Agenda – Children, Young People and Education Committee

Meeting Venue:	For further information contact:
Committee Room 1 – Senedd	**Llinos Madeley**
Meeting date: 16 January 2020	Committee Clerk
Meeting time: 09.15	0300 200 6565
	SeneddCYPE@assembly.wales

Private Pre-meeting

(09.15 – 09.30)

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(09.30)

2 School improvement and raising standards – evidence session with Regional Education Consortia

(09.30 – 10.20)   (Pages 1 – 56)

Debbie Harteveld, Managing Director – Education Achievement Service for South East Wales (EAS)

Will McLean, Lead Director – Education Achievement Service for South East Wales (EAS) and Chief Officer, Children and Young People – Monmouthshire County Council

Louise Blatchford, Interim Managing Director – Central South Consortium (CSC)

Sue Walker, Lead Director – Central South Consortium (CSC) and Chief Education Officer – Merthyr Tydfil County Council

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
National Assembly for Wales

Attached Documents:

Research Brief

CYPE(5)-02-20 – Paper 1 – Education Achievement Service for South East Wales (EAS)

CYPE(5)-02-20 – Paper 2 – Central South Consortium (CSC)

Break

(10.20 – 10.30)

3 School improvement and raising standards – evidence session with Regional Education Consortia

(10.30 – 11.20)   (Pages 57 – 95)

Andi Morgan, Interim Managing Director – Education through Regional Working (ERW)

Kate Evan-Hughes, Lead Director – Education through Regional Working (ERW) and Director for Children and Schools – Pembrokeshire County Council

Arwyn Thomas, Managing Director – North Wales School Effectiveness and Improvement Service (GwE)

Attached Documents:

CYPE(5)-02-20 – Paper 3 – Education through Regional Working (ERW)

CYPE(5)-02-20 – Paper 4 – North Wales School Effectiveness and Improvement Service (GwE)

CYPE(5)-02-20 – Paper 5 – Correspondence from Welsh Government, Estyn and WLGA

4   Papers to note

(11.20)

4.1   Joint Letter from the Minister for Health and Social Services and Minister for Education – next steps for Mind over Matter report

(Pages 96 – 97)

Attached Documents:

CYPE(5)-02-20 – Paper to note 1

4.2   Letter from Adoption UK – impact of recent funding decisions on support services for adopted young people and their families in Wales

(Pages 98 – 100)

Attached Documents:

CYPE(5)-02-20 – Paper to note 2

4.3   Letter from the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services – Update on progress obtaining reliable social services data highlighted in the Regulatory Impact Assessment of the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill

(Pages 101 – 105)

Attached Documents:

CYPE(5)-02-20 – Paper to note 3

4.4   Letter from Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services – Laying of the updated Explanatory Memorandum in relation to the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill

(Pages 106 – 110)

Attached Documents:

CYPE(5)-02-20 – Paper to note 4

5   Motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to resolve to exclude the
     public for the remainder of the meeting
     (11.20)

6   School improvement and raising standards – consideration of the
     evidence
     (11.20 – 11.35)

7   Consideration of the letter from the Chair of the Committee on
     Assembly Electoral Reform – potential implications for Assembly
     committees
     (11.35 – 11.55)   (Pages 111 – 112)

     Attached Documents:
     CYPE(5)-02-20 – Private paper

Agenda Item 2

Document is Restricted

Submission to The National Assembly for Wales: Children Young People and Education Committee / School improvement and raising standards

December 2019

Education Achievement Service for South East Wales (EAS)

Submission to The National Assembly for Wales: Children, Young People and Education Committee / School improvement and raising standards

This report has been compiled jointly by the EAS and each of the five local authority Directors of Education from within the South East Wales Consortium.

1. A brief summary of:

1.1. Your approach to school improvement in your region, including how this is informed by the school categorisation process.

Regional investment in building the capacity of schools and educational settings over the last five years have enabled more collaborative ways of working and a move towards the creation of a self-improving school system. This approach is enabling teachers and leaders to learn from each other, to try out new approaches and to engage with educational research as the backdrop for improvement. Across the region the ways in which the EAS supports and challenges school improvement has developed over the past 6 years. The impact, effectiveness and value for money of regional strategies are reviewed regularly through both internal and external processes. The region has commissioned several external reviews over the past 3 years that have helped to shape future direction based upon effective principles of a self-improving system.

A summary of the school improvement strategies that are utilised across the region are noted below:

- The role of the challenge adviser in supporting, brokering and challenging the pace of progress schools make in addressing their identified school priorities;
- The role of EAS officers (including subject specific support, support for governors, wellbeing and equity) in supporting, brokering and challenging the pace of progress schools make in addressing their identified school priorities;
- Access to funded school networks that support all aspects of professional development and school improvement focused on improving the quality of leadership and teaching and learning;
- Access to a wide range of professional learning, some with accreditation options, for teaching assistants, teachers, school leaders and governors;
- Peer working and peer reviews;
- The use of trained and accredited coaches and mentors for teachers and leaders, sourced from within and beyond; and
- Access to eLearning materials and high-quality resources.

The EAS offers a comprehensive Professional Learning Offer (PLO) to all schools and settings across the region. For the past three years the region has funded schools to deliver a large proportion of the professional learning activity much of which is offered on a cluster basis. Each cluster has an assigned lead for professional learning who organises and co-ordinates support for, and access to professional learning across each of the clusters. In addition, each school has a regionally funded professional learning lead who co-ordinates this work at school level. Support via the numerous funded learning network schools is also organised on a geographical basis to support this delivery model.

The cluster-based professional learning lead also provides schools within the cluster with updates and development materials to support all key priorities within the National Mission, to include: Schools as Learning Organisations, Professional standards for teaching and leadership/Excellence in Teaching and Leadership Framework. This work is disseminated to all schools / practitioners through their nominated professional learning leads.

Each cluster also has a linked curriculum pioneer school, that supports regional delivery of key information and latest drafts/key messaging with regards to the new Curriculum for Wales. EAS organises regular briefing sessions with professional learning leads, headteachers, chairs of governors and local authority partners to ensure consistency of messaging, understanding and respective roles and responsibilities in key areas of work.

All schools are provided with a bespoke support package that compliments the priorities identified within their own School Development Plans (SDPs) in line with the levels of support they require. The support levels are informed by the national categorisation process, Estyn inspection outcomes or local intelligence. There is a degree of flexibility within the deployment model to allow for in-year changes in circumstances. The progress schools are making towards their priorities within their SDPs and against their local targets are captured on a termly basis are reported to local authorities.

Through a series of workshops, surgeries and professional panels during the summer and autumn terms 2019, the regional review and evaluation process supported all schools in ensuring that their processes for school improvement planning were effective. This approach supports the national reform and the interim target setting arrangements at key stage 4. It aims to ensure greater rigour and support in self-evaluation and development planning through the joint review and evaluation of school development plans with schools, local authorities and the EAS.

1.2. How you work with your member local authorities to ensure synergy and no duplication in your school improvement work.

There is no duplication between the work of the EAS and each of the local authorities in South East Wales. The Business Plan addresses each local authorities' strategic priorities that fall within the remit of the work of the EAS. The EAS works in partnership with local authorities to support additional local priorities, as appropriate. It is fully recognised that the improvements that are required at regional and local authority level require a strong commitment of partnership-working to be successful. Where local authorities and the EAS work in close partnership, there is evidence, particularly with regards to schools causing concern, that rapid and sustainable school improvement can be achieved.

The EAS is a not for profit limited company that is owned by the five local authorities in South East Wales. The EAS delivers, through a democratically agreed EAS Business Plan, a wide range of school improvement services to all schools (all key stages), pupil referral units and funded non-maintained nursery settings on behalf of each local authority. The EAS Business Plan supports the role that local authorities have in delivering their statutory function, addressing their individual improvement priorities and promoting improved pupil outcomes.

The Business Plan encompasses delivery across the following aspects: Monitor, challenge, support and intervention; Curriculum, assessment and accountability reform; Data collation, analysis and support (school, local authority, region); Professional learning: teaching and leadership; Professional learning: Teaching assistants / Higher Level Teaching Assistants;

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Equity and wellbeing; Literacy, numeracy and digital; Welsh language development; Core and non-core subjects; support for governing bodies including professional learning; national strategies, to include: Lead Creative Schools, Global Futures , Specialist HR support, Initial Teacher Education / Graduate Teacher Programme

2. Details of funding you are responsible for spending in 2019-2020, to include:

2.1. How much funding you are receiving in 2019-20 from each local authority for your school improvement services.

The EAS is subject to a robust governance model that is underpinned by the Collaboration and Members Agreement (CAMA). The EAS is funded on an annual basis from three sources: Local authority core contributions, grants and service level agreements. A detailed spending plan accompanies the Business Plan which is intrinsically linked to all actions contained within it. A detailed overview of the regional distribution of all grants is available for all schools to view and compare allocations and rates of delegation through the regional grant monitoring tool.

Financial contribution from each of the Local Authorities to the EAS

Local Authority	EAS 'As Is' Model Aug 2012	2013/14	2014/15 (funding levels set by WG, based on RSG formula to LA)	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018-19	2019-20
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Blaenau Gwent CBC	454,853	423,953	417,511	403,316	391,216	379,480	371,890	364,452
Caerphilly CBC	1,187,541	1,133,580	1,169,666	1,129,897	1,096,000	1,063,120	1,041,858	1,021,020
Monmouthshire CC	591,619	468,403	481,642	465,266	451,308	437,769	429,014	420,433
Newport CC	1,095,407	926,421	934,254	902,489	875,415	849,152	832,169	815,526
Torfaen CBC	940,858	760,016	600,536	580,118	562,714	545,833	534,916	524,218
Total	4,270,278	3,712,371	3,603,609	3,481,086	3,376,654	3,275,354	3,209,847	3,145,650

Total Efficiencies								-1,124,628

Total Staff FTE	135							71

2.2. How much in Welsh Government grants you are responsible for distributing in 2019-2020, including a breakdown between the Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant and the Pupil Development Grant, as well as details of how much is delegated to schools and how much is administered / spent on a regional basis.

There is a legal agreement in place between the local authorities and the EAS that details the process that must be followed for the agreement and distribution of all regional grants. The Education Improvement Grant is distributed on a common regional formula across each local authority.

Overview of grants 2019/2020

Grant Name	Grant Total	Amount delegated** to schools	Delegation** Rate (to date)
	£	£	
School Improvement Grant (SIG) - Education Improvement Grant (EIG)*	24,360,007	22,544,570	93%
- Other grant initiatives	4,582,685	3,718,863	81%
Pupil Development Grant (PDG)	19,735,125	19,674,189	100%
PDG (Lead Regional PDG Adviser)	100,000	0	0%
Seren Pre 16	98,400	98,400	100%
Seren Post 16	55,000	50,000	91%
Total	**48,931,217**	**46,086,022**	**94%**

*Includes the match funding requirement £1,910,832

** Delegation: This refers to funding which gives freedom of choice to a school in how it is used. It must however be spent in accordance with, and in the spirit of, the core purpose of the grant and the individual school development plan priorities. The following circumstances are not classed as delegation:

- Staff seconded from the local authority or the consortium to a school(s) or a cluster(s);
- Staff working wholly or partly in schools and paid for from a local authority or consortium retained budget;
- Staff or services that form part of a service level agreement, this type of activity will be classed as non delegated;
- Monies delegated from the consortium to a local authority.

3. **A summary of Key Stage 4 and A/AS Level examination data for 2019 and previous years in your region, plus any analysis you wish to provide.**

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.

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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 Welsh Local Government Association (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."

Consortia will adhere to this guidance when reporting on performance .

3.1. Reporting on key stage 4 results

New interim key stage 4 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	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. 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	✓ Only a pupil's first entry will count ✓ WJEC Science GCSE only

Interim Measure	How it is calculated	Differences from previous years, and why comparisons cannot be made
	one GCSE in size, specifying requirements in literacy, numeracy and science GCSEs only.

The best grade from any of the literature or first language Welsh or English GCSEs can contribute towards the literacy slot.

The best grade from either of the mathematics or mathematics – numeracy GCSEs can contribute towards the numeracy slot.

The best grade from a science GSCE 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).

The remaining six qualifications will include the pupil's best performance in either GCSE and/or vocational equivalent. | |
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 now 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.

https://gov.wales/examination-results-september-2018-august-2019

https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2019-12/examination-results-september-2018-august-2019-080.pdf

3.2. A / AS Level

This commentary reflects performance for schools across the region, rather than any provision in any colleges. Currently all Blaenau-Gwent learners, along with approximately one third of Caerphilly learners are offered sixth form provision delivered by Coleg Gwent. Torfaen will follow this model for first assessment in 2021.

Post-16 performance is heavily influenced by the context of the cohort, which in turn can be influenced by the entry policies of individual institutions. In addition to comparing raw outcomes, over the last three years the EAS has commissioned ALPs (a company who measure and compare progress from GCSE to A level across over 2,000 providers in England and Wales). Progress is graded on a nine-point scale with 1 being the greatest progress and 9 the lowest. The overall progress grade for the region has remained stable at 5 since 2016, which places regional performance in the middle of the potential range. At AS level this score is also a 5, and for BTEC the grade has improved from 7 to 6 since 2016. A very strong area of performance at post-16 is History at both AS and A level, with the region's value added for this subject at a grade 2 for the past 2 years, putting performance across the region in the top 10% of learners across England and Wales.

The Level 3 Threshold for the region has increased overall since 2017 and improved by 1.1pp from 2018 to 97.3%. Since 2017, of the four local authorities in the region with 6th form provision, two have improved performance and two have remained stable. The 0.9pp improvement in the region since 2017 compares against a 0.8pp improvement nationally over the same period. The Average Wider Points score has improved by 5 points in the most recent year, but due to a decline in 2018 overall performance remains stable in the region since 2017. In this time the national average has improved by almost 11 points, regional performance remains below that of Wales and the gap has widened slightly. Since 2017, only Monmouthshire has seen an improvement at this measure, where performance exceeds the national average (797.7 compared to 741.3).

3.3. Training for Elected Members

The EAS in partnership with local authorities has provided workshops for Elected Members to support their understanding and role in the scrutiny of performance data as part of the changes in the accountability system. Welsh Government, WLGA and Estyn have also hosted workshops for Chairs of Scrutiny Committees and Executive Members for Education within the region with further training planned for the spring term. The outcome of this session was that there would be a joint scrutiny session for all five local authorities to share learning and best practice.

4. A summary of PISA 2018 results in your region (if available), plus any analysis you wish to provide.

Regional data is not available at the time of writing the report. However, Wales has seen its performance improve in international tests in reading, maths and science. The biggest improvement was in maths, while science is also now close to the international average. The number of high-performing students in Wales rose from 4% to 7%. There was also no significant gender gap for the first time.

5. An update on progress to tackle the attainment gap in your region:

There are effective links between the work of each of the local authorities and the EAS to ensure synergy and no duplication of efforts when providing support and challenge to schools in this aspect of work. The work of the region is to promote improved outcomes for all groups of learners and the focus is very much on the quality of teaching and learning to ensure all learners make appropriate progress overtime.

Each of the improvement strands within the current EAS Business Plan has a specific emphasis on the work of the EAS in promoting improved outcomes for vulnerable learners, in particular, those in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM). These strategies are based on a wide range of research evidence. It is important that all other stakeholders, including schools and local authorities, have their own specific strategies to support and promote improved outcomes for vulnerable learners. The EAS endeavours, as appropriate, and within available resources to support local authority strategic plans to maximise the impact on learner outcomes.

There is a regional Equity and Wellbeing Strategy which encompasses all the approaches that are being implemented across the region to support schools in promoting improved outcomes for vulnerable learners. The strategy has been formulated with a wide range of partners (including local authorities, Health Board, Gwent Police) and continues to be reviewed and updated. A summary of some of the areas contained within the regional strategy is noted below:

- A regional professional panel (including local authorities and EAS) that discusses and approves school grant plans (Pupil Development Grant (PDG), Looked After Children (LAC), Educated other than at school (EOTAS)) with headteachers and chairs of governors. In addition, this encompasses midyear reviews of grant plans and impact capture.
- A regional professional learning offer for schools and settings that covers all aspects of the wellbeing and equity agenda, grant planning and interventions.
- Support for schools to interrogate data on groups of learners to assist with planning for improvement.
- Regional delivery schools for wellbeing and equity, a cluster that delivers professional learning to support the LAC agenda and a Lead Pupil Referral Unit that offers support and professional learning across the region.
- The delivery of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) professional learning with nearly all schools having completed Unit 1 with a target of all schools competing Unit 2 (Emotion Coaching) by July 2020.
- Pilot programme working in partnership with Children's Commissioner on the Rights to Education due to be rolled out to all schools.
- Working in partnership with Young Carers Wales to design lessons for both primary and secondary phases to raise awareness of young carers.

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- Created a regional 'Wellbeing Toolkit' which has been used across schools to audit provision and engagement in learning for all vulnerable learners. In addition, all clusters of schools have developed 'Wellbeing Plans' that are bespoke to the priorities within their community.

5.1. Between eligible for free school meals (eFSM) pupils and other pupils:

In addition to the information provided above the region has:

- Completed regional based research on provision and performance of FSM learners which has been shared with all schools to support PDG planning and the provision for pupils eligible for FSM.
- Introduced Professional Panels (including LA and EAS) to discuss with headteachers and chairs of governors their PDG and LAC grant plans. These sessions afford the opportunity to align support needs and apply rigour to the approval and impact capture of grant plans.
- Provided termly sessions, in collaboration with the regional Additional Learning Needs Transformation Lead for governors to assist them in scrutinising school grant plans and to be cognisant of the latest research and effective practice.
- Partially funded a vulnerable learner lead practitioner in every secondary school to engage in a 12-month professional learning programme. Schools will engage in research on the engagement and provision for FSM learners within their own school context enabling them to review and refine their own school strategy for improving the provision for FSM learners.
- Introduced the RADY (Raising attainment of disadvantaged youngsters) programme that has been implemented in 6 secondary schools, this is now running into the 2nd year.
- Engaged with 'Children in Wales' and 'Poverty Proofing' to support schools to review the 'cost of the school day'.
- Engaged with Education Endowment Foundation to host regional research events.

5.2. Between ethnic minority groups at risk of underachieving and other pupils;

Gwent Education Minority-ethnic Service (GEMS) works to provide strategic support and intervention for minority-ethnic pupils who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) across the South East Wales Consortia (SEWC). A referral process ensures that all new arrivals are known to the service and initial assessments carried out in home language or English. GEMS has the flexibility to assess pupils in a range of languages. GEMS support is provided to pupils in cohorts from Year 2 to Year 11 who may be at risk of underachieving at school and who have a Welsh Government language acquisition stage of A/B. Pupils below Year 2 can be supported if there is capacity and support available.

All supported pupils are assigned a Language Acquisition Record to track their language development. These records are available to all schools and local authority officers. The Language Acquisition Record allows early identification of pupils who are not making the expected rate of language acquisition and allows for allocation of additional intervention. To ensure practice is consistent, training in identifying the correct Language Acquisition stages was carried out across the region in 2018 and will again be offered to all schools in 2019.

Across the South East Wales region in 2018, Key Stage 4 outcomes for all EAL pupils continued to improve with 55.8% of EAL pupils achieving the Level 2 threshold including English and

mathematics. This represents a 4.9 percentage points improvement on performance in 2017. In 2018, the attainment of EAL pupils exceeded that of their non EAL counterparts by 2.9 percentage points.

Pupils who have been categorised within the Category A Welsh Government Language Acquisition Stage can be disapplied from end of key stage assessments. However, the GEMS team has prioritised raising standards for all EAL pupils in Key Stage 4. To support with this aim and increase the chances of their leaving school with a qualification, EAL pupils can sit a qualification in their home language. For those who are new to the UK education system it is vital that they are able to take a GCSE examination. For some EAL pupils, this may be their only exam they are able to pass. GEMS has produced a booklet for schools to promote these exams to students and links with heads of MFL departments and Headteachers to maximise the number of eligible candidates. GEMS staff support schools to deliver the oral element of the GCSE exam and help pupils to prepare for their written examination. Across the South East Wales region in 2018-2019, 102 EAL pupils were entered for qualifications in a home language. 67 were entered for GCSE examination, 15 pupils were entered for AS level examinations and 20 pupils were entered for A2 qualifications. Analysis of these results indicates that nearly all pupils achieved grade A*-C grades in their chosen examination.

To ensure there is strong monitoring of the work of the GEMS service, each authority provides a link officer who meets each term with the Head of GEMS at Gwent Achievement Progress (GAP) meetings. In addition, link officers attend termly Greater Gwent team meetings to discuss the progress of supported pupils. The GEMS teams offer training opportunities to staff in all schools in a range of key areas including: Effective EAL strategies; Gypsy Roma Traveller support and Supporting Refugees and Asylum Seekers. Training is followed up by GEMS staff to evaluate the impact of their work. In the 2020-2021 academic year training will be offered on a cluster basis to enable the work of the GEMS team to impact more widely on a larger number of schools.

In the 2018-2019 academic year, a regional conference was held as a way of sharing best practice for EAL pupils and was run by schools for schools across the region. The conference began to focus the work of schools on developing a strategic action plan to support EAL pupils. A second conference is planned for March 2020. The EAS has worked collaboratively with schools and GEMS to write a toolkit to support schools who are new to receiving ethnic minority and new to English learners.

5.3. Between Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) children, and other pupils;

Newport City Council hosts the GEMS service. Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly and Monmouthshire local authorities access support from GEMS through established Service Level Agreements (SLAs). GEMS provides support to schools across the region with the aim of building their capacity to meet the needs of Gypsy, Roma Traveller (GRT) pupils. However, as Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent run their own Traveller Services, GRT does not form part of their SLA.

GEMS employ a full time GRT teaching assistant who mainly supports learners in schools across Newport. The funding for this post come directly from the Minority Ethnic Achievement Grant (MEAG). In addition, a GEMS teacher co-ordinates support for GRT learners and engages with GRT families through home visits.

The GEMS Senior Achievement Leader oversees the strategic support for GRT across the region and chairs a regional GRT forum. The forum works collaboratively with a range of organisations on issues affecting education, health, housing, community cohesion, holistic development and wellbeing of the GRT community. Links are also made with the Traveller Service in Torfaen and visits are carried out to see how Gypsy Traveller (GT) learners are supported in secondary education. Sharing practice is vital to ensure a consistent approach to supporting GT learners.

15 GT learners are currently supported in 5 schools in Newport. Referrals for GEMS support were made by schools with parental permission in all cases. GT learners are most frequently referred to GEMS because their levels of literacy are lower than that expected for their age. The reading attainment of these learners is tracked, and appropriate intervention implemented. In 2018-2019, nearly all GT learners who accessed GEMS support made improvements in their reading levels. GEMS bilingual teaching assistants also provide support for Roma learners who have EAL. There are very few Roma learners across the region, with the majority of pupils residing in Newport. The progress Roma pupils make with language skills is tracked using the GEMS Language Acquisition Record (LAR). The tracker identifies underachievement and the support that is needed by learners in specific skill areas.

The Torfaen Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) Education Service and the Blaenau Gwent GRT Education Service are both local authority teams. The Torfaen Service has 5 members of staff and the Blaenau Gwent Service 1.2 FTE members of staff. Each Service provides task focused, school-based additional support to GRT pupils. The teams work on an outreach basis working with pupils, families and school staff using a personal centred approach to plan for GRT pupils and ensure they are fully included and accessing mainstream education to break down the barriers to engagement and learning. Both teams are part grant and part core funded. In the 2019/20 academic year there were 115 GRT pupils on roll across eight Torfaen schools and 82 GRT pupils on roll across nine Blaenau Gwent schools who received support from the teams. The teams work with key partners to offer an enhanced, flexible curriculum with wide range of opportunities to engage students in a range of school based and vocational qualifications.

Types of support provided by Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent Gypsy Roma Traveller Education Services include:

- Support the transition and admission of Gypsy and Traveller pupils into school.
- Provide task focused support to small groups or individual pupils to raise attainment and support pupil wellbeing in addition to existing schools support for GRT learners.
- Support schools/colleges to develop Learning Pathways for KS4 and post-16 GRT learners
- Provide advice and guidance for families to break down the barriers to engagement with learning.
- Engaging with pre-school pupils and their families to support the transition into early year's settings.
- Support GRT pupils with ALN as part of their IEP/IDP in conjunction with school support and other LA service intervention.
- Liaising with school, parents and other agencies in order to maximise engagement, attainment and progression of Gypsy Traveller young people within their schools.

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- Raise awareness of Gypsy Traveller culture providing resources and guidance to schools.
- Monitoring attendance, exclusions, achievement and attainment levels for all GRT pupils.
- Support schools to facilitate links between home and schools
- Provide support to the Education Welfare service when attendance issues for GRT pupils arise.
- Support GRT pupils during examination periods to meet course work deadlines and access examinations.

5.4. Between Looked After Children and other pupils (and any work to identify and improve the attainment of adopted children compared to other pupils).

The regional strategy for promoting improved outcomes for LAC and known adopted pupils is well understood and embedded across all local authorities. There are effective working practices between EAS, local authority LACEs, the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Transformation Officer and the regional Social Care Transformation Officer to align support and roles and responsibilities. In line with the recommendations within the terms and conditions of the grant funding, funding is distributed on a cluster basis, this has been the case for the past three financial years. Each cluster across the region has submitted a plan noting their priorities for PDG LAC funding, the plans have been approved via a regional professional panel.

The focus has been to build capacity within clusters of schools to support professional learning, improve provision and access to regional funding (including an application process for LAC being educated in England) with the aim of improving the outcomes for LAC and adopted children.

There is a regional professional learning programme available to schools and settings that focuses on ACEs, trauma, attachment and creating safe spaces within schools to support the provision for LAC and known adopted children. In addition, the EAS is working in partnership with 'New Pathways' to design and deliver a five-module professional learning programme for wellbeing leads in schools to upskill staff on trauma attachment and relationships. The current EAS Business Plan has a focus on developing links with Adoption UK. The plan also focuses upon the National Nurturing Schools Programme with 42 schools across the region nearing completion.

6. An update on how you are challenging and supporting schools that participated in schools challenge Cymru. We would be particularly grateful to know how you have ensured that, where schools' performance improved during the programme, this positive momentum has continued.

Since the end of Schools Challenge Cymru (SCC) programme the region has continued to learn from the most effective elements from within the programme and has integrated these into regional protocols. Use continues to be made of regional externally commissioned research to assist decision making in how the region approaches school improvement activity. The regional focus is firmly on building capacity within secondary schools, improving the quality of teaching and learning (at all key stages), building a collective ownership of pupil outcomes within each cluster of schools and developing leaders who can sustain improvement.

Many lessons were learnt through the engagement in the SCC programme and the impact this had on school improvement at school level, building capacity at a regional level and ensuring local accountability is secured. A summary of these are noted below:

- There needs to be effective line management and clear lines of accountability for Challenge Advisers.
- The use of Accelerated Improvement Board to hold schools to account regularly for progress are effective and have been utilised across the region.
- The focus for school improvement needs to be on all aspects of leadership and provision and not solely on the end of key stage 4.
- More focus needs to be placed on the quality of school improvement planning, the processes for self-evaluation and the accuracy of self-evaluation judgements made by school leaders.
- Effective links need to be made into local authority wider services to ensure that schools make effective progress. The region has strong links with each of the local authorities to ensure this is the case.
- Cabinet Members for Education, local authorities and regional consortia need to have clear roles in holding schools to account.

Across the region 14 schools (2 schools closed and a new one opened during the programme) were engaged in the SCC programme. As a result of changes in performance measures and specifications across several indicators at key stage 4, it has not been possible to compare 2019 figures with previous years performance (as noted in 3.1). It is however possible to make a number of other statements about the progress the schools have made overtime:

- Of the schools in the programme who had previously been in receipt of the highest support levels, 5 are now in receipt of the lowest levels of support (Green or Yellow).
- Out of the 14 schools, 9 have had changes in headteachers since the end of the programme.
- 7 of the schools have been in receipt of Statutory Warning Notices either during the SCC programme or after. 3 schools that were previously in the programme are currently in receipt of a Statutory Warning Notice.
- Of those schools inspected during or immediately after the SCC programme 9 schools were placed in statutory categories (either significant improvement or special measures), 6 of these have now been removed from these categories and are making good progress.
- Of those schools inspected during or immediately after the SCC programme 3 schools were placed in the category of Estyn monitoring, all 3 have since been removed from this category and are making good progress.
- An Interim Executive Board has been implemented in one of the schools.

7. **Any comments you have on current and future school accountability arrangements and the impact of these on school improvement.**

There is strong support for the current regional model for school improvement from all five councils, with all agreeing the EAS Business Plan and contributing fully to the priorities and actions within in.

Open and transparent regional funding processes (both core and grant) are essential to enable schools to have confidence within the processes so they can utilise this to support their school improvement priorities.

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As a region we welcome the changes to the accountability arrangements, the focus on a broader range of performance measures, the focus on self-evaluation and improvement planning and the increased support and resources for wellbeing.

The region knows its schools well, we believe that the current national model for school categorisation could now be refined to reflect the progress that has been made.

8. **Any other comments you wish to make on the school improvement and raising standards agenda.**

It is pleasing that there is a strong feeling of collaboration between other partners within the middle tier. This is particularly important when it comes to determining roles and responsibilities to ensure that there is limited duplication of effort. It is essential that schools are clear about who does what and where to access support and resources.

We welcome the enhanced working practices with colleagues from Estyn, particularly around the support for curriculum for Wales, the national resource for school improvement and through the pilot model for schools causing concern.

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Consortiwm Canolbarth y De
Central South Consortium

Gwasanaeth Addysg ar y Cyd
Joint Education Service

Submission to The National Assembly for Wales: Children, Young People and Education Committee / School Improvement and Raising Standards

December 2019

BRIDGEND County Borough Council

CARDIFF CAERDYDD

MERTHYR TUDFUL MERTHYR TYDFIL County Borough Council

RHONDDA CYNON TAF

VALE of GLAMORGAN BRO MORGANNWG

Central South Consortium submission to The National Assembly for Wales Children, Young People and Education Committee: School improvement and raising standards

This report has been compiled jointly by Central South Consortium and the five local authority Directors of Education from within the region.

1.0   A brief summary of:

1.1 Your approach to school improvement in your region, including how this is informed by the school categorisation process.

The Central South Consortium (CSC) remains committed to its original mission of providing a school improvement service to the five local authorities within its region. The delivery model is based on the sound principles underlying other successful school systems where schools are supported and given greater ownership for their own improvement through developing a self-improving system.

The Central South Wales Challenge (CSWC) developed with school leaders was first launched in January 2014 and has been further developed following robust evaluation of impact, value for money and the need to ensure that schools are well prepared for the new curriculum. In 2019 a refined model of the CSWC strategy has enabled the organisation to include the delivery of the Welsh Government's transformation agenda within its model.

CSC is an ambitious region with the aim that every school in every local authority becomes as good as the best, and that in school variation is eliminated. The aim is also to reduce the impact of disadvantage on leaners.

The strategy was based upon six underlying principles commonly found in successful school systems:

- Schools are communities where collaborative enquiry is used to foster improvements in practice;
- Groupings of schools engage in joint practice development;
- Where necessary, more intensive partnerships are organised to provide support for schools facing difficulties;
- Families and community organisations support the work of schools;
- Coordination of the system is provided by school leaders: and
- Local authorities work together as the conscience of the system

CSC publishes a professional learning offer to all schools. 92% (see 2.2) of the Education Improvement Grant element is delegated to schools. This enables schools to identify areas of need and determine which areas of the professional learning offer they wish to access.

The focus over the past few years has been to embed the following key approaches to the school-led improvement model:

- **Leadership programmes** developing existing and future senior & middle leaders in our schools;
- **Cluster** working focusing on areas of responsibility best met through local approaches
- **School Hubs** - offering professional learning aligned to regional and national need and follow enquiry –led approaches
- **School Improvement Groups (SIGs)** – partnerships which may be new, or well established where Convenors act as the professional learning lead and facilitate enquiry led improvement. Governor Improvement Groups (GIGs) have also been developed.
- **School-to-School partnerships** where high performing schools are partnered with schools requiring improvement to support and accelerate progress focused on specific development areas, brokered and agreed by challenge advisers and monitored in LA performance meetings
- **Peer Enquiry** Developing capacity for effective self-evaluation through peer models to bring about sustained school improvement

Recruiting and retaining high calibre school improvement (SI) advisers both challenge advisers and strategic advisers is key to developing and maintaining a successful self-improving system. The role of SIs in identifying, signposting and brokering good practice is paramount.

Challenge advisers continue to work within a time allocation model with the number of days support provided to each school distributed in proportion to need. The number of days are linked to categorisation, Estyn inspection outcomes or local intelligence but there is a degree of flexibility within the deployment model to allow for in-year changes in circumstances.

1.2 How you work with your member local authorities to ensure synergy and no duplication in your school improvement work.

The Central South Consortium is commissioned by, and acts on behalf of, the five local authorities to develop a school improvement service that challenges, monitors and supports schools to raise standards for all learners in the region. In order to achieve the best outcomes for all learners across the region, a collaborative approach between schools, local authorities and the consortium is essential.

The CSC Business Plan is developed with all stakeholders and analyses evidence, requirements of the National Mission and wider consultation captures the improvement priorities of the region. The Business Plan directly addresses the priorities of the local authorities across the region, whilst supporting the local authorities in delivering their statutory function, with the strategic priorities of each local authority published within the plan.

Regular meetings with each Local Authority take place at many levels including Directors, Heads of Service etc to ensure intelligence on all schools, especially those causing concern, is shared. Joint action plans are agreed and often jointly funded.

A holistic approach to school improvement demands that CSC works in synergy with other services within the local authority to provide effective support to schools and all learners. A partnership approach with those school improvement services that remain within the remit of the local authorities, especially around vulnerable learners, ensures that duplication is minimised. The senior challenge adviser aligned to each local authority liaises closely with services within local authorities such as attendance and wellbeing, youth services, inclusion services, HR, etc. to identify and inform future strategies.

On an annual basis, an effectiveness & efficiency report is presented to Joint Committee for scrutiny by Members.

2.0 Details of funding you are responsible for spending in 2019-2020, to include:

CSC is subject to a robust governance model which is determined by the Legal Agreement signed by the five local authorities. Rhondda Cynon Taf is the host authority for the consortium and ensures CSC abides by all relevant policies and procedural rules. The business plan includes a detailed spending plan which ensures compliance with the terms and conditions of the specific lines within the grant funding streams.

Each local authority is represented within the CSC budget forum which includes head teachers and finance officers from across the region. Financial information is available to each school budget forum as required.

2.1 How much funding you are receiving in 2019-20 from each local authority for your school improvement services.

Financial Contribution from each of the local Authorities (£s)

Local Authority	2019 – 2020 £
Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC	1,014,176
Bridgend CBC	570,729
Merthyr CBC	234,897
Vale of Glamorgan CBC	547,722
Cardiff Council	1,343,329
Total	**3,710,853**

2.2 How much in Welsh Government grants you are responsible for distributing in 2019-20, including a breakdown between the Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant and the Pupil Development Grant, as well as details of how much is delegated to schools and how much is administered / spent on a regional basis.

There is a legal agreement in place between the Local Authorities and CSC that details the process that must be followed for the agreement and distribution of all regional grants. Directors and Members of the Joint Committee consider and approve the apportionment proposals put forward by CSC. The Education Improvement Grant element of the Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant is distributed on an agreed common regional formula across each Local Authority.

Commissioned Regional Delivery of Grants from the 5 Local Authorities of CSC

Grant Name	Funding Allocation	Amount delegated to Schools	Amount delegated to LAs	Retained for future delegation to Schools/LAs	Retained in Consortia	Delegation Rate*
	£	£	£	£	£	%
Regional School Improvement Grant (RCSIG)	44,743,941[1]	37,074,054	878,231	3,211,026	3,580,630	92%
Pupil Development Grant (PDG)	31,734,150	30,937,360	467,520	0	329,270	99%
Total	**76,478,091**	**68,011,414**	**1,345,751**	**3,211,026**	**3,909,900**	

* Delegation: This refers to funding which is allocated to schools. However, it must be spent in accordance with, and in the spirit of, the core purpose of the grant and the individual school development plan priorities. This figure also includes funding for specific circumstances so that schools can respond positivity to the Central South Wales Challenge model.

3.0 A summary of Key Stage 4 and A/AS Level examination data for 2019 and previous years in your region, plus any analysis you wish to provide.

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.

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[1] Includes c£2.9m Local Authority match funding

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."

Consortia reporting on performance will adhere to this guidance.

3.1   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	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. Three of the nine slots require the awards of specific subjects and qualifications in order to contribute any points towards the measure.	Only a pupil's first entry will count WJEC Science GCSE only

	These slots are each one GCSE in size, specifying requirements in literacy, numeracy and science GCSEs only. The best grade from any of the literature or first language Welsh or English GCSEs can contribute towards the literacy slot. The best grade from either of the mathematics or mathematics – numeracy GCSEs can contribute towards the numeracy slot. The best grade from a science GSCE 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). The remaining six qualifications will include the pupil's best performance in either GCSE and/or vocational equivalent.	
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	Calculates the average of the scores for the Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate awards for all individual learners in	Reported separately as a main indicator for

| Certificate measure | the cohort, whether it is the Foundation (Level 1) or the National (Level 2) award. | 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.

Links have been included below to analysis produced by Welsh Government, which provides a commentary on the performance of the region:

https://gov.wales/examination-results-september-2018-august-2019
https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2019-12/examination-results-september-2018-august-2019-080.pdf

3.2 Reporting on A / AS Level

CSC commission Alps – a company who measure A level progress from GCSE to A level across over 2,000 providers in England and Wales through the use of a data analysis tool with the philosophy to support teachers to unlock the potential of every pupil. Alps analyse the data for all schools and local authorities and provide a deatiled report on performane across the region. The progress grade for the region ('T' score) has been 4 for each of the four previous academic years, placing regional performance as a whole in the top 40% of learners.

The Level 3 Threshold for the region has increased for the second consecutive academic year, and in 2019 has reached its' highest ever position. Over the latest three-year period, the region has improved by 0.6pp, with three of the four LAs in the Region also increasing for this performance measure over this same period. The improvement in the Region compares against a no-change in performance for this performance measure nationally over the same period. The Average Wider Points score has fallen by 4.6 points in the most recent year, but this is still above the score seen in 2017. The region continues to exceed the national score for this performance measure. Only Bridgend and The Vale of Glamorgan LAs have seen improvements for this measure in the most recent year. Since 2016, this performance measure has fallen by 80.0 points in the region and 81.9 points nationally, with all 4LAs in the region decreasing over this period.

2019 results show a no-change in performance for the proportion of pupils achieving 3A*-A grades regionally, but a 0.2pp increase nationally, with the region continuing to exceed the national proportion for this measure. Both Bridgend and Cardiff LAs saw increases for this performance measure in the most recent year and their highest ever performance for this indicator. Over the latest three-year period the region has seen an improvement of 7.6 pp for this performance measure, which compares favourably against a national improvement of 6.9pp. All LAs in the region improved for this performance measures over the same period. The proportion of pupils achieving 3A*-C grades has decreased regionally and for all LAs within the region but has increased nationally. Despite this fall in performance, the region continues to exceed the national average for this performance measure. There has been a fall in performance for this

measure over the latest three-year period for the region, Wales and all LAs in the region, with only Cardiff LA seeing a smaller decrease than see nationally.

Girls out-perform boys for all four performance measures at Key Stage 5. The gap in performance between boys and girls has remained constant for Level 3 Threshold but has widened for all other measures.

4.0 A summary of PISA 2018 results in your region (if available), plus any analysis you wish to provide.

Regional data is not available at the time of writing the report. However, Wales has seen its performance improve in international tests in reading, maths and science. The biggest improvement was in maths, while science is also now close to the international average. The number of high-performing students in Wales rose from 4% to 7%. There was also no significant gender gap for the first time.

5.0 An update on progress to tackle the attainment gap in your region:

5.1 Between eligible for free school meals (eFSM) pupils and other pupils;

Supporting schools to provide for the needs of all vulnerable groups of learners is at the heart of the CSC business plan and features prominently throughout all areas of the organisation's work in partnership with the Local Authority services as highlighted in 1.2. Measuring the impact of activities is however challenging as quite often teaching and learning strategies targeted at identified vulnerable groups will benefit other learners. The use of wellbeing profile tools such as PERMA and SELFIE are being rolled out to support schools to self-evaluate how learners are making progress, and to become more inclusive.

A summary of some of the aspects within the regional strategy include:

- Closer challenge and monitoring schools' use of the Pupil Development Grant (PDG). Two hundred schools across the region submitted an evaluation of the PDG in the summer term of 2019. Currently schools are submitting their PDG plans electronically. An evaluation of all secondary schools and a sample of primary PDG plans to be conducted in January 2020

- A pilot in collaboration with the "Inclusion Expert" led by Daniel Sobell (as part of the school-led hub programme) is underway with a good level of engagement by twenty schools across the region. The pilot which has seen impressive gains in schools in England involves identifying successful practice in supporting vulnerable learners as well as gathering information about the wellbeing support schools are offering. The pilot includes looking at the effectiveness of how vulnerable pupils are tracked as well as initiatives or other interventions that are being undertaken. Effective wellbeing assessment tools are being identified as part of the Inclusion Expert pilot. Evaluating this information in conjunction with an evaluation of all of the schools PDG plans and wellbeing tools will identify how CSC can support schools in improving outcomes for vulnerable learners. This will then determine the professional learning offer being delivered by CSC

- The professional learning offer to all schools will be structured around the results of the pilots that are taking place this year. The evaluations of the PDG plans as well as evaluating effective equity and wellbeing support taking place in the pilot schools will result in co-constructing an ongoing professional learning offer based on sound research

- CSC will work with schools in refining systems of monitoring, evaluating and reviewing. This will involve providing guidance in how these systems can effectively determine the progress of vulnerable learners. It will look at listening to learners, book looks as well as learning walks and will work in collaboration with the work that is going on with the work of the Learning Collaborative, led by Dr Lyn Sharratt.

- A revised teaching and learning strategy is being developed to include wellbeing and equity

- The provision for groups of vulnerable learners is at the heart of the ALN transformation work and will look to identify what is effective teaching and learning for vulnerable learners.

- In some areas within this region many children start school with deficit speaking skills. We are working with Voice 21 to raise the state of oracy in schools across Wales. In 2018-19 116 schools in CSC were invited to take part. All secondary schools and one primary from each cluster. Also 6 special schools. In 2019-20 a further 124 schools invited to take part.

- As part of the PDG LAC and MAT work clusters have been established to ensure that true reciprocity exists, and schools are effectively sharing strong practice. This will allow for projects to be developed, cluster training to be shared and improved outcomes for more able and children looked after

- Effective research is at the heart of all project evaluations. CSC are working in collaboration with Cardiff Metropolitan University to ensure that robust evaluation of the impact of all school improvement work that is taking place is effectively documented allowing the identification and sharing of successful practice

- Partnership working with other local authority services is on-going for example working with the attendance and exclusion leads across the 5 authorities. Projects involve identifying and sharing effective practice in schools, sharing effective protocols and working with improving outcomes for free school meal pupils

5.2 Between ethnic minority groups at risk of underachieving and other pupils & between Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children, and other pupils;

As at PLASC in January 2019 approximately 17% of the school population across the region are from backgrounds other than White British, this includes 0.2% pupils classed as Traveller or Gypsy.

Of the pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) 1.7% are at acquisition levels A-C % 6.7% at levels D-E. The region includes Cardiff which has the highest EAL population across Wales. Both Vale of Glamorgan and Merthyr Tydfil

have comparatively high percentages of EAL/Gypsy, Roma & Traveller pupils. Each local authority has managed support for these pupils in similar ways but driven by local needs. The attainment of these pupils is discussed through the regular CA meetings with schools although direct support is managed through Local Authority services. Support includes direct allocation to schools to allow the employment of additional staff, the use of inclusion classes (Merthyr Tydfil) for both EAL and Gypsy, Roma & Traveller pupils, a central team for specific support (Cardiff) and support towards Traveller Education Services.

5.3 Between Looked After Children and other pupils (and any work to identify and improve the attainment of adopted children compared to other pupils).

- In line with the recommendations within the terms and conditions of the grant, funding is distributed on a cluster basis. The cluster approach to delegating funding was first introduced in 2018-19. Schools identify a cluster lead for each cluster and most clusters submitted robust business plans that included good self-reflection based on the region's self-evaluation toolkit. All 61 clusters across the region submitted group plans with only one cluster choosing to present individual school plans.

- Roadshows were held in each local authority to fully explain the funding model and terms and conditions of the grant. Schools reported that the roadshows provided much needed clarity that the funding available needs to build capacity within schools. The events also helped to generate interest and promote this year's training programme.

- The LAC Education Coordinators (LACES) are very active in ensuring that the cluster plans within their local authority are robust and delivered in line with the grant. A steering group which comprises of staff from CSC, LACES and Headteachers from each local authority approve the quality of the cluster plans before funding is released.

- Clear guidance is provided to clusters with a self-evaluation toolkit to help structure their planning. These indicators are taken from the CLA Friendly Schools Quality Mark which has been piloted in RCT and Merthyr Tydfil and is now being introduced in Bridgend. Eight pilot schools across Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil completed this award during 2018-19, a celebration event was held with invitations for all local authorities so that the Quality Mark is made available to schools throughout the region. A further 14 schools in RCT achieved this Quality Mark by the end of 2018-2019.

- Feedback following regional training reported that Permanent and Fixed Term Exclusions have been reduced for Looked After Children.

- The CLA Friendly school's initiative that has been co-created between Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil and Cardiff University has been recognised as good practice by Welsh Government and was launched nationally as a toolkit for designated teachers in April 2019. There is a whole school approach to creating the CLA Friendly School.

- Over the past year, a project to promote good practice for CLA within schools and educational settings has been put into place. This project is composed of three elements:

  - Children Looked After Friendly Schools Handbook – a resource that supports the practice of schools and settings in this area.
  - CLA Friendly Schools Training – a three tier training programme for those who work in educational settings that reinforces and develops the practice set out in the Handbook. All schools are encouraged to have this training.
  - CLA Friendly Schools Quality Mark – A quality mark for schools achieved by evidencing a high standard of practice for CLA pupils. The Mark is based on a set of indicators that have been derived from the CLA Friendly Schools Handbook. This ensures clarity about the key elements needed to help pupils to feel safe, included and engaged in school life from the Foundation Phase until the end of KS4.

- Level 3 "CLA Friendly Schools" training was successfully piloted and evaluated during 2018-19. As a result, two courses were offered during the Summer Term and 50 school representatives attended. Evaluations show that this training was well received and have reported that school staff will implement these strategies in their classrooms.

- Training was well attended during 2018-2019. 900 school staff attended the courses which included expert guidance from Educational Psychologists, Clinical Psychologists and Specialist CLA teachers who are developing guidance on attachment, trauma, mental health and Adverse Childhood Experiences. Much of this training is based on developing robust relationships with very vulnerable pupils and help school staff to be "trusted adults".

- There are regular meetings with the LACES from each local authority to ensure that consistent practice exists across the region. For example, all Designated Teachers are trained by the LACES to deliver the CLA Friendly Schools Level 1 to all staff members, including governors in each school. By the end of 2018-19, 85% of school Designated teachers received this training across the five local authorities.

- The PDG LAC Lead was invited to present at the Adoption UK masterclass during 2018-19. Adoption UK support the work in Central South Consortium by delivering training during the Autumn and Spring term which is well received. There is specific information about Adopted pupils in the CLA Friendly Schools about the impact of adoption on these children. During the conference that was organised last year, schools were asked to present on their work with pupils who have been adopted. With agreement from all Directors within CSC, a lump sum is given to each cluster for training needs for adopted children.

6.0 An update on how you are challenging and supporting schools that participated in schools challenge Cymru. We would be particularly grateful to know how you have ensured that, where schools' performance improved during the programme, this positive momentum has continued.

6.1 Sixteen schools in CSC were part of the Schools Challenge Cymru (SCC) programme and the region has further developed the most effective aspects of the programme and integrated these into regional ways of working. In order to build upon the good practice, the following strategies have been developed:

- To support schools in the transition from SCC, Accelerated Progress Leads (APLs) were introduced in September 2017. APLs provide support and challenge to the most vulnerable secondary schools in the region with a focus to specifically improve key stage 4 (KS4) results, especially for pupils eligible for free school meals (eFSM). Their work should impact over the short and medium terms and develop and sustain whole school improvement over the longer term. APLs were recruited from SCC advisers in order to provide continuity for schools and to build the capacity of challenge advisers. The APL function includes playing a key role in determining and brokering the appropriate support package for each school, working alongside the existing challenge adviser, sharing expertise and coaching to develop challenge adviser capacity to help schools make accelerated progress.

- School Improvement Forums continued in the schools where APLs worked and followed the format introduced by SCC.

- The CSC Intervention Strategy for schools causing concern was reviewed and rewritten to reflect the outcomes from SCC.

6.2 Summary of Impact of School Challenge Cymru

Of the sixteen school in the Central South Consortium region engaged in the SCC programme, two schools closed during the academic year 2017/18. As a result of changes in performance measures and specification across several indicators at key stage 4, it will not be possible to compare 2019 figures with previous years performance (as noted in 3.1). It is however possible to make a number of other statements about the progress the schools have made over time:

- Of the 16 schools in the programme (which remain open) who had previously been in receipt of the highest support levels, 10 are now in receipt of the lowest levels of support (Green or Yellow).
- Only one school is deemed to require Red Support and one further school is receiving Amber support.
- Of those schools inspected during or immediately after the SCC programme 5 schools were placed in statutory categories (special measures), all of which have now been removed from these categories.
- Of those schools inspected during or immediately after the SCC programme 5 schools were placed in the category of Estyn monitoring, all 5 have since been removed from this category.

7.0 Any comments you have on current and future school accountability arrangements and the impact of these on school improvement.

Following an independent review of the Central South Consortium, there is a renewed commitment for the regional model of school improvement supported by each of the five local authorities.

As a region we welcome the changes to the accountability framework (and the removal of the unintended consequences) of the previous high stakes performance measures. The focus on a broader range of performance measures and a focus on self-evaluation for improvement is an essential element of reform. Workshops have been held in local authorities with scrutiny committees to support their understanding and role in the scrutiny of performance data as part of the changes in the accountability system. Welsh Government, WLGA and Estyn will also host further training in January 2020.

The current model of school categorisation can have a negative impact on the community's perception of its school.

8.0 Any other comments you wish to make on the school improvement and raising standards agenda.

It is important that the roles and responsibilities of organisation in the Middle Tier are clearly defined and articulated to schools. This will ensure clarity of responsibility as well as ensuring reduced duplication and efficiency.

ERW

Ein Rhanbarth ar Waith
Education through Regional Working

Submission to National Assembly for Wales: Children and Young People Committee

(School Improvement and Raising Standards)

December 2019

Cynghrair o 6 awdurdod lleol yw ERW a reolir gan gyd-bwyllgor cyfansoddiadol cyfreithiol.
Y nod yw gweithredu strategaeth a chynllun busnes rhanbarthol cytunedig a chefnogi gwelliant ysgolion.

ERW is an alliance of 6 local authorities governed by a legally constituted joint committee.
Its aim is to implement the agreed regional strategy and business plan to support school improvement.

ERW Submission to The National Assembly for Wale's Children, Young People and Education Committee: School improvement and raising standards

1. A brief summary of:

- **Your approach to school improvement in your region, including how this is informed by the school categorisation process.**

The ERW region has worked since its conception in 2014 to provide a consistent and effective approach to delivering school improvement support services on behalf of the six constituent local authorities (Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, Powys and Swansea).

To achieve this, the local authorities and ERW central team work in close partnership and more effectively recently, to deliver an agreed and collaborative strategic direction and clear moral purpose as set out within our ERW Business Plan. These activities are designed to respond directly to the expectations and needs of our school communities via the provision of a high quality service.

The ERW governance structure and strategic planning processes are key enablers within this work, along with a relentless focus on our agreed aims to:

1. Improve the quality of **leadership** and its impact on outcomes.

2. Improve the quality of **teaching and learning experiences** and its impact on outcomes.

3. Reduce the impact of poverty on attainment, support vulnerable learners and **ensure all learners reach their potential**

4. Deliver **high quality and bespoke support**, challenge and intervention to schools

5. **Communicate** effectively with all stakeholders

In addition, ERW has developed a range of defined strategies and approaches to secure ongoing improvement across its schools. These include a wholly integrated approach to delivering our Business Plan content which reflects national, regional and local needs. This work is therefore delivered through the work of our six 'ERW Strategy Groups' focusing on:

i)   Professional Learning and Research
ii)   Leadership
iii)   Curriculum
iv)   Health and Wellbeing
v)   Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Learning
vi)   Welsh

The composition of our recently implemented ERW Strategy Groups is specifically designed to engender an open and transparent regional dialogue in support of the delivery of our agreed school improvement priorities.

ERW Strategy Group composition:
- 1 x ERW Lead Officer
- 1 x Local Authority Director
- 2 x Local Authority Officers
- 3 x Headteacher / Outstanding Practitioner

ERW Operations Group (Senior Challenge Advisers & ERW Senior Leadership Team members):

The ERW Operations Group draws Senior Challenge Advisers from each local authority and centrally based ERW Senior Leadership Team members together to focus on a wide range of school improvement issues. In particular, the group employs a specific focus on ensuring:
- achieving accurate and supportive national categorisation of all ERW schools
- brokerage of bespoke provision support for all schools (as a direct outcome of the above process)
- ongoing support via monitoring and review of individual school progress
- ensuring effective and relevant professional learning for all challenge advisers (CAs)

The Operations Group also focuses on ensuring all our schools receive the relevant number of support days as defined by their individual national categorisation process. The nature of such support is discussed, thus enabling us to deploy our resources according to need and in the most effective and efficient manner.

ERW School Performance Team:

The ERW School Performance Team meets on a half-termly basis to monitor, review and evaluate school progress and evolving needs within each local authority in turn. The locally based Senior Challenge Adviser meets with senior ERW officers with the aim of ensuring appropriate support provision is in place. This strategy ensures a focus on the delivery of appropriate and supportive provision. These meetings also facilitate numerous elements of cross-region working with CAs from different local authorities collaborating on specific improvement projects and school-based activities.

ERW Professional Learning Offer:

Our ERW Professional Learning Offer seeks to provide all schools with a range of professional learning opportunities. ERW fully recognises the role and impact of such activities on practice implemented within the classroom and therefore the enhanced learning experiences our children and young people will enjoy. We share full details of our 'offer' on the ERW website and highlight the broad variety of opportunities via our weekly ERW Head teacher Newsletter email communication.

ERW Key Stage 4 Subject Specialists:

The Key Stage 4 Subject Specialist Team is led by our Key Stage 4 Curriculum & Examinations Lead. This team of fourteen practitioners provides specific subject expertise and guidance across the region. Their work promotes the key themes of whole school improvement whilst focusing on subject area specifics too. Recent discussions with local Secondary Head teacher networks have evidenced the value and impact of the team's work on progress and achievement. Our lead officer attends the Operations Group on a regular basis which further cements the collaboration underpinning this work.

ERW 'Rhwyd' and National Categorisation:

ERW 'Rhwyd' is an electronic reporting system which is used by all CAs across the region to capture and present the findings of their Core Support Visits to schools. The system has been designed to ensure a consistent approach towards this aspect of our work and in doing so, aids numerous key activities in a practical and efficient manner. Our ERW Core Support Visit One, undertaken during the Autumn Term, embraces the National Categorisation model process. We would emphasise that identification of a school's needs is an ongoing process and not restricted to one annual event. Our CAs are in contact with schools and therefore able to respond to changes in circumstances in a rapid and responsive manner. During the Autumn Term visit, two CA reports are generated. The first report demonstrates the rationale and agreement for each school's 'support category' (based on the Welsh Government template) with the second report providing additional regional information which includes evaluating the use and impact of grant funding such as the Pupil Development Grant.

This process paves the way for appropriate and accurate brokering of support for each school. In addition, CAs and advisory staff are also able to present additional documentation via the ERW Support Form at any time throughout the academic year. This resource is also encompassed within the 'Rhwyd' mechanism. Rhwyd also facilitates the highlighting of effective practice and contains a built in quality assurance model. ERW supports 474 schools and settings. Through this system, we are able to monitor, evaluate and provide support for school improvement in a wholly relevant and equitable manner.

- **How you work with your member local authorities to ensure synergy and no duplication in your school improvement work.**

Our revised ERW Governance Structure (draft) and Business Plan set out with clarity the pathways and processes for effective collaborative working across the ERW region. The Business Plan articulates the role of schools, local authorities and ERW to ensure clarity for all partners. Another feature is the supportive role and beneficial impact of ongoing evaluation and guidance provided through the ERW Management Board (Directors of Education & ERW Managing Director), meeting on a monthly basis. These meetings provide the platform for a wide range of school improvement discussions, review and evaluation. They enable ERW to progress its key agendas in accordance with local, regional and national priorities.

Our focus on securing the best possible support provision for our schools ensures that we avoid any level of duplication across our school improvement work. All elements of support provision are monitored closely with a particular emphasis on a clear understanding of the specific agents and resources involved. In cases where staff employed by a local authority undertake such provision, this is transparent and agreed by all. In the vast majority of cases, this takes place as a direct result of specific linguistic needs to provide support through the medium of Welsh for core elements of literacy, numeracy and ICT or support for the non-maintained sector. There is a constant level of collaboration and communication across this work to ensure clarity and impact. Our Operations Group plays a central role within this aspect of provision brokerage for all schools. We celebrate the fact that this approach adds much expertise and valuable capacity to our work.

ERW Governance Structure (draft):

- The **Joint Committee** meets termly to agree the strategy and business plan, agrees and monitors budget and performance
- The **Advisory Board** reviews and challenges progress once a term
- The **Management Board** (Directors of Education and ERW Managing Director) meets monthly and has a strategic decision making role – decisions will be reported to the Joint Committee
- The **Strategic Groups** meet monthly to monitor the implementation of the business plans and oversee funding delegated to the strategic groups
- The **Headteacher Reference Group** meets half termly to inform regional strategy and advocate on behalf of schools
- The **Trade Union Reference Group** meets half termly to discuss and inform regional policies relating to HR issues, and where relevant make recommendations to policy development
- The **Scrutiny Councillor Group** meets bi annually to monitor performance, contribute to policy development and review and investigate matters which affect the Councils they represent (another function of the Scrutiny group is holding the Joint Committee to account by examining and questioning their decisions)
- The **SLT** develops draft strategies and approaches to meet WG priorities and grant requirements (**SLT** report to each authority's Scrutiny Committee at least annually with an annual performance report)
- The **Operations Group (Senior Challenge Advisers & ERW SLT)** meets half termly with a focus on operational performance and strategy

ERW Business Plan 2019-20:

Our ERW Business Plan clearly describes all levels of activity and accountability across its broad range of priority content. Our priorities focus tightly on the content of 'Our National Mission' aligning all work in a coherent and manageable manner for school leaders. We have shaped their content and delivery methodology through practical co-construction with our partners and stakeholders. As a result, schools, local authorities and ERW are fully aware of the actions required by each party and subsequent responses to expectations and levels of accountability.

ERW Roadshows 2019:

The Autumn Term, 2019 witnessed a series of ERW Roadshows undertaken across the six local authorities. The content was wholly designed to provide our schools with an update and overview of the recent ERW reform work. This included confirmation of the revised team's composition and its role within school improvement (as outlined in our 2019-20 Business Plan). Specific reference was made to 'avoidance of duplication' to ensure clarity and confidence for school leaders. In addition, the ERW Business Plan is structured in a manner which further reinforces our approach and purpose. The series also provided a detailed overview of 'Schools as Learning Organisations' emphasising its value and relevance to current reform. This key element served to reinforce and celebrate work already implemented successfully by schools across our region via school led 'cameos' of activity.

This approach has highlighted the effective collaboration in place between ERW, local authority officers and schools in support of our children and young people. We will continue to engage with schools and senior leaders in this manner as curriculum reform and practice and moves forward.

ERW improvement priorities 2019-20:

- Developing and delivering a transformational curriculum
- To develop a high-quality education profession
- To develop inspirational leaders and to facilitate them working collaboratively to raise standards
- To develop strong and inclusive schools that are committed to excellence and wellbeing
- To develop robust assessment, evaluation and accountability processes that support a self-improving system

2. Details of funding you are responsible for spending in 2019-2020, to include:

2.1 How much funding you are receiving in 2019-20 from each local authority for your school improvement services.

ERW is funded on an annual basis from two main sources: LA core contributions and grants from Welsh Government and EWC. A total of £250,000 is received from the six local authorities to fund our core and administrative activities. No funding is received directly from the local authorities at ERW for our school improvement services as the CAs are located with the local authorities. A detailed spending plan accompanies the Business Plan which is linked to all actions contained within it.

2.2.   How much in Welsh Government grants you are responsible for distributing in 2019-20, including a breakdown between the Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant and the Pupil Development Grant, as well as details of how much is delegated to schools and how much is administered / spent on a regional basis.

There is a legal agreement in place between the local authorities and ERW that details the process that must be followed for the agreement and distribution of all regional grants. The Education Improvement Grant is distributed on a common regional formula across each local authority.

Overview of grants 2019/2020			
Grant Name	**Grant Total £**	**Delegated** [**] **to Schools (Budget) £**	**Budgeted Delegation** [**] **Rate %**
School Improvement Grant (SIG)			
Education Improvement Grant (EIG)*	36,682,247	31,420,732	86%
Other grant initiatives	6,369,729	1,774,443	28%
Pupil Development Grant (PDG)			
Pupil Development Grant (PDG)	23,255,850	23,247,600	100%
Looked After Children Pupil Development Grant (LAC PDG)	1,133,900	877,358	77%
Lead Regional PDG Adviser	100,000	37,404	37%
Education Workforce Council	505,000	505,000	100%
Total	**68,046,726**	**57,862,537**	**85%**

*Includes the match funding requirement £3,189,510

** Delegation refers to funding which gives freedom of choice to a school in how it is used. It must however be spent in accordance with, and in the spirit of, the core purpose of the grant and the individual school development plan priorities. The following circumstances are not classed as delegation:

·   Staff seconded from the local authority or the consortium to a school(s) or a cluster(s).

·   Staff working wholly or partly in schools and paid for from a local authority or consortium retained budget.

·   Staff or services that form part of a service level agreement, this type of activity will be classed as non-delegated.

·   Monies delegated from the consortium to a local authority.

Our 'Rhwyd' system also identifies a school's use of grant monies. This derives from discussions between CAs and school leaders with regard to the effective and efficient use of grant funding

3. **A summary of Key Stage 4 and A/AS Level examination data for 2019 and previous years in your region, plus any analysis you wish to provide.**

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."

Consortia will adhere to this guidance when reporting on performance .

3.1 Reporting on Key Stage 4 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	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. 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 size, specifying requirements in literacy, numeracy and science GCSEs only. The best grade from any of the literature or first language Welsh or English GCSEs can contribute towards the literacy slot. The best grade from either of the mathematics or mathematics – numeracy GCSEs can contribute towards the numeracy slot. The best grade from a science GSCE 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). The remaining six qualifications will include the pupil's best performance in either GCSE and/or vocational equivalent.	✓ Only a pupil's first entry will count ✓ WJEC Science GCSE only
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	New 2019 measure, first entry only will count

		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.	
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 now 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.

Key Stage 5:

KS5 provision across the region has continued to witness positive outcomes for our young people. Our focus remains firmly on ensuring the highest level of progression and achievement for each individual leaner. Understandably, it is crucial to view all analyses and statistics within the context of each cohort. The information shared below is based on performance within our schools alone.

In 2019, every local authority recorded specific levels of improvement across a range of indicators (based on provisional WJEC data), including:

- All local authorities recording an overall pass rate (A* - E) between 96.7% and 97.9%
- All local authorities recording pass rates for A* - A grades between 22.0% and 28.4%

Ongoing support for Key Stage 5 is provided via our Post 16 & Welsh Baccalaureate specialist. We enjoy beneficial collaboration with schools, WG and our Consortia partners across a wide range of activities in support of enhanced provision, outcomes and opportunities for our young people.

4. A summary of PISA 2018 results in your region (if available), plus any analysis you wish to provide.

A regional analysis is not available. However, Wales has witnessed an improved performance based on 3,165 pupils from 107 schools participating. The biggest improvement was in maths, while science is also now close to the international average.

The number of high-performing students in Wales rose from 4% to 7%.

There was also no significant gender gap for the first time.

5.   An update on progress to tackle the attainment gap in your region:

5.1 Between eligible for free school meals (eFSM) pupils and other pupils;

Increasing the regional focus on improving use and understanding of the PDG has been our primary focus over the last two years. We have worked to improve pupil attainment through improved teaching and learning, creating opportunities for schools and learners to undertake new professional learning, share up

to date research and guidance, share effective practice, provide one to one support, facilitate school to school working and develop strategic support where necessary and possible.

Specific actions and outcomes:

Increased understanding and awareness of the PDG:

- a new Strategic Adviser / Regional Coordinator is in place to provide direct support to schools and develop regional strategy
- extensive engagement with school leaders, local authority officers and school staff to discuss and challenge best use of grant funding and how it is being both targeted towards individuals and used to support whole school approaches to wellbeing
- engagement with clusters via attendance at Cluster meetings to ensure support and awareness raising in an ongoing manner across the region along with direct, one to one interaction with schools
- developed strong relationships with LA PDG, PDG LAC Leads and CAs to ensure understanding and knowledge of local context and key information

Increased opportunities for Professional Learning:

- new professional learning communities set up to give schools regular opportunities to share effective practice and learn from others
- regional training opportunities provided around Attachment and Trauma, Parental Engagement and improving attainment strategies from the Education Endowment Foundation
- PDG Effective Practice Network launched to provide school staff with local access to bite size sessions on specific research and what works etc.
- increased opportunities made available for 2019-20 and beyond that will include – Supporting Adopted Learners, Attachment and Trauma within the context of Curriculum 2020+, Empowering Disadvantaged Learner through Creative Learning, Designated LAC Leads Training and regional conference on supporting all learners (with specific focus around wellbeing and inclusion).

Increased opportunities for School to School working:

- numerous opportunities have been put in place for schools to learn from each other and share effective practice
- 'Peer Review' pilot set up with three Welsh medium secondary schools to explore use of the PDG grant and wellbeing provision within schools, the intention is to roll out the programme further following evaluation of the pilot and development of template documents
- support brokered for schools through CAs where appropriate (based on analyses of use of funding)

Additional funding provided to schools and clusters:

- to support specific ideas and pilot projects we have provided schools and clusters with additional funding through the PDG Ideas Fund (this was from additional money provided to the region on top of the PDG*). This has allowed schools to consider projects that could support attainment locally and allow them to pilot ideas and collaborations. Some excellent examples of spend have been witnessed including, PRU Wellbeing Conference with over two hundred PRU staff attending from across the region, projects to support literacy and numeracy, aspirational programmes and projects to support more able and talented learners and engaging external specialist organisations to support schools with specific issues and strategic priorities. Much of this work will continue to evolve and develop in support of schools' needs.

  *40 schools received funding in 2018-19 with a wide range of projects delivered, including:
  - Family Engagement - increased engagement with harder to reach families, direct one to one support provided for some families and increased engagement with families supporting reading and literacy programmes;
  - A range of entrepreneurial projects set up in partnerships between schools. FSM pupils working directly with external artists and community leaders to produce and sell products;
  - A range of literacy and numeracy programmes developed and delivered with improvements seen across the schools and clusters;
  - Professional Learning events developed and delivered – improving and increasing staff awareness around trauma and attachment, resilience and strategies for improving pupil wellbeing;
  - New projects such as 'Empathy Lab' introduced to schools supporting increased engagement around reading;
  - Pupil enrichment and aspiration programmes developed and delivered across numerous schools across the region, offering FSM pupils the opportunity to undertake new and exciting activities;
  - Implementation of a Restorative Practice pilot;
  - Schools utilising the money to develop pupil wellbeing through activities such as yoga and mindfulness in the classroom. Schools report clear improvements in behaviour and engagement from pupils as a result of this work.

*Developed Online Resources***:**

- we have developed a focussed online Hwbsite to store research, effective practice examples, links to online professional learning programmes and key guidance documents (initiated as an ERW resource but now opened up to include resources and information for all Consortia to provide all schools with access to Wales wide resources and examples of effective practice)

Strengthened our work with all four Consortia:

- we have developed very strong links and working relationship with other Consortia and Welsh Government (collaborating to identify strategic areas of development, equal access across Wales to resources, joint training for CAs and understanding of what works across the UK and around the world)

Ongoing priorities and our next steps:

The information provided above is focussed around use of the PDG with a great deal of work being delivered to ensure progress. As a region, we would now benefit from developing a further agreed strategy that would strengthen our work in the following areas:

- How do we support schools and LAs to reduce the 'Impact of Poverty' on attainment of eFSM learners?
- How do we increase focus on / support schools and LAs to prioritise eFSM Literacy and Numeracy?
- How do we increase focus on attainment of eFSM pupils in the secondary sector?
- How are we going to take advantage of the Curriculum for Wales to raise attainment of eFSM learners?
- How do we support schools and LAs to do more with eFSM learners who are More Able and Talented?
- How do we better support schools to develop their pedagogical approaches so that eFSM learners are better supported?

5.2 & 5.3 Between ethnic minority groups at risk of underachieving and other pupils & Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children, and other pupils;

WG grant funding in support of these pupils is provided directly to local authorities. The six local authorities within ERW have continued to deploy their varying levels of resource in the most beneficial and productive manner over time. Their strategies to ensure progress and achievement for these pupils include:

- Utilisation of funding to provide centrally based staff and school-cluster based models along with material resources for schools
- Engagement with the Language Acquisition model
- Provision of guidance, policy documentation and materials electronically to support school provision

- Enhancing training for schools to engender greater self-sustainability and impact
- Analysis of survey data to identify specific needs and appropriate targeting of resources
- Securing participation and representation within key groups e.g. Youth Council
- Consultation with pupils to glean their 'voice' with an emphasis on 'learning styles'
- Strengthening awareness and understanding of cultures and expectations through training, workshops and partnership activities

Local authorities are reviewing their practice and delivery service models to ensure longer term effectiveness and sustainability.

5.4 Between Looked-After Children and other pupils (and any work to identify and improve the attainment of adopted children compared to other pupils).

Our region works in close collaboration with colleagues supporting Look-After Children across the six local authorities. We have focused in particular on the following key elements in support of improved outcomes for all Looked-After Children (LAC) across our region:

Combining of Strategic Adviser for PDG role with PDG LAC Coordinator role:

This was undertaken as a part of the ERW reform and review programme. It is intended to strengthen the work and support available for the PDG as a whole, providing one clear point of contact. This also ensures continuity with different leads and teams across the region in both local authorities and schools.

Reorganisation of the PDGLAC:

For 2019-20 the grant has been devolved directly to clusters. This has brought ERW in line with other Consortia. It will enable schools and clusters to work together to identify strategic spending plans in line with both Consortia and local authority priorities. For 2019-20 ERW has identified Adopted Learners as a priority area and a range of professional learning opportunities have been developed with Adoption UK to improve understanding of the issues they face and the support that can be put in place.

Developing relationships with LA PDG LAC Leads:

We are developing strong working relationships with local authority leads to ensure joint working, clear responsibilities and opportunities for strategic development. Regular meetings have facilitated and agreed that we will develop a 'Regional PDG LAC Framework' to develop commonality across the region, strengthen use of the grant, provide specific strategic support to each local authority where needed and provide continuous professional learning opportunities for all schools.

The numbers of LAC pupils within our local authorities can vary greatly. The supportive work provided by local authority services for pupils and schools continues to witness positive impact and progress as a result of an emphasis on the following aspects:

Pupil focused activities:

- Annual celebration of achievements
- DDP therapy and sexual abuse counselling
- Designated support from a range of professional services including, Educational Psychology advice and Theraplay practitioners
- Regular and wide ranging consultation and participation group activities
- Pupil involvement in staff recruitment processes

School focused activities:

- Detailed support and guidance on adopted children (cross-departmental approaches including LACE officer engagement and expertise) for all partners (social workers, foster carers, youth workers, adopters, contact workers, project workers, Careers Wales etc)
- Personal Education Plan (PEP) engagement and guidance
- Attachment and Adverse Childhood Experiences awareness training
- Emotion coaching
- Trauma informed practice
- Nurture Network training

6 **An update on how you are challenging and supporting schools that participated in schools challenge Cymru. We would be particularly grateful to know how you have ensured that, where schools' performance improved during the programme, this positive momentum has continued.**

Across the ERW region, four schools participated in the Schools Challenge Cymru programme. In the main, all schools have continued to demonstrate encouraging levels of progress and achievement across a range of school performance areas.
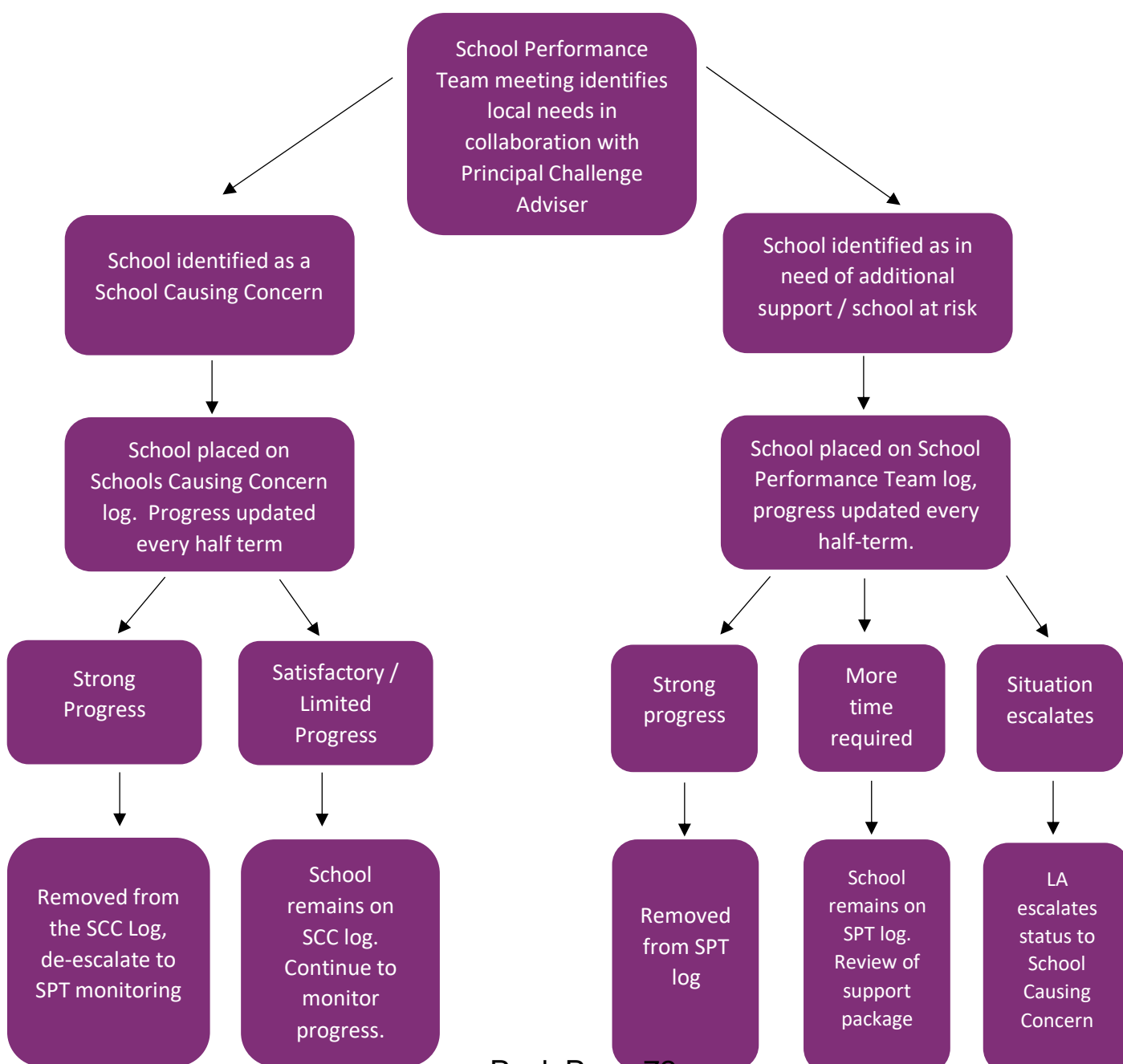
These include:

- strengthening strategic planning and effective self-evaluation processes
- embedding enhanced pedagogical approaches
- enhancing leadership capacity across the school
- progressing from 'Red' towards 'Green' levels of support within the National Categorisation model
- achieving higher levels of attendance
- achieving higher levels of performance outcomes

Over time, the region has continued to ensure the appropriate level of bespoke support and guidance through its programme of secondary school improvement strategies, including:

i)   School Performance Team Meetings and Protocol:

As noted in section 1, we undertake 'School Performance Team Meetings' on a half-termly basis. All six Senior Challenge Advisers meet separately with ERW central officers to share an overview of each school's specific needs. These meetings also facilitate an evaluation of any previous elements of support provision. The protocol below arose out of discussions with Senior Challenge Advisers and a range of ERW officers over time. It serves to ensure clarity and clearly defined pathways to support schools experiencing specific levels of challenge and need.

The graphic below demonstrates the protocol in clearer detail:

School Performance Team meeting identifies local needs in collaboration with Principal Challenge Adviser

School identified as a School Causing Concern

School identified as in need of additional support / school at risk

School placed on Schools Causing Concern log. Progress updated every half term

School placed on School Performance Team log, progress updated every half-term.

Strong Progress

Satisfactory / Limited Progress

Strong progress

More time required

Situation escalates

Removed from the SCC Log, de-escalate to SPT monitoring

School remains on SCC log. Continue to monitor progress.

Removed from SPT log

School remains on SPT log. Review of support package

LA escalates status to School Causing Concern

ii) Secondary Support Group (SSG):

Our ERW Secondary Support Group continues to provide bespoke support for identified schools across the region. The Group's activity is always brokered in a detailed manner via discussions between the school, ERW officers, senior LA officers, Senior Challenge Adviser and any additional, appropriate officers. The focus of need and following support provision is always tailored to the individual case and setting to ensure effective impact and progress.

iii) Key Stage 4 Subject Specialists:

Our team of Key Stage 4 Subject Specialists supports a wide range of varying needs within schools across our region. Their work provides a valuable input of specialist expertise to support and progress an individual element of provision swiftly. In addition, their integral involvement in our Secondary Subject Networks provides effective guidance and reinforcement of some central priorities for all our schools, namely:

- high expectations for all learners
- whole school responsibility and accountability for individual learner progress and raised standards

Summary:

This work has supported the embedding of processes and cultures for ongoing self-improvement and sustainable success across our schools. In addition, we have placed much emphasis on developing 'school-to-school' support as an integral element of any school's journey. We are confident that this approach benefits our schools greatly, underpinning the key aim of attaining a self-improving system across Wales.

7 Any comments you have on current and future school accountability arrangements and the impact of these on school improvement.

The ERW region welcomes the ongoing national focus on ensuring appropriate and purposeful accountability arrangements for schools as outlined within current documentation focusing on:

- clarity of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for schools, local authorities, Consortia and Welsh Government
- revised self-evaluation and improvement planning mechanisms within our schools
- a broader range of performance measures focused on progress and achievement for all learners
- the collegiate development of the Curriculum for Wales
- the collegiate development of support and resources for crucial areas of provision such as learner and staff wellbeing, school leadership and professional learning, excellent pedagogy etc

We welcome the previously mentioned (Section 3) Welsh Government, Estyn and WLGA letter on Evaluation and Improvement Arrangements (dated 16 July, 2019) and opportunity to share greater detail with Elected Members and Education Directors during the forthcoming Evaluation and Improvement seminars to be held in January 2020.

The clear intention of Welsh Government to drive significant system and cultural change across all educational tiers in transparent partnership is central to our thinking as a region. We are working closely with all of our partners in direct support of each aspect of the current reform programme.

8 **Any other comments you wish to make on the school improvement and raising standards agend**a.

The ERW region welcomes all collaborative activity occurring nationally in support of achieving the content and goals of 'Our National Mission.' The ongoing work to enhance the clarity of the role of the 'middle tier' is to be welcomed, along with the support of Estyn for the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales. We are committed to improving learning experiences and outcomes for all our children and young people in partnership with all stakeholders. We look forward to contributing further across all aspects of the national reform journey.

GwE submission to The National Assembly for Wales Children, Young People and Education Committee: School improvement and raising standards

1. **A brief summary of:**
- **Your approach to school improvement in your region, including how this is informed by the school categorisation process.**

Regional approach to challenging and supporting schools
The regional consortium has worked hard over the last two years to change culture and behaviour and move away from a 'top down' approach to school improvement, to encouraging professional generosity, reciprocity and a collective moral purpose. There is a culture shift from 'my' to 'our' and the development of more collaborative and lateral leadership with cluster working and peer engagement integral to the work of school improvement whilst also integrating all aspects of the reform journey. We have also changed the name of the 'Challenge Adviser' to 'Supporting Improvement Adviser' (SIA).

The following outlines the regional approach to challenging and supporting 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 School Development Plan 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.

Categorisation process

The categorisation process on its own does not drive the identification of school needs. The categorisation process is an ongoing process throughout the spring, summer and autumn terms and is captured on G6 (the regional management information system). Clear guidance and exemplified templates are shared with all Supporting Improvement Advisers (SIAs) to ensure greater consistency across the whole region. All SIAs use an appropriate evidence base on which to make an accurate and well informed categorisation judgements. Categorisation is discussed throughout the year with LA representative in the County Quality Boards that meet on a fortnightly basis.

All schools going into an Estyn statutory category are categorised as D Red and then reviewed following progress as noted in the guidance.

'*In normal circumstances the improvement capacity of a school requiring **significant improvement or special measures** should not normally be higher than D and the support category red in the first instance. As a school addresses the recommendations from its inspection, evidence about its progress should be weighed carefully and professional judgement applied when reviewing the school's support category*.'

There are clear rationale for reviewing and changing the support category based on progress against recommendations and end of key stage performance (time in category is also considered).

Strengths:
- Very good correlation between regional picture, categorisation process and Estyn findings, especially in the primary sector.
- Robust and consistent process in place.
- G6 management information system used effectively to inform categorisation.
- SIAs know their schools very well and schools have been accurately and robustly categorised.

Aspects for Development:
- Further develop cross-regional working for the process moving forward to ensure national consistency in the process.
- Continue to work closely with the Quality and Standards Group and ensure that all stakeholders are kept apprised of any changes to National Categorisation.
- Continue to involve SIAs for peer assessment in the quality assurance process.

Current regional situation

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, including serving and retired headteachers;
- ensured all secondary schools have access to a generic and bespoke programme of support;

- facilitated access to curriculum, More Able and Talented (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 Key Stage 4 (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.

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 More Able and Talented (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.
- Welsh: assessment for learning principles, sharing resources, language and grammar accuracy, opportunities for language teachers within schools to collaborate and plan together to respond to changes in the new curriculum, emphasis on literature and the development of oracy, reading and writing skills,

improving oracy, reading and writing standards in KS4, effective questioning, pedagogy - sharing effective strategies and ideas to promote oracy.

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 ask 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.

Peer engagement

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

As Steve Munby and Michael Fullen (2016) outline in their paper '*Inside-out and downside-up*', the critical success factors for an effective system-wide school collaboration are 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 (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) 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.

The Reform Journey
GwE is working with all local authority schools to ensure a clear and systematic approach to support and reflect on their engagment with all aspects of the reform journey.

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 i.e. secondary and their local primary schools. For both Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and Curriculum for Wales (CfW), facilitators have been identified in each cluster and have received professional learning through a bespoke change management training accreditated by an international awarding body. Each cluster, supported with appropriate additional building capacity funding, has identified a number of focused workstreams developing teaching and learning and as part of ALN and Curriculum for Wales reform. Success criteria include increased opportunities for primary and secondary practitioners to work together to plan and prepare for the continuum of learning from 3-16 and to reflect and develop innovative pedagogical approaches.

Schools are engaging well with all aspects of the reform journey to include ALN and Curriculum for Wales. Schools have welcomed the integrated approach taken by GwE and SIAs have had regular face-to-face contact with school leaders to develop relationships and share rationale as part of shift in culture, ethos, expectations and accountability. Impact of this can be seen in the increased engagement of G6 reform modules. In November 2018, 77% of schools across the region stated that they were partly on track or better for the Knowledge & understanding milestone. By November 2019 this figure has risen to 91%. In November 2018, 69% of schools across the region stated that they were partly on track or better for the Engagement & participation milestone. By November 2019 this figure has risen to 96%. 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 SIA team meetings continue to provide important opportunities for the full team to share updates and develop consistent messaging on an integrated platform across the wider education reform. Further to this, prompt sheets and resources are shared.

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 custers on key aspect of the reform journey.

As a result of this work, schools are well placed to respond to the demands of the reform.

- **How you work with your member local authorities to ensure synergy and no duplication in your school improvement work.**

IDENTIFYING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILTIES

GwE — LAs

COMPLEX

UNIVERSAL — ACUTE

School Improvement | Intervention and prevention | Statutory Social Care / Health / Wider Partnerships

Reform Journey	
Welsh	LAC
Wellbeing / Equality	DCF
ALN	Accountability
Curriculum	Collaborate
PDG	ACE
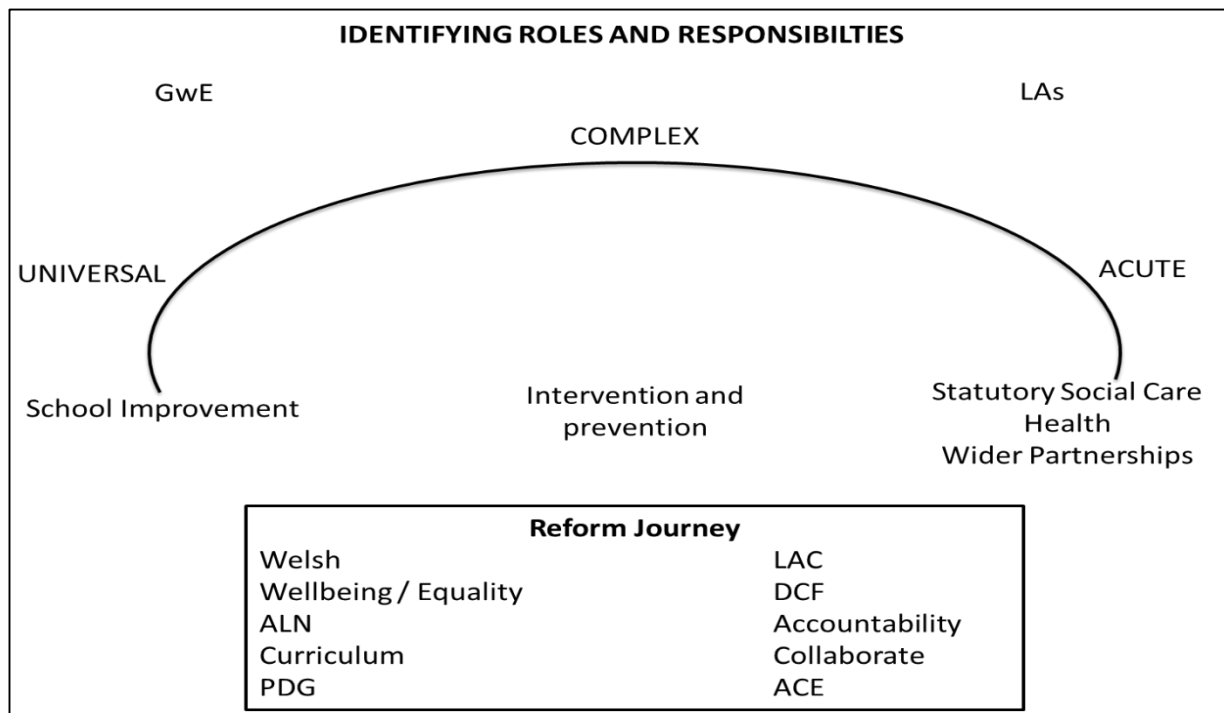
There is a clear and robust accountability framework in GwE. The Business Planning Framework that's in place ensures clarity, accountability and strategic coordination in the delivery of the priorities on a local, regional and national level.

Detailed business plans on all levels of planning address all aspects of the work of GwE and align with *Education in Wales: Our National Mission'* (Welsh Government), reflecting the current regional and national priorities, and clearly noting the contribution of the service to the transformation agenda.

The priorities and areas for improvement are based firmly on the findings of the self-evaluation processes and through consultation with headteachers and the local authorities.

Each Local Authority (LA) has a detailed business plan, which are closely aligned to the LA business plans, 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. These are quality assured at both regional and local levels to ensure there is no duplication and that the regional plans address local priorities.

The relationship and collaboration between the local authorities and the Regional School Improvement Service (GwE) is very good. Through this relationship, the local authorities provides its schools with robust and appropriate challenge, support and intervention. As a result, schools benefit from a diverse regional professional learning offer and bespoke support at individual school and cluster level. These partnerships have a positive impact on developing the quality of leadership and provision and on pupil outcomes in important areas.

The local authorities has benefited from the establishment of a Regional School Improvement team that has ensured greater consistency in its challenge and support especially to secondary schools. The strength of the service's revised strategy in using the expertise and experience of service staff and school senior leaders to provide high quality guidance and support to schools has contributed to improved consistency in the quality of school improvement activity within the local authorities.

During the recent inspection of Flintshire County Council, Estyn concluded that:

> *The local authority and the regional consortium (GwE) work well together to support those schools which need to improve the outcomes pupils achieve by the end of key stage 4. There is a strong working relationship between the authority's education officers, the consortium's supporting improvement advisers (SIAs) and the secondary schools, focused on improvement. This relationship is based on mutual respect, trust and understanding.*
>
> *The authority has a strong working relationship with the regional consortium, and contributes well to its management, governance and scrutiny. The local authority and GwE share information frequently for operational purposes. This creates a shared understanding of school performance and ensures that the provision of bespoke packages of support is appropriate. (Estyn – June 2019)*

Similar findings were also found during Denbighshire and Wrexham inspections.

In September 2018, Steve Munby – an education consultant on leadership and system reform - reviewed GwE's current practice and direction of travel. Steve Munby recently re-visited the region to help us further evaluate the service and shape our future direction and concluded:

> *It is encouraging to see that there is a genuine partnership approach being developed between GwE and local authorities and that the relationship with local authorities is at least as good as it was last year, if not better. Roles are being clarified, relationships are being strengthened and effective ways of working are being developed. "GwE's role is support and challenge; the local authority's role is accountability and statutory work". Steve Munby (October 2019)*

2. **Details of funding you are responsible for spending in 2019-2020, to include:**

- **How much funding you are receiving in 2019-20 from each local authority for your school improvement services.**

Local Authority	2019/20 £	2019/20 %
Ynys Môn	368,745	10.20
Gwynedd	637,630	17.64
Conwy	553,019	15.30
Denbighshire	551,437	15.26
Flintshire	820,790	22.71
Wrexham	682,966	18.89
Total	**3,614,596**	

- **How much in Welsh Government grants you are responsible for distributing in 2019-20, including a breakdown between the Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant and the Pupil Development Grant, as well as details of how much is delegated to schools and how much is administered / spent on a regional basis.**

	Total	Delegation	% Delegation
Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant	33,794,084	29,477,494	87%
* Includes LA match to Education Improvement Grant £2,486,280			
Pupil Development Grant (PDG)	17,052,050	17,011,050	100%
PDG (Lead Regional PDG Adviser)	100,000	0	0%
Total	50,946,134	46,488,544	91%

3. **A summary of Key Stage 4 and A/AS Level examination data for 2019 and previous years in your region, plus any analysis you wish to provide.**

Reporting on Key Stage 4 (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	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. 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 size, specifying requirements in literacy, numeracy and science GCSEs only. The best grade from any of the literature or first language Welsh or English GCSEs can contribute towards the literacy slot. The best grade from either of the mathematics or mathematics – numeracy GCSEs can contribute towards the numeracy slot. The best grade from a science GSCE 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). The remaining six qualifications will include the pupil's best performance in either GCSE and/or vocational equivalent.	✓ Only a pupil's first entry will count ✓ WJEC Science GCSE only
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.

Emerging questions to help evaluate pupil progress, standards and performance

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 quality assurance 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 Education other than at school (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 ****** 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 Pupil Referral Units supported and skilled to clearly identify how best to maximise the performance of individual pupils across the revised performance measures?

A/AS Level:
The delivery model for Key Stage 5 varies within authorities and across the region. Provision is delivered by individual schools, sixth form colleges, further education colleges or collaboration between schools (and colleges) within the consortium. This deems it difficult to come to a meaningful conclusion regarding Key Stage 5 performance in the region.

GwE commission ALPs – a company who measure A level progress from GCSE to A level across over 2,000 providers across England and Wales - to provide results analysis for all schools and local authorities, and to provide us with a full regional report. The progress grade for the region ('T' score) has improved in 2019 from a 5 to a 4 which places regional performance as a whole in the top 40% of performers. This represents a significant improvement in the progress made by students in our Sixth Forms in 2019. At AS level the 'T' score is also a 4, suggesting progress in 2020 should also be strong.

4. **A summary of PISA 2018 results in your region (if available), plus any analysis you wish to provide.**

Regional analysis is not available.

Wales has seen its performance improve in international tests in reading, maths and science. The biggest improvement was in maths, while science is also now close to the international average.

The number of high-performing students in Wales rose from 4% to 7%.

There was also no significant gender gap for the first time.

5. **An update on progress to tackle the attainment gap in your region:**

   a. **Between eligible for free school meals (eFSM) pupils and other pupils:**

A clear and robust Pupil Development Grant (PDG) Support Plan for both FSM and Looked After Children (LAC) is being implemented across the region with clear communication plans.

PDG grant - The following actions have been implemented to drive improvement across the region:
- Further development and implementation of the consortia's PDG Strategic Adviser Role across the region with focus on regional objectives/outcomes and national collaboration and consistency of role via the All Wales PDG project group.
- Increase in the number of schools implementing the regional PDG framework model, focusing on the 5 key areas that are evidence based.
- PDG Workshop developed and delivered across the region to support schools to further embed evidence based practises both via Collaborative Institute for Education Research, Evidence and Impact (CIEREI) and via the EET toolkit.
- Targeted work on the effective practise in relation to PDG for school governors.
- Further development in supporting Pupil Referral Units (PRU) in the use of the PDG and developing key strategies via the regional PRU steering group.
- Targeted support via the PDG for schools to deliver evidence based practise such as the Readiness for Learning project and Trauma Informed Schools.
- Increase in the number of individual PDG monitoring visits across the region and working with Core Leads to identify schools/settings that need additional support and to identify successful practise.
- Further developed Oracy and Literacy intervention programmes. Good practise to be shared in the Evidence based conference in February 2020.
- Supporting schools to further develop key interventions with the PDG and evaluate its impact.
- Rolled out the Evaluating and measuring impact guidance across the region for schools to use to identify successful practice and distance travelled by FSM learners.

- Data, target setting and tracking are more effectively and consistently applied and discussed with SIA's/LA's via the Strategic & Core Lead.
- Annual audit and evaluation of impact on the actual evidence of grant spend has been carried out on the PDG in each school for 2018/19 and 2019-2020. This has resulted in identifying specific lines of enquiry for SIA's during school monitoring visits.

b. Between ethnic minority groups at risk of underachieving and other pupils;

c. Between Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children, and other pupils;

Since 2017, the Minority Ethnic Achievement, and Gypsy and Traveller Children Education Grants are passported directly from Welsh Government to Local Authorities. The grant amounts vary considerable depending on the demographics. For example in some authorities, there is a high percentage of Pupils learning English as an additional language (EAL) and the grant is used to fund a support service.

Outcomes are analysed annually. Through the work of Supporting Improvement Advisers, the performance of various groups of learners are analysed and are part of the conversation with schools.

The GwE data team has produced a comprehensive assessment tracker tool which enables schools to analysis pupil performance and identify underperformance. Many schools who have adopted the tool as their main progress tracker have been identified by ESTYN as effectively tracking learner progress and used as good practice case studies. The impact of the data summary and tracking can be seen in many schools with schools focusing on progress of groups of learners.

Through the vast range of development programmes offered to schools, teachers are now much more knowledgeable about the development of literacy and numeracy, how to influence and advance learning for all groups of learners, lead subjects effectively in school and offer support to other schools, with regard to their own development journey.

d. Between Looked After Children (LAC) and other pupils (and any work to identify and improve the attainment of adopted children compared to other pupils).

Pupil Development Grant (PDG) Strategy - GwE's business plan model and strategy is fully implemented across the region. Our focus is to increase the cluster approach and ensure targeted schools/clusters are getting access to the regional funds. We are also working closely with the 6 LAs to ensure clear communication and collaboration in regards to additional support and intervention to show evidence of impact of LAC PDG. The main areas to drive improvement across the region are as follows:
- Focus on developing decision making and lines of accountability in regard to the PDG LAC between schools, LA and Consortia. Effective collaboration with children services across all 6 LA in regard to the LAC PDG.

- Strong communication strategies are in place to inform Looked After Children in Education (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
- Effective data sharing via the Children Receiving Care Census to Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) to ensure targeted support via the LAC PDG and PEPs (Personal Education Plan).
- 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.
- Increase in the number of schools/settings who are trauma informed and ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) aware. 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. Over 220 schools have attended the Trauma Informed / ACE practise within this academic year. During the last 18 months all schools who have LAC have been targeted to receive professional development in trauma informed practise and classrooms.
- 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.
- The processes for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the LAC PDG have been developed and trialled with a number of schools in 2018/19. The One Page Evaluation received positive feedback and now forms part of the 2019-20 grant guidance along with a sample individual tracking tool. It also captures learner voice across the clusters / schools.
- More school accessing the LAC PDG to support adopted children. The consortia is piloting 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 centered approach.
- Health & Wellbeing self-assessment tool has been developed in partnership with CAMHS (Child and adolescent mental health services) and LA's, incorporating the Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLE) / Estyn LAC checklist and ACES toolkit.
- Regional ACE strategy in collaboration with the 6 LA to ensure universal approach across the region and sustainability of support to schools.
- We have worked with all LA to identify Continuing Professional Development (CPD) needs and this has informed the CPD GwE offer, this has also ensured we are not duplicating offers to schools and value for money.
- 22 targeted schools / LA staff across the region have completed their Diploma in Trauma Informed Schools and Mental Health. An additional 28 are currently completing the diploma. The Group will have a role in supporting successful practise in schools going forward and ensuring how the principles can be implemented within the pedagogical approaches.

- During 2018-19 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.
- Collaboration with the Collaborative Institute for Education Research, Evidence and Impact (CIEREI), in regards to a project looking at Readiness to Learn and targeting schools with high number of FSM/LAC.

6. **An update on how you are challenging and supporting schools that participated in schools challenge Cymru. We would be particularly grateful to know how you have ensured that, where schools' performance improved during the programme, this positive momentum has continued.**

The GwE Region had only 5 schools that participated in School Challenge Cymru (SCC). The progress made in the five schools over the period of the programme was generally disappointing.

Three of the school have been placed in special measures and the other two have recently made improvements and been removed from Estyn follow-up categories - one from Special Measures and the other from Estyn Review.

The Schools Challenge Cymru programme had little or no impact on the schools participating from the North. Funding received for building capacity across the region was also much less compared to other regions, and therefore its impact on non SCC school was also minimal. However, GwE has taken some of the most effective elements from SCC and integrated them into the Secondary Challenge and Support Strategy. This includes the use of Accelerated Improvement Boards for schools causing concerns.

7. **Any comments you have on current and future school accountability arrangements and the impact of these on school improvement.**

GwE Annual Accountability

Headteachers User Groups — 15 x 6
Management Board — Monthly
Local Quality Board — Fortnightly x 6
Scrutiny Committees — 2-3 x 6
Joint Committee — 5 per year
Advisory Board — Termly
Categorisation
Chief Executives — Termly
Welsh Government Challenge And Review — Twice
Internal and external Audit
Lead Director & Chief Executive
Estyn Local Authority Link Visits — 3 x 7
Children And Young People's Committee — At Least Annually
LA Estyn Inspections / Improvement Conferences — Termly For the Last 2 Years

GwE Annual Accountability

Accountability system for schools in Wales

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."

Consortia reporting on performance will adhere to this guidance.

Evaluation and Improvement Arrangements Workshops
A seminar by WG and WLGA was recently held for elected members in the region in relation to the new Evaluation and Improvement arrangements. The main objectives were as follows:
- To update lead members for education and scrutiny leads on the development of new national arrangements for Evaluation and Improvement
- To identify and share good practice in the scrutiny of school performance that goes beyond looking at just headline data and key performance indicators
- To identify any potential barriers to the development of new approaches to Evaluation and Improvement Arrangements at a local level
- To discuss and debate what future arrangements for Evaluation and Improvement might look like at a local level
- To identify any future support needs

The seminar provided an opportunity for members to gain a broader understanding of the important role they will play in providing effective scrutiny under the new arrangements. The education system is changing, and we all must change our established practices. This will mean changing the way we challenge schools as well as how we support them. The role of Democratic Scrutiny in the new Evaluation and Improvement arrangements as a function of accountability is key to its success.

GwE have also held local workshops with elected members in some local authorities in relation to the new interim Key Stage 4 performance measures and the National Evaluation and Improvement Arrangements.

During the academic year 2020-2021, further professional learning for all elected members will be arranged.

This direction of travel is welcomed. As a region we welcome the changes to the accountability arrangements, the focus on a broader range of performance measures, the focus on self-evaluation and improvement planning and the increased support and resources for wellbeing.

8. **Any other comments you wish to make on the school improvement and raising standards agenda**

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 has now been sent to all schools in Wales before the end of the summer term and schools are in the process of completing the survey and recognising which of the 7 dimensions they need to develop further through drawing up their own action plan.

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.

Finally, 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 Goverment have asked GwE to support and advise this new appointee during the early days of her new job.

Evaluation and Improvement Arrangements

Key update - 2019 Key Stage 4 examinations

To: Chairs of Scrutiny, Cabinet Members, Directors of Education, Chief Executive Officers, Managing Directors of Regional Education Consortia

Dear Colleague

This is a joint communication from the Welsh Government, the WLGA and Estyn regarding handling of the Key Stage 4 examination unverified results in August and implementation of the new interim performance measures.

Together, we are delivering a shared ethos which supports our ambitious reform journey, in particular to help the move towards the new evaluation and improvement arrangements.

As you will know, we are moving away from a disproportionate emphasis on one or two isolated performance measures. Instead, we will have a wider range of indicators which better capture the progress of all learners, the whole learning experience and our ambitions for the new curriculum.

Steve Davies, the Government's Director of Education wrote to schools on 18 July to set out more detail.

We look to schools, local authorities and regions to engage with the wider policy and curriculum intentions that sit behind these changes and be mindful of the need to offer a broad and balanced curriculum to all learners.

To facilitate the culture change needed to create the right conditions for success, the Welsh Government, Estyn and the WLGA have jointly agreed and committed to a new protocol as we move to the interim measures.

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.

Detailed guidance on the interim measures and the changes to the analyses provided for schools have recently been published and can be found here:
https://gov.wales/interim-key-stage-4-school-performance-arrangements

A copy of the letter to schools is also attached for information.

Steve Davies
Director of Education
Welsh Government

Meilyr Rowlands
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector
Estyn

Chris Llewellyn
Chief Executive
WLGA

Agenda Item 4.1

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education

Lynne Neagle AM
Chair, Children, Young People and Education
Committee National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

6 January 2020

Dear Lynne,

The emotional and mental health of children and young people in Wales – next steps for *Mind over Matter*

Thank you for your letter of 12 December in which you outlined your consideration of our previous correspondence and your intended next steps for the CYPE Committee activity in this area, during 2020. We particularly welcome the involvement of the young people of the Youth Parliament and our Youth Stakeholder group which is supporting both the Whole School Approach and the Together for Children and Young People programme.

Whilst acknowledging progress, particularly within the Whole School Approach area where we have focussed our resources to date, we welcome the continued emphasis by the committee to ensure ongoing improvements against the wide range of recommendations of the Mind Over Matter report. In response to your request for information in advance of your stakeholder event in February, we will provide the committee with a position statement against the committee's Mind over Matter recommendations reflecting activity since our last update.

We will also provide a further response in the new year, which will respond to the other specific queries in your letter, including the formal scope of the Outcomes for Children Ministerial Advisory Group, alongside further details of the workplan sitting under this group. We will provide details to offer assurance that the Joint Task and Finish Group on the Whole School Approach will encompass the whole system change as agreed. This additional information will illustrate how we intend to manage the risk of fragmentation, whilst also supporting cross sector progress with recommendations. Details of this arrangement will also be discussed at the next Joint Task and Finish Group on the Whole School Approach, scheduled for 27 January 2020.

Yours sincerely,

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education

Agenda Item 4.2

CYPE(5)-02-20 - Paper to note 2

adoptionuk

ar gyfer pob teulu sy'n mabwysiadu
for every adoptive family

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Caerdydd CF11 7LU

Penhevad Studios, Penhevad Street,
Cardiff CF11 7LU

Ffon | Phone 029 2023 2221
Ebost | Email wales@adoptionuk.org.uk

Yr ydym yn croesawu gohebiath yn Gymraig neu yn Saesneg
We welcome correspondence in either Welsh or English

Lynne Neagle A.M.
Chair of the Children and Young People and Education Committee
73 Upper Trosnant Street,
Pontypool,
NP4 8AU

2nd January 2020

Dear Lynne,

First of all let me wish you and your family all the best for 2020.

I am writing to ask that the CYPE Committee inquire into the impact of recent funding decisions on support services for adopted young people and their families in Wales, several of which are under threat following decisions about the Sustainable Social Services 3rd Sector grant round which will be announced publicly any day now.

As you know, Adoption UK Cymru delivers support, advice and training for adoptive parents and more recently direct services for adopted young people across Wales. Over the last 4 years we have benefited from government support in the form of the Sustainable Social Services Grant to develop these services, in recognition of the acute vulnerability of many of these families. We have been proud to work alongside our partner voluntary organisations and the National Adoption Service in support of Welsh Government's goals for the adoption sector.

We have just learned that our funding will not be renewed from April 2020. While recognising that difficult funding decisions need to be made, we are deeply concerned about the outcomes for adopted young people in Wales going forward. We suspect that one of the reasons for the decision is that Welsh Government have recently begun to fund local authorities directly to deliver adoption services with an investment of £2.3M a year. Whilst we very much welcome this decision it should not be seen as a replacement for supporting third sector organizations like Adoption UK. The sector overall is in need of investment to ensure young people leave care and remain in successful adoptive homes, and the recent local authority grant for 2019/21 has been committed within regional and local adoption teams. It is not available to backfill central post-adoption services provided by Adoption UK Cymru.

adoptionuk

ar gyfer pob teulu sy'n mabwysiadu
for every adoptive family

On the current funding timeline, support for our youth, community and training support services will stop in March 2020, with limited time to plan alternative ways to support adopters and their families. This will have three major impacts which I would like to draw to your attention.

Commitment to adopted young people and their families

Last year, when After Adoption withdrew from Wales, Welsh Government welcomed our initiative to work with the National Adoption Service to rescue Talk Adoption, the support service for adopted young people. Over the last year we have re-launched the service as 'Connected' (we have a launch event planned for the 16th January), and grown it to provide support and a peer group for 70 extremely vulnerable young people. The feedback we received from the families involved was overwhelming gratitude that the service had been saved. The effect of the recent grant funding decision will be to end the youth service a year after we worked to secure its future. This is at best inconsistent and at worst deeply undermining for the most vulnerable adoptive families in Wales.

Erosion of service quality and reach for the adoptive community

Adoption UK Cymru brings the voice of the adopter and increasingly the adoptee into service development and delivery, working with our members and the wider community of adopters to inform decision-making with the lived experience of adoption. The grant decision means we must cut our community work, and will not be able to maintain our adopters and adoptee groups, free training for adopters and helpline going forward. The opportunities to hear the voice of adopted young people and adults which were just opening up, will effectively be closed down again.

Failure to reduce care population

Finally, but perhaps most importantly, adoption will always be an essential tool in the reduction of the care population. A proportion of children will never be able to return to their birth families, and depend on a route out of care via adoption. At a time when we are facing a shortfall in adopter recruitment, knowing that that support is a key element of growing the prospective adopter pool, and recognising that partnership working is crucial to ensuring the third sector remain a vibrant part of the children's care economy, we are at a loss to understand the logic of ceasing support in this priority area.

Adoption UK is committed to supporting adoptive families in Wales and will maintain an office and a reduced range of services. I would be most grateful for any action your committee can take to encourage Welsh Government to work with Adoption UK to provide at least some interim funding for the community services and ideally ongoing funding to support the direct work with young people. If that is lost and the very experienced staff who currently deliver it leave the organization, it will be very hard to set it up again.

Yours sincerely

Ann Bell,
Director for Wales Adoption UK Cymru.

Agenda Item 4.3

Julie Morgan AC/AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Our ref: MA JM 5235 19

Lynne Neagle AM
Chair
Children, Young People and Education Committee

Llyr Gruffydd AM
Chair
Finance Committee

7 January 2020

Dear Chairs,

I am writing to provide an update about progress towards obtaining reliable social services data, which is highlighted in the Regulatory Impact Assessment accompanying the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill and was the subject of recommendations during Stage 1 scrutiny of the Bill.

My letter of 5 April 2019 set out the issues in relation to establishing an estimate of the current number of referrals relating to reasonable punishment received by social services departments using existing social services data.

Social services departments do not currently collect data about the number of referrals of cases of physical punishment of a child by their parent or person acting in loco parentis. It was not possible to include a reliable estimate of the number of referrals in the original version of the RIA published as part of the Explanatory Memorandum when the Bill was introduced.

In response to recommendations published by the Finance Committee, I noted that Welsh Government officials have been working with a small number of local authorities to try to obtain an estimate of numbers of current referrals to social services, based on the methodology used by the police.

If it was possible to obtain a reasonably reliable estimate of numbers using that methodology, officials planned to use that estimate and the unit cost set out in the Explanatory Memorandum laid when the Bill was introduced, to provide an estimate of the current costs of referrals to social services. While the police data, and the estimated potential increase in numbers of reports to the police, are subject to caveats, which are set out in the Explanatory Memorandum, they were considered to be reliable enough to include as an indication of the possible impact.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Pack Page 101

Welsh Government and local authority officials have now completed the work on social services data. A technical note, approved by the Welsh Government's Chief Statistician is attached, setting out the methodology and results obtained.

As detailed in the note, it has become clear that the social services data collected is subject to a number of additional caveats, which do not apply to the police data. For example, it was only possible to collect enough comparable data to produce these estimates for three of the 22 local authorities in Wales, whereas the RIA included data from each of the four police forces in Wales. Furthermore, there is likely to be a large degree of duplication of records of referrals in the social services data, because each referral is 'cloned' and logged against any other child considered to be at risk because of the same incident (for example siblings). This means it is not always possible to identify the number of original referrals received. In addition, processes and computer systems are used differently across children's services teams to capture data about referrals.

The Chief Statistician agrees with the advice of our officials set out in the technical note that, due to the caveats, it is not possible to extrapolate the results obtained to provide an estimate for referrals for physical punishment of children by their parent or person in loco parentis at an all-Wales level.

Regretfully, for these reasons it is not possible to provide a sufficiently robust estimate of the current numbers of referrals to social services for the purpose of the revised RIA. It would be a disservice to AMs and wider scrutiny to present figures which are not fit for purpose and do not represent the likely impact of the legislation.
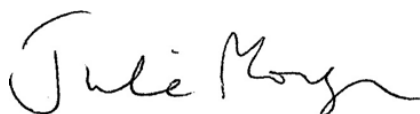
As you are aware, such an estimate would not have replaced the need to collect data for a more robust baseline prior to commencement – the purpose of this work was to provide an estimate of social services referrals to include in the RIA.

It is important we have appropriate plans in place to monitor the impact of the legislation – should it be passed by the Senedd – once it is implemented. As such, the Data Collection and Monitoring task and finish group, operating under the Strategic Implementation Group, is continuing to develop an approach to collect data about relevant referrals to social services so it can be collected prior to commencement to provide a more robust baseline, and following commencement to monitor the impact.

I will write to you again to set out the changes in the updated Explanatory Memorandum for the Bill, which will be laid ahead of Stage 3 proceedings.

I look forward to continuing to work with the Committees as the Bill progresses through the Senedd.

Yours sincerely

Julie Morgan AC/AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services

Technical Note for Scrutiny Committees

Social services data – referrals to children's services for physical punishment of children by parents or those acting in loco parentis

Exercise to gather social services data

1. Existing data collection has not enabled us to produce a robust estimate for the current number of physical punishment cases referred to children's services in Wales for physical punishment of children by parents or those acting in loco parentis. This is because there is not currently a requirement to record this information. At the request of the Welsh Government a number of social service teams have conducted an audit of recorded referrals for children. The intention was that the data would provide the Welsh Government with a caveated estimate of current referrals to social services relating to the abolition of the defence of reasonable punishment, to inform the regulatory impact assessment.

2. This estimate would not replace the need to collect data for a more robust baseline prior to commencement of the legislation; it would only provide an estimate for the purposes of the regulatory impact assessment which is required to be laid before the Assembly alongside the Bill.

Methodology

3. Initially, a number of Social Services teams across Wales were approached to explore whether they may be able to replicate the methodology used by the police to generate estimate numbers of referrals to Children's Services. Factors such as time and resource pressures as well as system capabilities meant that only five were able to take the initial work forward.

4. As a first step, the total number of referrals/contacts to Children's Services were identified. This includes any referrals/ contacts to Children's Services from the public or professionals such as the police, teachers, health visitors etc. and could relate to any area of child concern. It includes referrals recorded against any child for whom there may be concerns. For example, children who have been physically punished as well as other children who may be judged as being at risk (such as their siblings). As such these referrals are likely to contain a high level of duplication.

5. A key word search was then conducted to identify all referrals that included words relating to physical punishment, such as: smack, hit, chastise, punish.

6. In three of these authorities, it was possible for a proportion of the results to then be manually examined to identify how many of them actually referred to parental physical punishment.

Results

7. Three authorities have currently completed this work, including a manual review of the cases:

- One local authority identified 7,945 cases where a child had a referral/contact on their record in a year. One in five of these cases contained keywords relating to physical punishment. Following a manual examination of a sample of the referrals, we estimate that around 540 (6.7%) of the total concerns recorded relate to the physical punishment of children (including duplicates).

- A second local authority identified around 7,500 cases where a child had a referral/contact on their record in a year. One in ten of the cases per year contained keywords relating to physical punishment. Following a manual examination of a sample of the referrals, we estimate that around 189 (2.5%) of the total concerns recorded relate to the physical punishment of children (including duplicates).

- The third identified 2,682 cases where a child had a referral/contact on their record in a year. Of these referrals 167 (6.2%) contained words related to smacking. This authority was able to identify and remove duplicate referrals against siblings, and as such 102 (60%) of these were removed. Following a manual examination of a sample of the referrals, we estimate that this local authority's children's services had 24 individual contacts regarding the punishment of children in a year. Note that this cannot be displayed as a proportion of their total contacts as has been displayed in other local authorities due to the fact that the total referral/ contact figure includes duplicates, whereas the final figure of 24 relates to unique referrals.

8. Although it covers just three authorities, the initial search figures data suggests that cases referred to children's services currently cover a range of concerns outside of physical violence, and particularly outside of the physical punishment of children. Based on the figures from the first two authorities, referrals to Children's Services regarding parental physical punishment make up between 2.5 and 6.7 per cent of total cases recorded against children in these authorities.

Caveats

9. The analysis has shown that referrals recorded on social service systems are likely to have a large degree of duplication, due to the fact that each single contact to children's services must be cloned against every child who may be judged as being 'at risk' due to the situation (such as siblings), rather than only recording against the victims of the reports. The analysis in Powys suggests almost two thirds of the referrals containing words related to physical punishment may have been duplicated referrals against siblings.

10. In addition, this exercise identified a number of challenges which may affect the reliability of the findings. Each of the Children's Services teams use processes and computer systems differently to capture their data. This includes the way the 'referral reason' field is used, which contains the text that was searched as part of the key word search. Equally, whilst the manual check helped identify the likely proportion of relevant referrals, it is not an accurate approach to identifying

the true number of relevant cases. These reasons further increase the uncertainty around the estimated figures provided.

11. Discussions with data leads in other Children's Services teams as part of this work and the work of the Data and Monitoring Task and Finish Group suggest that these caveats, amongst others, are highly likely to apply, to children's services data recorded across Wales.

Outcome

12. Due to the above caveats, and the challenges of collecting consistent data from a wider range of authorities, it is not possible to extrapolate these figures to provide an estimate for current referrals at an all Wales level. As part of the implementation work, a Data and Monitoring Task and Finish Group has been established to develop an approach for collecting baseline and post implementation figures to monitor the impact on Social Services.

Relationship between Social Service and Police figures

13. Although it may be expected that Police numbers would mirror those of social services, this may not be the case.

14. The main reason for this is the way in which data is recorded by the police compared to social services. Police figures only record each phone call/ incident as a single crime, regardless of the number of children at risk as a result of that incident. However, the same incident, when referred to social services, would be recorded individually against all children in the family.

Julie Morgan AC/AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MA/JM/5235/19

Lynne Neagle AM
Chair
Children, Young People and Education Committee

Llŷr Grufydd AM
Chair
Finance Committee

Mick Antoniw AM
Chair
Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee

7 January 2020

Dear Chairs,

I am writing to inform you that an updated Explanatory Memorandum (EM) was laid before the National Assembly today, in respect of the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill.

The EM reflects the changes made to the Bill by the Children, Young People and Education (CYPE) Committee during the Stage 2 proceedings and also provides new or additional data and evidence that has become available since the publication of the original EM at introduction of the Bill in March 2019.

Stage 2 of the legislative process took place between 18 September and 24 October 2019. Government amendments in relation to a duty to raise awareness and to undertake a post implementation review – both recommendations from Stage 1 scrutiny Committee Reports – were agreed. Also agreed was the Government amendment to provide certainty in relation to commencement of the Bill's core provision: the removal of the defence of reasonable punishment.

There have been developments in relation to the availability of baseline data for social services. I have written separately on this issue to the Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee and the Finance Committee.

The main material changes to note in the updated EM are:

<u>Chapter 2 (Legislative Competence)</u>

This section has been updated to provide further information on the Welsh Government's analysis of the Bill's compatibility with Article 8 and 9 of convention rights and European Union law (paragraph 2.3).

<u>Chapter 3 (Policy objective and purpose and intended effect of the legislation)</u>

- The section 'Context' has been updated to reflect the latest legislative developments in relation to the Bill (paragraphs 3.8 and 3.9).

- In the section 'Purpose and intended effect of the Bill' information is provided on the research commissioned by the Welsh Government on attitudes to physical punishment which was published after the legislation was introduced in March. The Committee was informed about this research when it was published in June. To take account of this research we have also updated the following sections of the Explanatory memorandum –paragraphs xi and xii; 3.32, 3.56 - 3.59.

- The section, 'Supporting the implementation of the Bill' has been updated to reflect developments to the delivery of parenting support which includes updating our Parenting. Give it time campaign, which we intend to expand to cover a wider age range of parents (paragraph 3.70); and delivery of the Healthy Child Wales programme and associated resources (paragraph 3.72, 3.73 and 3.74).

<u>Chapter 4 (Consultation)</u>

- 'Support for parents' - an update on our Parenting Expert Group (PEAG) has been provided. PEG will work with the Welsh Government to consider the results of the mapping exercise we carried out to examine the extent of parenting support currently provided across Wales (paragraph 4.8).
- 'Impact on public bodies' and 'Guidance/ training to support frontline professionals' – information is provided in these sections on the Strategic Implementation Group and associated task and finish groups (paragraph 4.13 - 4.18)
- Paragraph 4.15 reflects the changes to commencement arrangements made to the Bill by the Children, Young People and Education Committee during the Stage 2 proceedings.

<u>Chapter 5 (Power to make subordinate legislation)</u>

The table has been updated to reflect the power in the Bill as amended after Stage 2 proceedings.

<u>Chapters 6 to 8 (Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA))</u>

Chapter 6: Summary of RIA

This section has been updated with revised figures for administrative costs for organisations to update guidance; out of court disposals, post implementation review (surveys of awareness and attitudes) and awareness raising.

In response to recommendation 20 of the CYPE Committee the section 'Unquantified costs' has been updated with further information where a best estimate of such costs has now been provided or to explain why we have been unable to do this.

The section 'Key evidence, assumptions and uncertainties' has been updated to provide information on the research commissioned by the Welsh Government on attitudes to physical punishment which was published in June.

Chapter 8: Costs and benefits

The following sections have been updated:

- 'Introduction to Chapters 8 and 9' – paragraph 8.2 notifies the reader that the EM has been updated to take account of changes since the Bill was introduced. Paragraph 8.9 provides information on the Strategic Implementation Group and associated task and finish groups
- 'Option 1: Do nothing' – costs for Welsh Government programmes have been updated
- 'Option 2: Legislate to remove the defence of reasonable punishment'
    - Paragraph 8.22 provides an update on the order making power contained in the Bill.
    - Welsh Government costs for awareness raising have been updated to take account of the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services' commitment to a high intensity communications and awareness raising campaign (Paragraph 8.28 – 8.32).
    - In response to recommendation 10 of the CYPE Committee, a new section 'Awareness Raising with Children', provides information on the Welsh Government's plans, and associated costs, for awareness raising with children.
    - 'A note on using New Zealand data to give an indication of potential impact of the legislation on social services, the police and justice system' – this has been updated to provide further information on differences between New Zealand and Wales (paragraph 8.44).
    - 'Local Authorities – Social Services' – In response to recommendation 4 of the Finance Committee and recommendation 6 of the CYPE Committee Stage 1 reports an update has been provided on attempts to provide accurate data for a baseline of referrals to social services and an estimate of the scale of increase in referrals following commencement of the legislation.
    - In response to recommendation 5 of the Finance Committee Stage 1 report a new section 'Out of Court Disposals' has been added to the RIA to provide a best estimate of costs associated with a diversion scheme.
    - In response to recommendation 6 of the Finance Committee the section 'Ministry of Justice - Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service' provides an

analysis of whether a link can be established between estimated referrals to the police and prosecutions for offences that previously would have been covered by the defence of reasonable punishment (paragraphs 8.50- 8.58).

- o A new section 'Supporting implementation' has been added to provide costs associated with implementation. In response to recommendation 9 of the Finance Committee this includes the costs associated with the post implementation review. In response to recommendation 8 of the Finance Committee's Stage 1 report this section provides the costs associated with the Welsh Government's Strategic Implementation Group and associated task and finish groups. I agreed to provide the costs associated with resourcing the activities of the Implementation Group separately, however for the convenience of the Committee, and to enable this expenditure to be seen within the overall context of costs associated with implementation activity I am providing this information in the RIA.
- o In response to recommendation 7 of the Finance Committee a new section 'Transitional costs – updating guidance and training' has been added to the RIA to provide a best estimate of costs associated with organisations updating guidance and providing training for their staff.
- o The 'Cost summary table' has been updated to take account of additional costs which have been added to the RIA.

Chapter 9 (Specific Impact Assessments)

The integrated impact assessment summary and the annexes relating to Children's rights, Equality and the Welsh Language have been reviewed and will be published on the Welsh Government's website ahead of Stage 3.

Chapter 10 (Post Implementation Review)

This section has been updated to provide further information on the Welsh Government's plans for implementation.

Explanatory Notes

The Explanatory Notes, which accompany the revised EM, reflect the amendments to the Bill made at Stage 2.

Annexes

Annex 4: Potential impacts on individuals and organisations

The following sections have been updated:

- 'Evidence from children' - provides further information from the Ministry of Justice on numbers of active Registered Intermediaries (paragraph 29).
- 'Cafcass Cymru' - further information is provided on Cafcass Cymru's consideration of how to monitor numbers of allegations of parental physical punishment in the context of litigation between separated couples (paragraphs 45 – 47).
- 'Impact on process' - gives the title of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 Part 7 statutory guidance (paragraph 55).

- 'Teachers' safeguarding responsibilities' - provides further information on the duties of teachers to report safeguarding concerns (paragraph 58).

Annex 5: Criminal Records and Disclosure and Barring Service

In the section 'Enhanced checks' further information is provided on the disclosure of non-conviction information, including data relating to enhanced DBS checks (paragraphs 10,11,16,18,19 and 20).

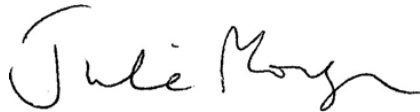**Annex 6: Using New Zealand data as a proxy for estimates in Wales**

In the section 'Differences in the Legislation in New Zealand and what is proposed in Wales' additional information has been provided on commencement periods in New Zealand and Wales (paragraph 9).

Annex 8: High Level Implementation Work Plan

In response to recommendation 8 of the Finance Committee a new section has been added, which provides information about the main activities of our Strategic Implementation Group and associated task and finish groups. It also covers our plans in relation to awareness raising. This is a living document that may need to evolve as the work around implementation progresses.

I look forward to continuing to work with Members as the Bill progresses through the Assembly process.

Yours sincerely

Julie Morgan AC/AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services

Agenda Item 7

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