was a reduction in the percentage achieving A*-C in Welsh First Language in Gwynedd (the authority with the highest percentage of its cohort following Welsh First Language). The percentage of learners achieving Level 2 Science in the region is lower this year. This reduction is also apparent on a national level as more schools enter pupils to follow GCSE Science rather than vocational qualifications. The largest decrease in the L2 Science was in Conwy with a significant increase in Wrexham.

Performance of individual schools

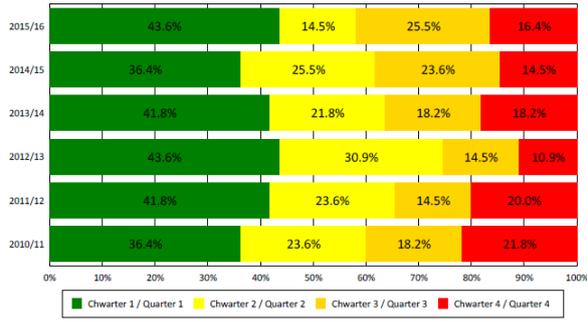
In 2016, around a third of all schools were within 1% of their final projections for the L2+; around two thirds achieved their projection or were within 5%; and only 6 schools (11%) where performance was 10% below their projection. This is an improvement on the situation in 2015 where too many schools were below their final projections.

Generally in 2016, too many schools across the region perform below the median in the FSM benchmarking for the key performance indicators (except at Level 1) and in English and mathematics. This is a cause for concern.

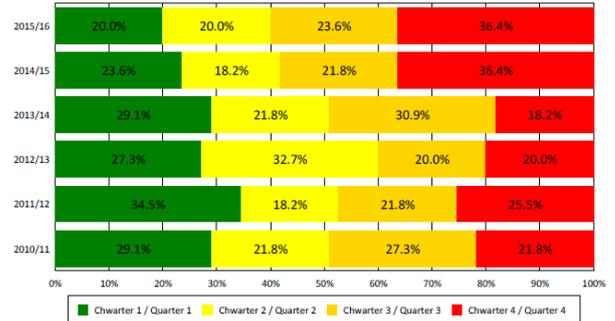
Table 5: distribution of school in the FSM benchmarking quartiles



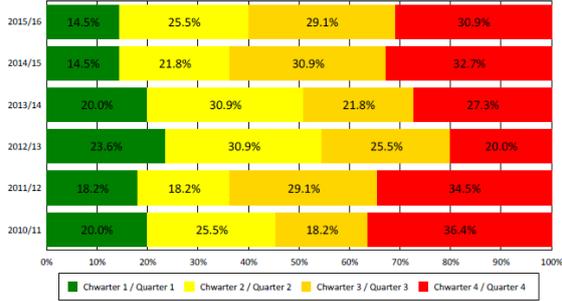
L1



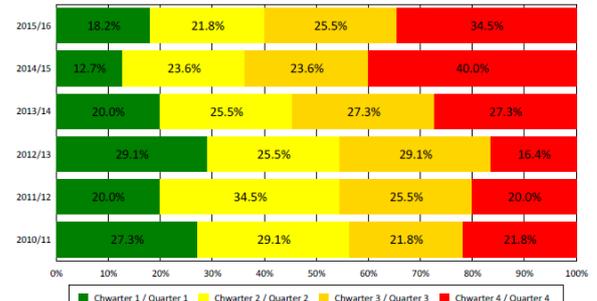
L2



English



Mathematics



The performance of individual schools varies significantly within and across Local Authorities. Whilst the FSM benchmarking profiles for Gwynedd, Denbighshire and Anglesey are generally as expected or better, the profiles for Conwy, Flintshire and Wrexham are a cause for concern with too many schools below the median in most if not all key indicators.

Appendix 2 Standards of Group of Learners

Performance of groups of learners

Boys and Girls

The performance of boys and girls continues to improve year on year in the main indicators at every key stage. However girls continue to perform better than boys and the gap between the performance of the girls and boys continues.

- In key stage 4, the L2+% of the girls has increased from 61.2% in 2015 to 64.2% in 2016 and is higher than the boys, also improving from 53.9% in 2015 to 55.1% in 2016. The gap has increased to 9.1% in 2016 compared to 7.3% in 2015. The gap between the performance of the boys and girls is much more obvious when looking at languages. The gap has increased in 2016 from 17.8% to 19.0% in English A*-C%, increased from 14.8% to 17.8% in Welsh compared to a gap of 2.7% in Science and 0.3% in Mathematics. The 2016 cohort was split 50.8% boys and 49.2% girls, compared to 2015 which was 51.7% boys and 48.3% girls.
- In key stage 3, the CSI % of the girls has increased from 90.2% in 2015 to 91.2% in 2016 and is higher than the boys which has also improved from 82.0% in 2015 to 84.5% in 2016. The gap of 6.8% is smaller than the gap of 8.3% in 2015 and 9.3% in 2014. The 2016 cohort had been split 51.1% boys and 48.9% girls compared to 50.4% boys and 49.6% girls in 2015.
- In key stage 2 the CSI % of the girls had increased from 91.1% in 2015 to 91.7% in 2016 and is higher than the boys which has also improved from 85.5% in 2015 to 86.0% in 2016. The gap of 5.7% is equal to the gap of 5.7% in 2015. The 2016 cohort was split as boys 51.3% and girls 48.7% compared to 52.1% boys and 47.9% girls in 2015.
- In the Foundation Phase, the CSI % of the girls has increased from 90.1% in 2015 to 90.4% in 2016 and is higher than the boys, also improving from 81.8% in 2015 to 82.2% in 2016. The gap of 8.2% is comparative with a gap of 8.3% in 2015. The 2016 cohort had been split as 50.8% boys and 49.2% girls compared to 50.7% boys and 49.3% girls in 2015.

Free School Meals (FSM)

The performance of pupils eligible for free school meals continues to increase from year to year with the gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils having fallen in the main indicators at every stage.

- In key stage 4, the L2+% of FSM pupils has increased in 2016 to 34.3% compared to 30.1% in 2015. The gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils has fallen from 32.9% in 2015 to 31.6% in 2016. This cohort represents 12.0% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 12.3% in 2015.
- In key stage 3 the CSI% of the FSM pupils has increased in 2016 to 73.3% compared to 67.6% in 2015. The gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils has fallen from 21.9% in 2015 to 17.2% in 2016. This cohort represents 14.8% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 14.9% in 2015.
- In key stage 2, the CSI% of the FSM pupils has increased in 2016 to 76.0% compared to 74.6% in 2015. The gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils has fallen from 16.2% in 2015 to 15.2% in 2016. This cohort represents 15.4% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 15.7% in 2015.
- In the Foundation phase the FPI% of the FSM pupils has increased in 2016 to 73.3% compared to 72.0% in 2015. The gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils has fallen from 16.9% in 2015 to 15.7% in 2016. This cohort represents 16.6% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 17.4% in 2015.

Looked After Children (LAC)

The numbers of looked after children across the region is small – between 0.6% and 1% of the cohorts in 2016 therefore performance can vary substantially based on the performance of one individual.

Overall, the performance of LAC continues to improve year on year in the main indicators. The exception is the Foundation Phase.

- In key stage 4, the L2+ % of LAC has fallen to 21.7% in 2016 compared to 22.4% in 2015. The gap between LAC and non-LAC has increased from 36.7% in 2015 to 40.6% in 2016. This cohort represents 1.0% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 0.7% in 2015.
- In key stage 3, the CSI % of LAC has increased to 67.8% in 2016 compared to 67.3% in 2015. The gap between LAC and non-LAC has increased from 19.2% in 2015 to 20.4% in 2016. This cohort represents 0.9% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 0.8% in 2015.
- In key stage 2, the CSI % of LAC has increased to 73.9% in 2016 compared to 58.9% in 2015. The gap between LAC and non-LAC has reduced substantially from 29.5% in 2015 to 15.0% in 2016. This cohort represents 0.6% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 0.8% in 2015.
- In the foundation phase, the FPI % of LAC has fallen to 74.5% in 2016 compared to 78.1% in 2015. The gap between LAC and non-LAC has increased from 7.8% in 2015 to 12.0% in 2016, but the gap was 38.0% in 2014 and 32.0% in 2013. This cohort represents 0.6% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 0.8% in 2015.

English as an additional language (EAL)

The number of pupils recorded across the region as having English as an additional language is fairly small – between 1.0% and 4.9% of the cohorts in 2016 therefore performance can vary substantially based on the performance of a small number of children. The performance of children with English as an additional language has fallen in 2016 in the main indicators for every stage.

- In key stage 4, the L2+% of EAL children has fallen to 28.6% in 2016 compared to 36.2% in 2015. The gap between those pupils recorded as having English as an additional language compared to those who aren't has increased from 23.7% in 2015 to 34.3% in 2016. This cohort represents 1.0% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 0.9% in 2015.
- In key stage 3, the CSI % of EAL children has fallen to 64.2% in 2016 compared to 66.7% in 2015. The gap between those pupils recorded as having EAL compared to those who aren't, has increased from 19.8% in 2015 to 24.1% in 2016. This cohort represents 1.2% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 1.2% in 2015.
- In key stage 2, the CSI % of EAL children has fallen to 80.5% in 2016 compared to 81.0% in 2015. The gap between those pupils recorded as having English as an additional language compared to those who aren't, has increased from 7.3% in 2015 to 8.5% in 2016. This cohort represents 2.1% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 2.1% in 2015.
- In the Foundation phase, the CSI % of EAL children has fallen to 82.3% in 2016 compared to 82.8% in 2015. The gap between those pupils recorded as having English as an additional language compared to those who aren't, has increased from 3.3% in 2015 to 4.3% in 2016. This cohort represents 4.9% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 4.3% in 2015.

Special Educational Needs – Pupils on a statement or School Action Plus

The performance of children on a statement or School Action plus in the main indicators varies across the stages.

- In key stage 4 the L2+% of children on a statement or School action plus has fallen to 18.0% in 2016 compared to 18.8% in 2015. The gap between those pupils on a statement or School action plus compared to those who aren't has increased from 44.9% in 2015 to 48.4% in 2016. This cohort represents 8.9% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 10.5% in 2015.
- In key stage 3, the CSI % of children on a statement or School action plus has increased to 47.8% in 2016 compared to 44.3% in 2015. The gap between those pupils on a statement or School action plus compared to those who aren't has reduced from 47.6% in 2015 to 45.6% in 2016. This cohort represents 11.9% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 11.7% in 2015.
- In key stage 2, the CSI % of children on a statement or School action plus has increased to 47.0% in 2016 compared to 45.9% in 2015. The gap between those pupils on a statement or School action plus compared to those who aren't has reduced from 49.0% in 2015 to 48.4% in 2016. This cohort represents 13.5% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 13.6% in 2015.
- In the Foundation Phase, the FPI % of children on a statement or School action plus has fallen to 38.7% in 2016 compared to 42.7% in 2015. The gap between those pupils on a statement or School action plus compared to those who aren't has increased from 48.0% in 2015 to 53.1% in 2016. This cohort represents 10.1% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 9.8% in 2015.

Performance according to Ethnic origin

The performance of the children of ethnic origin that's not White/British has generally improved in the main indicators, but are lower than the percentages seen of White/British pupils.

- In key stage 4, the L2+% of children of non-White/British ethnic origin has increased to 60.9% in 2016 compared to 60.2% in 2015. This cohort represents 4.6% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 4.3% in 2015.
- In key stage 3, the CSI % of children of non-White/British ethnic origin has fallen to 83.0% in 2016 compared to 84.9% in 2015 and is lower than the CSI % of White/British pupils which was 88.2% in 2016. The gap between those pupils who are White/British compared to those who aren't has increased from 1.4% in 2015 to 5.3% in 2016. This cohort represents 4.7% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 4.4% in 2015.
- In key stage 2, the CSI % of children of non-White/British ethnic origin has increased to 86.1% in 2016 compared to 86.0% in 2015 and is lower than the CSI % of the White/British pupils which was 89.0% in 2016. The gap between those pupils who are White/British compared to those who aren't has increased from 2.3% in 2015 to 2.9% in 2016. This cohort represents 5.5% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 4.9% in 2015.
- In the Foundation Phase, the FPI % of children of non-White/British ethnic origin has increased to 83.6% in 2016 compared to 83.0% in 2015 and is lower than the CSI % of the White/British pupils which was 86.6% in 2016. The gap between those pupils who are White/British compared to those who aren't has reduced from 3.1% in 2015 to 3.0% in 2016. This cohort represents 7.8% of the full cohort in 2016 compared to 6.8% in 2015.

Gypsies and Travellers

- In key stage 4 in 2016, there were 5 year 11 pupils in the cohort across the region. The L2+% in 2016 fell to 20.0% compared to 33.3% in 2015 and 20% in 2014.
- In key stage 3 in 2016, there were 8 pupils in the cohort across the region. The CSI % fell from 57.1% in 2015 to 50% in 2016.
- In key stage 2 in 2016, there were 14 pupils in the cohort across the region. The CSI % fell from 64.3% in 2015 to 57.1% in 2016.
- In the Foundation Phase in 2016, there were 22 pupils in the cohort across the region. The FPI % fell from 50.0% in 2015 to 45.5% in 2016.

Most able and talented

- In key stage 4, the % obtaining 5A*-A fell in 2016 to 14.2% compared to 15.1% in 2015. If EOTAS pupils are included this % falls to 13.9% which is lower than the national % of 15.8%.
- In key stage 3, the % attaining level 6 or higher in English increased from 54.5% in 2015 to 57.7% in 2016 and is higher than the national % of 56.2% with GwE performing highest but one out of all the regions. Welsh increased from 59.8% in 2015 to 61.3% in 2016 and is higher than the national % of 57.2%. GwE is the second top performer of all the regions. Science increased from 60.3% in 2015 to 63.8% in 2016 and is higher than the national % of 62.9% with GwE performing highest but one out of all the regions. Mathematics increased from 62.1% in 2015 to 64.4% in 2016 and is higher than the national % of 62.7% with GwE performing best out of all the regions.
- In key stage 2, the % attaining level 5 or higher in English increased from 40.2% in 2015 to 40.8% in 2016 and is lower than the national % of 42% with GwE performing third best out of all the regions. Welsh fell from 38.4% in 2015 to 37.1% in 2016 and is lower than the national % of 38.0% with GwE being the highest but one performer of all the regions. Science increased from 40.8% in 2015 to 42.3% in 2016 and is lower than the national % of 42.5% with GwE performing third best out of all the regions. Mathematics increased from 40.8% in 2015 to 42.1% in 2016 and is lower than the national average of 43.2% with GwE performing third best out of all the regions.
- In the Foundation Phase, the % attaining Outcome 6 or higher in English increased from 33.6% in 2015 to 36.2% in 2016 and is equal with the national % with GwE performing highest but one out of all the regions. Welsh fell from 36.9% in 2015 to 34.8% in 2016 and is lower than the national % of 36.2% with GwE's performance being last of all regions. Personal Development increased from 58.1% in 2015 to 61.6% in 2016 and is higher than the national % of 58.9% with GwE performing best out of all the regions. Mathematical Development increased from 33.8% in 2015 to 35.9% in 2016 and is lower than the national % of 36.4% with GwE performing third best out of all the regions.

Appendix 3 – ESTYN Inspection Outcomes: September 2015- March 2017

During 2015-16, a total of 61 Educational Establishments (x48 Primary / x9 Secondary / x1 All Age / x1 Special / x2 PRU) within the GwE region were inspected by ESTYN, of these:

- 39 schools (64%) were judged as good or better on their current performance. This is an improvement of 1.7% when compared with the results for 2014-15 (x77 schools inspected).
- 2 schools (3.3%) were judged as Unsatisfactory on their current performance – both schools were secondary schools. In 2014-15, x1 school (Secondary) was judged as unsatisfactory.
- 42 schools (68.8%) were judged as good or better on their prospects for improvement. This is an improvement of 3.9% when compared with the results for 2014-15.
- 6 schools (10%) were judged as Unsatisfactory on their prospects for improvement – two of these were primary schools, two were secondary schools and both PRU's. In 2014-15, 5 schools were judged as unsatisfactory (3 Primary, 2 Secondary).
- Over one third of schools (x21) were not placed in any 'follow-up' category. In 2014-15, 40% of schools (31) inspected were not placed in any 'follow-up- category,
- Over 10% of schools (7) were placed in either 'Significant Improvement' or 'Special Measures' categories, with almost a quarter of secondary schools (x 2) being placed in 'Special Measures'. In 2014-15 x6 (3 Primary and 3 Secondary) schools were placed in either 'Significant Improvement' or 'Special Measures'
- Standards (KQ1) were judged good or better in 39 schools (64%). This is an improvement of 1.7% when compared with the results for 2014-15.
- Provision (KQ2) was judged good or better in 46 schools (75.8%). This is an improvement of 3.1% when compared with the results for 2014-15.
- Leadership (KQ3) was judged good or better in 42 schools (68.8%). This is an improvement of 2.6% when compared with the results for 2014-15.
- Standards and Leadership was deemed as Unsatisfactory in almost a quarter of Secondary schools inspected

The inspection profile for Primary schools is positive and indicates sound improvements. Of the schools inspected (48 schools), 70% or more were judged as being good or better in all key judgements. These results compare favourably with all Wales results. The profile for Secondary schools is less positive with only 44.4 % of schools inspected (9 schools), judged as being good or better in all key judgements. These results are better than the all Wales results, however the percentage of Secondary schools deemed unsatisfactory for four of the five key judgments is significantly higher than the all Wales results

2015-16	Primary				Secondary			
	Good or better		Unsatisfactory		Good or better		Unsatisfactory	
	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales
Current Performance	70.9%	72%	0%	1%	44.4%	39%	22.2%	12%
Prospects for Improvement	75.0%	72%	4.2%	3%	55.5%	54%	22.2%	12%
Standards	70.9%	72%	0%	1%	44.4%	39%	22.2%	12%
Provision	77.1%	78%	0%	1%	77.8%	67%	0%	3%
Leadership	75.0%	73%	4.2%	3%	55.5%	54%	22.2%	12%

During 2016-17 (up to and including February 2017), a total of 24 Educational Establishments (22 Primary, 2 Secondary) were inspected by ESTYN and their inspection reports published, of these:

- 19 schools (79.2%) were judged as Good or better on their current performance, an improvement of 15.2% when compared with 2015-16
- 1 school (Secondary) was judged as Unsatisfactory on their current performance
- 18 schools (75%) were judged as Good or better on their prospects for improvement, an improvement of 6.2% when compared with 2015-16
- no school was judged as Unsatisfactory on their prospects for improvement
- 75% of schools (18) were not placed in any 'follow-up' category.
- One school (Secondary) has been placed in 'Significant Improvement' and no school has been placed 'Special Measures' category
- Standards (KQ1) were judged good or better in 19 schools (79.2%), an improvement of 15.2% when compared with 2015-16
- Provision (KQ2) was judged good or better in 20 schools (83.3%), an improvement of 7.5% when compared with 2015-16
- Leadership (KQ3) was judged good or better in 18 schools (75%), an improvement of 6.2% when compared with 2015-16
- No school was deemed Unsatisfactory for Provision and Leadership

Of the Primary inspections already undertaken in 2016-17 [20 schools], the figures for all Key Judgments have risen significantly.

2016-17	Primary				Secondary			
	Good or better		Unsatisfactory		Good or better		Unsatisfactory	
	2015-16	2016-17	2015-16	2016-17	2015-16	2016-17*	2015-16	2016-17*
Current Performance	70.9%	81.8%	0%	0%	44.4%	50%	22.2%	50%
Prospects for Improvement	75.0%	77.2%	4.2%	0%	55.5%	50%	22.2%	0%
Standards	70.9%	81.8%	0%	0%	44.4%	50%	22.2%	50%
Provision	77.1%	86.4%	0%	0%	77.8%	50%	0%	0%
Leadership	75.0%	77.2%	4.2%	0%	55.5%	50%	22.2%	0%

*only two Secondary schools

Of the schools inspected during 2015-16 (61) and 2016-17 (24), the number of schools placed in 'follow-up' categories was:

'follow-up' category	LA monitoring		ESTYN monitoring		Significant Improvement		Special Measures	
	2015-16	2016-17	2015-16	2016-17	2015-16	2016-17	2015-16	2016-17
		19	0	14	5	4	1	3

Currently, 43 schools within the region are in 'follow-up' category:

'follow-up' category	LA monitoring	ESTYN monitoring	Significant Improvement	Special Measures
	14	22	4	3

Three of the seven schools in 'Significant' Improvement' or 'Special Measures' are Secondary schools and two are Primary schools. Two PRU's are in 'Significant Improvement'.

During 2016-17, 26 Schools (7 Secondary, 19 Primary) were removed from ESTYN 'follow-up' categories.

The ESTYN inspection profiles for the six Local Authorities (with regard the schools and PRU's inspected during 2015-16) within the GwE region is as follows:

2015-16	Current Performance		Prospects for Improvement		Standards		Provision		Leadership	
	Good or better	unsatisfactory	Good or better	unsatisfactory	Good or better	unsatisfactory	Good or better	unsatisfactory	Good or better	unsatisfactory
Ynys Môn (x8)	63%	0%	50%	25%	63%	0%	63%	13%	50%	25%
Gwynedd (x13)	84%	0%	92%	0%	84%	0%	92%	0%	93%	0%
Conwy (x9)	56%	0%	78%	11%	56%	0%	78%	0%	78%	11%
Denbighshire (x8)	63%	0%	63%	0%	63%	0%	75%	0%	63%	0%
Flintshire (x14)	57%	14%	57%	14%	57%	14%	64%	0%	57%	14%
Wrexham (x9)	56%	0%	67%	11%	56%	0%	78%	0%	67%	0%
Wales (x223)	65%	3%	67%	6%	65%	3%	74%	2%	68%	6%

- In Gwynedd, of the schools inspected during 2015-16, the percentage achieving 'Good or Better' for all key judgements is significantly higher than the results for Wales
- In Flintshire, of the schools inspected during 2015-16, the percentage achieving 'Good or Better' for all key judgements is significantly lower than the results for Wales
- In the schools inspected in Flintshire and Conwy, Wrexham and Flintshire the percentage of schools where Current Performance and Standards were deemed Unsatisfactory is significantly lower than the results for Wales
- In the schools inspected in Môn, Flintshire and Conwy, the percentage of schools where leadership was deemed Unsatisfactory is significantly higher than the results for Wales