



Tuag at Ragoriaeth  
Towards Excellence

# GwE ANNUAL REPORT

## 2019 – 2020



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## 1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Welsh Government alongside several partners and experts has undertaken a fundamental review of the accountability system for schools in Wales.

Findings highlighted that the existing system and its use of performance measures has many negative unintended consequences, such as:

- narrowing curriculum choice;
- disproportionate focus on particular groups of learners;
- the way in which benchmarking is used driving competition between schools rather than encouraging collaboration;
- an increased and unnecessary workload for teachers and others in the system, without the necessary impact or benefit for learners; and
- an aggregation of data for *accountability* purposes where it was designed for *improvement* purposes.

As a result, schools have heard conflicting messages from the various parts of the system about what matters. This has often diverted effort from learning and teaching and moved us towards a culture of compliance and bureaucracy.

A joint communication from **Welsh Government, the WLGA and Estyn** to Chairs of Scrutiny, Cabinet Members, Directors of Education, Chief Executive Officers, and Managing Directors of Regional Education Consortia, published on **16 July 2019** stated that:

*“It is counter-productive for schools to be placed under disproportionate pressure on the basis of individual measures. It is not in the interest of school improvement and risks undermining the ongoing change in culture that we are working together to achieve. We expect local authorities and regional consortia to support schools to make appropriate decisions about their curriculum to avoid narrowing choice for learners.*

*Collectively, we have agreed that this is the right approach to take and strongly advise you to use a broad range of un-aggregated data and information to enable you to discharge your duties when reporting on school performance. Evaluating the performance of individual schools rather than generating aggregated data at local authority level will be more helpful to supporting and challenging individual schools with their improvement.”*

The section on performance across North Wales in this report will adhere to this guidance.

### **Reporting on Teacher Assessments (Foundation Phase to Key Stage 3)**

National changes in the reporting of teacher assessments has been introduced over the past two years. It supports the key objectives of the Welsh Government document: ‘Our National Mission,’ in delivering robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements to support a self-improving system.

International evidence suggests that for all learners to achieve their full potential, there should be a coherent assessment and accountability system. The primary purpose of assessment is to provide information that guides decisions about how best to progress pupils’ learning.

There is now a greater focus on the use of data in school self-evaluation. In the reformed system, schools are evaluated according to the difference they make to the progress of every child.

Data and information that is available to schools to measure this progress includes: end of key stage data, baseline entry data, pupil progress data over time, value added data between baseline and key stages, reading and numeracy diagnostic test data, action research and specific testing data as well as ESTYN inspection outcomes.

Data that has traditionally been aggregated upwards for comparison has been removed. All benchmarking, comparisons with other establishments, reading and numeracy test data, placing schools and Local Authorities in rank order is no longer acceptable or possible. As of last year, the only comparative data available to Local Authorities in these key stages are the National averages for end of these key stages.

In addition, the Minister for Education published a statement on school performance targets in June 2019. She stated:

*'....., I want to be absolutely clear that school targets should only be used to support self-evaluation and should not be aggregated up to a local authority measure of performance to hold schools to account.'*

These recent changes in assessment reporting requirements will strengthen the accuracy of assessment. It will reduce inflated levels and gaming and will ensure that every school looks closely at every learner and not just borderline learners who influence whether a school achieves a narrow measure or not.

National arrangements will have a renewed emphasis on Assessment for Learning as an essential and integral feature of learning and teaching; it is a significant move away from gathering information about young people's performance on a school-by-school basis for accountability purposes.

Teacher assessment data and National Reading and Numeracy Test data at a school, local authority and consortia level will no longer be published. This applies to the Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 in all maintained primary and secondary schools.

Arrangements that will remain:

- National Reading and Numeracy Tests and Teacher Assessments for individual learners, however no national school level benchmark information will be published.
- Headteachers are required to report school performance to parents and adult learners each school year.
- Governing bodies are required to produce annual reports to parents, school prospectuses, school development plans, and set performance and absence targets.
- Schools, governing bodies and local authorities still have access to their own data (alongside national level data) for self-evaluation purposes.
- The Welsh Government continue to collect individual learner level data to ensure transparency at a national performance level and to inform policy.

Arrangements that will change:

- No comparative information about teacher assessments and tests, in relation to other schools within a local authority or 'family of schools', will be published.
- The Welsh Government no longer produce or publish School Comparative Reports and All Wales Core Data Sets for schools and local authorities in respect of teacher assessment data.

- The My Local School website no longer includes teacher assessment data below the national level (from 2018).

### Changes to Areas of Learning in the Foundation Phase

In October 2014 the Foundation Phase Areas of Learning (AoL) for Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and Mathematical Development were revised to align them with the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) as well as make them more demanding. In line with this the Foundation Phase outcomes were recalibrated to align with the increased expectations of the revised Areas of Learning.

The revised AoLE were introduced on a statutory basis from September 2015. This means that the cohort of children that started Reception in September 2015 were the first children to be formally assessed against the revised outcomes at the end of the Foundation Phase in the summer of 2018. Comparisons of Foundation Phase outcomes with previous years at school level should, therefore, be avoided as they are not measured on a comparable basis.

### Reporting on KS4 results

New interim KS4 measures have been introduced for 2019 as part of the significant education reform programme in Wales.

National data capture for individual schools will be based on first entry results. The data provided regionally for individual school and LAs will also be based on first entry results.

JCQ/WJEC have published their data and press release based on the ‘best outcome’ obtained by 16 year olds across both the November and summer series. There will be differences between first entry and best outcome data.

As a result, across several indicators, it will not be possible to compare 2019 figures with previous performance.

The table below shows the new interim measures and the methodology used for calculating. It also demonstrates the key differences with previous years.

Interim Measure	How it is calculated	Differences from previous years, and why comparisons cannot be made
Capped 9	<p>The Capped 9 Points Score is a performance measure calculating the average of the scores for the best awards for all individual pupils in the cohort, capped at a specified volume of GCSEs or equivalent qualifications.</p> <p>Three of the nine slots require the awards of specific subjects and qualifications in order to contribute any points towards the measure. These slots are each one GCSE in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Only a pupil's first entry will count</li> <li>✓ WJEC Science GCSE only</li> </ul>

	<p>size, specifying requirements in literacy, numeracy and science GCSEs only.</p> <p>The best grade from any of the literature or first language Welsh or English GCSEs can contribute towards the literacy slot.</p> <p>The best grade from either of the mathematics or mathematics – numeracy GCSEs can contribute towards the numeracy slot.</p> <p>The best grade from a science GCSE can contribute towards the science slot (currently this is limited to awards in the WJEC suite of science GCSE qualifications currently available to learners: biology, chemistry, physics, science (double award) applied science (double award) and applied science (single award).</p> <p>The remaining six qualifications will include the pupil's best performance in either GCSE and/or vocational equivalent.</p>	
Literacy measure	Calculating the average of the scores for all individual pupils in the cohort, taking the best grade from any of the literature or first language Welsh or English GCSEs awarded to a pupil.	New 2019 measure, first entry only will count, with Literature also accepted within this measure
Numeracy measure	Calculating the average of the scores for all individual pupils in the cohort, taking the best grade from either of the mathematics or mathematics – numeracy GCSEs awarded to a pupil	New 2019 measure, first entry only will count
Science measure	Calculating the average of the scores for all individual pupils in the cohort, taking the best grade from a science GCSE awarded to a learner (currently this is limited to awards in the WJEC suite of science GCSE qualifications available to learners: biology, chemistry, physics, science (double award) applied science (double award) and applied science (single award) - these are identified as being able to contribute towards science measures.	New 2019 measure, first entry only will count
The Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate measure	Calculates the average of the scores for the Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate awards for all individual learners in the cohort, whether it is the Foundation (Level 1) or the National (Level 2) award.	Reported separately as a main indicator for the first time in 2019

In this context, the data should be analysed on a local level and as a starting point to question local priorities.

Although 2019 data is currently available on historical performance measures (L1, L2, L2+ and 5A\*-A), comparison with previous years is not valid because of the first entry counting rather than best outcome.

### Scrutinising Individual School Performance

Regular Local Quality Board meetings are held between the GwE Core Lead and each LA. Any schools causing concern are discussed and any strengths and areas for improvement are noted. This links to the regular meetings held by the core lead with Supporting Improvement Advisers to discuss school progress. The regular communication between LA and GwE officers ensures shared intelligence about the capacity to improve of schools, and where concerns are identified that all parties work in partnership to review the standards and provision in the school and to set and monitor clear targets for improvement.

Each LA has its own monitoring processes to scrutinise the performance of individual schools. This includes the use of 'Accelerated Improvement Boards' for school's causing concern.

### Schools Causing Concern

All schools are on an improvement journey and thus require differentiated and appropriate support and challenge to varying degrees. A few schools will require more intense targeted intervention.

The label 'schools causing concern' is very wide ranging and in its broader term has not been clearly defined in national guidance. For our own purpose within GwE, we have come up with the following definitions:

- Schools that need support to maintain or improve upon standards [i.e. moving from 'good' to 'excellent' or 'coasting schools'];
- Schools that are improving but need further support to sustain their improvement trajectory and/or further reduce within school variability;
- Schools that need more specific targeted support and intervention to prevent them being a cause of significant concern;
- Schools that have been identified as causing significant concerns and/or are in a statutory category.

GwE and the local authorities have an overall good track record in effectively supporting schools and specifically those causing concern. All secondary schools have a bespoke 'Support Plan' which ensures that GwE support is closely aligned with their SDP priorities. This allows for more effective deployment of resource, regional expertise and best practice.

High challenge and support is targeted in a timely and effective approach leading, in most instances, to an acceleration of the improvement journey in the identified schools, and, where relevant, their removal from Estyn follow-up category.

Local Quality Standards Board meetings are held on a regular basis between LA and GwE senior officer and used to share information around school performance and progress and to agree on any required adaptations to support plans. Interim Accelerated Improvement Boards provide challenge and

intervention to those schools in serious categories of concern. Where concerns remain, escalated action is taken which could include the use of powers of intervention as defined by national guidance.

### Current regional situation

The primary and special school inspection profile has been continuously strong and compares well with the Estyn profile for schools across Wales. All primary schools placed in a category over the past three years have been removed promptly as a result of the targeted high challenge and support.

Standards in the secondary sector remains a cause for concern. Over the past 18 months, GwE has:

- re-profiled its service to ensure that additional resource is targeted towards the secondary sector;
- strengthened its team of link secondary SIAs to ensure relevant experience and expertise;
- ensured all secondary schools have access to a generic and bespoke programme of support;
- facilitated access to curriculum, MAT, post 16 and subject networks to disseminate good practice;
- adopted a targeted 'wave' support for ensuring continued improvements in core subjects;
- enhanced the GwE offer of professional development opportunities [and especially for experienced, new and potential leaders of the future];
- led the *Assessment for Learning* regional initiative to improve teaching and learning with Shirley Clarke;
- ensured further support for head teachers via strategic forum meetings and for participating schools through the *Excellence and Innovation* forum;
- supported 12 regional schools to research and address in-school variance by improving data tracking and intervention. Lessons extracted from the pilot will be transferable to all schools across the LA;
- provided financial support for a more diagnostic approach to securing improvements at KS4 English and Mathematics via PIXL;
- provided specific training at behest of schools for curriculum middle leaders and pastoral leaders;
- supported bespoke training for targeted schools and departments to improve aspects of the teaching and learning, e.g., with Tom Sherrington, Olevi ITP and OTP.
- Intensify the support and guidance to secondary sector schools in a specific authority as part of post-inspection implementation

In addition to the bespoke support delivered for secondary schools in the core subjects, generic regional and local guidance has also been available via subject networks and forums. Some of the key areas addressed include:

- English: A Level study support, Accelerated Reader training, developing literacy across the curriculum, improving oracy to support writing, improving tracking and intervention at KS4, improving standards of writing at KS4, guidance on MAT provision in English, development of resources e.g. *'Fix-it' resource to support the repair work required to address identified weak skills, Mastery Packs for KS4, Gothic SOW with grammar focus for Y7*
- Mathematics: leadership guidance and up-dates for new curriculum, sharing of best practice from Whiterose Maths Academies on the development of pedagogy within their cluster of schools, developing departmental pedagogy by 'deepening thinking', developing pedagogy at A level, supporting collaboration between numeracy co-ordinators to identify best practice in developing skills across the curriculum, develop leadership of numeracy co-ordinators who are within the first two years of being in post, developing understanding of the changes to the Numeracy Procedural tests.
- Science: excelling at GCSE Science – sharing best practice, sharing successful intervention strategies at KS4, developing scientific literacy – evidence based Research from Bangor University, developing strategies to engage learners in Science, working with schools to build scientific knowledge and supporting pupils in learning scientific concepts, developing reading skills in

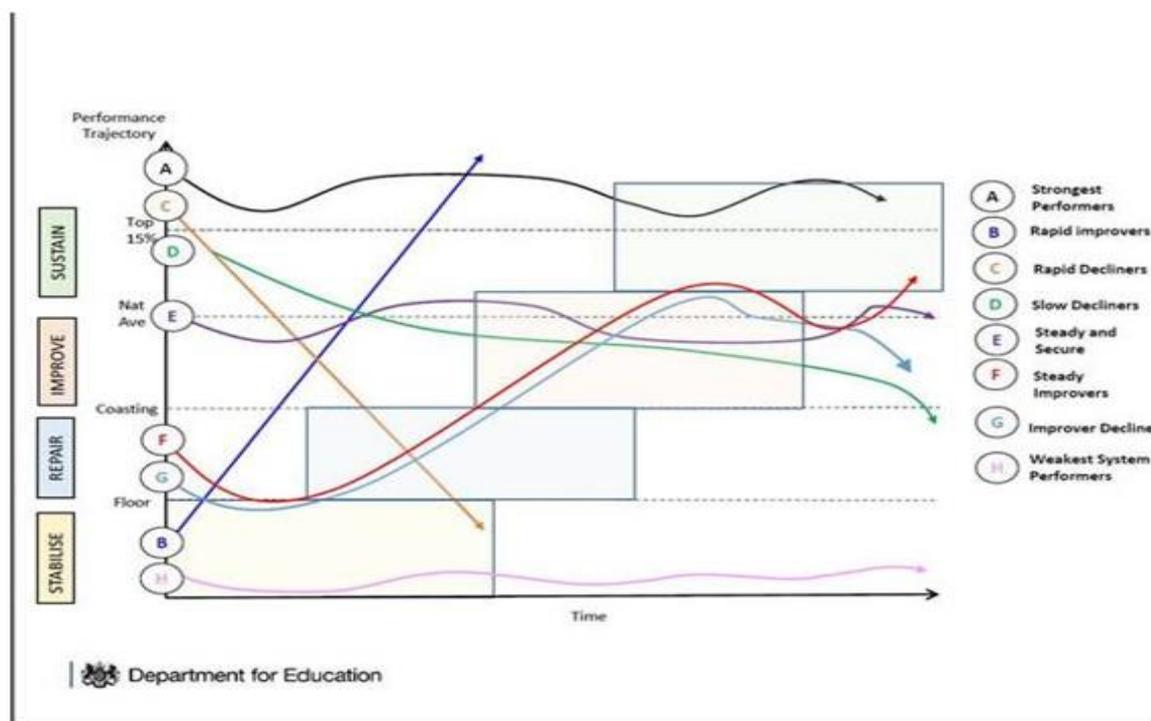
Science, sharing ‘how to learn strategies’ and retrieval practice, developing reading skills and the understanding of command and tier two words, developing deeper understanding of the GCSE specifications.

### Moving Forward

We recognise that all schools are on a continuum of improvement. Some are emerging and developing, others developing and strengthening whilst our strongest schools are more autonomous and empowered.

As a service we are often asked to synthesise a myriad of school improvement metrics into a single definition. However, it is just as important to capture the journey and not just the ‘snap shot’ of a school’s position on that journey.

The following diagram, developed by the DfE in England, looks to define the stages of a school’s journey and begins to define the trajectory of school improvement:



We feel that this type of diagrammatic trajectory representation is a more useful tool when discussing with schools the required level and nature of support required. Its application can also be an effective strategy to capture schools at the beginning of any ‘downward’ trajectory thus mitigating any need for them to be identified as ‘causing concern’.

We also believe that peer engagement and support should be an integral part of school improvement. Welsh Government’s vision for an evaluation, improvement and accountability system is one that is fair, coherent, proportionate, transparent, and based on shared values for Welsh education. The National Mission commits us to work with Welsh Government and other key stakeholders to establish new evaluation and improvement arrangements at all levels. These arrangements will need to be robust and strong enough to bring about the required improvements and especially so within the secondary sector. There is a clear expectation that within these arrangements schools develop not

only the required capacity and skills to effectively challenge themselves, but also the ability to work collaboratively and systemically in a school improvement model founded on professional peer review.

GwE and the six regional local authorities has undertaken a consultation process with head teacher representation around the various aspects of the *National Reform Journey*. In terms of developing a regional framework for peer-to-peer engagement and support, head teachers suggested the following principles:

- a peer review approach should be adopted regionally to further drive progress towards a self-improving system;
- the peer-review model should not be developed to deliver a *pseudo-inspection* system;
- all stakeholders should work effectively together to ensure that we create the right conditions for effective peer review;
- we should agree and adopt a regional set of principles and technical language for our model;
- we should agree framework parameters which will allow flexibility for schools to operate a range of models;
- schools should have the freedom and flexibility to choose their peers;
- the model should involve peer engagement at all levels within a school;
- the model should promote trust, honesty, transparency and professional confidence;
- engagement should be a supportive and sustainable process and not a one-off imposition event;
- the model should support a cultural shift towards collegiate responsibility

Steve Munby and Michael Fullen (2016) in their paper '*Inside-out and downside-up*' outline the critical success factors for an effective system-wide school collaboration as follows:

- the purpose of collaboration must be to improve outcomes;
- the partnership must be founded on a clearly articulated shared moral purpose;
- transparency, trust and honesty are crucial;
- a commitment to and capacity for effective peer review form the engine that drives improvement;
- peer review needs to be carried out within a long-term relationship and a commitment to continuously improving practice and systems through cycles of collaborative enquiry;
- the partnership must have a plan to move from collaboration to co-responsibility to a position of shared professional accountability;
- the partnership should go beyond school leaders and engage with students, teachers, families and communities;
- partnerships welcome scrutiny and support from other partnerships as their contribution to a connected local, regional and national system.

We firmly believe that peer engagement should underpin a rigorous cycle of continuous improvement and include:

- **Self-review:** effective peer review should start with how well the school knows itself and be led by the school being reviewed. The national self-evaluation toolkit developed by Estyn/OECD and the profession should play a key role in this aspect. Self-evaluation should focus on the learner, their achievements, progress and experiences in school and focus on learning and teaching, leadership, the development of a learning organisation culture, well-being of pupils and staff, equity and inclusion. In moving forward, the self-evaluation should also focus on the four purposes of the new curriculum and evaluate the progress the school is making towards realising the new curriculum. The self-evaluation processes should allow the school to identify areas of strengths and priorities for improvement. It should also identify aspects of their improvement journey that require peer support to aid improvement.

- **Peer-review:** the most effective peer reviews have an agreed focus. The purpose of the collaboration must be to improve outcomes and any agreed focus should be based on strong evidence of what's needed to improve and what outcomes would be most benefit to the school. Peer reviewers working as a team or trio work best where they can triangulate evidence and jointly analyse their findings. They are not there to pass judgement but to seek evidence and agree findings to be shared with the school. It is imperative that the peer review process does not become a *pseudo-inspection* system. The partnership must be founded on a clearly articulated shared moral purpose with transparency, trust and honesty crucial and integral to the process. The peer review should also provide professional development opportunities and include leaders at all levels.
- **School-to-school support:** if peer review is going to be a vehicle for ongoing improvement in school systems, then it must go further than the review itself and involve school to school or cluster support. Where the outcomes are owned by the staff, the long-term and sustainable impact will be greater. This helps to further build capacity and increased resilience within a self-improving system. The partnerships built should therefore go beyond school leaders and engage with students, teachers, families and communities.

GwE and the six regional local authorities are currently working with schools to establish a regional peer engagement model which fully reflects the principles and values that have been identified by head teachers and which also harvests from best practice nationally and beyond. Supporting Improvement Advisers are central to the facilitation and the development of this model.

This articulates our approach within the 'accountability' aspect of the reform journey. It details how peer engagement can be used to underpin a rigorous cycle of continuous development and improvement. We believe that peer engagement and support should be an integral part of school improvement in moving to a self-improving system whilst also supporting those schools that are causing concern.

## 2. STANDARDS

### ESTYN SCHOOL INSPECTION PROFILE

Historically, the overall inspection profile across the region has been generally strong.

Combined School inspections September 2017- February 2020.

Year	Region	No Inspected	No Follow Up		Estyn Review		Significant Improvement		Special Measures	
			%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
17/18	GwE	69	82.6	57	14.5	10	1.4	1	1.4	1
17/18	Wales	237	75.1	178	17.3	41	4.6	11	3.0	7
18/19	GwE	64	79.7	51	17.2	11	1.6	1	1.6	1
18/19	Wales	227	75.8	172	19.8	45	1.8	4	2.6	6
19/20*	GwE	36	63.9	23	25.0	9	2.8	1	8.3	3

\*Inspections up to February 2020

Judgements all schools 2018-19

	Standards		Wellbeing		Teaching		Support		Leadership	
	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales

Excellent	18.8	11.5	25.0	19.8	17.2	11.9	23.4	18.9	28.1	17.2
Good	62.5	65.2	67.2	67.4	62.5	62.1	71.9	70.9	51.6	58.6
Adequate	15.6	21.1	7.8	12.3	20.3	24.2	4.7	8.4	18.8	20.7
Unsatisfactory	3.1	2.2	0.0	0.4	0.0	1.8	0.0	1.8	1.6	3.6

Judgements all schools inspected in 2019-20 up to end of February 2019-20

	Standards		Wellbeing		Teaching		Support		Leadership	
	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales	GwE	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales	GwE
Excellent	5.6	-	25.0	-	5.6	-	19.4	-	16.7	-
Good	75.0	-	63.9	-	66.7	-	66.7	-	47.2	-
Adequate	8.3	-	11.1	-	22.2	-	13.9	-	27.8	-
Unsatisfactory	11.1	-	0.0	-	5.6	-	0.0	-	8.3	-

Primary School inspections Sept 2017- February 2020

Year	Region	No Inspected	No Follow Up		Estyn Review		Significant Improvement		Special Measures	
			%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
17/18	GwE	59	86.4	51	11.9	7	1.7	1	0.0	0
17/18	Wales	200	80.5	161	14.5	29	3.5	7	1.5	3
18/19	GwE	54	88.9	48	11.1	6	0.0	0	0.0	0
18/19	Wales	188	80.9	152	16.5	31	0.5	1	2.1	4
19/20	GwE	29	65.5	19	27.6	8	0.0	0	6.9	2

\*Inspections up to February 2020 / Including all-through schools

Secondary / All Age School inspections Sept 2017- February 2020

Year	Region	No Inspected	No Follow Up		Estyn Review		Significant Improvement		Special Measures	
			%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
17/18	GwE	7	57.1	4	28.6	2	0.0	0	14.3	1
17/18	Wales	30	50.0	15	33.3	10	10.0	3	6.7	2
18/19	GwE	8	12.5	1	62.5	5	12.5	1	12.5	1
18/19	Wales	32	43.8	14	40.6	13	9.4	3	6.3	2
19/20	GwE	8	50.0	4	25.0	2	12.5	1	12.5	1

\*Inspections up to February 2020 / Including all-through schools

Primary Judgements 2018-19 & 2019-20

	Standards		Wellbeing		Teaching		Support		Leadership	
	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales
Excellent	20.4	6.9	27.8	17.2	18.5	6.9	25.9	13.8	31.5	17.2
Good	70.4	79.3	68.5	75.9	72.2	69.0	72.2	75.9	57.4	48.3
Adequate	9.3	6.9	3.7	6.9	9.3	20.7	1.9	10.3	11.1	27.6
Unsatisfactory	0.0	6.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.9

\*Inspections up to February 2020 / Including all-through schools

## Secondary Judgements 2018-19 & 2019-20

	Standards		Wellbeing		Teaching		Support		Leadership	
	18/19	19/20	18/19	19/20	18/19	19/20	18/19	19/20	18/19	19/20
Excellent	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	37.5	0.0	12.5
Good	12.5	50.0	62.5	25.0	0.0	50.0	75.0	25.0	12.5	37.5
Adequate	62.5	25.0	37.5	25.0	100.0	37.5	25.0	37.5	75.0	37.5
Unsatisfactory	25.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5	0.0	0.0	12.5	12.5

\*Inspections up to February 2020 / Including all-through schools

**Primary** - Of the 29 primary schools and the one lifelong learning school inspected in 2019/20 up until the end of February, 19 of those were judged as not requiring follow-up (65.5%) in comparison to 88.9% in 2018/19. Ten schools (34.5%) required follow-up in comparison to 11.1% in 2018/19. Eight of the ten schools were put in the least intensive follow-up category of Estyn Review, with two in special measures. At present, there are 14 schools in the follow-up category and 2 schools in the Statutory Category (special measures).

**Secondary** - Of the eight schools inspected thus far in 2019/20, it was judged that four did not require any follow-up (50% in comparison to 12.5% in 2018/19.) It was judged that two required Estyn review (25% in comparison with 62.5% in 2018/19) and two were placed in the statutory follow-up category [one in special measures and one requiring significant improvement]. These two schools had already been identified as 'high risk' in our profile.

Given the inspection areas, it was judged that standards were good or better in 4 of the 8 schools (i.e. 50% in comparison to 12.5% in 2018/19), and good or better in 6 schools as regards wellbeing and attitudes towards learning (i.e. 75% in comparison to 62.5% in 2018/19). In inspection area 3, it was judged that teaching was good or better in four schools (i.e. 50% in comparison to 0% in 18/19). It was judged that 5 schools were good or better in terms of care, guidance and support (i.e. 62.5% in comparison to 75%), and 4 schools were judged as being good as regards leadership (i.e. 50% in comparison with 12.5% in 2018/19). An increase was seen in the excellent judgements with wellbeing and attitudes towards learning being excellent in four schools, care and support being excellent in three schools, and leadership being excellent in one school. No schools were awarded an 'excellent' judgement against any inspection area in 2018/19.

The region's current profile shows that seven secondary schools are in a statutory category. All schools have a comprehensive PIAP and Estyn have signed off the LA's support plan. These schools are at different stages along the improvement continuum, and progress that is more apparent is being made in two schools. All schools receive regular monitoring visits, the relevant local authority officers are informed of the progress made, and any concerns arising are highlighted. Another seven are under Estyn review and there is a clear expectation for all schools to demonstrate the necessary improvements within the timescale set.

**Special Schools/PRUs** - No special schools or Pupil Referral Units have been inspected thus far in 2019-20.

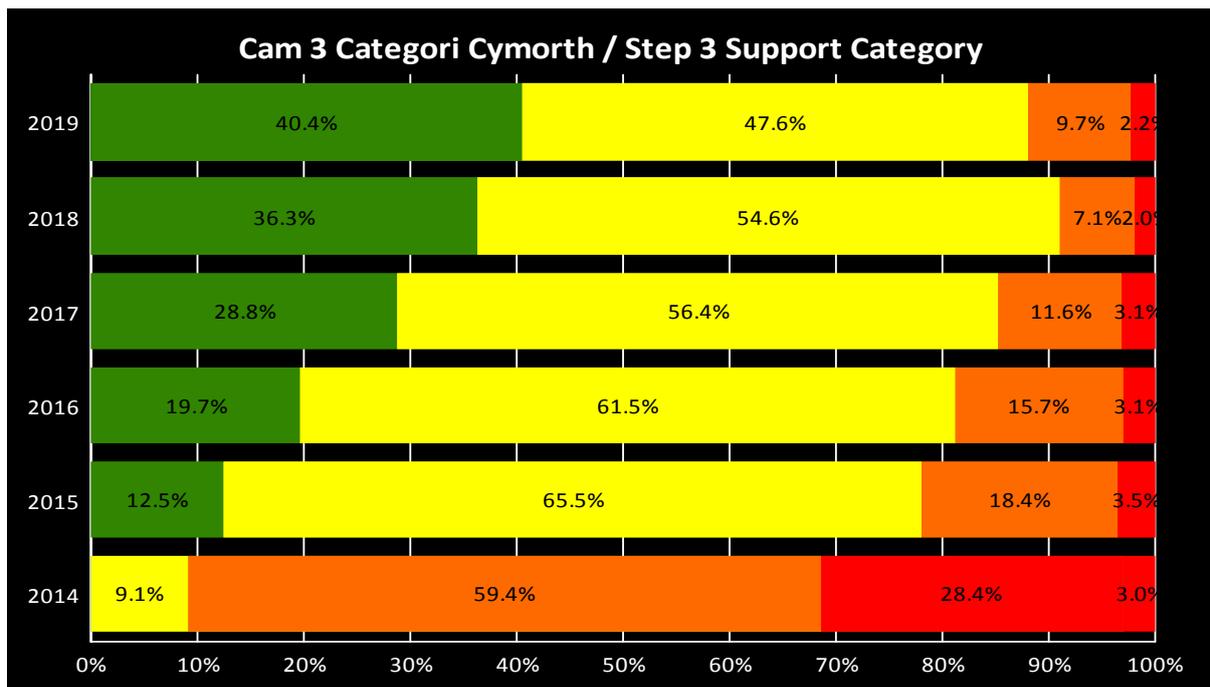
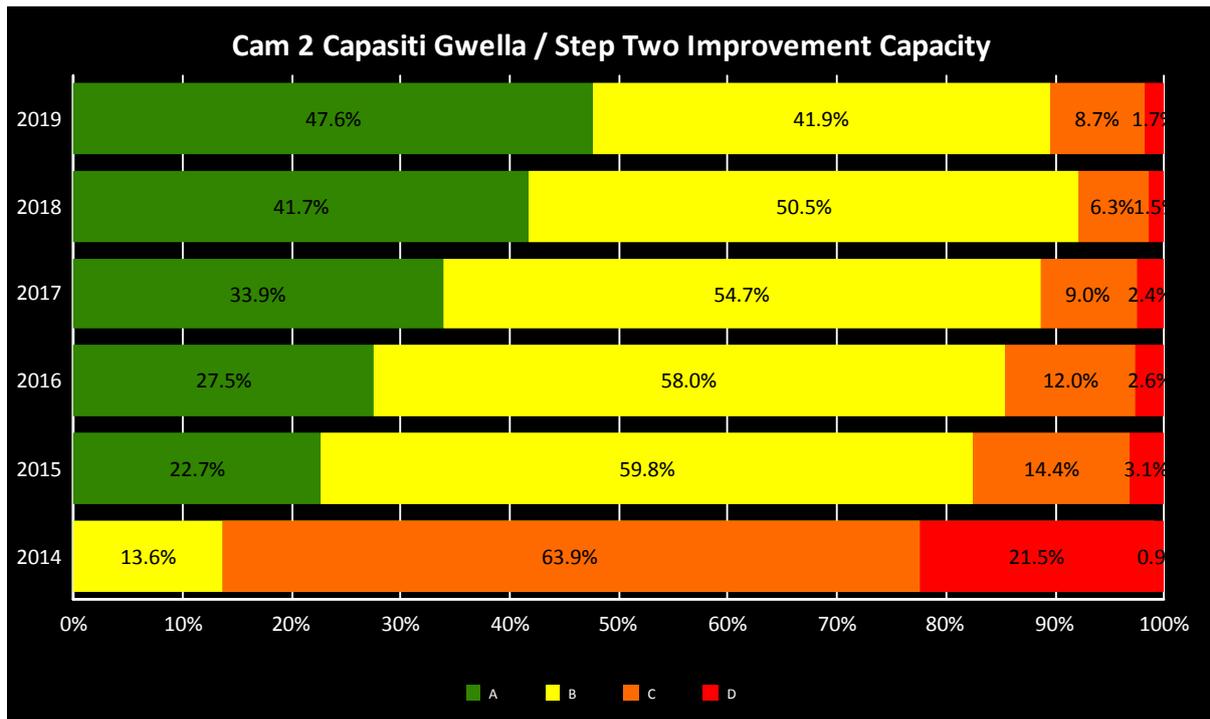
## NATIONAL CATEGORISATION

### All schools

Across all sectors the percentage of schools categorised as Grade A and B for Step 2 has decreased slightly from 92.2% in 2018 to 89.6% (361 schools) in 2019 due to the number of schools awarded a grade C increasing by 9 to 35 (8.7%) and the number of schools awarded a D grade increasing by 1 to

7 (1.7%) . The percentage categorised as Grade A continues to increase with 47.6% (192 schools) awarded an A grade.

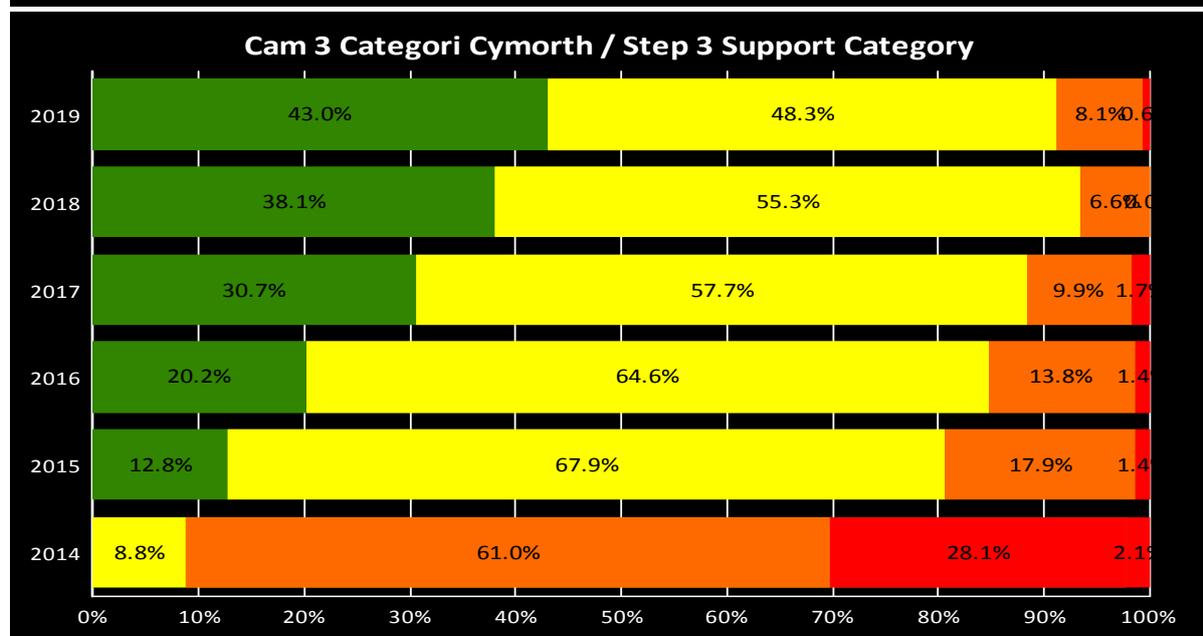
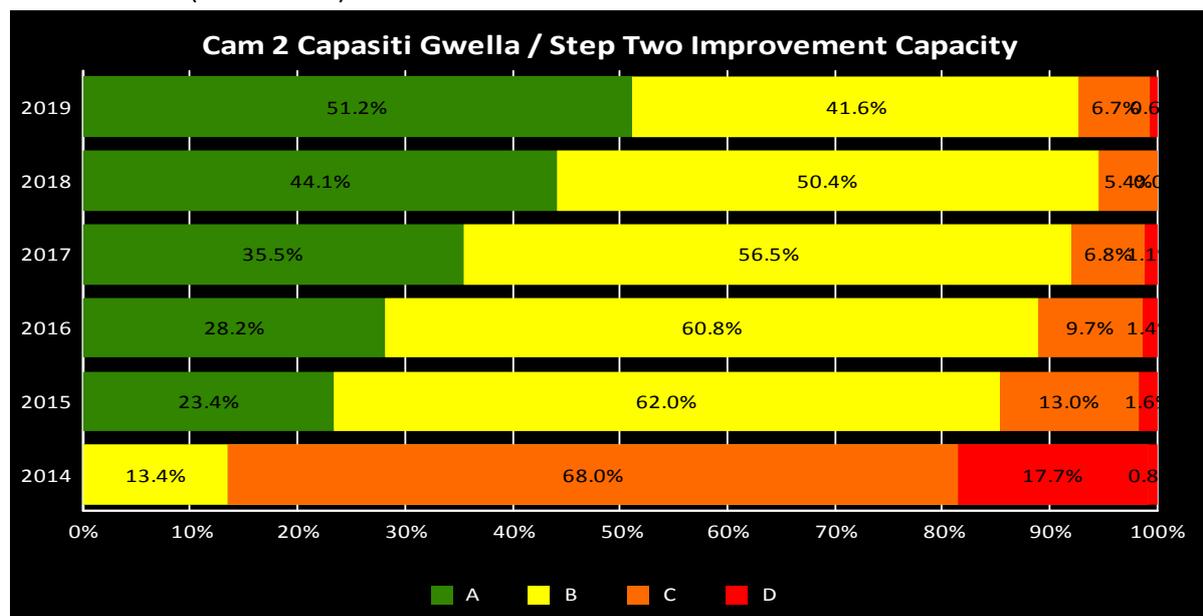
The percentage of schools categorised as Green or Yellow for Step 3 decreased from 91.0% in 2018 to 88.1% (355 schools) in 2019 with the percentage of Amber or Red school increasing by 2.9% due to an additional 10 schools classed as Amber and 1 additional classed as Red. The percentage categorised Red increased by 0.2% to 2.2% (9 Schools) and the percentage categorised as Green increased yet again to 40.4% (163 schools).



### Primary

The percentage of schools categorised as Grade A or B for step 2 decreased from 94.6% in 2018 to 92.7% (319 schools) with the number schools awarded a C grade increasing by 4 to 23 and the number of schools awarded a D grade increasing from 0 to 2. The percentage categorised as Grade A has increased significantly from 35.5% in 2017, 44.1% in 2018 to 51.2% (176 schools) in 2019.

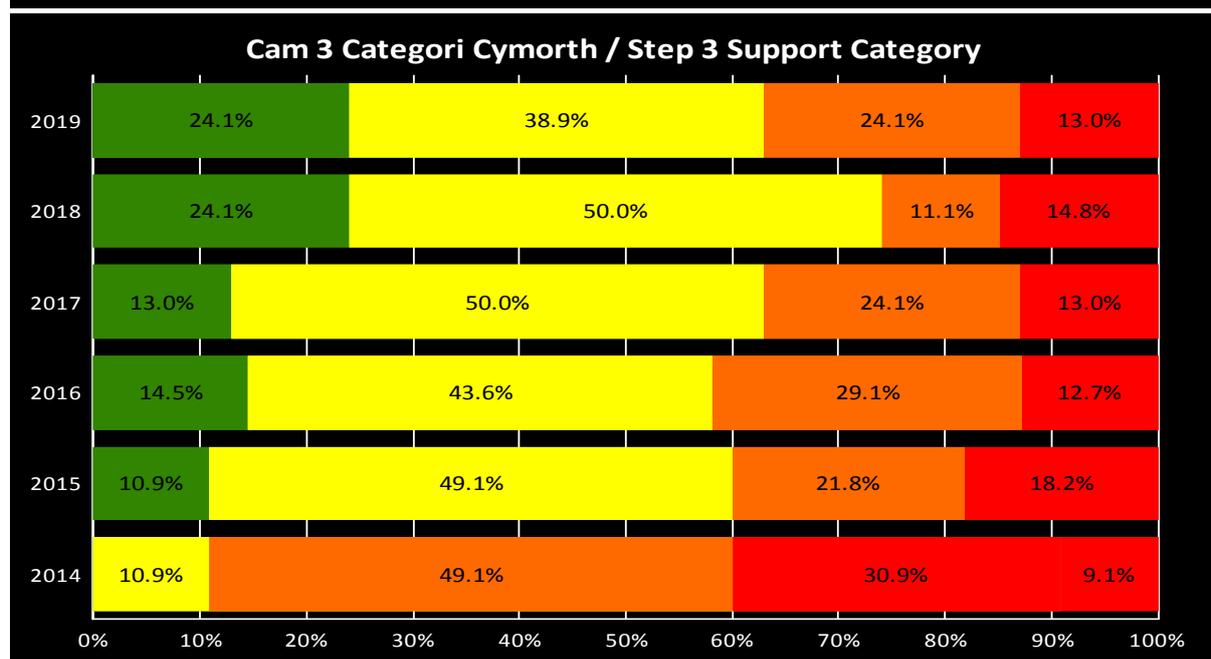
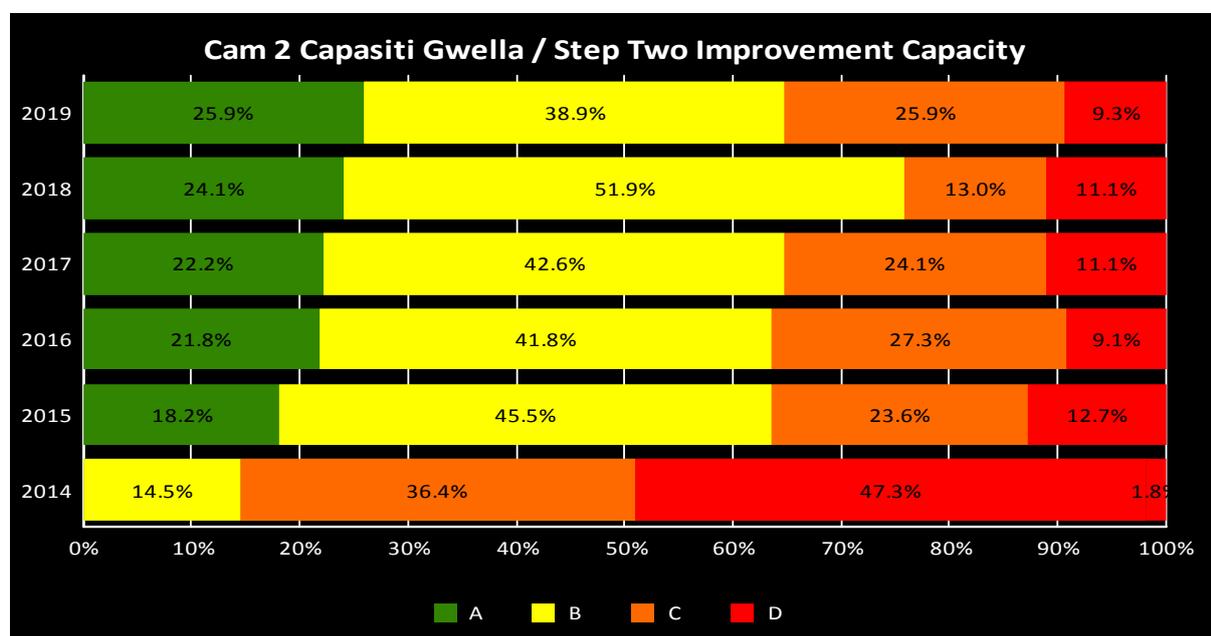
The percentage of schools categorised as Red or Amber for Step 3 increased from 6.6% in 2018 to 8.7% (30 schools) with an additional 7 schools categorised as Amber or Red. The percentage categorised as a red increased from 0% in 2018 to 0.6 % in 2019 due to the Red categorisation of 2 schools. The percentage categorised as green has increased significantly from 30.7% in 2017, 38.1% in 2018 to 43.0% (148 schools) in 2019.



## Secondary

The percentage of schools categorised as Grade A and B for Step 2 decreased from 75.9% (41 schools) in 2018 to 64.8% (35 schools) in 2019. The percentage categorised as a D fell from 11.1% (6 schools) to 9.3% (5 schools). The percentage categorised as Grade A continues to increase from 22.2% in 2017 to 25.9% (14 schools) in 2019.

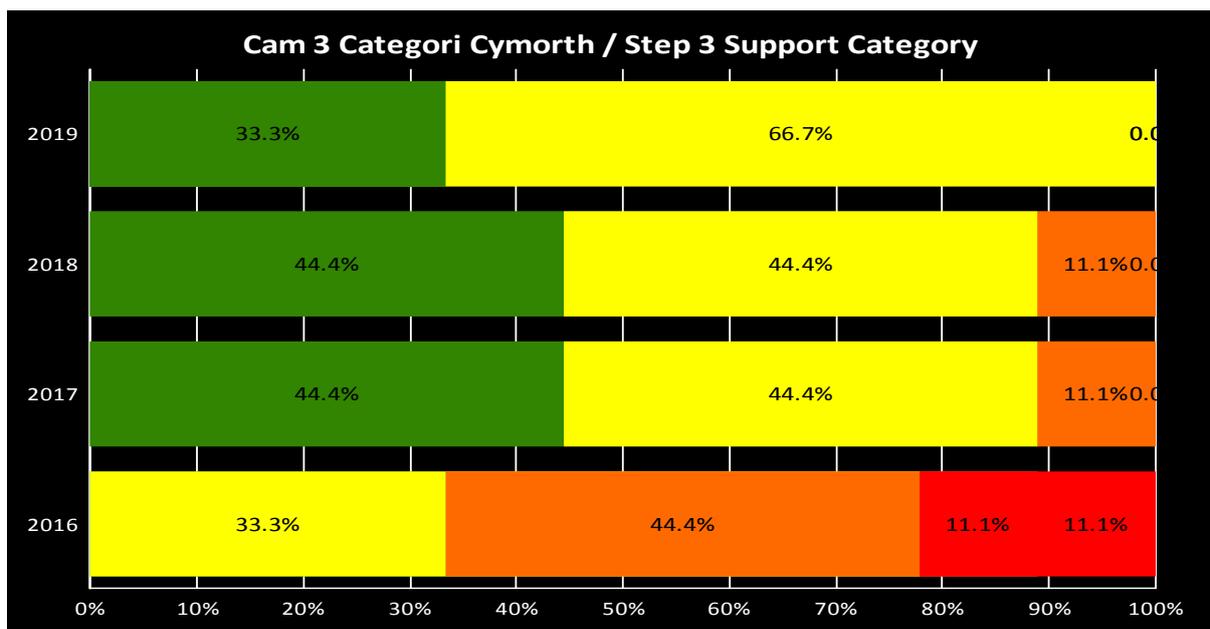
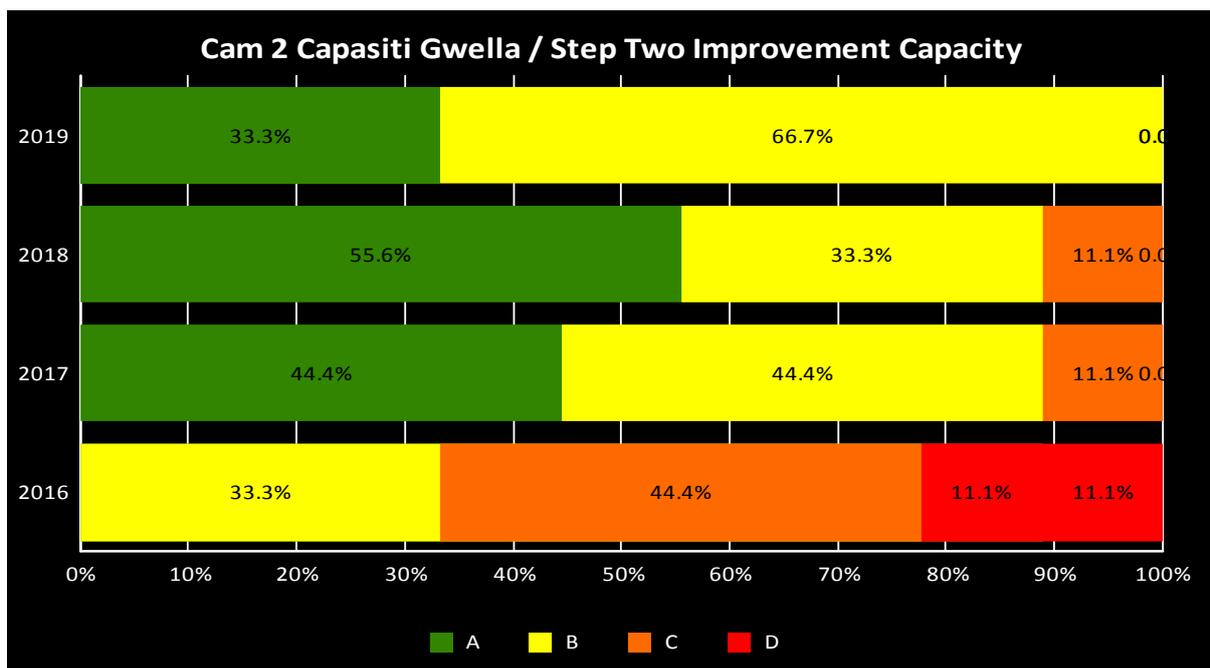
The percentage of schools categorised as red and amber for Step 3 increased from 25.9% (14 schools) in 2018 to 37.0% (20 schools) in 2019. The percentage categorised as Red fell from 14.8% (8 schools) in 2018 to 13.0% (7 schools) in 2019. The percentage categorised Green remained constant at 24.1% (13 schools) with the percentage categorised Yellow decreasing from 50% in 2018 to 38.9% and subsequently the percentage categorised as Amber increasing from 11.1% in 2018 to 24.1% with the number of Amber schools increasing by 7 to 13.



**Special**

The percentage of schools categorised as Grade C and D for Step 2 has fallen to 0. No special school has been categorised as a D since 2016. The percentage categorised as Grade A has decreased from 55.6% (5 schools) in 2018 to 33.3% (3 schools) in 2019. 6 of the 9 schools are categorised as Grade B, up from 3 in 2018.

The percentage of schools categorised as red and amber for Step 3 has fallen to 0.0% and no special school has been categorised red since 2016. The percentage categorised as green decreased from 44.4% (4 schools) to 33.3% (3 schools). 6 of the 9 schools are categorised as Yellow, up from 4 in 2018.



### 3. EMERGING QUESTIONS TO HELP THE JOINT COMMITTEE, LA OFFICERS AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES TO EVALUATE PUPIL PROGRESS, STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE

#### Teacher assessments

- Why do Foundation Phase, KS2 and KS3 outcomes appear to be lower over the past two years?
- Why does the regional ESTYN profile and GwE intelligence gathering contradict falling outcomes at Foundation Phase?
- How effectively is progress and value added data analysed and reported so as to strengthen performance and improve standards?
- To what extent are schools adopting rigorous assessment tracking for all learners of all ages?
- How do schools use baseline assessment data to target and plan intervention needs?
- Are individual learners and groups of learners correctly identified and effectively supported?
- Have schools developed effective self-evaluation arrangements which go beyond end of key stage performance data to identify what they are doing well and what needs to change?
- What actions are leaders undertaking with classes that consistently underperform?
- How robust are in-school standardisation and cluster moderation procedures in schools?
- What monitoring processes are in place to ensure that schools set appropriate targets?
- Are schools ensuring that there is a broad and balanced curriculum and not fixated on a narrow set of subjects and areas of learning?
- What school data can be used for Local Authority self-evaluation purposes and how can this be presented?

#### Key Stage 4

- To what extent are all schools embracing the national change in direction and behaviour to maximise the performance of individual pupils across the ability range? Do school leaders have a clear vision for what to change and why?
- Have all schools developed effective self-evaluation arrangements which go beyond examination performance data to identify what they are doing well and what needs to change?
- How appropriate is the schools' curriculum across the region? Have all schools robustly evaluated the impact and contribution of individual non-core subjects into the revised C9 measure? Is this supported by leaders making effective and timely use of Welsh Government bulletin up-dates?
- Are current internal accountability and QA processes robust enough to ensure consistent performance by individual pupils across their option choices i.e. are leaders effectively addressing In School Variance?
- What actions are leaders undertaking with departments that are outperforming the school average and with those that are underperforming?
- To what extent do individual departments forensically analyse the data shared by WJEC on subject performance?
- To what extent do all departmental staff, across the range of subjects, understand the assessment weighting for each specification? How does this effectively impact on their planning and delivery and, where relevant, the understanding of grading, awarding and reporting?
- To what extent are departments making effective use of the Chief Examiner's annual report which highlights strengths and weaknesses of performance?
- Many schools have members who are WJEC examination markers. To what extent are their expertise fully utilised within and across schools?
- Why has the performance in English dropped significantly in a number of historically strong performing departments?

- Why is there a variance in a number of regional schools between the performance of Mathematics and Maths-Numeracy?
- How well do current 14-19 local strategies ensure that funding is effectively used to deliver appropriate experiences and qualifications for targeted groups of pupils and to what extent do they contribute to the revised interim measures in each local authority?
- Are we confident that the national change in direction has sufficiently impacted on the local provision for EOTAS? To what extent has their performance in 2019 impacted on local authority outcomes?
- Are we confident that the national change in direction has sufficiently impacted on the local provision for Special Schools (145 pupils in Year 11) and Units? To what extent has their performance in 2019 impacted on local authority outcomes?
- Within the region there are 247 EOTAS pupils in year 11 – by grouping them together this is a larger cohort than what we have in any school. To what extent are leaders and staff within PRUs supported and skilled to clearly identify how best to maximise the performance of individual pupils across the revised performance measures?

#### 4. GWE REGIONAL PRIORITIES AND PROVISION

##### DEVELOPING A HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION PROFESSION

###### Foundation Phase

Workshops and Foundation Phase Networks for Senior Leadership Teams, Teachers and Teaching Assistants (TA's) have been delivered bilingually across the region where national, regional and local messages have been disseminated, and good practice shared. As a result, the majority of schools inspected during last financial year have been judged as good or excellent for Foundation Phase provision and standards.

High numbers of staff from mainstream and special schools have attended regional workshops, and termly network meetings (1,746), impacting positively upon pedagogy, teaching and learning. The workshops and network meetings are aligned with the new Curriculum for Wales, focusing on the four purposes, 12 pedagogical principles and based on a creative, holistic and cross-curricular approach, promoting problem solving through experiential learning.

Generally, the quality of outdoor learning is improving in response to the network meetings and outdoor learning training for teachers and TA's. Pupil voice is a consistent message delivered through training and meetings which is beginning to influence classroom practice. Overall, there is greater understanding of Foundation Phase pedagogy and provision, experiential learning and application of key skills with Key Stage 2 Year 3 teachers and teaching assistants.

Schools supported by the Foundation Phase Team have been removed from category and nearly all schools identified as high risk have made expected or better progress against areas of improvement. There has been reduction in the variance in the teaching and learning in Foundation Phase.

Bespoke training has been delivered to individual schools and to clusters who have similar priorities identified by Supporting Improvement Advisers. (102 individual schools and 19 clusters).

Good practice is disseminated regionally and nationally through the networks and workshops with presentations and resources shared on GwEs Foundation Phase Hwb. This enables schools to have access to resources and regional good practice.

## Literacy and Numeracy

There has been strong engagement from schools from every Local Authority across the region. Nearly all schools engaged in development programmes have reported:

- significant positive impact on attitudes to learning from learners;
- attitudes to subject pedagogy and increased knowledge in staff;
- positive impact on standards of progress and attainment of learners in numerical reasoning, numeracy, mathematics, oracy, reading and writing in KS2 and FPh.

There is now a body of evidence held centrally, produced by delegates of these programmes, showing pupil progress in terms of learner outcomes/progress data, pupil work, schemes of work and effective practice teaching strategies has been shared this year with new cohort delegates, with several schools practitioners from across the region co-delivering in meetings and training events and thus cascading their effective practice, experience of implementation and future strategic plans.

Throughout every area of development, the 12 pedagogical principles, Four Purposes and cross curricular requirements of literacy, numeracy and Digital Competence Framework (DCF) feature centrally. Many schools have reported that the underlying development of oracy in their schools, is not only allowing children to more successfully access other areas of the curriculum, but has impacted positively on well-being, engagement and attitudes to learning. Oracy, specifically through Science and STEM and Outdoor Learning, has been a central factor in nearly all of the above development programmes, for both literacy and numeracy.

Practitioners from regional schools have supported through their own evidence and experience, the development of inquiry based practice within new cohort schools. As a result, the schools involved have gained greater ownership of findings, learning and outcomes. This has dramatically enhanced the progress in subject knowledge and efficacy based practice within these schools. This has all been in line with the Curriculum for Wales (CfW) and the new Professional Standards.

Teachers involved are now much more knowledgeable about the development of literacy and numeracy across a wider curriculum, how to influence and advance learning for all groups of learners, lead the subject effectively in school and offer support to other schools, with regard to their own development journey. Quality Assurance visits to schools show that nearly all have made sustainable change and that new pedagogies are being cascaded and embedded across the school and often intertwined further with a wider range of development activities.

Some clusters have independently developed working links with each other and further developed Outdoor Learning, STEM and Oracy into collaborative plans, transition into KS3 and CfW developments. This has been facilitated further by the Literacy and Numeracy SIA and a wider network of independently sourced agencies, to further develop a culture of collaboration and make improvements more sustainable into the future.

## Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) - Global Futures (GF)

The Global Futures (GF) Team and the Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) departments across the region have continued to work collaboratively and effectively with various partners such as Routes Into Languages, Student Mentoring, British Council, Goethe Institute, Confucius Institute, Institut français, Bangor University etc. to promote languages in both, primary and secondary sector, across the region.

Through close monitoring from GF team and effective promotion of initiatives available, we have seen a consistent participation of MFL departments in the various activities aiming at promoting languages. This year, almost all schools have taken part in one or more of the available activities, which shows that schools value and welcome these opportunities.

The GF team works successfully to bring coherence, clarity and a shared commitment to realising the vision for pedagogy, learners, colleagues and the wider community. The GF team have continued to develop a strong network amongst MFL practitioners across the region through regular meetings, training opportunities and teach-meets. This network of mutual support and collaboration is widely used by all schools and, as a result, effective pedagogy is spread across the region

The GF Team has a very good knowledge of MFL departments across the region and is able to target individual teachers and departments effectively to improve or develop professional standards for teachers and heads of departments. Feedback from schools is very positive and show impact on professional growth. Various training sessions during meetings, conferences, teach-meets and collaborative work were also organised by the team in response to teachers' needs and requests. This has created a positive climate for innovation and the development of techniques and approaches to improve pedagogical outcomes across the consortium.

Primary Sector: The GF team has successfully promoted the teaching and learning of International languages in the primary sector for a second year; 40 primary schools across the region are now taking part in the GF pilot to deliver languages in the primary sector.

The team has continued to provide opportunities for professional development for primary school teachers. The Learning to teach languages in primary Course: YEAR 2 (Open University/Welsh Government Initiative) gives the opportunity to learn a new foreign language as well as acquire the pedagogy to teach languages, and is a unique opportunity for innovative professional development. This project has been helpful in developing skilled primary practitioners in preparation for the New Curriculum.

Four conferences were held to support the introduction and the teaching of languages in the primary sector. Expert primary MFL speakers presented practical ideas and resources especially designed for non-specialists and to enable them to integrate languages across the curriculum. Teachers had the opportunity to share good practice with focus on planning and were given time to continue planning to embed languages in the curriculum. Schools have been provided funding to continue planning to embed language learning within the curriculum and using the resources bought by GF. By now, all teachers understand better how to plan their provision for languages and embed it in their thematic work or other part of the curriculum. There was excellent feedback and all teachers are eager to put into practice the various ideas presented during the conferences.

Teachers understand the direct link between the international language learning skills and the literacy agenda. They are better aware that international languages can be embedded in the curriculum rather than being taught as an add-on and contribute to the development of literacy skills. As a result, they have a better understanding of how to respond to the demands of the New Curriculum and specifically LLC.

Secondary sector: The GF team has provided regular opportunities for teachers to extend their knowledge, skill and understanding as regard to teaching, learning and effective planning of MFL. The training provided has been carefully planned to respond to Estyn's recommendation for MFL and to provide high quality inset. These sessions have enthused and motivated MFL practitioners across the

Consortium and contributed to their professional development and their competence in teaching MFL.

To ensure follow-up and implementation of the ideas and techniques presented by MFL experts, the GF Team has enabled teachers to work collaboratively to create practical, effective and creative resources. These have all been quality-assured and have been shared through meetings and through the Hwb platform. By now, there is an extensive range of resources for French, German and Spanish for KS3, KS4 and KS5 as well as MFL toolkit and guidance for SoW.

Individual teachers continue to make regular use of the resources on Hwb MFL GwE which is updated and populated regularly by the GF Team with quality assured resources. This is ensuring better quality of teaching and learning. As a result, learners of all abilities are fully challenged and engaged in creative language activities that develop their mastery of the language.

### Core subjects

Secondary schools have access to specialist support in all core subjects across the region. A comprehensive strategy is in place for improving standards in English, mathematics, science and Welsh across the region.

The Core Subject Supporting Improvement Advisers work in close collaboration with link School Improvement Advisers and the secondary Core Lead to challenge and support underperforming secondary school departments. In addition to the bespoke support delivered for secondary schools in the core subjects, generic regional and local guidance has also been available via subject networks and forums. The main priorities for 2019-20 are outlined below.

### Science

The main priorities for 2019-20 were:

- Science support programme
- Hub school programme.
- Network meetings, subject specific support networks and collaboration
- GCSE online resources ([www.tanio.cymru](http://www.tanio.cymru))
- Supporting lower ability learners at GCSE

Science support programme – All 54 schools were provided with a link Science SIA and all were visited at least once this year. The support has been bespoke for each individual school and the level of support has been directly linked to level of need. Support has included developing leadership, improving the quality of teaching and learning, curriculum planning, assessment and tracking etc. and will have a positive impact on pupil outcomes.

Hub school programme – The three Hub schools have supported a significant number (over 50%) of schools and individual teachers from across the region. This has included hosting teachers and sharing best practice, sharing resources, supporting individual subjects within schools and mentoring teachers and leaders. Schools have been able to request specific support from the hub schools and have benefitted from the support and collaboration.

Network meetings, subject specific support networks and collaboration – The network meetings have improved schools understanding of the changes to the KS4 performance measures in Science/school, the progress of the new curriculum for Wales, standards at KS2 (presentations from KS2 practitioners) and provision for STEM. This increased collaboration across school/LA/region and developed teacher knowledge and understanding of the KS4 and KS5 specifications.

GCSE online resources ([www.tanio.cymru](http://www.tanio.cymru)) – The website has continually evolved and almost all the presentation/revision resources for all units in years 10 and 11 (DA Science) are now on the website. There is now a teacher zone which includes a variety of resources to support teaching and learning. The website continues to be updated on a regular basis, and the site is receiving daily hits of approximately 500 visits per day. Feedback received from parents, teachers and pupils has been extremely positive, and as well as being a revision resource for home learning, it is being widely used across the region within schools.

Supporting lower ability learners at GCSE – Work booklets and assessment materials differentiated for the lower ability learners have been produced bilingually. Schools are using these widely and have seen an increase in engagement from these groups of learners since their introduction.

### **Welsh**

The priorities for 2019-20 were to:

- Develop and sustain the Welsh Language and Literature provision in the region's secondary schools
- Support middle leaders to create strong and inclusive departments with teachers who foster the potential of all learners.
- Develop an effective assessment system with middle leaders to track learner progress and to raise standards.
- Develop the knowledge of Welsh teachers across the region regarding the new curriculum and pedagogical principles.

Meetings with Heads of Welsh captured a clear picture of the provision across North Wales, and served as an opportunity to build a close relationship with them in order to support their work as successful middle leaders. Those meetings focused on the four aforementioned priorities and tailoring support to meet departmental needs and sharing support materials.

These visits set an additional direction for work during the year as good practice could be shared in regional meetings/INSET/GwE Offer courses/in the 'Cymraeg GwE' Network within Hwb, and in further support visits with individual schools.

More specific support was provided for some departments following these initial meetings and also at the request of the school's SIA over the year. Support was provided for the HoD facing an Estyn inspection via scrutiny visits and support with producing strategic documents and lesson planning to demonstrate progress.

Good quality expert-led courses have been delivered. These were research and pedagogy-based and motivated teachers to return to school to share and trial different teaching and learning approaches. Leadership and planning approaches were shared as models for others and which stimulated course attendees to trial new leadership and management approaches.

### **Maths**

The main priorities for 2019-20 were:

- Develop knowledge of practitioners with regard to impactful teaching and learning
- Develop leadership roles to support the development of learning within their departments
- Develop individuals in need of support to improve their pedagogy
- Support individual teachers to develop their pedagogy
- Develop tracking system that gives the opportunity for middle leaders to identify learners that are underachieving for on-going and suitable interventions.

- Develop resources for supporting revision and learning outside the classroom – intermediate phase complete.
- Develop middle leadership understanding of ‘suitable assessment’ and how this could be used to inform tracking and intervention.

Successful practice has been shared with departments across the region. Individual support for new Heads of Department has been provided across the region through a combination of school visits and inviting individuals to schools where different members of departments have contributed to a day of showcasing.

GwE has been working with individual teachers within schools to develop the pedagogy within their classrooms by:

- working with teachers and acting HOM to develop deeper understanding through thoughtful questioning and careful planning
- modelling of revision techniques to support learners' resilience when faced with examination questions that may seem unfamiliar
- working with individual teachers on the impact of careful planning during lessons with challenging learners
- working with individual teachers on planning and the impact of consideration of questions on learner engagement;
- working with individual teachers on preparation of learners' for examination
- differentiation with mixed ability teaching and feedback
- planning and modelling effective teaching and learning in the Numeracy spec
- improvement planning and engaging lower ability pupils
- developing teaching and learning

Phase 1 for developing a tracking system that gives the opportunity for middle leaders to identify learners that are underachieving for on-going and suitable interventions has been completed. Heads of department (HoD) have received a presentation on using the system. Further developments of this model and the thorough trialling of this resource before launching further versions is being implemented by HOM.

Resources have been developed for supporting revision and learning outside the classroom and the Maths.Cymru website has been launched at intermediate tier to Heads of Maths in the region.

Individual schools have collaborated with GwE in creating and trialling new assessment and marking systems, which have enabled teachers to identify key areas for intervention and inform students clearly on what they need to improve and how. Individual schools have given training and support to implement tracking and feedback strategies that target specific weaknesses.

### **English**

The main priorities for 2019-20 were:

- Improving standards of teaching and learning specifically in target schools
- Improvements in planning and delivery of writing and oracy
- Increased level of challenge and improved provision for more able students
- Effective Literacy Intervention Programme introduced in 25 schools
- Improved tracking and repair systems in most English departments
- Improved skills and expertise of middle leaders
- Increased knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales

Development and implementation of Literacy Intervention programme – a second wave of Literacy Intervention toolkit has been developed and shared with schools. Two days training sessions delivered and individual / bespoke support to set up intervention programme provided to schools.

Heads of English and Science have been working collaboratively to develop approaches to teaching reading and vocabulary - bespoke support and mentoring provided to 7 Heads of English. This has led to strengthened leadership. Peer support programme has been put in place and buddy visits planned. This has improved capacity of middle leaders.

Development and implementation of English tracking system and 'Fix It' resources – the English tracking system has been further developed and shared with schools. Most schools utilise the tracking system or have adapted principles. 'Fix It' materials have been developed and these have been shared and are used successfully in schools. Standardisation material has been developed and shared. Walking talking mocks have been developed to further support students and teachers. Literature tracking system and 'Fix It' material developed to support schools.

Improvements in classroom practice can be seen. The focus has been on developing oracy and links with feeder primaries. Training has been delivered to classroom teachers and Heads of English on improving provision for more able students. A range of resources has been developed and shared regionally. A website has been developed to support students and teachers in revising for English Language and Literature with a focus on stretch and challenge. Teaching of writing at KS4 has been strengthened as evidenced in book scrutiny documentation and notes of visit.

## Post 16

The support post-16 for schools has strengthened. Work is continuing to develop across the region to look at provision in all areas to ensure continuing strength and breadth at post-16.

The skills of heads of Sixth Form continue to be augmented by consortia planning. Good cross-consortia work is continuing, particularly around the development of the Sixth Form Leadership development programme to ensure that all leaders and potential leaders have the skills, understanding of national and local contexts and tools to support pupils to the best outcomes. Feedback has been strong and presentations on various aspects of pastoral leadership have been of a high standard.

The Regional Conference (February 2020) was well attended again – over 40 delegates. The focus was on wellbeing at request of heads of Sixth Form. Sessions were excellent and very well received by delegates who appreciate the opportunity for Professional learning of this kind.

The Subject Networks which have been established across the seven most popular A level subjects are becoming a useful forum for ideas and sharing of practice. The meetings focus on the needs of schools and their departments.

The use of ALPs Connect has increased again this year. More training has been delivered to six schools and most schools are using or at least accessing Connect regionally. In other schools different tools are being used.

To ensure that schools are equipped to support students in independent learning, VESPA North Wales programme (led by A level Mindset team) has been delivered to eleven schools. The programme has been very well received by schools and their students to date and hopefully will continue next year and expand to include other schools.

### Teaching Assistants Learning Pathway (TALP)

The number of induction and experienced assistants attending TALP training increased following promotional work with head teachers.

The cluster model has proved to be an effective way of training experienced assistants. A total of 11 new cluster training courses were successfully delivered over the year, with 240 assistants trained. By now, we have managed to raise heads' awareness of the cluster model and have been approached by schools requesting cluster training, with another 5 clusters having now committed to deliver training for 2020-21 also.

National collaboration on the new Aspiring Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTA) programme is particularly good, with all consortia contributing well to discussions and to preparation work and resource creation. The collaboration days proved extremely successful, resulting in high-quality training, assessment and recruitment materials.

The new Aspiring HLTA Programme is developing very well. GwE was solely responsible for preparing the digital training materials.

A total of 818 teaching assistants have attended HLTA training from March 2019 - April 2020, with 66 having attended HLTA information sessions and 41 attending the Aspiring HLTA session.

Eight new coaches have been trained across the region.

Number of Teaching Assistant Learning Pathway Courses 2019-20	
Induction	51
Experienced (2-days)	135
Experienced (cluster model)	241
HLTA 17 and 18	66 (31+35)
HLTA Information Sessions Round 18	66
Aspiring HLTA Information Sessions	41
Aspiring HLTA	29
Development Day	180
Conwy INSET (taster session)	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>818</b>

## INSPIRATIONAL LEADERS WORKING COLLABORATIVELY TO RAISE STANDARDS

### Leadership

GwE provides consistent, equitable and high-quality development programmes at each stage of the national leadership professional learning development pathway, from middle leadership through to experienced Headteachers. These programmes enable practitioners to develop their schools as learning organisations so they are able to “react more quickly to changing environments, embrace innovations in internal organisation, and ultimately improve student outcomes”. The programmes secure professional leadership development at each career stage of educational leadership to ensure sustained highly effective practice set against the formal leadership standards. The development programmes promote collaborative leadership aspects with effective practitioners from schools and Local Authorities co-delivering sessions with GwE staff. This further develops the notion of developing a self-improving system and developing peer-to-peer engagement across North Wales. The

establishment of the Regional Leadership Group, which includes representatives from GwE and the six local authorities, ensures that needs are identified and that programmes meet the needs of the profession.

Through the programmes, GwE has ensured that senior leaders have been kept updated on key developments regarding the reform journey. There is a clear leadership development pathway for future senior leaders, and as a result, the region is developing competent, skilled school leaders and an increase can be seen in the number of quality applications for leadership positions received across sectors in the region.

School leaders have been encouraged to engage in school-to-school collaboration and inquiry based projects. Middle and Senior leaders have been upskilled to lead more effectively on the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales in their schools. All School leaders have raised awareness of the new Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership.

GwE plays a key role in communicating, promoting and co-ordinating a variety of programmes, which meet the needs of staff at various levels. The programmes offered are as follows:

- **Middle Leadership Development Programme (MLDP)** – The MLDP has continued as planned. Since 2017-18, over 300 middle leaders across North Wales have benefited from attending this cross sector programme. Module 3 of Programme (February 2020) - 135 participants from across the region have enrolled on the Middle Leadership Development Programme (2 English medium cohorts and 1 Welsh medium cohort). SIAs have been proactive in encouraging their link schools to identify potential candidates for the MLDP. The GwE Leadership Group monitored uptake for the programme by link SIAs. Feedback from the participants is extremely positive. The evaluations will be shared with LAs in the regional leadership group meetings. The facilitator will also provide feedback on the programme. By following the middle leaders programme, most individuals feel they have gained knowledge, skills and understanding of leadership, identifying their strengths and areas for development in their school. Every individual on the programme has been given opportunities to put leadership skills into practice, developing strategies to raise standards in their school.
- **Aspiring Headteacher Development Programme (AHDP)** – Since 2017-18, 192 aspiring headteachers across North Wales have benefited from attending this cross sector programme. Four awareness-raising sessions were held in December across the region, to explain how the programme is combining with the NPQH as a national programme in 2020. Three of the five Development Days have been written nationally for regional delivery. 34 applicants were approved in January 2020 following an application process.
- **National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH)** – Over the past three years, 181 individuals have been accepted on to the programme. 58 practitioners were accepted this year (compared to 54 in 2017–2018 and 69 in 2018-19) from primary, secondary, special and GwE staff. The criteria for NPQH candidates have been thoroughly discussed with members of the Regional Leadership Group. Applicants attended two Development Days during the autumn term - a National Day and a Regional Day. Assessment Centres were held during the first two weeks of February. Nearly all the formal feedback on the Development Days was positive, with nearly all candidates confirming that they had a deeper understanding of the need to adopt differing leadership styles in different contexts and situations. The rigour of the Assessment Centre ensured that only candidates who have proved to be ready for headship have gained the qualification. Moderation of assessments ensured greater consistency. A high number of

candidates from across the region have evidenced their readiness for Headship against the Professional Standards for Leadership.

- **New and Acting Headteacher Development Programme** - A new National Development Programme, endorsed by the National Academy for Educational Leadership (NAEL) commenced in November 2019 with 30 individuals taking part in the programme. All local authorities in the region provided GwE with details of newly appointed and acting headteachers. There is now a central database of all newly appointed and acting Headteachers. Day 2 of the programme was held on 16 January 2020 at Venue Cymru with a delivery team of facilitators from North and South Wales. The focus of the day was 'Managing Change' and included sessions on Schools as Learning Organisations, managing change and developing individual, team and whole-school resilience. Cohort 2 (Heads in their first year of office) have completed two successful and well-received training days. All Heads were part of coaching groups led by experienced headteachers from the region.
- **Experienced Headteacher Development Programme** – The application date for the Experienced Headteacher Development Programme was extended during the autumn term. 20 places have been allocated to each consortium and a total of 17 headteachers from across the GwE region have applied successfully. Cohort 1 attended a 2-day residential course in mid Wales in March 2020, which was very well received.

### Governor Support

In line with GwE protocol, and at the request of Local Authorities, support is available for schools when appointing members of SLT, with SIAs available to contribute to discussions during shortlists and also available to interview. All governing bodies benefit from the experience and advice offered by the SIAs during appointments so that they are able to make an informed decision as to the most suitable candidate.

There is a commonly agreed menu of Professional Learning (PL) offered by GwE SIAs on a LA basis upon request. This ensures that the LAs can choose the most most appropriate PL for their region. Professional Learning opportunities is offered to Governors in with regards to the Transformational Reform to ensure that all governors who attend have a better understanding of the aspects delivered, have increased confidence when supporting their schools and are able to contribute more strategically to governing body discussions.

GwE ensures bespoke pre inspection support for schools in all sectors of the LAs. All schools have access to this support prior to an Estyn inspection ensuring that they are much more aware of the inspection process and the expectations on the School. The governors attending the Estyn interview are more confident whilst responding to questions on their role as a critical friend.

A good relationship between the Governors Support Officers and the GwE portfolio lead has ensured clear lines of communication and a common understanding of training needs. Effective lines of communication between GwE and all LAs during termly meetings ensures that support for Governors is agreed on a regional basis.

## **STRONG AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE, EQUITY AND WELL-BEING**

### **Wellbeing**

A clear and robust PDG Support Plan for both FSM and Looked After Children (LAC) has been implemented across the region with clear communication plans and lines of accountability.

There is a stronger focus on the monitoring and evaluating the overall performance of e FSM learners across key portfolio areas both in the secondary and primary sector. Updated guidance has been shared with all SIA's and Schools in regard to monitoring of grants. SIAs 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.

The LAC PDG has been utilised effectively by schools / Local Authorities to further develop an inclusive and supportive ethos that has a beneficial impact on pupils' wellbeing and personal development. The revised framework includes a set of core purposes for the regional PDG-LAC lead coordinators role and will enable national consistency to ensure the best educational outcomes for looked after children across Wales.

Monitoring systems are in place in relation to children who are looked after, both through the SIAs and the Looked After Children – Education Coordinators (LACE) and LA's. Stronger communication strategies are in place to inform LACE coordinators, school staff and wider stakeholders of regional plans, REC level provision, and processes for accessing funding which is delegated or open for bids.

The regional LAC PDG guidance model is fully implemented across the region. Most clusters are accessing the PDG and schools are also accessing individual bursary for LAC. 42 cluster projects have implemented evidence based support / interventions during 2019-20.

During 2019 / 20 around half of LAC have accessed additional tuition in year 10/11 to support with exam practice, study skills and revision that has impacted on their overall achievement.

The majority of secondary and primary schools have accessed trauma / attachment training for looked after children which has resulted in teaching staff being more confident in dealing with learners and identifying suitable support and provision. Effective models of implementing the Trauma Informed Schools into daily practise and delivery within teaching and learning can be seen. Regional groups have been set up by schools who are further developing resources and how to advice for schools.

There is an increase in the number of schools/settings who are trauma informed/ACE aware - 650 attended bespoke Profesional Learning during the year. In addition over 300 have attended bespoke session delivered by GwE during INSET days that is focused on trauma informed practises within teaching and learning. This has resulted in teaching staff being more confident in dealing with learners and identifying suitable support and provision and more schools who have an inclusive approach in relation to the teaching and learning.

Authorities have made good use of the LAC PDG to support schools to identify the additional learning needs of LAC and vulnerable learners via the roll out of the Boxall Online Profile. This has been implemented effectively in some schools / LA staff to assess, track and monitor progress of LAC. Nearly all LAC have a Boxall Profile to measure the developmental needs and distance travelled. The LAC PDG has been utilised to offer training and mentoring for schools to implement the tool

successfully. In addition we have increased the focus on supporting schools to measure wellbeing via a range of evidence based measures.

There is also an increase in the number of school accessing the LAC PDG to support adopted children. GwE has shared an Adopted Learner Plan for schools to share with adoptive parents and to identify key areas of support. Initial feedback is positive as it's ensuring a person centred approach.

### **Pupil Referral Units**

Positive relationships have been established across the region with more meaningful collaboration and sharing of best practice.

All PRU leaders have received relevant information and access to training opportunities and support within GwE.

The PRU Network has been further developed with regular update meetings and contact. They are also an effective method of sharing good practice, for example:

- Use of Trauma Informed approaches
- Successful joint bid for Circle Time training for 15 PRU staff.
- Alignment of INSET days to allow more joint working
- Effective wellbeing tracker

All settings are open to change and are exploring different ways of working.

## **ROBUST ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY ARRANGEMENTS SUPPORTING A SELF-IMPROVING SYSTEM**

### **Tracking and assessment**

The impact of the data summary and tracking can be seen in many schools. This includes:

- Schools focusing on individual pupil progress from baseline to end of primary education, by both teachers and school leaders.
- Schools focusing on progress of groups of learners.
- Better consistency throughout schools in teacher assessment and target setting which leads to a more robust self-evaluation and improvement planning.
- Using a variety of ways to interrogate pupil data and present the findings e.g. through graphs and charts

In primary schools, there is clear focus on tracking pupil progress.

- Whole School Tracker: An increasing number of schools reporting that Estyn recognised the tracker as a comprehensive tool to use to track the progress of all pupils, groups of learners and cohorts. All SIAs received update training on the tracker and were able to better support more schools to use it more effectively
- Data Summary Spreadsheet: Year 2 and Year 6 pupil data summary provided for all primary schools – Headteachers have praised this for the information provided and reducing workload. All schools received the revised updated version to include progress of e-FSM and Boys/Girls progress data, charts and a narrative report. Many schools have expressed their thanks and stated that reduced schools' workload further.
- KS2 and 3 moderation: Clear messages about accuracy of baseline and the impact it can have on showing pupil progress resulted in an increase in the number of Foundation Phase teachers

across the region attending the Foundation Phase data training sessions. SIA attendance at and the reporting on the quality of the cluster moderation process identified schools and clusters who needed support with their teacher assessments.

Training has been offered to all schools across the region. By request this training is still ongoing.

Fifty five percent of all regional secondary schools have been successfully enrolled into the In-school variance (ISV) programme for this academic year. As in-school variance is four times more significant than school-to-school variance, effectively addressing this issue is central to improving performance across the region. This has heightened regional schools' awareness on the the importance of ISV in developing their strategy towards enhanced Capped 9 performance. 4Matrix clinics have been well attended and on-line support facilities have been well used.

GwE is working closely with experts from Warwick and Bangor Universities to develop an individual child attainment model (iCAM) to predict attainment and inform child-driven priorities for secondary schools in Wales. The model will be based on historical data from across Wales and, if successful, would dispense with need for arbitrary between-school comparisons for cohorts of children and instead model expectations about individual children's attainment at KS4.

Support for regional schools to confidently operate in an 'earned autonomy' climate has focussed on developing their ability to manage data against an increasingly diverse, defuse and rapidly changing set of parameters . Within the evolving climate, schools are expected to operate more effectively across three levels: projections based on personal, socio and economic profiling; reduction of in-school variance and question level analysis at a peer-to-peer and a regional level to generate appropriate challenge.

### Small schools

A conference was held for Headteachers of small schools with 56 schools attending. There was good feedback with 85% judging good or better for the day. Headteachers of smaller schools welcomed the opportunity to meet and discuss the reform journey and its challenges in a situation where the Headteacher is also teaching.

Meetings have been held for headteachers and/or teachers in the region who teach four different age groups in Foundation Phase or Key Stage 2 in order to offer guidance and ideas on designing Curriculum for Wales (cFW) for mixed age classes. They were given the opportunity to attend regional sessions on guidance on designing CfW in their mixed age classes.

There was also an opportunity for the first time for the headteachers of smaller schools to come together to receive relevant information, but more importantly, to share practice and barriers and create informal networks.

## TRANSFORMATIONAL CURRICULUM

### Teaching and Learning

Many exciting and far-reaching projects have been implemented during the last year, and it is hoped that these will have a significant influence on the quality of teaching in regional schools. These projects offer teachers the opportunity to collaborate, share their expertise and passion for teaching and to get to know new professional colleagues. They also enable all teachers in the region to develop and deepen their teaching skills and their understanding of the principles of formative assessment and

excellent pedagogy. Ultimately, our pupils will become the independent and confident learners they deserve to be.

#### Formative Assessment Action Research Project

The Formative Assessment Action Research project (GwE and Shirley Clarke) has been operational in the region since October 2017. The project is developing effectively and is implemented in a pattern of tiers, putting pedagogical principles in action in classrooms on the basis of robust evidence.

The aim of the programme is to develop individuals to be able to lead on developing teaching in their schools, leading to:

- a positive impact, not only on the quality of teaching in classes, but also on pupils' wellbeing, attitudes to learning and development as independent learners.
- deepening teachers' understanding of effective pedagogy on the basis of wide and current research, both on a local and international level.
- teachers undertaking active research in their schools, and taking part in professional collaboration and becoming confident pioneers. Consequently, schools that are a part of the project are developing well as learning organisations.
- an increased focus on effective pedagogy in the work of the region's collaborative clusters.
- a significant contribution to schools' readiness and preparations for the Reform Journey and Curriculum for Wales; specifically so by ensuring good attention to the four purposes, the 12 pedagogical principles, schools as learning organisations, the professional standards for teaching and leadership and the agenda for reducing teachers' workload.

The commitment of schools across the region to the project over the 3 tiers is as follows:

• Tier 1	27 schools	54 teachers
• Tier 2	193 schools	386 teachers
• Tier 3	141 schools	261 teachers
<b>Total</b>	<b>361 schools</b>	<b>701 teachers</b>

The impact of the project reaches at least 17,500 pupils across the region (based on an average class size of 25 pupils). The project is developing effectively and the commitment of Tier 1, 2 and 3 schools to the work is very positive. Since September, Tier 1, 2 and 3 schools are collaborating at cluster level to support action research and to experiment with teaching in their classes, developing and sharing good practice.

Teachers' feedback is very positive, with the project demonstrating a positive impact, not only on the quality of teaching in classrooms but on standards in wellbeing and pupils' attitudes to learning.

Tier 2 Implementation and impact report was published in December with very positive findings on the commitment of schools and impact of work across the region.

#### Implementation of the 'Outstanding Teacher Programme – Olevi' (OTP)

There was positive feedback to the training and its impact on teaching in schools. The programme develops individuals to be able to lead on developing teaching in their schools, thus:

- Olevi messages and principles continue to extend beyond the initial counties
- further developing individuals to be able to lead on developing teaching in their schools
- positive feedback to the training and its impact on teaching in schools
- increasing capacity across the region in terms of school to school support and collaboration
- increasing schools'/classrooms' ability and capacity to further improve the quality of teaching and sustain progress

- teachers and leaders have a deepened understanding and expertise in order to be able to lead and develop effective pedagogy across schools.

#### Mantle of the Expert (Primary)

Ysgol Cae'r Nant is an accredited school, which has received practitioner status and supported and led other schools in this area.

Schools' commitment across the region to experiment with and implement Mantle of the Expert principles in classrooms has developed well during the year, with more schools expressing an interest in further training.

#### Development of provision for More Able and Talented pupils (MAT) - (Secondary)

There have been successful developments in this area. These are the main activities:

- schools collaborating in triads to improve opportunities for MAT pupils and working with the Seren network (for Sixth Form MAT pupils)
- a variety of support from GwE core teams, for example training across the region by the GwE English Advisory Team on attaining A/A\* in English, discussions with groups of Heads of English on methods to support MAT pupils, training on practical strategies to use in the classroom to develop higher order thinking skills in English, support with science, training and support across the region to improve pedagogy in KS4 and KS5 in order to raise standards and prepare Year 11 MAT pupils for studying mathematics in the Sixth Form, modelling some MAT lessons in some schools
- MAT coordinators' groups have been set up to share and disseminate good practice
- collaboration within a cross-consortia working group on guidance and resources to identify and support MAT pupils' attainment and wellbeing
- co-ordinator has contributed to Module 3 of the Professional Offer for middle leaders, focusing on Teaching and Learning
- a range of resources created and shared with schools in order to raise the level of challenge in Key Stage 4. In addition, curriculum planning resources have been created
- Mike Gershon, Education Adviser has held training on Differentiation and challenging thinking for Heads of English and Heads of Welsh.

Good practice is shared within authorities and across the region. There has been positive feedback from teachers and MAT co-ordinators, with a number of schools across the region noting they are making good use of the resources and training in their classes. All this is enriching experiences and opportunities for MAT pupils in schools and beyond.

#### National Project led by Lynn Sharratt - Clarity (Secondary)

Led by Dr Lynn Sharratt, schools across the 4 consortia are collaborating on a 2-year active research project on Leadership, Pedagogy and the New Curriculum. The project utilises Dr Sharratt's 14 parameters to encourage reflecting on and improving schools' approach to the new curriculum, and its place in supporting other schools.

Five Wrexham secondary schools are a part of this project, and Dr Lynn Sharratt has delivered two training sessions to more than 20 leaders. The main focus of the initial two days' training was assessing literacy. There are two more sessions.

The project is progressing well and is effectively driven internally in the schools, with best practice shared in a north Wales Headteachers' conference. There is interest in the project in many authorities and beyond, and several schools have visited the project schools and started piloting strategies.

Leaders are extremely positive about the initial impact of the project, which has deepened their understanding and expertise in order to be able to lead and develop effective pedagogy across schools.

Schools are developing their practice and leadership based on the ideas and research of Dr Lynn Sharrat, with active research leading to improving schools' understanding and capacity to lead on further improvements and identifying common strategies for improving teaching/learning.

#### Support is tailored to Secondary Schools by means of Individual Plans.

There are Plans in place for all schools in the region. The focus on improving teaching and learning is a priority in all schools where this has been identified as post-inspection courses of action, and is targeted for specific departments/aspects in other schools, in line with School Development Plan and Departmental Development Plan priorities. In addition, there is focus on specific aspects of pedagogy via subject forums.

Evidence from monitoring visits, discussions with leaders and scrutiny/observation exercises shows a positive impact on pedagogy in the majority of schools and circumstances where support has been targeted.

The region's schools are developing effectively in their readiness for the New Curriculum and its implementation in the classroom. Plans have been completed to refine and strengthen processes for identifying support needs for the next academic year.

Provision via the above projects has made a significant contribution to schools' readiness and preparations for the Reform Journey and Curriculum for Wales - the four purposes, the 12 pedagogical principles, schools as learning organisations, the professional standards for teaching and leadership and the agenda for reducing teachers' workload. They have also deepened teachers' and leaders' understanding and expertise in order to be able to lead and develop effective pedagogy within and across schools.

An increasing number of teachers and school leaders are leading and supporting each other, disseminating good practice and demonstrating a strong understanding of effective pedagogy and sharing consistent messages as regards pedagogy.

The majority of the regions' schools have benefited from working with international experts and from their guidance, experts such as Shirley Clarke, Dr Lynn Sharrat and Mike Gershon, and also from being part of high calibre programmes such as Mantle of the Expert and Olevi.

They have also deepened their understanding of effective pedagogy, based on wide and current research, both on a local and international level. Teachers are undertaking active research in their schools, collaborating professionally and developing well in terms of confidence and innovation.

## **5. THE REFORM JOURNEY**

GwE is working with all local authority schools to ensure a clear and systematic approach to support and reflect on their engagement with all aspects of the reform journey. Each school cluster has two designated leads to facilitate the change management process and planning that schools have undertaken when developing the new curriculum and implementing new professional standards. SIAs effectively disseminate consistent key messages, including examples of successful practice regarding the national reform agenda with all schools. The national reform journey is embedded in regional and

local authority priorities where SIAs provide thorough and informed support to all clusters on key aspect of the reform journey.

### Accountability - the new evaluation and improvement arrangements

Welsh Government has developed new evaluation and improvement arrangements to replace parts of the current accountability system.

This will require significant changes to culture and behaviours across the whole system. At the heart of the evaluation and improvement arrangements is robust and continuous self-evaluation. This, along with peer engagement, will support learning and improvement, embed collaboration, drive self-improvement and raise standards for all our learners.

The arrangements are based on the following four key principles.

They will be:

- **fair** - they will promote equity, inclusion, choice, individual pathways to learning and never lose sight of the learner
- **coherent** - allowing each part of the system to work together without overlapping, with clear roles and responsibilities
- **proportionate** - ensuring that the implementation of the new system and process is manageable and makes a difference. They will be underpinned by the principle of subsidiarity, allowing responsibility for accountability for schools to be local, led by self-aware schools.
- **transparent**- recognising the breadth of learning experience across schools and the value added by teachers in class.

Data driven self-evaluation will be a strong feature of future arrangements. This will be supported through the National Resource for Evaluation and Improvement developed by Estyn, Welsh Government, the regional consortia and the profession (see below). The outcome of the self-evaluation process will be the identification of priorities for improvement. Schools will still be required to publish their priorities for improvement, in line with regulations on school development plans. It is expected that schools will include peers to support their self-evaluation arrangements.

National school categorisation, which indicates the level of support schools need from the system to improve, will evolve into a more sophisticated process that looks at a broader range of indicators, such as learner well-being. It is expected that this will evolve into an ongoing process of authentication of a school's self-evaluation and priorities for development.

It is regional consortia that will implement this authentication process for schools. Regional consortia will continue to provide support to schools in proportion to need, and in line with the improvement priorities identified.

School level target setting expectations will remain as will the need for local authorities to approve the process of target setting.

It will evolve however, to give schools flexibility to identify local targets for improvement appropriate to the school's context, and so reflecting their priorities as a school.

Welsh Government will develop system-wide measures to help nationally judge progress in policy implementation. Aggregation of school level data will be avoided.

Rigorous inspection will continue to provide clear evidence of the quality and standards of education and training in Wales. There will be a partial suspension of inspection from September 2020 to August 2021 to enable the inspectorate to work more closely with schools and consortia on the curriculum reform.

Schools that continue to give cause for concern will be monitored by Estyn during this time and will continue to receive support from their regional consortia and local authorities.

Moving forward Estyn will change the way they undertake their inspections. This will involve the validation of the school's self-evaluation and improvement processes and will take place more regularly than in the current cycle. Estyn will shortly begin a process of consulting with stakeholders on the new arrangements from 2021. This will include inspecting schools more than once within a seven year cycle

### **National Evaluation and Improvement Resource**

As part of national arrangements to develop revised evaluation, improvement and accountability arrangements, Estyn and Welsh Government have been working with key stakeholders to develop a national resource so as to increase rigour and consistency in self-evaluation and improvement planning processes, whilst promoting and fostering the culture and behaviours required to support the implementation of the new curriculum and the wider agenda of the reform journey.

Key stakeholders, including representation from GwE, have been contributing to the discussions and to the work programmes of the stakeholder group and the working group. This national resource will be based on 4 themes [Leadership, Teaching and Learning Experiences, Well-being and Inclusion and the 4 Purposes of the curriculum], with the principles of Schools as Learning Organisations underpinning these themes. The resource will be a combination of evaluation stimuli, exemplary material and reference to successful practice. Since September 2019, a pilot group of cross-sector schools (one from each authority) have started work on piloting the stimuli in this resource, prioritising those that pertain to preparing for the new curriculum. A representation from GwE along with Estyn, Welsh Government and the other regional consortia are part of the group that is steering the work of the pilot schools, together with developing the resource digitally on Hwb and ensuring the quality of the finished product.

Updates on the development of the resource have been shared with Headteachers in various events. The aim is that the section in the resource pertaining specifically to the four purposes of the curriculum will be available to schools during the 2020-2021 academic year.

### **Curriculum Development**

Curriculum for Wales reform work continues with pace across the region, using the structures of cluster networks. All 53 cluster networks continue to meet and Curriculum for Wales reform is a regular agenda item for updates. Supporting Improvement Advisers are in regular attendance in these meetings and are key in allowing clear channels of two-way communication to share and feedback consistent messages.

Our approach to the reform journey has been integrated in all aspects of our work from the beginning. Our priorities are a combination of improving school provision, leadership and outcomes, as well as delivering the reform journey. A range of effective communication channels has been established to include headteacher forums to discuss the approach and develop appropriate content to meet local needs.

All 53 clusters proposals for next steps to develop the curriculum awareness have been agreed in principle and success criteria include:

- Transparent shared objectives to improve learner outcomes
- Increased number of staff aware of the new curriculum developments
- Increased number of all schools staff working collaboratively
- Increased number of opportunities to plan and prepare for the continuum of learning from 3-16
- Provide opportunities for teachers to reflect and to be innovative with pedagogical approaches

In partnership with stakeholders, GwE has developed a long-term supportive and sustainable strategy which is successfully building capacity across the region to meet the challenges of the wider reform. The integrated approach has focused on developing collaborative opportunities across clusters of schools.

GwE has encouraged schools to collaborate through sharing practice and co-constructing areas that need improving and the challenges of the reform journey. We have invested in various cluster models and encouraged schools to find a range of appropriate partners to deliver improvement and changes.

The development of G6 has helped support schools to reflect on their preparation for the ongoing transformation agenda. It also gives clear direction on how GwE will implement a clear and systematic approach to support all schools across the LA in reflecting on their readiness for a new curriculum and supporting schools with their preparation for reform journey.

Termly G6 milestones continue to guide schools and offer expectations under specific headings. Region wide figures for engagement are as follows:

Schools engaging with G6:	<u>Knowledge and awareness</u> - partly on track or better:	<u>Engagement and participation</u> - partly on track or better:
74% (Nov 2018)	77% (Nov 2018)	69% (Nov 2018)
82% (June 2019)	82% (June 2019)	76% (June 2019)
96% (Nov 2019)	91% (Nov 2019)	96% (Nov 2019)

Engagement is strong across the region. Feedback is clear that at this point, schools feel they are on track with their staff awareness of the information currently available on the curriculum developments, in particular 4 purposes and 12 pedagogical principles.

Monthly Professional Learning opportunities for regional staff continues to provide important opportunities for the full team to share updates and develop consistent messaging on an integrated platform across the wider education reform. All resources developed commonly by Pioneers and delivered as part of the engagement events are shared through our G6 system available to all schools in the region. GwE actively contributes to the development of the national Curriculum for Wales framework through regional staff and networks of pioneer schools.

### Professional Learning

GwE's professional offer is broad and comprehensive, offering professional learning opportunities for all school staff. It also includes various other Professional Learning opportunities, for example, Literacy and Numeracy in the primary sector, core subjects in the secondary sector, curriculum planning and wellbeing. It has been planned with the development of individuals on the classroom

floor in mind; whilst also accommodating whole school aspects; supporting clusters of schools, and responding to LA needs.

GwE priorities are at the heart of the Professional Offer. Curriculum for Wales principles are embedded in the offer. They are the golden thread, linking together everything that it offered. The 4 purposes are a priority for presenters as they plan relevant, current and exciting training.

Each GwE professional learning offer has a Logic Model that underpins it, which identifies the need for training along with inputs and outputs, including any external threats that could impact professional learning.

It is an ambition in Wales that every school develops as a learning organisation, in line with OECD principles. The service has evolved to offer training on the basis of these principles and works to ensure that all professional learning offered promotes the dimensions of a learning organisation, providing opportunities for schools to explore new approaches and adapt to the changing environment. The focus is on professional learning that provides support in various forms, including off-site specific professional learning programmes, remote learning, mentoring and effective school-to-school collaboration. This all promotes self-improvement and pedagogy with the aim of disseminating good practice.

The offer is designed to develop individuals in classrooms and whole school aspects, support clusters of schools and respond to LA needs. Provision is based on Supporting Improvement Advisers' robust knowledge and understanding of their individual schools, on the needs of specific clusters, the aspirations of LAs and national priorities.

The professional standards for teaching and leadership focus on the essential elements of the work of every teacher – pedagogy, collaboration, leadership, innovation and professional learning. GwE's professional offer supports the development of the professional standards

Professional learning will be central to ensuring that all school staff have the professional knowledge and skills to deliver on the education reforms that are well underway in Wales. A clear framework for themes for professional learning has been identified for practitioners within schools. The programme of professional learning for Headteachers and Senior Leaders commenced in February 2020, based on the following themes:

- Leading change
- Developing shared vision
- Creating time and space for Professional Learning
- Planning for curriculum change / curriculum design
- Leading pedagogy

Through the curriculum work, a growing number of clusters have identified and requested bespoke professional learning to meet their needs. Feedback shows that this collaborative local approach to professional learning is well received and has early signs of positive impact on common language for teaching and learning

Sharing rationale and approaches to Professional Learning in small cluster groups has been valued by headteachers as an effective opportunity to engage with peers and have professional discussions with over 230 leaders registering within the first 24 hours.

An increasing number of clusters are developing local approaches between primary and secondary to collaborate on many school priorities e.g. developing teaching and learning strategies; developing logic model to identify joint Professional Learning.

## **Digital**

An essential part of the national mission is ensuring that all learners have high level digital skills so that they are digitally competent to be critical, creative and enterprising thinkers.

GwE has produced a digital professional learning programme to support teachers and leaders to develop effective and sustainable digital learning experiences for learners so as to ensure that our young people have high level digital skills.

In order to ensure that pupils develop their digital skills, GwE offers professional advice, guidance, training and support in the following key areas:

### **Improving schools' digital learning provision**

- A regional digital learning strategy has been produced and is currently being delivered. The strategy outlines the main steps taken by the service to raise standards of digital learning in schools over the next three years.
- A resource enabling schools to produce a vision for digital learning and convert into a plan has been created and released. This resource was introduced to all cluster digital facilitators to be used as a tool for clusters to collaborate to form their vision.
- Over 200 registered to attend the Regional Digital Learning Event in March 2020.
- 96% of schools engage with Hwb (Hwb Data - March 2020).

### **Improving programming skills region-wide.**

- Twelve lead schools have been identified with one teacher from every school upskilled.
- GwE's on-line coding challenge was launched.
- A strategy has been prepared for 2020-21 to provide resources to support coding clubs and ensure that learners across the FP, KS2 and KS3 get to experience programming as part of the preparations for the computer element of the curriculum prior to September 2022.
- A total of 45 schools have received training and a classroom toolkit from Microbits.

### **Adopt GwE's cluster model to enable and promote collaboration in order to improve the quality of digital leadership and professional learning opportunities.**

- A total of 45 clusters have appointed a digital facilitator for the cluster - initial training held in January 2020.
- A total of 172 schools in the region have been partaking in cluster level activity between January and March 2020.
- 16 clusters applied for additional funding to support a further project to raise standards of digital learning.
- A virtual network was established to facilitate the sharing of documents and key messages.

### **Ensure that schools' understanding of e-safety issues is up-to-date and increase their engagement with the '360 Degree Safe Cymru' self-evaluation tool.**

- 7 sessions for head teachers have been held across the region - over 200 attending.
- 65 schools engaged with the '360 Degree Safe Cymru' tool following these sessions
- GwE SIA have received on-line safety training.

### **Develop and establish a digital and national self-evaluation tool and ensure that schools use it effectively to plan for improvement.**

- The 4 regions were responsible for the content and structure of the tool.

### **Improve secondary sector engagement as schools prepare to implement the Digital Competence Framework.**

- Consultation took place with some secondary heads' forums within the region, and there is a strong desire to obtain support on how to develop digital learning in schools.
- Intention to bring school senior leaders together region-by-region to receive training and facilitate collaboration to develop and deliver a vision.

### **Welsh Language**

The education system in Wales is in a period of transformation, and the Welsh language is an integral part of these reforms. The education system has a key contribution to make and the region has committed to respond to, and to deliver the Welsh Government's policy and vision. The main developments over the year are outlined below:

- The Joint Committee approved the strategic plan, 'Developing Welsh in Education in the North Wales Region 2019-22' (November 2019).
- A concise handbook was developed for SIA to assist them with their joint planning for the Welsh language's journey within the reform journey.
- A Welsh Language Training Directory was developed for the region, with details of initial training, ranging from apps/basic websites, courses held by Welsh Advisory Teachers/Welsh Tutors in the Authorities, to Sabbatical Courses.
- GwE and LA bulletins continue to promote the sabbatical courses. Forty-three attended sabbatical courses during 2019-20 - i.e. Welsh in a Year course, Advanced Course for Assistants, Foundation Course for Teachers, and 12 have committed to a Follow-up course for the Welsh in a Year Course.
- The cluster model is operational. A Welsh Language Cluster Coordinator was identified for all 54 clusters across the region. Funding is secured by providing a Cluster Action Plan to promote informal use of the Welsh language and to develop the Welsh skills of the workforce.
- Work to support the Language Charter and the three Coordinators is ongoing which increases collaboration between the Charter and Cymraeg Campus.
- Eight members of GwE staff attended the Learning Welsh Course (Work Welsh) during 2019-20 and passed the Entry examination in June 2019.
- Collaboration continues with other regions on the Welsh Language Strategic Leaders' Project.

### **Additional Learning Needs (ALN)**

ALN transformation cluster work has been established across North Wales, providing a consistent approach to supporting school readiness to implement the ALN reform. As a result, all schools have an awareness of the reform, have worked with their cluster to identify joint priorities and submitted a cluster action plan. The model ensures that all schools across the region receive accurate, timely and consistent advice and support as we move towards the end of the transformation journey to implementation.

In addition, all senior leaders and clusters have identified their own professional learning needs to support the implementation which have fed into the 2019-2020 professional learning offer for ALN transformation.

Innovative work at cluster level has been successful including defining universal provision, defining high quality teaching and implementing strategies to communicate with parents and carers.

Clusters have been encouraged to develop their work on the transformation of ALN collaboratively and in a cohesive way, where possible, supporting learners as they move between phases of their education.

Work will continue to support to ensure that all clusters are pro-active in working together, identifying priorities and developing an action plan.

## G6

The development of G6 (the regional management information system) has helped support schools to reflect on their preparation for the ongoing transformation agenda. It also gives clear direction on how GwE will implement a clear and systematic approach to support all schools across the LA in reflecting on their readiness for a new curriculum and supporting schools with their preparation for reform journey.

The system provides a structure to capture school improvement processes and priorities and collates quantitative evidence of a school's improvement journey. Schools make effective use of the milestones provided in the Curriculum for Wales and Additional Learning needs modules. This allows schools to reflect on their current position with regards to the reform journey and provides clear next steps for their consideration. The system also captures and shares best practice within and between schools. Cluster work is enhanced through sharing of priorities on G6 and dialogue helps capture the level of support required by schools and collaborations of schools. Schools access LA Professional Learning through the system and can identify links between whole school priorities and professional learning needs.

Through regular concise communication between schools and GwE, the system focuses on the transfer of live data to support the progress of current pupils. With increased professional dialogue between the SIA and School, it allows for a quicker response from SIAs to assist Schools with areas that need support.

Following a successful regional and cross sector rollout of the system, an effective programme of region wide training and support was offered for all School based leaders and GwE users to ensure further embedding of the system.

A system wide update in February 2020 ensured that nearly all aspects of phase 4 development have now been completed. These include the development of a GwE staff area to ensure consistency of messaging for the whole GwE staff and an Action Research area to ensure that all schools have access to information regarding the regional action research project.

As a direct response to feedback from user groups the system update also improved the G6 user interface to allow for quick access to latest developments as well as allowing schools the ability to edit and print reports from the commentary held in the system on their priorities.

Bespoke training packages of training have also been provided for a range of users across the region according to identified needs by SIAs these include new head teachers and SLT members.

The number of Quality Assured & published case studies in the Successful practice module has almost doubled. Further work is needed to develop the range and sector wide balance of case studies shared. This responsibility has been included in the minimum requirements set out for SIA's.

Region wide figures for engagement with G6 in 2019-20 showed that:

- 99% of all Primary Schools had set their priorities in G6 during the Autumn term 2019.

- 92% of all Secondary Schools had set their priorities in G6 during the Autumn term 2019.

Region wide figures for the ALN Wales module in January 2020 showed that:

- 96% of Schools stated that they were either partly on track or on track for the Awareness & engagement milestone. An increase of 32% on the figures for March 2019.
- 95% of Schools stated that they were either partly on track or on track for the Person Centred Approach milestone. A 29% increase on the figures for March 2019.

Increased engagement by schools (see figures above) has led to greater confidence. Latest training for schools has included presentations of effective practice by a range of schools

## 6. PARTNERSHIP WORKING

### Peer Review

GwE and the six regional local authorities are working in partnership with schools to establish a regional peer engagement model which fully reflects the principles and values that have been identified by Head teachers, and also learn from good practice nationally and beyond.

Developing multi-level and multi-tiered peer-engagement, forged and owned by the schools themselves, will also allow establishments to adopt an integrated approach to the national reform journey. The integrated approach will be effectively supported by the local authorities and GwE.

The model will be used to underpin a rigorous cycle of continuous development and improvement, and will be an integral part of school improvement in moving to a self-improving system, whilst also supporting those schools that are causing concern.

Schools were invited to present expressions of interest to participate in a regional peer engagement project which fully reflected the principles and values that had been identified by regional Head teachers.

A two-pronged approach was undertaken to develop peer review across the region:

1. Clusters of schools committed to a more structured approach to peer review to hone and evolve the '*Schools Partnership Programme*' model adapted to meet needs locally from an established model that had been identified following research into good practice; and
2. Clusters of schools developed their own models for peer review which fully reflected those principles and values that had been identified locally.

There were applications from 290 schools to participate in the peer review pilot. Ten clusters (60 schools) were selected and trained to participate in the *School Partnership Programme*. In addition, 28 clusters (171 schools) were selected to participate in locally developed models of peer review that were fully supported by Supporting Improvement Advisers (SIAs).

Continuous training and support was provided to all GwE SIAs on peer review, facilitation and coaching.

Training, advice and support in peer review and school to school support was delivered to school senior leaders involved in the project.

As part of the School Partnership Programme, a comprehensive 'Peer Reviewer' and 'Improvement Facilitator' training events were delivered. Impact and Support Workshops were also delivered throughout the year.

For the local peer review model, clear schedules for implementation were planned which were facilitated and supported by GwE SIAs.

An evaluation and assessment of impact programme was also developed and a baseline established for the project.

Up until March 2020:

- all GwE staff had received initial training on peer review, facilitation and coaching
- 6 GwE staff received comprehensive training to enable them to be 'Peer Reviewer' and 'Improvement Facilitator' trainers
- 72 senior leaders were trained as peer reviewers
- 49 senior/middle leaders were trained as Improvement Facilitators
- 300+ senior leaders were successfully participating in peer review
- At least 500 staff were engaged and involved in peer review
- All clusters were successfully implementing their peer review programmes

The following improved practice have been identified:

- Improved collaboration across the region with effective practice for self-evaluation and improvement planning being shared within catchment areas and beyond.
- Peer review model successfully embedding across the region and beginning to be seen as an integral part of school improvement.
- Talented leaders and teachers identified and trained to facilitate improvement, building leadership capacity across the region.
- Improved professional dialogue between head teachers with a greater willingness to receive feedback from peers which has resulted in honing and sharpening self-evaluation procedures.
- Peer reviews on the whole have been very well-constructed, intuitive, fit for purpose and strongly structured.
- Clear signs beginning to emerge that peer review is impacting on outcomes and pupil progress in many participating schools.

### **Schools as Learning Organisations (SLO)**

GwE has worked with the OECD to develop the Consortia and LAs as learning organisations. Findings from this work were shared with other regions, and internationally, as we further strived to develop a vivacious and healthy organisation.

During 2018-19, 50 regional schools were randomly selected by Welsh Government to respond to a survey focusing on the seven dimensions of Schools as Learning Organisations (SLOs). Schools received a snapshot of their results. This was a quick overview of aspects for further development.

These schools have received support from GwE to develop these aspects through regular meetings, visiting effective practice in a national conference, along with looking at specific aspects of action research by attending a presentation on 'Spiral of Enquiry'.

Several GwE schools have been working on developing a resource to convey Schools as Learning Organisations to our pupils. Seven schools collaborated to develop an animation with pupils and young

people, which is now to be seen on Welsh Government's website. Regional schools have also developed a community version of the presentation, which is to be included in a national resource jointly developed with the other regions.

All schools who took part in the survey have held various activities to further develop SLO in their schools, and have produced case studies to this purpose.

The region was requested by Welsh Government to produce a resource to raise the awareness of schools in Wales of what it means to be a SLO. This resource was jointly developed with the other regions in Wales, and is now used by 20 GwE schools to raise awareness of SLOs in their catchment areas and beyond across all schools in the North.

A national plan has been jointly developed with the other regions on how we will develop each school in Wales to be a learning organisation. Even though it is a national plan, there will be a local flavour when presented regionally.

The SLO survey was sent to all schools in Wales before the end of the summer term, enabling schools to recognise which of the 7 dimensions they need to develop further through drawing up their own action plan.

A number of schools from the region have delivered local raising awareness sessions with all schools in the region for SLO.

A cross regional playlist, which included numerous case studies, has been developed to help schools have a deeper understanding of what being an effective SLO entails.

The region has also worked closely with Bangor University recently in order to develop a LO survey for the middle tier. All regions have now agreed the contents and the survey will be ready in the new year for all regions to complete.

A member of staff from our original SLO survey schools has been appointed by Welsh Government to further develop SLO across all schools in Wales. Welsh Government have asked GwE to support and advise this new appointee during the early days of her new job.

### **Initial Teacher Education (ITE)**

Closer working between GwE and CaBan has led to more cohesive and collaborative approach. GwE has supported the successful Accreditation of BA / PGCE programmes and has worked with CaBan and regional schools to co-construct modules.

The main priorities for 2019-20 were;

- Improved the quality of ITE and professional learning for student teachers - Programmes are fully in place and developed with close to practice research, pedagogy, Welsh language and curriculum for Wales, evidenced in programme content.
- Extended role of mentor in partner schools having positive impact on quality of teaching across partner schools - mentor training and regular updates have been delivered and all mentors have undergone positive QA process, impacting on improved provision for students as evidenced in QA reports.
- Develop the confidence of NQTs in delivering the curriculum - highly effective training sessions have been delivered to NQTs.

- Recruit and select candidates for GTP to meet regional needs - GTP candidates were selected and supported and all will achieve QTS through extended provision by schools. GTP will no longer run from July 2020 onwards.
- Work with OU to select regional schools to co-construct part-time and employment based routes has been planned and in place - accreditation by EWC for 5 years.
- Work with OU to recruit schools and suitable candidates for employment based science PGCE pilot - 4 lead partner schools recruited, 7 employer schools and 8 associated schools, recruitment is taking place nationally currently (regional figures not yet available).

GwE ITE lead continues to attend meetings to begin to evaluate programme and develop reaccreditation. Relevant SIAs provide specialist input in to module delivery.

### Research and Evaluation

GwE is working closely with Bangor University on the 'Collaborative Institute for Education Research, Evidence and Impact' (CIEREI) Project to ensure robust evaluation systems for their development programmes and to measure their impact in schools as part of a regional approach. The various projects are:

- North Wales Online Reading Trial Study: Trans Regional Implementation Project (NorthWORTS-TRIP): To improve provision of evidence-based teaching strategies for primary schools across all LAs (Foundation Phase and key stage 2). NorthWORTS-TRIP Improves reading standards with Headsprout Early Reading (HER) and Comprehension programmes (HRC). Initial outcomes from this project have been disseminated during GwE conferences and cluster meetings, as well as several research conferences.
- North Wales Repeated Reading (NWRRP) project: To evaluate the effectiveness of a Repeated Reading intervention to improve reading fluency of children in primary school. To compare the effectiveness of Repeated Reading (RR) with high-frequency word (HFW) fluency approach. Twenty eight schools joined the project in September 2019.
- The Denbigh Cluster Reading Project is designed to help support primary schools to improve the standard of reading fluency for children through training staff in the implementation of Headsprout, Repeated Reading, High Frequency Words and the administration of DIBELS.
- Improving Wellbeing and Behaviour in a Learning Community (iWaB-RLC) project to evaluate the impact of behavioural strategies and wellbeing programmes: To improve provision of evidence-based strategies for primary and secondary schools (2017-2020). Initial outcomes from this project have been disseminated during during GwE conferences and cluster meetings, as well as several research conferences.
- Positive Readiness for Learning (PR4L) Project: To improve standards of attainment, behaviour and pupil engagement. To increase provision of evidence-based strategies in partner primary schools (2017-2020) To enable pupils to be independent, ambitious and capable learners. To develop all stakeholders as leaders in improving a whole school approach to readiness for learning. To implement the core purposes in line with the New Curriculum Successful Futures. Initial outcomes from this project have been disseminated during GwE conferences and cluster meetings. Findings were also presented to Welsh Government during November 2019. This work is also being collated for inclusion into a new academic book focussing on the use of whole-school behavioural systems.
- Improving Standards through Effective Revision (iStER) project: A collaborative three-year PhD research project seeks to explore the impact of evidence-based learning strategies in KS4 science subjects, to help improve the scientific attainment of pupils in school now and in the future. The primary aims of iStER are: (1) to disseminate accurate information about effective learning strategies amongst secondary school pupils; (2) to encourage pupils to invest time

for independent study and revision; and to provide a system to help organise pupil independent study/revision time and learning.

The collective outcomes from the studies here have been described in a recent paper in the Wales Journal of Education: Nearly all of the projects above focus on the use of research-informed ideas and strategies to improve outcomes. All of the projects involve research students working with schools to train, deliver and assess the impact of effective strategies and ideas. They are also providing schools with practical ideas and strategies to improve behaviour and wellbeing through the use of evidence-informed ideas. This work will inform schools as they look towards curriculum reform and the health and wellbeing AoLE.

## **7. BUSINESS**

### **Staff Development**

The consistency and quality of challenge and support to schools is good. Regular training, support and discussions ensure that Supporting Improvement Advisers' knowledge and understanding of national and local developments, and the implications of this on their roles, is good.

Quality Assurance processes continue to develop and evolve in line with national developments and principles. Messages and information are communicated clearly and on a regular basis to all employees. Generic, purposeful and effective support programmes are offered. Full and sector team meetings offer regular opportunities for collaboration, consultation and contributing to discussions and decisions regarding GwE's direction of work during a period of considerable change.

### **Performance Management and Accountability**

The clear and robust accountability framework is a key strength in GwE. Detailed business plans on all levels of planning address all aspects of the work of GwE, and clearly note the contribution of the service to the transformation agenda. Plans are fully costed, with clear success criteria and milestones for delivering objectives.

There are detailed self-evaluation arrangements. Plans are reviewed on a quarterly basis, evaluating progress and impact. Staff on all levels fully understand their responsibility for continued improvement and accountability.

Each Local Authority has a detailed business plan agreed upon by the head of service and the core adviser. Progress towards agreed outcomes on a local authority level is reviewed regularly in meetings between the lead adviser and Local Authority. Ongoing issues are referred to GwE Senior leaders in a timely manner.

Self-evaluation is a strong feature in GwE and the self-evaluation process is cyclical and ongoing. Great emphasis is placed on accountability and continuous review, and there is consistent emphasis on progress in line with priorities. Consequently, GwE leaders accurately identify areas of good performance and areas for development, or areas where there is an element of risk in terms of improving experiences and educational outcomes for learners.

### **Value for Money**

The consortium has effective financial management processes in place. Communication and consultation on financial arrangements is effective, and GwE staff, the host local authority and Joint Committee all review the core funding and grant expenditure on a regular basis.

A robust financial analysis supports the work of delivering the business plan. A medium term financial plan and workforce plan are both aligned with the business plan. Through increasingly effective use of data to identify key priorities, the link between the business planning process and decisions regarding financial planning is strengthened as the work streams that underpin the business plan clearly note the resources to be used.

A formal framework was produced to assess the wider value for money provided by GwE. The judgement is now consistent across all stakeholders on how to measure the value for money of GwE activities within the structure and objectives of the business plan.

### **Risk Register**

There are rigorous and comprehensive arrangements in place to accurately identify and manage risks on a local, regional and national level. The risk register is a live document, which is updated on a regular basis in order to identify increasing risks or risks which are no longer deemed as high level. It is reviewed every month in a senior leadership meeting and the Management Board and the Joint Committee review the register on a quarterly basis.

Through effective management of risks to the region, GwE is able to support the region's objectives, make effective use of resources and meet the outcomes as intended.

## **8. 2020-2021 BUSINESS PLAN PRIORITIES**

The priorities and areas for improvement are based firmly on the findings of our internal self-evaluation processes, external reviews on our current practice and direction of travel, and through consultation with headteachers and the Local Authorities. The Business Plan also addresses Welsh Government and the Local Authorities strategic priorities that fall within the remit of the work of GwE. Additionally, GwE will work in partnership with Local Authorities to support additional local priorities, as appropriate. It also takes into consideration the views and priorities of other middle tier partners such as Estyn, Qualifications Wales, WJEC, National Academy for Educational Leadership (NAEL), Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and Education Workforce Council (EWC).

The Business Plan links with more detailed service plans, with measurable targets for improvement and clear success criteria in order to accurately measure the region's progress. Progress against the Business Plan is reported on a quarterly basis, in line with the Accountability Framework.

Each Local Authority has a detailed business plan which has been agreed upon by the head of service and the lead Core Advisers. In each plan, there are details about key issues pertaining to the local authority along with a unique improvement plan to address specific challenges. Progress towards meeting agreed outcomes on a local authority level is reviewed on a regular basis.

The Management Board and the GwE Joint Committee have approved our strategic objectives and priorities for improvement for 2020-2021. The Business Plan is in 6 sections and is aligned with '*Education in Wales: Our national mission*', clearly noting the contribution of the service to the transformation agenda.

Our strategic objectives are:

1. Developing a high-quality education profession
2. Inspirational leaders working collaboratively to raise standards
3. Strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being

4. Robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements supporting a self-improving system
5. Transformational Curriculum
6. Business

Our regional priorities for improvement for 2020-2021 are:

<b>1: DEVELOPING A HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION PROFESSION</b>
<b>Priorities for improvement:</b>
1.1 Support secondary schools in statutory category, and those causing concern, to improve performance
1.2 Cymraeg 2050 – deliver a regional strategy to support delivering ‘A million Welsh speakers’.
1.3 Support CaBan to develop high quality ITE provision.

<b>2: INSPIRATIONAL LEADERS WORKING COLLABORATIVELY TO RAISE STANDARDS</b>
<b>Priorities for improvement:</b>
2.1 Work with other regions to provide development programmes across the work force to ensure high quality leadership
2.2 Support secondary schools to improve middle leadership performance
2.3 Develop peer engagement model and processes with schools to ensure robust self-evaluation and improvement planning at all levels

<b>3: STRONG AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE, EQUITY AND WELL-BEING</b>
<b>Priorities for improvement:</b>
3.1 Further develop the implementation of the regional Pupil Development Grant (PDG) framework model
3.2 Further develop LAC strategy
3.3 Work with LA and Schools to best prepare for Additional Learning Needs transformation

<b>4: ROBUST ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY ARRANGEMENTS SUPPORTING A SELF-IMPROVING SYSTEM</b>
<b>Priorities for improvement:</b>
Support schools to improve performance in the secondary sector:
4.1 Develop tracking and assessment systems
4.2 Develop accountability and management systems
4.3 Further develop accountability arrangements and processes for robust self-evaluation and improvement planning

<b>5: TRANSFORMATIONAL CURRICULUM</b>
<b>Priorities for improvement:</b>

- 5.1 Support schools and clusters as they make themselves ready to offer a Transformational Curriculum through a programme of professional learning based on the following themes:
- Leading change
  - Developing shared vision
  - Creating time and space for Professional Learning
  - Planning for curriculum change / curriculum design
  - Leading pedagogy

**6: BUSINESS**

**Priorities for improvement:**

- 6.1 Undertake a budget and workforce review