

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018

STANDARDS

Performance strengths

- GwE's performance in the main indicators in Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 continues to improve rapidly, and the region's performance is the highest of the four consortia.
- Key Stage 2 - In 2017, there was a 1.6% increase in the percentage of pupils who attained the Core Subjects Indicator [CSI] compared to the national percentage of 0.9%. This was higher than the increase seen in the other regions and GwE's performance is now the best of the four regions. In 2017, an increase of 2% or more was seen in three of the local authorities, Ynys Môn (+2.1%), Gwynedd (+2.3%) and Wrexham (+2.6%). Three of the 6 authorities performed better than their FSM position, with one equivalent to it.
- In 2017 in Key Stage 3, a further increase in the percentage of pupils who attained the Core Subjects Indicator [CSI]. The region's performance in the CSI continues to be the best of the four consortia, with three authorities, Gwynedd, Conwy and Flintshire, performing higher than their FSM position, or close to it.
- Key Stage 4 - The performance gap between GwE and the 2 highest performing consortia in the TL2+ has decreased by approximately 1%.
- On the higher levels [level 6+] in Key Stage 3, an increase was seen in all core subjects. The increase in the region was higher than the national increase for Welsh. Performance in mathematics, science and Welsh is the best of the four consortia, and English has the second best performance.
- In Key Stage 2 and 3, the performance of FSM pupils in the GwE region was higher than the national percentage in each of the main indicators, with the exception of Welsh in Key Stage 2.

These are areas that require improvement:

- Raising standards in the Foundation Phase continues to be a key priority for improvement in the consortium. Even though the greatest increase was seen in the percentage of pupils who attain the Foundation Phase Indicator (FPI), an increase of 0.8% compared to 0.3% nationally, there is still considerable work to be done across the region.
- Raising Standards in KS4 remains a priority. As KS4 indicators have been revised, the historical comparison is no longer valid. GwE's performance continues to be the third best of the regions' performance. There is a need to improve the inspection results profile of secondary schools.
- In Key Stage 4, there is variation in the performance of individual local authorities across the region. This year, overall, Gwynedd and Conwy have performed close to what was expected in the majority of indicators. Improving standards in those local authorities where performance is below their comparative FSM position is an important priority.

- In Key Stage 4, too many schools across the consortium are performing below expectations. There is a need for improvement in schools' performance against the modelled expected outcome in the majority of indicators. Performance in the L2+ and Capped 9 needs to be prioritised.
- In Key Stage 4, the aim is to ensure that the performance of FSM pupils is equivalent to, if not higher than, the national percentage. In 2017, the performance of FSM pupils in the L2+ was 1.7% below the 28.6% seen nationally, and the nine points score and capped 8.3 were below the national score. In Key Stage 2 and 3, GwE's performance was higher than the national percentage in the core subject indicator, and only slightly below in the foundation phase indicator.
- In Key Stage 4, there is a need to improve performance in maths and English.
- There is a need to improve the higher outcomes across all key stages.

PROVISION

Strengths:

- Support and challenge - there is more consistency across the service and clarity in terms of the accountability of the team and of the service.
- Secondary delivery model - all secondary schools now have a support programme that is more fit for purpose and which better matches the school improvement plan.
- There is a more effective structure in place to support and challenge schools. We are already seeing an improvement in performance across a range of indicators.
- The school improvement service uses data and targeting and tracking procedures more effectively and consistently to challenge and support schools.
- The number of primary schools placed in an Estyn category (Estyn monitoring, Significant Improvement and Special Measures) has nearly halved in the last two years (from 46 in 2013-15 to 26 in 2015-17).
- GwE provides a range of professional learning programmes for practitioners, from Higher Level Teaching Assistants to experienced Headteachers.
- Increasing emphasis was placed during 2017-18 on improving the quality of leadership, focusing on improving the quality of evaluation and improvement planning. There is clear evidence that the leadership workshops for primary school leaders have led to improved outcomes, and strengthened schools to direct their own journey towards improvement.
- The Literacy and Numeracy team has provided an extensive variety of support and development programmes across the region in order to ensure planning and provision of a high standard in the primary and secondary sectors.
- Effective processes have led to a more consistent approach to assessment across the region.

- Good work continues in developing schools as Learning Organisations (OECD), and collaboration with the new Academy of Education Leadership in Wales.
- Teaching and Learning - there are many exciting and far-reaching projects under way, which will enable all teachers in the region to develop and deepen their teaching skills and their understanding of the principles of formative assessment and excellent pedagogy.

These are the areas that require development:

- Ensure that a wider range of data and live information is available for Supporting Improvement Advisers, LA Officers and schools, and that the information is used consistently in an effective and timely manner across all levels of implementation.
- Improve provision, curriculum planning and assessment in the Foundation Phase.
- Improve curriculum planning in secondary schools in order to ensure improved outcomes for all learners.
- Improve the quality of assessment, tracking and intervention programmes in secondary schools.
- Improving A level provision.
- Develop and further improve the quality of senior and middle leadership across the region.
- Improve the quality of departmental leadership in the core subjects in secondary schools.
- Develop aspiring headteachers / senior leaders.
- Develop and implement a common strategy for Wellbeing across the region.
- Continue to incorporate the Curriculum for Wales agenda into the wider team work of GwE.

LEADERSHIP

Since the core inspection, the service has made good and rapid progress to re-structure its leadership and administrative team. Consequently, there is more consistency across the service and clarity in terms of the accountability of the team and of the service.

Strengths:

- The clear and robust accountability framework is an important strength in GwE. Detailed business plans on several levels address all aspects of GwE's work.
- Self-evaluation is a strong feature in GwE. Considerable emphasis is placed on accountability and continuous review, and there is a consistent emphasis on achieving

progress in line with priorities. This emphasis on evaluation and review leads to significant improvement.

- There are thorough and composite arrangements in place to rigorously identify and manage risks on a local, regional and national level.
- The Organisational Health Index notes GwE as an organisation in the highest quartile, with particular strengths in terms of direction, capacity and leadership.
- GwE's improved planning and performance management model clearly notes the vision, values, priorities and objectives of the service. Its clear strategic direction and strong accountability framework are key features in moving forward.
- Using data with increased effectiveness to identify our key priorities has strengthened the link between the business planning process and decisions regarding financial planning. Resources clearly match priorities and specific criteria are used to monitor and evaluate the impact of funding.
- Overall, the consortium has effective financial management processes. A formal framework has enabled GwE to better demonstrate and assess value for money.
- Scrutiny has matured across the region. Local scrutiny members have a better understanding of the purpose of GwE and its objectives.

These are the areas that require development:

- Establish GwE as an Organisation that is learning and working in partnership with WG and OECD.
- Develop an information management system to analyse and share best practice.
- Continue to develop the working relationship and develop opportunities for action research for schools across the region.
- Continue to strengthen the links with a wide range of partners in line with developing the new curriculum, and share resources with an increasing number of schools.

The areas for development are priorities in our business plans for 2018-2019.