



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE **The School Performance and Absence Targets (Wales)
(Amendment) Regulations 2019**

DATE **20 June 2019**

BY **Kirsty Williams, Minister for Education**

In May last year, I announced new interim Key Stage 4 performance measures for secondary schools for 2019. The new measures shift the focus from ‘average’ to raising our aspirations for all learners. They also remove the emphasis on the Level 2 inclusive measure for GCSE and the narrow focus on borderline grades that the past use of threshold measures cultivated. As set out in our draft Evaluation and Improvement arrangements that I published in February, there will be a greater focus on school self-evaluation. In our reformed system, every child will count and schools will be evaluated according to the difference they make to the progress of every child.

Following the introduction of the interim Key Stage 4 performance measures, amendments are being made to the School Performance and Absence Targets (Wales) Regulations 2011. The revised regulations are due to come into force on 1 September 2019 and will reflect the recent changes to Key Stage 4 performance measures. As such, the amendments will only apply to target setting arrangements for pupils at Key Stage 4. The amended regulations will require the number of non-specific targets to be increased from 3 to 6 and the requirement for governing bodies to set measure-specific targets will be removed.

I believe these changes will provide greater autonomy for schools to self-improve and develop genuine targets that contribute to raising the quality of education in schools and standards of learners’ achievements. Targets are at their most powerful when they are used alongside teachers’ own assessment and monitoring of pupils’ progress to inform what needs to happen in the classroom. It is important to retain some level of reassurance to ensure targets are appropriate. Local authorities will, therefore, still be required to approve targets. However, I want to be absolutely clear that school targets should only be used to support self-evaluation and should not be aggregated up to a local authority measure of performance to hold schools to account.

I think it would be premature to try to implement any more significant target setting changes during this stage of curriculum reform, and I do not propose to make any immediate changes to Key Stage 2 or 3 target setting requirements, as they are still very much aligned with current assessment arrangements.

Links to the consultation on the changes to school target setting requirements in Wales and summary of responses, can be found below:

https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-01/consultation-document-proposed-changes-to-the-target-setting-requirements-on-schools_0.pdf

<https://gov.wales/changes-target-setting-requirements-schools>