

## CYPE(5)-13-19 - Paper to note 1

Kirsty Williams AC/AM  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Lynne Neagle AM,  
Chair  
Children, Young People and Education Committee  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
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29<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Dear Lynne,

I agreed to write to you with an update of the evidence paper provided during the Committee's *On the money?* Inquiry on the 2018 Key Stage 4 attainment data.

Although it is not possible to make historic comparisons of data due to the significant changes to performance measures, it has been possible to consider some breakdowns. In 2017-18, analysis indicated that the changes made to performance measures disproportionately affected eFSM learners; with the cap on the contribution of vocational qualifications having a particular impact on the Level 2 threshold.

You are already aware the 2017-18 data showed that removing the cap would improve the Level 2 performance of eFSM learners by 8.5 percentage points compared to 4.4 percentage points for non-eFSM learners. Analysis for the 2018-19 data set shows that removing the cap would have less significance but there would still be an improvement of 6.4 percentage points for eFSM learners compared to 3.1 percentage points for non-eFSM learners. The Level 2 inclusive indicator shows the cap has not significantly affected either eFSM or non-eFSM results, with only marginal improvement differences of 0.1 percentage points.

The cap on the value of non-GCSEs and on the size of individual non-GCSE qualifications has contributed to a shift away from vocational qualifications to GCSEs, reversing the trend seen in some subjects in recent years. Last year, 2017-18, saw increased results across all science subjects as schools prepared for the changes to performance measures in 2018-19 where the Capped 9 points score required 2 GCSEs in science. The summer results for 2018-19 showed an increase in entries for biology, chemistry and physics, and there were over 42,000 entries to the new Double Science award. This increase in entries for science GCSEs is encouraging, as more young people will be equipped with the science skills and knowledge they need to progress to further study post-16, including at A level.

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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.

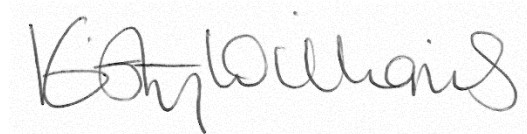
I am pleased that since 2016 we have seen 30% increase in the number of pupils on Free School Meals who have achieved at least one GCSE in Science

We knew the impact of the significant changes made to performance measures would cause volatility but it is too early after those changes to make any robust conclusions; particularly in the context of the additional changes we will see to the curriculum and the accountability framework. [My Written Statement on Evaluation](#) and Improvement – a new accountability system to raise standards for all issued on 19 February this year sets out our proposals moving forward.

I also agreed in my response to the Committee's report to consider how this update could include looked after children. We do not yet have the relevant data available to do this, but I can assure you we will analyse the data as soon as it becomes available and feed it into the ongoing conversations my officials are having with the regional education consortia and others.

I hope the Committee finds this update helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams', is placed over a light grey rectangular background.

**Kirsty Williams AC/AM**

Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education

Table 1 : Average GCSE entry per pupil, 2014 to 2018

	Number of subjects						Change	Change
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2017 to 2018	2014 to 2018	
FSM	5.8	5.8	6.1	7.5	7.8	0.3	2.0	
NonFSM	7.9	7.9	8.1	9.1	9.4	0.3	1.5	

Table 2 : Average BTEC entry per pupil, 2014 to 2018

	Average entry						Change	Change
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2017 to 2018	2014 to 2018	
FSM	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.7	1.4	-0.3	-0.5	
NonFSM	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.3	-0.2	-0.4	

Table 3 : Percentage of pupils entering at least one BTEC, 2014 to 2018

	Per cent of pupils						Change	Change
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2017 to 2018	2014 to 2018	
FSM	71.7	76.1	72.0	51.6	41.2	-10.4	-30.4	
NonFSM	56.1	57.5	51.4	35.0	26.1	-8.8	-29.9	

Table 4 : Percentage of pupils entering at least one GCSE in Science, 2013 to 2018

	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<b>Change 2017 to 2018</b>	<b>Change 2013 to 2018</b>
FSM	58.5	49.6	48.1	53.5	76.8	91.0	14.1	32.4
NonFSM	79.0	75.3	74.5	77.7	89.8	97.8	7.9	18.8

Table 5 : Percentage of pupils achieving GCSE Maths A\*-C, 2013-2018

	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<b>Change 2017 to 2018</b>	<b>Change 2013 to 2018</b>
FSM	33.7	34.5	39.2	43.6	38.3	39.3	1.0	5.7
NonFSM	65.9	67.7	70.1	73.2	68.6	70.0	1.4	4.2

Table 6 : Percentage of pupils achieving GCSE English or Welsh A\*-C, 2018

	<b>English and Welsh Language Only</b>	<b>English and Welsh Language and literature</b>	<b>Difference</b>
FSM	40.0	43.1	3.2
NonFSM	71.5	74.3	2.8
All	64.9	67.6	2.8

Table 7 : Percentage of pupils achieving the L2 threshold, 2018

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	<b>With no cap on contribution of vocational qualifications</b>		
	<u>Published</u>	<u>ons</u>	<u>Difference</u>
FSM	41.8	48.1	6.4
NonFSM	73.9	77.1	3.1
All	67.0	70.5	3.5

Table 8 : Percentage of pupils achieving the L2 inclusive threshold, 2018

This table shows the effect of the cap on vocational qualifications

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	<b>With no cap on contribution of vocational qualifications</b>		
	<u>Published</u>	<u>ons</u>	<u>Difference</u>
FSM	29.5	29.6	0.1
NonFSM	61.7	61.8	0.1
All	55.1	55.2	0.1

Table 9 : Percentage of pupils achieving the L2 inclusive threshold, 2018

This table shows the effect of the cap on vocational qualifications and the removal of literature as a qualification that counts towards this measure.

	<b>With no cap on contribution of vocational qualifications and including</b>		
	<b>Published</b>	<b>literature</b>	<b>Difference</b>
FSM	29.5	31.0	1.5
NonFSM	61.7	63.2	1.6
All	55.1	56.6	1.5

Table 10 : L2 inclusive by FSM, 2012 to 2018

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>Change 2012 to 2016</b>	<b>Change 2017 to 2018</b>
FSM	23.4	25.8	27.8	31.6	35.6	28.6	29.5	12.2	0.9
NonFSM	56.6	58.5	61.6	64.1	66.8	61.0	61.7	10.3	0.7
All pupils	51.1	52.7	55.4	57.9	60.3	54.6	55.1	9.2	0.5

Note: Data for 2017 and 2018 not consistent with previous years due to changes recommended by the Review of Qualifications. These figures are provided for information only

Table 11 : Achievement of A\*-C in Maths by FSM, 2012 to 2018

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<b>Change 2013- 2018</b>	<b>Change 2012- 2017</b>
FSM	31.3	33.7	34.5	39.2	43.6	38.3	39.3	5.7	7.0
NonFSM	63.8	65.9	67.7	70.1	73.2	68.6	70.0	4.2	4.8
All pupils	58.4	60.3	61.7	64.4	66.9	62.5	63.6	3.2	4.1

Table 12 : Achievement of A\*-C in English or Welsh by FSM, 2012 to 2018 (a)

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<b>Change 2013- 2018</b>	<b>Change 2012- 2017</b>
FSM	36.6	37.4	40.4	45.8	47.8	39.4	40.0	2.6	2.7
NonFSM	69.2	69.9	73.4	75.7	76.6	71.5	71.5	1.6	2.3
All pupils	63.5	64.0	67.1	70.1	70.4	65.0	64.9	0.8	1.6

(a) language only for 2017 and 2018.

Table 13 : Achievement of A\*-C in English or Welsh and Mathematics by FSM, 2012 to 2018 (a)

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<b>Change 2013- 2018</b>	<b>Change 2012- 2017</b>
FSM	23.9	26.1	28.0	32.1	35.9	29.1	30.2	4.1	5.2
NonFSM	57.0	58.8	61.8	64.4	67.1	61.5	62.3	3.4	4.5
All pupils	51.6	53.1	55.7	58.3	60.7	57.1	57.2	4.1	5.5

(a) language only for English and Welsh in 2017 and 2018

Table 14 : Percentage of pupils passing at least one GCSE in Science at any grade, 2013-2018

	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>Change 2017 to 2018</b>	<b>Change 2013 to 2018</b>
FSM	53.9	46.4	45.8	50.5	72.6	80.5	7.9	26.6
NonFSM	77.9	74.6	73.8	76.9	88.9	94.7	5.8	16.8