



Cyfarfod / Meeting

CYD-BWYLLGOR GwE
GwE JOINT-COMMITTEE

Dyddiad ac Amser / Date and Time

10.00 am DYDD MERCHER, 17 RHAGFYR 2014

10.00 am WEDNESDAY, 17 DECEMBER 2014

Lleoliad / Location

VENUE CYMRU
LLANDUDNO

Pwynt Cyswllt / Contact Point

GLYNDA O'BRIEN

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AELODAETH Y CYDBWYLLGOR/MEMBERSHIP OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE

Aelodau â phleidlais/ Voting Members

Cynghorydd/Councillor Ieuan Williams – Cyngor Sir Ynys Môn/Isle of Anglesey County Council
Cynghorydd/Councillor Gareth Thomas – Cyngor Gwynedd Council
Cynghorydd/Councillor Wyn Ellis Jones – Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Conwy/Conwy County Borough Council
Cynghorydd/Councillor Eryl Williams – Cyngor Sir Ddinbych/ Denbighshire County Council
Cynghorydd/Councillor Chris Bithell – Cyngor Sir y Fflint/Flintshire County Council
Cynghorydd/Councillor Michael Williams – Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Wrecsam/Wrexham County Borough Council

Aelodau Cyfetholedig heb Bleidlais/Co-opted Non-voting Members

Esgobaeth Wrecsam/Wrexham Diocese – Rita Price
Cynrychiolydd Ysgolion Cynradd/Primary Schools Representative – Diane Chisholm
Cynrychiolydd Ysgolion Uwchradd/ Secondary Schools Representative – Annwen Morgan
Cynrychiolydd Ysgolion Arbennig/Special Schools Representative – Jonathan Morgan
Cynrychiolydd Llywodraethwr/Governor Representative – Alison Fisher

Swyddogion heb Bleidlais/Non-voting Officers

Dr Gwynne Jones – Cyngor Sir Ynys Môn/Isle of Anglesey County Council
Owen Owens – Cyngor Gwynedd Council
Richard E. Owen – Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Conwy/Conwy County Borough Council
Karen Evans – Cyngor Sir Ddinbych/Denbighshire County Council
Ian Budd – Cyngor Sir y Fflint/Flintshire County Council
John Davies – Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Wrecsam/Wrexham County Borough Council

Swyddogion yn bresennol/Officers in attendance

Iwan Evans a Dafydd Edwards – Awdurdod Lletyol/Host Authority
Geraint Rees – Llywodraeth Cymru/Welsh Government
Huw Foster Evans – Rheolwr Gyfarwyddwr GwE/GwE Managing Director
Susan Owen Jones – Rheolwr Busnes a Chyllid GwE/GwE Business & Finance Manager
Mohammed Mehmet – Cyngor Sir Ddinbych/Denbighshire County Council

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL CONNECTION

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING 6/11/14
(copy enclosed)

5. GwE BUSINESS PLAN 2014/15 - UPDATE
(copy enclosed)

6. GwE ANNUAL REPORT
(copy enclosed)

7. GwE SELF-EVALUATION
(copy enclosed)

8. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE GwE CONSULTATIVE BOARD
(copy enclosed)

**GwE JOINT COMMITTEE
06.11.14**

Present: **Councillor Michael Williams (Vice Chair)**

Councillors: Ieuan Williams, Gareth Thomas, Wyn Ellis Jones, Chris Bithell.

Co-opted Members with no vote: Diane Chisholm (Primary Schools Representative), Jonathan Morgan (Special Schools Representative), Alison Fisher (Governors Representative)

Officers with no vote: John Davies (Wrexham County Borough Council), Owen Owens (Gwynedd Council), Dr Gwynne Jones (Isle of Anglesey Council), R Ellis Owen (Conwy County Borough Council), Hywyn Williams (Denbighshire County Council), Ian Budd (Flintshire County Council)

Also Present: Huw Foster Evans (GwE Managing Director), Elfyn Vaughan Jones (GwE Senior Challenge Adviser), Susan Owen Jones (GwE Business and Finance Manager), Iwan Evans (Host Authority Head of Legal Services – Gwynedd Council), Hefin Owen (Host Authority Finance Manager – Gwynedd Council), Martyn Gray (Welsh Government representative), and Glynda O'Brien (Host Authority Members Support Officer – Gwynedd Council)

Apologies: Councillor Eryl Williams (Denbighshire County Council), Mrs Annwen Morgan (Secondary Schools representative), Mohammed Mehmet (Denbighshire County Council), Dafydd Edwards (Host Authority Head of Finance - Gwynedd Council)

1. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any Member present

2. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of this committee, held on 29 September 2014, as a true record of the meeting, subject to including Alison Fisher on the list of apologies.

2.1 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(a) Item 5 (b) – GwE progress report :

(i) GwE Managing Director reported as follows:

- (a) The Head of Standards post has been advertised recently, but due to insufficient applications the post will be re-advertised.
- (b) The first draft of the GwE self-evaluation for the ESTYN thematic inspection visit has been produced, and the intention is to present it to the Joint Committee in December. It was further noted there will be a full ESTYN inspection next year.
- (c) The first phase in the process of delivering a programme for the NPQH qualification is in place.

- (ii) In response to a query from a Member about branding activities for GwE, the Managing Director noted that, following going out to tender, one of the tenders looks promising. It was further noted that Hwb+ provision (Welsh Government's Virtual Learning Environment) is not suitable for the GwE service.

(b) Item 8 (v) – Office provision

It was noted that enquiries are in progress, which include considering the possibility of using different schools as a centre for GwE's Main Office in the Conwy/Denbighshire hub. Other options for a suitable venue are also in discussion.

It was decided to: **Accept and note the above**

3. GwE BUSINESS PLAN

The GwE draft business plan was presented, which is in three parts:

1. Key priorities for improving learner outcomes
2. Key priorities for developing the business capacity and functions of GwE as an organisation
3. Individual LA Commissioning

The GwE Managing Director noted that the plan is extremely important for GwE as a service and that the appendices are work in progress

During the subsequent discussion, the following points were highlighted:

- (a) Thanks were expressed to the GwE Managing Director and his team for preparing the plan. The Directors of Education had an input into the plan and there will be further opportunities for the Directors to meet as a group with the GwE Management Team to discuss priorities and check progress further. It was confirmed that the process works well.
- (b) The plan is ambitious and is a means of presenting and raising expectations. The need to be very careful regarding ambitious targets was noted and that an overview of regional progress is needed.
- (c) The plan sets a clear direction. The importance of discussing its content with schools was noted so that they have some ownership over it.
- (ch) With regard to format, it would be beneficial for the Joint Committee to be able to see progress, giving each priority status, noting:
 - how many of the financial resources have been earmarked
 - how successful are targets
 - timetable e.g. milestone achievements
 - reasoning behind some of the targets
- (d) The importance of being practical with regard to targets in the wake of all the attention on TL2+ results. Whilst it is acknowledged that the region can achieve very good work, concern was expressed that the external examinations system undermines it. It is hoped that the Welsh Government will take this into account.

- (dd) It was asked whether it would be foreseen that there would be pressure on the four leading schools to deliver support and training to other schools.

In response, it was acknowledged there would be additional pressure on the schools to increase capacity for leading and that there would be an additional budget of £200,000 available to them for a period of two years. As a region, it was felt that this is the way forward and it is hoped that an improvement will be seen.

- (e) A meeting was held recently with the Minister for Education regarding performance. Very positive feedback was received regarding the way forward and the region was congratulated for being robust in relation to teacher assessments.
- (f) In response to a comment made about setting challenging targets, it was agreed that the schools themselves are ambitious
- (ff) School to school collaboration is very important but, at the same time, it must be ensured that there is continued progress throughout pupils' education, especially during the Year 6/7 transition. There should be executive consultation between the primary sector and the secondary sector in order to achieve continuation in the curriculum. It was further noted that primary schools use INCERTS with enthusiasm and that these experiences should be built upon. It was suggested that it would be beneficial for Heads of Mathematics Departments to collaborate with teachers in the primary sector to develop Mathematics.

In response, it was acknowledged that schools have a lot of expertise and excellent progress is achieved. We wish to see schools as prominent schools in their areas of expertise. It was further noted that more work needs to be done on the transition process from primary to secondary, although schools are achieving this very effectively at present.

- (g) In response to concern expressed on behalf of schools regarding school to school provision, it was explained that every school has received a budget and that developments are underway at present to develop a school to school strategy.
- (ng) In response to a query about cluster standardisation, it was explained that there is a statutory responsibility to do this and that a different structure will not be established.

It was decided to: (a) approve the business plan in its draft form and that its content will be reviewed to comply with proposed changes in April 2015.

(b) ensure that a formal item on the business plan is included on the Joint Committee agenda so as to be able to monitor the progress made

4. GwE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

- (a) A report by the Host Authority (Gwynedd Council) Head of Legal Services was presented, outlining the governance arrangements for GwE in response to the National Model for regional working
- (b) The Joint Committee was led through the report, and attention was drawn to the proposed governance structure along with amendments to Joint Committee membership and the establishment of an Advisory Board and a Management Board to support the Managing Director and GwE Senior Management Team. It was noted that it is a requirement to submit a report to the Cabinet of each local authority
- (c) The Welsh Government representative noted that the arrangements are in line with the vision of the National Model.
- (ch) The following comments by individual Members were noted:
 - is there a need to strengthen the relationship between GwE and elected Members, taking into consideration that the work of improving schools is key for the authorities
 - the mechanics of Scrutiny Panels are in place, but is the system robust enough
 - taking into consideration that we have a Business Plan, which is a very useful tool, it was suggested that it would be beneficial to present it annually to the Scrutiny Panel of each authority as a basis for challenge and scrutiny
 - there would be an opportunity for any Scrutiny Panel within the six authorities to summon GwE before the committee and, as a result, it is envisaged that this would reduce any additional concerns
 - more time is needed to discuss the above comments as well as opportunities to scrutinise the following:
 - a. annual report on schools' performance
 - b. report on GwE activities
 - c. local business plan and GwE's contribution to local priorities
 - d. school categorisation
- (d) In response to the above comments, the relevant officers responded as follows:
 - the suggestion of establishing one Scrutiny Panel for the six authorities has been discussed
 - scrutiny takes place on different levels and ample opportunities within the structure to keep GwE under review
 - GwE Managing Director is happy to move forward with the national discussions, but he is not keen for GwE to fall between two stools as collaboration has been successful to date. The Appendices within the Business Plan would provide focus and a means for the authorities to ensure that the service is accountable to the regional work.
 - again, with regard to the format of the business plan, would it be possible, within each priority, and on a local level, to note the focus of each authority and, as a result, make it easier for members to scrutinise it and see forecasts and regional achievement

- (dd) Reference was made to the names mentioned during the last meeting of the Joint Committee as being suitable to invite to serve on the Advisory Board. The individuals noted below have been contacted and it has been confirmed that they are willing to serve on the Advisory Board:

1. Professor Mel Ainscow
2. Mr Iwan Thomas
3. Mr Gareth Williams
4. Mr Gareth Jones

It was suggested that membership may be increased as the work progresses

The Gwynedd Council Head of Legal Services explained that a clear procedure needs to be adopted and a further report submitted to the next meeting of the Joint Committee in December in the context of the appointments to the Advisory Board.

It was decided to: (a) Accept, note and thank the Host Authority Head of Legal Services for the above report

(b) Approve the structure in Appendix 1 of the report, subject to further discussing a procedure for appointing individuals to serve on the Advisory Board as well as a procedure for scrutiny of GwE activities and opportunities to do so.

5. 2014/15 GwE Budget - SECOND QUARTER REVIEW

(a) A report by the GwE Managing Director and the Host Authority Head of Finance was presented, updating the Joint Committee on the latest financial review of the GwE budget for the 2014/15 financial year.

(b) The Host Authority Finance Manager highlighted the net underspend of £67,000 against the budget in comparison to the net underspend of £230,000 in the First Quarter Review. An explanation was received regarding the reduction in underspend i.e. severance costs and established/transferred posts in accordance with the requirements of the National Model.

(c) It was decided to: approve committing the £67,000 underspend to commissioning work so as to deliver the business plan, the National Model and the requirements of schools in 2014/15 and beyond.

6. SPECIAL MEETING OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE

It was decided to: Hold a special meeting of the Joint Committee at 10.00 a.m. on Wednesday, 17 December 2014 at Venue Cymru, Llandudno to discuss:

- (a) Annual Report**
- (b) GwE Self-evaluation**
- (c) Preparing for ESTYN Inspection (the Committee was forewarned that ESTYN would question some members of the Joint Committee)**

The meeting commenced at 1.30 p.m. and concluded at 3.00 p.m.

CHAIR



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

17 DECEMBER 2014

Report by: GwE Managing Director

Subject: Regional Business Plan 2014-15 – Monitoring Report

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To update Joint Committee members on progress in delivering the Business Plan 2014-15.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Regional Business Plan 2014-15 was approved during the Joint Committee meeting on 6 November 2014.

2.2 The Joint Committee requested that progress against the Business Plan be reported on at every meeting and that this be included as a formal item on the agenda.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 The Monitoring Report details the following against each priority & action:

- Progress to date;
- Further action to be taken (including timescale);
- Risk assessment based on the following colour indicators

	Completed/ahead of schedule		On track		Needs attention		Requires urgent attention
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3.2 The risk assessment gives a clear indication on progress & illustrates the priorities / actions requiring urgent attention & posing the greatest risk of not being fulfilled.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 The Joint Committee is asked to note the content of the report.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6.0 Equalities Impact

6.1 There are no new equalities implications arising from this report.

7.0 Personnel Implications

7.1 There are no new personnel implications arising from this report.

8.0 Consultation Undertaken

8.1 The North Wales ADEW Group have been consulted during the development of the document.

9.0 Appendices

9.1 Regional Business Plan 2014-15 – Joint Committee Monitoring Report (November 2014)



Joint Committee Monitoring Report
Regional Business Plan
2014-15

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school>school support programme [implementing a ‘ladder of learning’ principle where appropriate] which will encourage all schools to become even better and the best schools to support others. At KS4, the deployment of lead individuals and the development of Lead Departments in GwE will take shape from early September 2014 to be fully in place by November 2014. These will provide: • seconded Headteacher to co-ordinate programme of support across region • designated expert Challenge Advisers lead for all 4 core subject within GwE • designated 4 lead schools who will work closely with lead Challenge Advisers • support programme for improvement available to all schools for GCSE 2015 and beyond and in improving PISA skills • from September 2014 additional schools will be asked to provide bespoke support for schools included in the <i>Schools Challenge Cymru</i> project. GwE will tailor all programmes to ensure wider capacity and legacy building. • GwE led national conference to showcase excellence		Seconded Headteacher in place from September 2014 and attending meetings of all relevant national strategic forums. Developments in the region have drawn very favourable comments from WG colleagues as a result of this high level involvement. <i>GCSE 2015/PISA Project:</i> Lead Schools (and Lead Practitioners) for all four subjects have been identified and confirmed [Welsh Ysgolion Botwnnog, Dyffryn Ogwen, Tryfan/English Ysgol Bryn Elan/Maths Ysgol Eirias (+Ysgol Glan Clwyd for ensuring translation and Welsh dimension)/Science Ysgol Alun (+Ysgolion Môn for ensuring translation and Welsh dimension)] First draft materials submitted by Lead Schools during November. Two Tier Quality Assurance process in place via GwE subject leads and external consultant <i>Schools Challenge Cymru:</i> Single Development Plans for all five SCC schools approved and funding confirmed. Capital Spending has been confirmed and funding drawn down via LA. Capacity Building plans submitted and approved and all partner schools informed. <table><tr><th>School</th><th>Capacity Building</th><th>Revenue</th><th>Capital:</th></tr><tr><td>Caergybi</td><td>£13,260</td><td>£149,298</td><td>£199,876</td></tr><tr><td>Treffynnon</td><td>£16,025</td><td>£159,202</td><td>£12,500</td></tr><tr><td>Rhosnesni</td><td>£15,525</td><td>£138,700</td><td>£110,000</td></tr><tr><td>Bryn Alyn</td><td>£71,125</td><td>£180,300</td><td>£140,000</td></tr><tr><td>Clywedog</td><td>£71,875</td><td>£162,500</td><td>£180,000</td></tr><tr><td>TOTAL:</td><td>£187,810</td><td>£790,000</td><td>£642,000</td></tr></table> <i>Welsh BAC:</i> GwE’s grant application to WG for £15,000 to support Welsh BAC development in the region has been accepted. Recent confirmation received that WG have allocated a further £50,000 to support regional developments. Four Lead Practitioners have been identified – two in NWW and two in NEW. The Lead Practitioners will lead four Development Groups (one for each of the three challenges and one for the Individual Project) who will produce a Teaching and Learning package to support the development of the skills within the	School	Capacity Building	Revenue	Capital:	Caergybi	£13,260	£149,298	£199,876	Treffynnon	£16,025	£159,202	£12,500	Rhosnesni	£15,525	£138,700	£110,000	Bryn Alyn	£71,125	£180,300	£140,000	Clywedog	£71,875	£162,500	£180,000	TOTAL:	£187,810	£790,000	£642,000	Draft materials to be uploaded to GwE Platform in January and made available to schools. First wave of workshops to take place in February. Showcase conference to take place on March 26th. Expected timeline of action outlined in approved plans for WG. Respond to recent confirmation of additional £50,000 funding to support developments [by January 2015]. Deliver against expected actions for additional funding. Dissemination of materials will take place in a conference during the summer term.
School	Capacity Building	Revenue	Capital:																												
Caergybi	£13,260	£149,298	£199,876																												
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TOTAL:	£187,810	£790,000	£642,000																												

			challenges/Individual project. The first meeting of the development groups took place on November 27th and awareness raising meetings have also taken place for school BAC Co-Ordinators and SMT members. <i>NfER PISA based tests:</i> 30 schools across the region have expressed an interest in sitting the NfER PISA based tests during the spring term. Several schools decided not to take part in the testing as Y11 would be included in the sample. These concerns have been raised with WG. NFER will be further contacting schools directly during January	Monitor and evaluate development on termly basis. Monitor and evaluate development and support participating schools to make effective use of resulting diagnostic tool [Spring/Summer 2015]. Disseminate key messages and best practice to all regional schools [Spring/Summer 2015].
Sharpen the focus on tracking, self-evaluation and improvement planning across all monitoring visits and placing a much greater emphasis on aspects which schools need to address more effectively.			Focus for all termly monitoring visits honed and aligned with expectations. GwE documentation for termly monitoring visits adapted to reflect revised focus. Expectations shared with key stakeholders and CA's briefed and supported to deliver high level of challenge during monitoring visits. GwE SLT have quality assured % of visits within and across hubs.	Ensure robust follow-up monitoring visits during 2015 Spring and Summer Term. Ensure QA processes are operational across all hubs for all termly monitoring visits. Share best practice re: challenging, supporting, commissioning and reporting with all GwE CA's.

Priority	Raise standards for learners eligible for FSM			
SLT Lead Member	SM+AsJ			
	Risk Assessment			
Action				Progress Report and evidence of impact
Seek to ensure that every school has a clearly designated lead for FSM pupils and that schools have appropriate plans for effective deployment of PDG funding [as part of a wider strategy to raise standards for this cohort of learners].				As part of Visit 1 conducted by Challenge Advisers with all schools, an item of focus was an audit of the school's plan for deployment of PDG funding.
Continue to ensure a firm focus on tracking outcomes for FSM learners in all GwE challenge and monitoring visits and that effective and timely use is made of available funding streams to support the development of effective teaching and learning strategies that is differentiated to meet the needs of the pupils.				All Visit 1 sessions with schools required the Challenge Adviser to focus specifically on outcomes for FSM learners. The quality assurance visits carried out by Senior Challenge Advisers and an audit of Visit 1 reports confirmed that this was being carried out as planned. In most cases the Advisers also discussed with schools the new requirements for School Development Plans and the future PDG funding arrangements.
Organise an effective approach to the sharing of the most effective practice for all schools in GwE in relation to promoting the achievement of FSM pupils by : arranging annual conference to showcase best practice [this should involve working with the other regions in Wales, and practitioners				GwE is actively organising conferences to showcase best practice and it is anticipated that this will include the performance of FSM pupils and effective use of the PDG grant. Lead schools will be identified following the processes of selection that are being conducted during late Autumn 2014 and early Spring 2015. Planning for co-leading schools, including those with good practice in promoting the achievement of FSM pupils, will facilitate visits by schools across the region.
				Identify with all schools where the lead person is not the Headteacher. Share best practice re: planning and deployment of PDG. Remaining visits during Spring and Summer 2015 will pursue this theme. Conference planning to proceed to implementation [Spring and Summer 2015]. Lead schools to include FSM good practice from Spring 2015. Visits to co-leading schools to be promoted in areas including good practice with FSM pupils from Spring

- from beyond Wales] - development of website to share best practice - work with stakeholders to recognise lead regional schools - promote and facilitate visits to lead schools - promote cluster of school>school collaboration to address underperformance of FSM pupils				A focus of Visit 1 has been to identify current practice in school to school working, and during the remainder of the year this will form the basis for further development, including the sharing a good practice in working with FSM pupils.	2015. Guidance to be provided to Advisers prior to visits in Spring and Summer terms.
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Priority	Raise standards for learners in the national reading and numeracy tests across the region					
SLT Lead Member	SM					
Action	Risk Assessment				Progress Report and evidence of impact	Further action to be taken [with timescale]
Ensure high quality co-ordination and support across region by : - identifying Senior Challenge Adviser for Literacy & Numeracy - develop regional strategy for Literacy and Numeracy					Senior Challenge Advisor in post since September. This has significantly increased capacity and the pace of action with regards to this priority area. Regional Strategy has been developed under the leadership of the SCA, working with a <i>Task and Finish Group</i> with representatives from schools, LAs and the NSP. It has been shared with GwE <i>User Group</i> and LAs to date. Final draft will be shared with Challenge Advisors before the end of the Autumn Term. The T&F group advised against sharing with schools at this point in the term and suggested postponing until the beginning of the Spring Term.	December 19th – share with all Challenge Advisors at team meeting. January 5th document to be e-mailed to all schools. January>February 2015 presentation at each HT Federation meeting across the region by either the SCA for the hub, or the SCA for L/N. Termly, from February 2015 onwards, the strategic group will meet to monitor the implementation of the strategy.
Coordinate and align the work of GwE Challenge Advisers, Associate Partners, with the National Support Programme in order to ensure consistent messages and high quality support for schools from all partners and avoid duplication of support or any gaps in provision					Due to the increased capacity (see above) there have been more regular meetings between the SCA L/N and the NSP Senior Partner. This has resulted in a more co-ordinated approach to the support being offered to schools, and less duplication, although this has not been totally eradicated. An agreement between the NSP and GwE with regards to partnership working has also been established and shared with all stakeholders. This needs to be further consolidated over the coming term.	As negotiations take place between LAs and GwE around the implementation of the National Model, joint working will need to be revisited and possibly amended.
Develop regional strategy to improve the quality of senior and middle leadership in the field of literacy and numeracy, as part of the wider programme of developing middle leadership					See RHH’s comments about leadership development programme. In the meantime, GwE’s Associate Partners have provided support for leaders of literacy and numeracy in schools this term through: - network meetings for literacy and numeracy leaders in secondary schools - training for numeracy co-ordinators in primary schools on developing numerical reasoning - training for literacy leaders in Flintshire LA on developing extended writing in their primary schools	See RHH’s comments about leadership development programme. APs will continue to support, coach and mentor targeted literacy and numeracy leads during 2015 Spring and Summer Terms. CA’s will monitor during 2014>2015 educational year
Ensure all schools have access to guidance and training re: analysing national test data, developing SMART					Through the NSP, all schools have had the opportunity to access support in analysing test data by including it as one of their five support priorities.	CA’s Spring Term monitoring visits will support schools in reaching a judgement about their progress against their improvement priorities.

development plans, monitoring the implementation, progress and outcomes of any intervention programmes used Challenge Advisers to monitor inclusion of appropriate priorities to raise standards in the national tests in SIPs Challenge Advisers to support schools in evaluating their progress against agreed priorities			SCA L/N shared key regional messages about the national test data at a full CA team meeting, thus making all CAs aware of the regional improvement priorities for 2015. As part of the Autumn Term's monitoring visits, CA have challenged schools' improvement priorities, and offered feedback on SDPs, including schools' plans on monitoring impact.	Further training will be offered to schools in the Spring Term on monitoring the implementation and impact of intervention strategies. Planned for 2015 Spring Term
Ensure that the support offered by NSP Partners allows schools to make intelligent use of WG diagnostic tool			NSP Partners providing guidance, as part of the partnership agreement with GwE. CA made aware of the diagnostic tool, and able to challenge schools on their use of it.	Further support will be offered to schools by GwE APs following next year's tests
In conjunction with the national programme, support schools to ensure that every teacher is a teacher of literacy and numeracy with the skills, knowledge and specialism to deliver the LNF at classroom level - target the support of the Associate Partners effectively to provide training, mentoring and coaching to individuals and groups of teachers - share best practice through a half termly bulletin, as well as network meetings In conjunction with the national programme, support the up-skilling of teachers to plan the development of literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum and across the range of age and ability, to use effective teaching strategies, including appropriate differentiation and to plan and prepare for the national tests - Associate Partner support targeted at schools with the lowest % of pupils scoring >115 in the national tests - Support and training for schools to plan rich tasks to stretch more able			Partnership agreement established between GwE and the NSP to ensure that there are no gaps in support for schools, and no duplication either. GwE using the NSP analysis of schools' requests to target support, as well as analysis of national test data, and referrals from individual CAs. Secondary literacy and numeracy network meetings held in each LA area during the Autumn Term. Effective practice and key developments shared. Literacy and Numeracy Bulletin has also been launched and two editions will have been distributed to schools by the end of the Autumn Term. Numeracy co-ordinators from 243 primary schools attended training provided by GwE's AP team on Numerical Reasoning in November. This was a 'train the trainer' session. Numerical Reasoning was the main support request identified by the NSP in GwE schools. Numeracy co-ordinators in secondary schools in Gwynedd and Ynys Mon also received training in this area. Literacy co-ordinators from 40 Flintshire primary schools attended training provided by GwE's AP team on Extended Writing across the curriculum in November. A higher % of primary schools had requested support on literacy than any other LA in GwE. GwE facilitated and delivered the National Literacy Trust's Premier League Reading Stars training in November/December. This pilot is funded by WG and has successfully improved boys' motivation and standard in reading in England. Around 120 schools have attended this training. In every LA in GwE girls outperform boys in SS115+ in the reading test, both Welsh and English. Individual APs have supported over 100 schools in total during the Autumn Term. These have been targeted according to need identified by the CA, or through the schools' own request for support via the NSP.	Reviewed in the Spring term. On-line bulletin will ensure that more teachers will have access to it. Numerical Reasoning training for secondary numeracy co-ordinators will be delivered in February 2015. Training on higher order reading skills and on procedural numeracy will be available in the 2015 Spring Term.

learners				The region's lowest performing schools in the national tests have been identified and those not already supported by the APs will be offered training and support in the Spring term.	
Deliver staff training for catch-up programmes				3 training sessions delivered for volunteers to support pupils with reading and basic numeracy skills – a total of 24 volunteers will be deployed to their local schools in the new year. 75 teachers and teaching assistants were trained in Catch Up Literacy or Catch Up Numeracy during the Autumn term.	Deliver against agreed training sessions [Spring/Summer 2015]

Priority	Increase the uptake of, and raise standards in, Welsh as a First Language across the region.																																			
SLT Lead Member	PM																																			
Action	Risk Assessment				Progress Report and evidence of impact	Further action to be taken [with timescale]																														
To work with Welsh Government colleagues to develop national and regional data sets which will enable progress in Welsh to be tracked [to include identifying and challenging the reduced cohort who study Welsh as a First Language as a proportion of the total cohort for all other core subjects]. In addition, the standards achieved within that reduced cohort have to be identified and challenged.					Initial evaluation of 2014 Welsh First Language assessment data completed	Secondment of SMT member to lead on priority (January 2015)																														
					<table><tr><th colspan="5">2014: Welsh First Language Outcomes – GwE region</th></tr><tr><th>KS</th><th>Cohort</th><th>% of cohort assessed Welsh 1st language</th><th>% of cohort achieved expected level</th><th>% of candidates achieved expected level</th></tr><tr><td>FP</td><td>7537</td><td>34.5%</td><td>30.5% (LCW5+)</td><td>88.4% (LCW5+)</td></tr><tr><td>KS2</td><td>6880</td><td>33.4%</td><td>29.1% (L4+)</td><td>87.2% (L4+)</td></tr><tr><td>KS3</td><td>7137</td><td>29.4%</td><td>26.4% (L5+)</td><td>89.7% (L5+)</td></tr><tr><td>KS4</td><td>7408</td><td>29.6%</td><td>21.2% (GCSE A*-C)</td><td>71.6% (GCSE A*-C)</td></tr></table>	2014: Welsh First Language Outcomes – GwE region					KS	Cohort	% of cohort assessed Welsh 1 st language	% of cohort achieved expected level	% of candidates achieved expected level	FP	7537	34.5%	30.5% (LCW5+)	88.4% (LCW5+)	KS2	6880	33.4%	29.1% (L4+)	87.2% (L4+)	KS3	7137	29.4%	26.4% (L5+)	89.7% (L5+)	KS4	7408	29.6%	21.2% (GCSE A*-C)	71.6% (GCSE A*-C)	Develop regional data system to track progress in Welsh First Language (March 2015)
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					Full time secondment for SMT member advertised (November 2014)	Collate and analyse LA Strategic Welsh Education Plans (March 2015)																														
					Preliminary discussions held with Welsh Government (2.12.14)	Formulation of an over-arching Regional Welsh Education Plan (May 2015) to include : ➤ targets for increasing the number of pupils assessed in Welsh First Language ➤ targets for increasing the number of pupils educated through the medium of Welsh ➤ raising standards in Welsh First Language and Welsh Second Language across the region																														
					Raise awareness of Headteachers (Primary and Secondary) during Summer Term 2015.																															
					Welsh to be a priority for discussion during 2015 Spring Term challenge and monitoring visit.																															
					Develop and formalise links with WG during 2015Spring Term																															
Ensure that effective use is made of the challenge and monitoring visit to evaluate the standards, provision and ethos for developing Welsh across all schools in the region.					Welsh to be a priority for discussion during 2015 Spring Term challenge and monitoring visit. This will include discussions on: • standards and provision for Welsh, and to gather information and good practice on a regional basis • school's actions for the development of Welsh as a subject and medium • extent to which the school responds to the Authority's policy and Strategic	Inform and brief all CA's on the focus for Spring Term challenge and monitoring visit (January 2015)																														
						Collate and analyse information received from CA's following spring term challenge and monitoring visit (April 2015)																														

				Welsh Education Plan • extent to which the school responds to Welsh Government policy, objectives and guidelines • school's self-evaluation for performance indicators 1.1.5 (Standards in the Welsh Language) and 2.1.3 (Provision of Welsh and Welsh Dimension) Spring Term challenge and monitoring visit form revised to include focus on Welsh. Headteachers have been informed of the focus for the termly challenge and monitoring visits (Letter to Headteachers, September 2014). Discussions with Headteachers have also taken place in strategic forum meetings and in User Group meetings.	Analysis of information received to inform GwE overarching Regional Welsh Education Plan (May 2015)
Ensure that a School>School support programme is developed which will encourage schools to improve standards and provision in Welsh First and Second Language at all key stages.				GwE School>School Collaboration Strategy developed and shared with all Headteachers (October 2014). Discussions with Headteachers have also taken place in relevant strategic forum meetings. S>S collaboration is a focus for discussion during the termly challenge and monitoring visit. Autumn, Spring and Summer term challenge and monitoring visit forms revised to include focus on S>S collaboration. CA's informed of S>S collaboration (September 2014)	Inform and brief all CA's on the focus for termly challenge and monitoring visits (January, May 2015) SCA's to discuss and identify Welsh as an area for School>School collaboration (Spring term 2015) CA's to discuss Welsh as an area for School>School collaboration during Spring Term challenge and monitoring visit (Spring term 2015)

Priority	Increase the proportion of 16 year old learners who achieve at least 5 A* or A grades [including language and mathematics] by the end of KS4					
SLT Lead Member	AJ					
Action	Risk Assessment				Progress Report and evidence of impact	Further action to be taken [with timescale]
Work with Welsh Government colleagues to develop national and regional benchmarking data sets which will enable the service to more effectively challenge schools.					Initial discussion between WG and the 4 consortia have led to the inclusion of a new indicator for the national categorisation system based on 5+ A*/A grades or equivalent. However, this measure does not include language/mathematics.	Discussion to continue within relevant national strategic forums.
Input into secondary school Headteacher forums across the region with follow-up at subject level as appropriate – see below					Senior Challenge Advisers have all provided input into secondary Headteacher forums across the region.	Continue to facilitate discussions with key stakeholders in relevant forums.
Work with all schools to target the improvement in attainment of most able pupils through : - ensuring that the measurement is known to all - promoting effective practice in terms of classroom teaching and					Awareness-raising has had the effect of ensuring measurement is known to all. Effective practice in terms of classroom teaching and school leadership will be a focus for the remainder of the school year. Planning of regional events will be coordinated in relation to those already being planned, but it is anticipated that showcasing will include items on the More Able and Talented.	Continue to facilitate discussions with key stakeholders in relevant forums. From Spring term ensure effective practice is disseminated via S>S and co-leading practitioner approach. National showcase conference to be facilitated by GwE in

- school leadership - facilitating regional events with schools and key stakeholders to promote the learning of the most able - ensure that national and local best practice are disseminated effectively and that appropriate follow-up action is taken in schools				National models of best practice will be disseminated through the regional events. Appropriate follow-up by schools will feature as part of the school-to-school agenda.	2015 Summer Term.
Include the 5 A*/A indicator as a focus for GwE termly monitoring visits and for regional target setting when quality data is available.				In the majority of Local Authorities the A*/A indicator has been included in the target-setting processes for secondary schools. Discussion on A*/A performance challenged in all secondary monitoring visits.	Need to ensure consistency of approach across all LA's re: target setting and in level of challenge by CA in monitoring visits.

Priority	Establish and promote an effective regional model for school>school support				
SLT Lead Member	RHH				
Action	Risk Assessment				Further action to be taken [with timescale]
				Progress Report and evidence of impact	
Regional strategy developed and shared with stakeholders				Regional strategy has been developed and shared with all stakeholders.	Implement strategy across region (Dec 2104-July 2015)
Model and action plan for effective school>school collaboration completed and agreed with relevant stakeholders.				GwE action plan completed and was shared with stakeholders.	Implement action plan (Dec 2104-July 2015)
Challenge Advisers briefed and updated regarding the role and expectations [supporting; facilitating; challenging; monitoring and ensuring accountability]. Termly monitoring visits to be conducted to measure progress and impact.				Challenge Advisers have been briefed and updated. S>S collaboration discussed and challenged during Visit 1 [monitoring will be completed by end of term].	Further professional development for CA is planned focusing on coaching skills May/June 2015. This will ensure higher quality support and guidance to school leaders. Term 2 and 3 monitoring visits will be conducted accordingly and before end of July 2015
Financial incentive to schools available to facilitate and promote collaboration [specific criteria agreed re: engagement conditions].				Financial incentive given to all schools within the GwE region based on an agreed formula with all LA's.	Monitoring procedures to be operational as part of termly visits.
Enhanced opportunity for all primary schools to access additional financial support for cross LA/region collaborative projects.				Information and application details sent to all schools with closing date (11:12:14) noted.	Selection process on 12:12:14 will determine the five most effective projects to receive the funding. Agreed engagement and monitoring procedures need to be agreed between the successful schools and GwE by January 2015.
Model established [and criteria agreed] for regional approach to support emerging practitioners, departments, schools. Lead practitioners, departments, schools will receive financial incentive				Model and criteria being established by GwE SMT Schools notified of intention of creating co-leading schools across the region. Referenced within the GwE S>S strategy.	Completed by January 2015 Establish criteria for identification of co-leading schools by January 2015

from GwE with specific agreed engagement conditions.				Challenge Advisers briefed on the intention of creating co-leading schools and to start identifying potential schools, departments, lead practitioners and leaders. Head teachers of schools briefed on GwE intention of creating co-leading schools through Headteacher forums and meetings. Information and application details sent to all schools with closing date noted.	Notify schools of criteria and application process by January 2015 Identify/select co-leading schools and practitioners. Hold briefing sessions during January 2015 Engagement and monitoring procedures need to be agreed between the successful schools and GwE. Quality assurance procedures need to be agreed between Co-leading schools and GwE
Arrange regional conference to showcase school>school effective collaboration and disseminate best practice.				Regional Conference arrangements being established by GwE SLT and engagement conditions agreed with participating schools. Assistance regarding the facilitation of the conference from Blahdblah (BdB) branding company.	Specific roles and expectations of participating schools to be agreed during Spring Term.

Priority	Develop quality leadership and teaching and learning at all levels				
SLT Lead Member	RHH				
Action	Risk Assessment				Further action to be taken [with timescale]
Audit and to determine current provision for leadership development across the six North Wales LA's.					Completed.
Determine key features of programmes required and present these in report to GwE SLT. The report to include 'high level principles' for proposed programmes.					Ensure that all future programme planning includes 'high level principles' identified – ongoing.
GwE SLT to evaluate, discuss and give feedback so that report can be amended and finalised with actions for provision.					To ensure that the report informs future planning regarding leadership – ongoing.
Draft and publish a 'Prospectus of Leadership & Management Development Programmes' for each of the identified areas: - Moving good teaching to excellent - Middle Leadership - Senior Leadership Prospectus to include clarity on : Vision, aims and objectives; Strategic intention; Menu of programmes – personal development/subject specific; Focus and means of delivery and accountability; Impact and standards driven / factors; Costs; Timings; Accreditation; Career					Send out finalised Middle Leadership Prospectus in January 2015 Create prospectus detailing all middle leadership provision across the region for 2015-16 – send out to schools February 2015 Draft and Publish prospectus for Leadership and Management Development Programmes for:- - Moving good teaching to excellent [March 2015] - Senior Leadership [May 2015] - Identify accreditation opportunities [ongoing].

progression					
Establish criteria for identification of a network of Lead Practitioners, Departments, Schools across North Wales who will be required to deliver support, training and development for other schools, departments, teachers, leaders. Lead Practitioners identified Termly monitoring and quality assurance procedures agreed and implemented.				Schools notified of intention of creating co-leading schools across the region. Referenced within the GwE school to school strategy. Head teachers of schools briefed on GwE intention of creating co-leading schools through Headteacher forums and meetings. CA's briefed on the intention of creating co-leading schools and to start identifying potential schools, departments, lead practitioners and leaders	Establish criteria for identification of co-leading schools by January 2015 Notify schools of criteria and application process by February 2015 Create brief/contracts for co-leading schools and practitioners by February 2015 Identify co-leading schools and practitioners. Hold briefing sessions by March 2015 Quality assurance procedures by June 2015
Liaise closely with other regional consortia with regard to cultivation of 'self-development' packages for schools to use in-house – to include pedagogical development, leadership development and succession planning for schools [to be made available digitally on GwE web-site].				Enquiries currently being made with regard to what other consortia use offer as self-development packages. Commissioned work for leadership undertaken with North West Wales Headteacher forum and Cynnal and to be trialled with Welsh medium/bilingual schools during Spring/Summer/Autumn 2015. Web-site planning contains area to hold digital resources for school to use in house as training packages.	Produce report paper outlining what is available in other consortia by April 2015 Undertake monitoring and evaluation of GwE/NWW headteachers/Cynnal project during 2015>2016. Start creating resources to be held centrally on GwE Web-site for use in schools [ongoing].
Evaluate the effectiveness of current external providers that GwE could commission if required to further enhance capacity and effectiveness of provision.				Discussions and evaluations taking place regarding external providers that could be commissioned to provide training in a number of areas. Potential external providers identified and currently being approached regarding availability.	Confirmation needed from external providers on availability and readiness to partake in GwE training- December 2014 onwards. RHH currently in discussion with possible external providers and evaluating current provision offered.
Co-arrange "Executive Head Conference" with NLDB and ERW regarding effective practices across both regions.				Discussions currently taking place between NLDB, ERW and GwE regarding Executive Head Conference. Providers and practitioners identified to lead and showcase effective practice conference.	Confirm arrangements of conference by January 2015
Establish a more flexible and effective school>school support programme [implementing a 'ladder of learning' principle where appropriate] which will encourage all schools to become even better and the best schools to support others.				All school received GwE S>S strategy and Headteachers briefed in relevant forums. CA's briefed on strategy during CA training day. CA Performance Management objective aligned to this priority – facilitating S>S working amongst contact schools. All schools have received grant from GwE to establish S>S collaborative working. CA's audit of S>S working currently taking place across the region during Visit 1[which will then be used as a benchmark].	Monitor individual schools' school to school programmes during visit 2 and 3 – ongoing. CAs to involve themselves in various projects and facilitate links [ongoing]. GwE S>S showcasing event to share best practice and celebrate the success of the strategy by June 2015.
Pedagogy training events to be				A number of hub based training events have taken place during the autumn term	Audit and evaluation of hub based training events

implemented with initial focus on effective assessment and moderation procedures.				e.e. what works best in the classroom/Assertive Mentoring training, moving learners to the next level, ICT etc.	currently undertaken across the region.
GwE to operate as project manager regarding the delivery of the NPQH selection and assessment process.				Moderation training taking place through <i>GwE Teacher Assessment Working Group</i> [training arranged for March 2015]. GwE have successfully tendered to deliver the NPQH regionally and have arranged and facilitated the selection process for the 2014/2105 process.	Create a more regional approach to pedagogy training and organise regional training events by March 2015. Further consideration from January 2015 to : • appointing Strategic Project Manager for the NPQH process • arranging and facilitating appropriate further training for NPQH mentors. • assisting WG with the training arrangements for NPQH candidates. • arranging and facilitating the assessment process for the 2015/2106 process

Priority	Support schools to develop more robust and effective assessment, standardisation and moderation processes				
SLT Lead Member	MBH				
Action	Risk Assessment				Further action to be taken [with timescale]
To ensure representation at national level on WG working groups looking at ensuring consistency in Teacher Assessment across Wales. Representative will lead a regional working group made up of Challenge Advisers who have expertise in this area.				Representation from GwE on National Teacher Assessment Moderation Working Group meetings. Regional working group established with one representative from each core subject in each sector. Advertised post for Seconded Headteacher to facilitate process and prepare logistical plan for timetable, venues and guidance.	To date, Working Group have only communicated electronically and by phone. Need for face to face discussion with facilitator and lead from January 2015. Appoint seconded Headteacher to lead on aspect from January 2015.
Identify eight expert practitioners (representing primary x1 and secondary x1 from each core subject) to create a regional portfolio of standardised work for each subject in all three Key Stages. High quality portfolios will be distributed to all schools across the region as part of school's own CPD on Teacher assessment. GwE staff will quality-assure the resources.				Six of the eight practitioners have been identified and have agreed to take part in the project. Lead practitioners in English, Maths and Science in both sectors have been identified and agreed to take part. Headteachers have confirmed release arrangements to produce documentation. The six Lead Practitioners are now putting together the portfolios under the guidance of the curricular and sector lead from the working group.	Lead practitioners for Welsh 1st language still need confirming [by end of December]. Portfolio documentation to be produced by February 2015. GwE working group individuals to QA materials before producing high quality copies of the documentation by February 2015.
Sixteen 'deputy' expert practitioners will be identified by the GwE staff (2 people per subject per phase). Practitioners will be trained by the expert practitioner in the delivery of the training resources. GwE staff to quality-assure training.				Deputy practitioners being identified at present. Maths and English deputies have been approached.	All deputy practitioners in place by February 2015 Deputy practitioners to be trained by working group/lead practitioners by March 2015
Lead practitioners to attend all				No progress as yet	GwE facilitator to arrange dates and agenda item-

Headteacher forums to present guidance and profiles.					February 2015
Trainers to hold cluster training sessions attended by one secondary and one primary representative from each cluster. Expectation for identified cluster leads to disseminate the resources to all schools in cluster meetings. Register of attendance at cluster meetings will be taken and non-attenders will be required to attend a subsequent one off <i>mop-up</i> training sessions. Challenge Advisors will sample a selection these sessions				No progress as yet	Attend Head teacher forum meetings during February/March 2015 Cluster sessions to be held during March 2015
School representatives to train/disseminate to all staff in their schools and meetings to be chaired by SLT. Headteacher to sign off that meeting has taken place. Challenge Advisers will request evidence from the head that meetings have taken place.				No progress as yet	Dissemination of resources and training to all school staff during March 2015
Cluster meetings to take place by end of Spring Term to undertake cross phase moderation. Standards to be informed by regional training and the agreed resource. Cluster school's work will be required to be signed off by a Headteacher from cluster. Hub Challenge Advisors to attend at least one moderation meeting within hub to quality assure process				No progress as yet	Cluster meetings to take place between March/April 2015. School's work to be signed off by Head teachers by April 2015. Hub challenge advisors to attend at least one moderation meeting within hub to QA during April 2015.
Summer cluster moderation meeting to confirm judgements of learner profiles at the expected and higher level for pupils at point of transfer – Years 2, 6 and 9.				No progress as yet	Summer cluster moderation to look at higher levels during May/June 2015.
Challenge Advisers to gather evidence through monitoring, reporting on and evaluating the delivery of the process [to be recorded]. Working Group to meet at the end of the summer term to evaluate the process using the evidence collated by Challenge				No progress as yet	CAs gathering evidence in Visit 2 and 3 during 2015 Spring and Summer Term Working group to meet end of summer term [by June 2015]. Evaluation paper written by regional facilitator during

Advisers. Regional facilitator to bring together regional evaluation paper for dissemination to LA Directors.					July/August 2015. Presented to ADEW during Autumn Term 2015.
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Priority	Develop leadership and business capacity to effectively fulfil key functions.				
SLT Lead Member	HFE/EVJ				
Action	Risk Assessment				Further action to be taken [with timescale]
Increase capacity of SMT and regional team to respond effectively to breadth of responsibilities and expectation and the development of new streams of work from April 2015 onwards [Management of Regional Grants/HR Services/14-19/Foundation Phase/Governor Services etc] • appointment of Head of Brokerage and Support • appointment of Senior Challenge Adviser to lead Literacy/Numeracy and to ensure alignment with NSP • reduction in number of contact schools for Senior Challenge Advisers • appointment of Head of Standards • appointment of Headteacher secondment to lead on national projects Schools Challenge Cymru/PISA Project • increase cadre of seconded Headteachers who are appropriately qualified and trained Challenge Advisers to support and challenge schools					Head of Brokerage and Support + Senior Challenge Adviser Literacy/Numeracy have taken up full-time post since September 2014. We have also appointed Headteacher secondment to lead on national projects [Schools Challenge Cymru/PISA Project] and have increased the cadre of seconded Headteachers within each hub. This has significantly increase capacity and has allowed GwE to respond much more effectively to breadth of responsibilities and expectation. Decision was taken to re-advertise for post of Head of Standards [with appointment expected for April 2015]. Appoint Head of Standards with successful candidate to take up post by April 2015.
Ensure more effective use of data to better support the work of school improvement and to allow the more effective deployment of resources : • strengthen regional data sharing/collation processes • develop pupil tracking system to enable near real-time data within Local Authorities, sub-regions and the Consortium.					Regional consortium <i>Data and Information Manager</i> has transferred to GwE during Autumn Term and is line managed by MD. LA historical data in process of being collated at regional level and data sharing protocols agreed. This will allow for a more effective and efficient system for analysing data and targeting resources. Research and pilot project to be undertaken to evaluate potential use of <i>Teacher Centre</i> which will allow for real-time tracking of pupil progress [MIS system developed and implemented by Ceredigion]. Teacher Centre has the potential to All historical data to be incorporated by January 2015. Briefing sessions arranged for LA's and schools before end of December with take-up for pilot project to be discussed from January 2015 onwards.

			provide the single view of a learner as sought by the Welsh Government. Additionally, it offers potential for financial savings and reducing the staff time needed to manage data allowing more time for analysis and reporting of data.	
Increase business capacity and structures to respond effectively to breadth of wider responsibilities and expectation of National Model.			Consortium support staff have transferred to GwE.	Complete revised job descriptions and confirm line-management structures for additional support staff by February 2015.
Ensure that effective structures are operational to allow an oversight of available resources and spend [including budget and proportion of employed staff and flexible resources for interventions]			Increased business capacity allows for a more cohesive approach to budget planning and monitoring. More robust financial monitoring systems and arrangements have been implemented between GwE Business Manager and host LA Finance Department. Monitoring of budget and any under/overspend undertaken in all GwE SLT meetings.	Ongoing
Ensure that work of all CA supported by: - relevant professional development opportunities, including access to the National and Local Training Programme. Key aspects of training programme will need to ensure that all Challenge Advisers are familiar with the key characteristics of effective school to school collaboration [including the facilitation of effective working]. - quality assurance processes which will be followed rigorously to ensure high quality. - effective and robust Performance Management structures for GwE staff [aligned with national standards and supported by national and local professional development programme]			All Challenge Advisers participated in the national training provided by WG [October 2014]. Effective and rigorous Performance Management procedures are operational across all three hubs. All Challenge Advisers expected to participate in specific Estyn training. Robust QA procedures operational for all termly visits.	Ensure that regional Challenge Advisers training provided by GwE is aligned with outcomes from national discussions and local Performance Management needs [initial training will focus on developing coaching skills]. To be delivered during 2015 Spring/Summer Term. All Challenge Advisers will be expected to participate in specific Estyn training during 2015 Spring/Summer/Autumn Term. Ensure QA procedures are thorough and effective for Visit 2 and 3 during 2015 Spring and Summer Term.
Establish effective internal structures to promote and develop the school>school support model			Challenge Advisers briefed and updated on regional developments and expectations re: promoting and facilitating more effective collaboration between schools Performance Management objectives aligned with this key priority. S>S collaboration discussed and challenged during Visit 1 [monitoring will be completed by end of term] with monitoring follow-up to be completed during Visits 2 and 3 in Spring and Summer Term.	Further professional development for CA is planned focusing on coaching skills May/June 2015. This will ensure higher quality support and guidance to school leaders. Briefing and guidance for Term 2 and 3 monitoring visits will be arranged for CA prior to visits by during 2015 Spring and Summer Term.

Priority	Ensure the effective governance of GwE.					
SLT Lead Member	HFE/EVJ					
Action	Risk Assessment				Progress Report and evidence of impact	Further action to be taken [with timescale]
In alignment with national model expectations, agree any amendments to governance structure during autumn 2014 for implementation by December 2014 : - review Joint Committee membership/terms of reference and align with NM expectations if required - review User Group membership and terms of reference and align with NM expectations if required - establish and agree membership/terms of reference for Executive Advisory Board - agree working arrangements with Local Authorities for statutory responsibilities and ensure that there is an effective feedback-loop through Elected Members/LA scrutiny processes and GwE consultative processes to inform decision making within GwE. - ensure that developed model outlines clearly the extent of delegated authority to directors and/or the MD and his team.					Joint Committee and User Group membership/terms of reference currently aligns with NM expectations Agreement in place to establish Executive Advisory Board with initial membership/terms of reference. The group will have advisory and reporting powers which correspond to the functions set out in the National Model, along with delegated decision powers. The GwE MD will have access to the EAB along with the 6 Chief Education Officers Governance model agreed which outlines clearly the extent of delegated authority to directors and/or the MD and his team.	Arrange first meeting of EAB during Spring Term 2015. Joint Committee to ensure that there is an effective feedback-loop through Elected Members/LA scrutiny processes and GwE consultative processes to inform decision making within GwE [Spring Term 2015]

Priority	Ensure robust quality assurance, scrutiny and accountability at all levels					
SLT Lead Member	HFE/EVJ					
Action	Risk Assessment				Progress Report and evidence of impact	Further action to be taken [with timescale]
Ensure that robust Performance Management procedures are applied consistently and that national training programmes for up-skilling Challenge Advisers are underpinned and reinforced by regional support.					Performance Management procedures agreed for all CA and operational across all 3 hubs [to be completed by December 2015]. All Challenge Advisers participated in the national training provided by WG [October 2014]. Discussion ongoing re: regional supplementary training.	Agree PM procedures for support staff by January 2015. Ensure that regional CA training provided by GwE is aligned with outcomes from national discussions and local Performance Management needs [initial training will focus on developing coaching skills]. To be delivered during 2015 Spring/Summer Term. All CA expected to participate in specific Estyn training during 2015 Spring/Summer/Autumn Term.

Further hone GwE internal self-evaluation structures and develop ways of measuring the impact of actions whilst ensuring that the findings of those processes are used effectively to set appropriate and challenging targets and quality indicators to improve the performance of the service and schools.				Full self-evaluation against regional performance, leadership and governance aspects and quality of provision and support by GwE completed for Estyn thematic inspection. 5 stakeholder surveys undertaken during period between April 2013>December 2014. Key strengths and areas for further improvement identified and included within 2014-2015 Business Plan.	From January 2015 onwards, ensure that self-evaluation processes are operational for all GwE led initiatives and projects so that we can measure impact of actions and set appropriate targets for improvements.
Ensure that SCA attend SLT meetings of LA home team to report on progress against key priorities [including performance of targeted schools].				All SCA attend regular meetings with LA home team.	Continued presence in meetings.
SCA to evaluate respective LA performance in Autumn Term and to present annual report to scrutiny committee and LA Senior Officers. LA Lead Members/Portfolio Holder/Cabinet Member to report on findings of individual scrutiny processes to Joint Committee. Joint Committee to agree on any further action required by GwE SLT				SCA currently updating reports on hub LA performance for 2013-2014 with finalised KS4 data. MD has completed annual regional report on performance. Both reports to be submitted to relevant scrutiny panels within respective LA's.	Both reports to be submitted to relevant scrutiny panels within respective LA's [December 2014>February 2015]. LA Lead Members/Portfolio Holder/Cabinet Member to report on findings of individual scrutiny processes to Joint Committee in first 2015 Spring Term meeting Joint Committee to agree on any further action required by GwE SLT following above reporting.
MD to evaluate regional performance in Autumn Term and to present : i. annual report for scrutiny to Advisory Board and Joint Committee ii. updates on progress against key priorities at timetabled meetings				MD has completed annual regional report on performance	Report to be submitted to all respective LA scrutiny panels and Joint-Committee by early 2015 Spring Term with updates when required.

Priority					
Ensure that GwE becomes a sustainable and effective partner within the educational community					
SLT Lead Member		RHH			
Action		Risk Assessment			Progress Report and evidence of impact
					Further action to be taken [with timescale]
Ensure a high level of GwE brand identification across the region so that all professionals know what GwE can/will deliver : - commission external "branding company" to assist/advise and implement developments. - Challenge Advisers and key stakeholders to be briefed and updated regarding developments - develop prospectus of GwE					External branding company commissioned with action/implementation plan completed. Briefing sessions for Challenge Advisers have taken place. Stakeholder sub group has been set up in order to discuss requirements. GwE training activities prospectus under development and to be published via phase 1, 2, and 3. GwE interactive website under development [will be published via phase 1, 2, and
					Updates to be provided during the year as project develops. Feedback form stakeholder sub group considered and implemented by December 2014 Briefing session for all key stakeholders by March 2015 Phase 1 to be published in January 2015 Ensure regular updates to User Group [from January

activities re: support/bespoke and generic training which will be available to schools. • establish GwE website/moodle/VLE platform to inform and share best practice across the region. • GwE User Group to advise and assist developments. • evaluation of progress and effectiveness of <i>new brand</i>. • brand identification operational across the region.				3]. Lead schools for 2015 GCSE project will trial the VLE developments. Presentation given to GwE User Group regarding developments to date [Nov 2014] Improved GwE profile has resulted in initial improved awareness amongst all stakeholders regarding the effective services provided by GwE.	2015 onwards]. Evaluation of action plan by July 2015.
Ensure that all Challenge Advisers deliver high levels of good quality services for schools. • full participation in the National Challenge Advisers training • participation in specific Challenge Advisers follow-up training events [to include coaching and mentoring training] • participation in specific Estyn training for Challenge Advisers • rigorous and challenging performance management procedure in operation for all Challenge Advisers. • bespoke training and support programme made available and to include opportunities for leadership experience in school settings				All Challenge Advisers participated in the national training provided by WG [October 2014] Effective and rigorous Performance Management procedures are operational across all three hubs. All Challenge Advisers expected to participate in specific Estyn training.	Ensure that regional Challenge Advisers training provided by GwE is aligned with outcomes from national discussions and local Performance Management needs [initial training will focus on developing coaching skills]. To be delivered during 2015 Spring/Summer Term. All Challenge Advisers will be expected to participate in specific Estyn training during 2015 Spring/Summer/Autumn Term.
Ensure regional consistency in terms of the provision available to develop the quality of school leadership and teaching [see Learner Outcomes Priority 3 and 7 above].				Bespoke GwE training development and support programme activities prospectus under development [see commentary on relevant priority above].	See commentary on relevant priority above.
Develop a prospectus of GwE activities/support/bespoke and generic training which will be available locally to schools [see Learner Outcomes Priority 7 above].				See commentary on relevant priority above.	See commentary on relevant priority above.
Develop a GwE website/moodle platform to inform and share best practice across the region				See commentary on relevant priority above.	See commentary on relevant priority above.
Develop strong links and a clear				No action taken to date.	Initial meetings with key regional partners to be



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

17 DECEMBER 2014

Report by: GwE Managing Director

Subject: GwE Annual Report to the Joint Committee 2013-14

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To present the GwE Annual Report for 2013-14 to the Joint Committee.

2.0 Background

2.1 As is stated in the GwE Inter Authority Agreement, the GwE Managing Director will report annually to the Joint Committee on the performance of the Service in delivering the Service Functions and Key Aims.

3.0 Considerations

In summary:

3.1 Improving quality and standards is a main priority for GwE and its partners and consequently having a positive impact on experiences and outcomes for children and young people. GwE believes that standards across the FP, KS2, KS3 and KS4 are generally good and that recent trends suggest plateauing at FP and KS2 with further improvements seen at KS3 and KS4. At FP, KS2 and KS3, GwE recognises that inconsistencies in moderation arrangements for teacher assessment locally, regionally and nationally make it very difficult to make accurate judgments on standards based on this data. This has been identified as a key priority for action within the current GwE Business Case and a national priority for Welsh Government.

3.2 Despite the generally positive picture outlined above, it is recognised that, with the exception of KS3, 2013>2014 national progress has been greater across the main indicators in all key stages and that there are still variations in performance between establishments in all sectors, across the region. Too many individual schools find that their rolling position is typified by

performance in the main indicators which is below the median in national FSM benchmarks or in the bottom quartile. Specific strategies have been implemented with establishments with a history of underperformance [including adopting quality improvement plans and agreeing on a tight and regular timetable of monitoring and challenging] which has resulted in measurable improvements in a substantial percentage of them. With a minority of those schools making inadequate progress, the Local Authorities, in full cooperation with GwE, have taken action in accordance with the powers and responsibilities as defined in the Authority/School Partnership Agreement [Section 197 Education Act 2007].

3.3 The biggest challenge remains with improving performance in a number of targeted secondary schools and consolidating the recent improvement seen in a number of others as well as securing improvements in standards and leadership across underperforming primary schools. The intense and focused action in these schools since 2013 reflects the commitment of the Local Authorities and of GwE's Senior Management Team to ensuring improvements for every learner, regardless of their location within the region. It is also essential, as GwE moves from being defined by the original Service Level Agreement to delivering the National Model, that we ensure that schools already on their improvement journey are more included in our work, both as a means of self-improvement and so as to ensure that they play their part in the system-wide improvement which is our ultimate goal.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 The Joint Committee is asked to note the content of the report.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6.0 Equalities Impact

6.1 There are no new equalities implications arising from this report.

7.0 Personnel Implications

7.1 There are no new personnel implications arising from this report.

8.0 Consultation Undertaken

8.1 The North Wales ADEW Lead Director has been consulted during the development of the document.

9.0 Appendices

9.1 GwE Annual Report to the Joint Committee 2013-14



***Annual Report
to the
Joint Committee
2013-14***

1. OVERALL SUMMARY

Improving quality and standards is a main priority for GwE and its partners and consequently having a positive impact on experiences and outcomes for children and young people. **GwE believes that standards across the FP, KS2, KS3 and KS4 are generally good** and that recent trends suggest plateauing at FP and KS2 with further improvements seen at KS3 and KS4. At FP, KS2 and KS3, GwE recognises that inconsistencies in moderation arrangements for teacher assessment locally, regionally and nationally make it very difficult to make accurate judgments on standards based on this data. This has been identified as a key priority for action within the current GwE Business Case and a national priority for Welsh Government.

Despite the generally positive picture outlined above, it is recognised that, with the exception of KS3, 2013>2014 national progress has been greater across the main indicators in all key stages and that there are still variations in performance between establishments in all sectors, across the region. Too many individual schools find that their rolling position is typified by performance in the main indicators which is below the median in national FSM benchmarks or in the bottom quartile. Specific strategies have been implemented with establishments with a history of underperformance [including adopting quality improvement plans and agreeing on a tight and regular timetable of monitoring and challenging] which has resulted in measurable improvements in a substantial percentage of them. With a minority of those schools making inadequate progress, the Local Authorities, in full cooperation with GwE, have taken action in accordance with the powers and responsibilities as defined in the Authority/School Partnership Agreement [Section 197 Education Act 2007].

The biggest challenge remains with improving performance in a number of targeted secondary schools and consolidating the recent improvement seen in a number of others as well as securing improvements in standards and leadership across underperforming primary schools. The intense and focused action in these schools since 2013 reflects the commitment of the Local Authorities and of GwE's Senior Management Team to ensuring improvements for every learner, regardless of their location within the region. It is also essential, as GwE moves from being defined by the original Service Level Agreement to delivering the National Model, that we ensure that schools already on their improvement journey are more included in our work, both as a means of self-improvement and so as to ensure that they play their part in the system-wide improvement which is our ultimate goal.

2. PERFORMANCE IN THE MAIN INDICATOR AT THE END OF EACH KEY STAGE

In comparison with the national situation, the performance of the GwE region in the main indicator is good at KS3 and KS4 [although 2013>2014 KS4 progress at national level surpasses regional improvement rate]. Performance at FP and KS2 are below the national average for the first time in three years and, as previously noted, further work needs to be undertaken to support assessment, standardisation and moderation across the region.

Indicator	2013		+/-	2014		+/-	Progress 2012>2013		Progress 2013>2014	
	GwE	Wales		GwE	Wales		GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales
FPI	83.5	83.0	+0.5	84.3	85.2	-0.9	+1.8	+2.5	+0.8	+2.2
CSI KS2	85.5	84.3	+1.2	85.6	86.1	-0.5	+1.9	+1.7	+0.1	+1.8
CSI KS3	78.7	77.0	+1.7	83.7	81.0	+2.7	+3.0	+4.5	+5.1	+4.0
L2+ KS4	56.0	52.7	+3.3	57.0	55.1	+1.9	+2.8	+1.6	+1.0	+2.4

3. SECONDARY BANDING

For 2013, in comparison with the national situation, the picture is very positive with a substantially higher % of GwE school in Band 1 and 2 [50.9%] and a significantly lower % in Band 4 and 5. [18.1%]. Between 2012>2013 14 schools in Band 4 or 5 had improved their banding position and across the region, there has been a significant reduction in the number of schools in Band 5 which reflects the impact of the targeted and brokered support by GwE over the period. In 2013 there was only one school in the lowest Band but there was a +11.5% improvement in their performance in 2014. Overall performance of Band 4 schools for 2014 was also most encouraging and in many cases again reflects the support GwE had brokered on their behalf – examples of improvement include School A Wrexham +7%, School B Wrexham + 11% [although despite overall improvement, the performance of FSM pupils was lower than the previous year]; School C Wrexham +12%; School A Flint +10%, School A Gwynedd +13%. Two schools [one in Wrexham and one in Gwynedd] were the only schools in the bottom two bands to see a slight drop. Intervention strategies for these schools in the coming year are already underway and include the personal input of the respective Senior System Leader. However, whilst there has also been a reduction in the number of schools in Band 4 and 5 [from 17 in 2012 to 10 in 2013], we feel that the % is still too high and we will continue to work with key stakeholders to support, monitor and challenge underperforming schools. An enhanced menu of leadership support and school>school collaboration will be delivered in 2014-15 to help achieve the necessary improvements. The LA with the strongest profile for the banding is Mon where all 5 schools, in 2013, were in Band 1 or 2.

4. NATIONAL CATEGORISATION

a. Secondary

With the changes in the categorisation process, the reduction in groups/bands from 5 to 4 and additional indicators and differentiated weightings being taken into consideration, the number of schools in the lowest categories has increased to xx% in 2014. The number of schools performing in

the highest category has to be increased and we need to address and clarify to stakeholders how GwE will support 'good' schools on their improvement journey to becoming 'excellent' schools. *Need to update with 2014 national categorisation data when available.*

Secondary National Categorisation Profile 2014-2015 [Stage 1 – Data]								
	Number of schools in Category 1	% C1	Number of schools in Category 2	% C2	Number of schools in Category 3	% C3	Number of schools in Category 4	% C4
Ynys Môn								
Gwynedd								
Conwy								
Denbighshire								
Flintshire								
Wrexham								
GwE								
Wales								

	Number of schools in Category 1 and 2	% C1 and 2	Number of schools in Category 3 and 4	% C3 and 4
Ynys Môn				
Gwynedd				
Conwy				
Denbighshire				
Flintshire				
Wrexham				
GwE				
Wales				

b. Primary

When compared to local categorisation for 2013, there are significant variations in the placements of some schools [many of these small schools with small cohorts] at Stage 1 of the national categorisation process. The % of schools in the lowest two categories is too high and further work is needed to improve standards as well as the accuracy of TA at both key stages. Stage 2 of the process has led to the final category being higher for a number of these schools as a result of good quality leadership, high quality teaching and learning or where very small cohorts impact quartile placement and do not fairly represent standards. Further work also needs to be done to examine the correlation between the outcomes in the national tests and school based assessments of the NC. As with the secondary sector, the % of schools in the highest band/group is also disappointing and we need to address how GwE will support the improvement journey of good schools to become excellent schools.

	Number of schools in Category 1	% C1	Number of schools in Category 2	% C2	Number of schools in Category 3	% C3	Number of schools in Category 4	% C4
Ynys Môn	11	22.92%	16	33.33%	14	29.17%	7	14.58%
Gwynedd	14	14.43%	32	32.99%	35	36.08%	16	16.49%
Conwy	6	10.17%	21	35.59%	25	42.37%	7	11.86%
Denbighshire	4	8.33%	16	33.33%	24	50.00%	4	8.33%
Flintshire	10	14.71%	21	30.88%	25	36.76%	12	17.65%
Wrexham	6	10.17%	19	32.20%	27	45.76%	7	11.86%
GwE	51	13.46%	125	32.98%	150	39.58%	53	13.98%
Wales	186	13.77%	487	36.05%	503	37.23%	175	12.95%

	Number of schools in Category 1 and 2	% C1 and 2	Number of schools in Category 3 and 4	% C3 and 4
Ynys Môn	27	56.25%	21	43.75%
Gwynedd	46	47.42%	51	52.58%
Conwy	27	45.76%	32	54.24%
Denbighshire	20	41.67%	28	58.33%

Flintshire	31	45.59%	37	54.41%
Wrexham	25	42.37%	34	57.63%
GwE	176	46.44%	203	53.56%
Wales	673	49.81%	678	50.19%

5. ESTYN INSPECTIONS

The regional profile for schools inspected between Summer 2013 and Autumn 2014, is generally positive with only 9 [2.0%] schools in a statutory category [Significant Improvement or Special Measures]. Individual LA profiles are as follows :

Ynys Môn school inspections [total of 15 inspections]	Inspection profile	Outcome of follow-up action by GwE
2013>2014 educational year [Summer] : <i>3 primary schools</i>	1 school no follow-up; 2 schools Estyn Monitoring	1 school has made the expected progress and has been removed from follow-up category. The other school is awaiting a visit on 18 November with firm prospects that it will be removed from the category.
2013>2014 educational year [Autumn/Spring/Summer]: <i>8 primary schools and 1 secondary school</i>	4 schools no follow-up; 1 LA monitoring; 4 Estyn Monitoring [the situation of 2 of these schools was historically vulnerable and considerable progress was made in a short space of time to get them into this category].	No revisits have taken place.
2014>2015 educational year [Autumn]: <i>1 primary school, 1 special school and 1 secondary school</i>	Although the reports have not been published, no school was placed in a follow-up category.	N/A

Current profile for Ynys Môn [all schools] :

- LA monitoring : 1 [1.8%]
- Estyn monitoring : 5 [9.2%]
- Significant Improvement: 0 [0.0%]
- Special Measures: 0 [0.0%]

Judgement profile [of the schools inspected in the period]:

- Good or better awarded across the 3 Key Questions: 8 [53.3%]
- KQ1 judged to be Good or better: 11 [73.3%]
- KQ2 judged to be Good or better: 10 [66.6%]
- KQ3 judged to be Good or better: 9 [60.0%]
- One of the Key Questions judged to be unsatisfactory: 0 [0.0%]
- Key Question/Overall Judgement judged to be Excellent: 1 [1.8%]

Gwynedd school inspections [total of 27 inspections]	Inspection profile	Outcome of follow-up action by GwE
2013>2014 educational year [Summer] : <i>5 primary schools</i>	No follow up in any school	N/A
2013>2014 educational year [Autumn/Spring/Summer]: <i>15 primary schools; 4 secondary and 1 special schools</i>	2 Significant Improvement; 6 Estyn Monitoring; 3 LA Monitoring; 9 schools no follow-up	Estyn have re-visited 2 schools [1 Estyn Monitoring category and 1 Significant Improvement – which had remained in category since 2012] and have removed them from their respective categories
2014>2015 educational year [Autumn]: <i>2 primary schools</i>	1 Estyn Monitoring; 1 school no follow-up	N/A
Current profile for Gwynedd [all schools] :		
• LA Monitoring : 3 [2.6%] • Estyn Monitoring : 6 [5.3%]		

- Significant Improvement : 2 [1.7%]
- Special Measures : 0 [0.0%]

Judgement profile [based on the 27 schools which have been inspected during the period in question] :

- Good or better across all 3 key questions : 19 [70.3%]
- Good or better for KQ1 : 20 [74.0%]
- Good or better for KQ2 : 21 [77.7%]
- Good or better for KQ3 : 20 [74.0%]
- Unsatisfactory for one or more of the key questions : 1 [3.7%]
- Excellent for one or more of the key questions : 4 [14.8%]

Conwy school inspections [total of 14 inspections]	Inspection profile	Outcome of follow-up action by GwE
2013>2014 educational year [Summer] : <i>3 schools</i>	1 LA Monitoring; 1 Estyn Monitoring; 1 school no follow-up	Both schools out of category
2013>2014 educational year [Autumn/Spring/Summer]: <i>11 schools</i>	4 Estyn Monitoring; 7 schools no follow-up	No revisits have taken place.
2014>2015 educational year [Autumn]: <i>0</i>	N/A	N/A
Current profile for Conwy [all schools] :		
• LA monitoring : 0 [%] • Estyn monitoring : 4 [6.2%] • Significant Improvement: 0 [0%] • Special Measures: 0 [0%]		

Judgement profile [of the schools inspected in the period]:

- Good or better awarded across the 3 Key Questions: 9 [64.2%]
- KQ1 judged to be Good or better: 9 [64.2%]
- KQ2 judged to be Good or better: 9 [64.2%]
- KQ3 judged to be Good or better: 10 [71.4%]
- One of the Key Questions judged to be unsatisfactory: 0 [0%]
- Key Question/Overall Judgement judged to be Excellent: 1 [7.1%]

Denbighshire school inspections [total of 13 inspections]	Inspection profile	Outcome of follow-up action by GwE
2013>2014 educational year [Summer] : <i>2 schools</i>	1 Estyn Monitoring; 1 school no follow-up	Out of category
2013>2014 educational year [Autumn/Spring/Summer]: <i>9 schools</i>	2 LA Monitoring; 2 Estyn Monitoring 5 schools no follow-up	One LA Monitoring out of category
2014>2015 educational year [Autumn]: <i>2 schools</i>	1 LA Monitoring; 1 Estyn Monitoring	N/A
Current profile for Denbighshire [all schools] :		
• LA monitoring : 1 [2.1%] • Estyn monitoring : 3 [6.4%] • Significant Improvement: 0 [0.0%] • Special Measures: 0 [0.0%]		
Judgement profile [of the schools inspected in the period]:		
• Good or better awarded across the 3 Key Questions: 9 [69.2%] • KQ1 judged to be Good or better: 9 [69.2%] • KQ2 judged to be Good or better: 9 [69.2%] • KQ3 judged to be Good or better: 9 [69.2%]		

- One of the Key Questions judged to be unsatisfactory: 0 [%]
- Key Question/Overall Judgement was judged to be Excellent: 0 [%]

Flintshire school inspections [total of 18 inspections]	Inspection profile	Outcome of follow-up action by GwE
2013>2014 educational year [Summer] : <i>3 Primary</i>	1 LA Monitoring; 1 Estyn Monitoring; 1 school no follow-up	All schools out of category
2013>2014 educational year [Autumn/Spring/Summer]: <i>12 Primary and 1 Secondary</i>	1 Special Measures; 2 Estyn Monitoring; 4 LA Monitoring; 6 schools no follow-up	1 school remains in Special Measures
2014>2015 educational year [Autumn]: <i>2 Primary</i>	1 LA Monitoring; 1 Estyn Monitoring	N/A
Current profile for Flintshire [% based on all schools] :		
• LA Monitoring : 5 [6.2%] • Estyn Monitoring : 3 [3.7%] • Significant Improvement : 2 [2.5%] • Special Measures : 1 [1.2%]		
Judgement profile [based on the 18 schools which have been inspected during the period in question] :		
• Good or better across all 3 key questions : 13 [72.2%] • Good or better for KQ1 : 14 [77.8%] • Good or better for KQ2 : 14 [77.8%] • Good or better for KQ3 : 15 [83.3%] • Unsatisfactory for one or more of the key questions : 1 [5.6%] • Excellent for one or more of the key questions : 1 [5.6%]		

Wrexham school inspections [total of 19 inspections]	Inspection profile	Outcome of follow-up action by GwE
2013>2014 educational year [Summer] : <i>2 Primary</i>	1 Estyn Monitoring; 1 school no follow-up	Out of category
2013>2014 educational year [Autumn/Spring/Summer]: <i>10 Primary; 4 Secondary and 1 Special School</i>	2 Special Measures; 7 Estyn Monitoring; 2 LA Monitoring; 4 schools no follow-up	Remain in Special Measures
2014>2015 educational year [Autumn]: <i>2 Primary</i>	1 Estyn Monitoring; 1 school no follow-up	N/A
Current profile for Wrexham [% based on all schools] :		
• LA Monitoring : 4 [6.0%] • Estyn Monitoring : 8 [11.9%] • Significant Improvement : 0 [0.0%] • Special Measures : 4 [6.0%]		
Judgement profile [based on the 19 schools which have been inspected during the period in question] :		
• Good or better across all 3 key questions : 8 [42.1%] • Good or better for KQ1 : 11 [57.9%] • Good or better for KQ2 : 13 [68.4%] • Good or better for KQ3 : 13 [68.4%] • Unsatisfactory for one or more of the key questions : 2 [10.5%] • Excellent for one or more of the key questions : 1 [5.3%]		

6. PERFORMANCE AT EACH KEY STAGE

a. Foundation Phase

- on a regional basis, performance continues to improve with a +1.1% increase from last year and a +2.9% increase from 2012>2014. However, a national increase of 2.2% this year [coupled with a 4.7% increase over rolling period] has meant that the regional performance falls slightly below the national average for the first time. The greatest regional increases was seen in Conwy [+4.6%

and +4.1] but for Môn [-1.3%] and Wrexham [-0.6%] the 2014 performance was lower than the corresponding figure for 2013.

- LCE 05+ [86.4%] is -0.2% lower than the national average [for the first time in 3 years]. A +2.5% improvements from 2012>2014 and +0.3% between 2013>2014 were lower than the corresponding national figures of +3.2% and +1.4%. The greatest dip was seen in Môn [-2.6% on previous year] while Gwynedd improved by the highest margin [+1.8%]. At 06+ [32.3%], the regions performance was slightly above the national average [+0.1%] as was the improvements over the three year period 2012>2014 [+6.7% in comparison to a national figure of +6.6%]. However, improvements from 2013>2014 were higher nationally [+2.7% in comparison to a regional figure of +2.5%]. On an individual LA basis, only Môn witnessed a dip from 2013 [-2.0%] and the greatest improvements from last year were seen in Gwynedd [+8.0%] and Denbighshire [+6.0%]
- LCW 05+ [88.4%] is lower than the national average for the second year in succession [three year improvement of +1.8% compared to national figure of +3.9% and 2013>2014 improvement of +2.3% compared to national +3.1%]. The most significant improvements 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 were seen in Conwy [+6.4% and +8.8%] whilst Wrexham witnessed a corresponding dip of -2.3% and -1.2%. LCW 06+ improved +2.4% to 34.1% [compared to a +3.3% national improvement. However, the regional % is still above the national average for the third year in succession. 2012>2014 improvements were +4.5% compared to +3.7% nationally.
- MD 05+ at 88.8% was +0.1% higher than the national average but the improvement rate between 2012>2014 [+1.2%] and 2013>2014 [+0.8%] is less than the corresponding national figures [+2.1%/+1.3%]. Two LA's saw a dip between 2013>2014 [Flintshire -0.7% and Môn -2.1%]. At MD 06+, the regional performance has fallen below the national average for the first time in 3 years [-0.6%]. Wales has seen a +6.1% improvement from 2012>2014 whilst the regional figure is +5.0% [and +0.9% between 2013>2014]. At individual LA level, the biggest increase from 2013 was seen in Gwynedd +4.9%.
- PSD 05+ [94.4%] is slightly above the national average. 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 improvements, however, are less than the national improvement rates [GwE +2.6% and +0.6%/Wales +3.3% and +1.2%]. Môn and Wrexham saw performance dip from 2013 [-1.1% and -1.0% respectively]. PSD 06+ at 52.7% is +1.2% higher than the national average but national improvements from 2012>2014 are +20.9% [compared to +10.6 regionally]. The most significant improvements from 2013>2014 were seen in Gwynedd [+7.2%] and Conwy [+8.1%].
- Performance of boys and girls : the gap between boys and girls has closed across all the main indicators with the exception of LCE 06+. The gap is less than the national average for LCE 05+ and 06+ and MD 05+. The performance of boys, when compared to 2013 figures has also improved across all indicators with the exception of MD 06+ [-0.2%]. In the main indicator [FPI], the gap was reduced to -8.6% with a 2.0% improvement for boys [corresponding national figures of -8.5%/+2.1%]. The biggest gap in regional performance was seen in Wrexham -10.0%, Gwynedd -9.3% and Môn -9.0%. For LCE 05+, the gap was reduced to -7.3% [-8.3% nationally] with a 1.4% improvement for boys from 2013 [+1.1% nationally]. There was a significant gap of -37.9% between boys/girls in Gwynedd]. For LCE 06+, the gap increased to -11.9% [-12.1%

nationally] but a 2.0% improvement for boys from 2013 [+2.2% nationally]. The gap for LCW 05+ and 06+ was reduced from 2013 [-9.9%/-13.7% compared to national gap of -7.9%/-12.3%]. Boys improved by 2.8% at both levels [+3.9%/+4.6% nationally]. Largest regional gap seen in Wrexham -18.2% for 05+ and Môn for 06+ -17.7%. For Mathematical Development, the gap was reduced between 2013>2014 [to -4.3% for 05+ and -0.2% for 06+ / national figures of -5.0%/+0.9%]. At 05+ boys improved +1.0% from last year [+0.9% nationally] but there was a slight drop at 06+ [-0.2% - +0.8% nationally]. At regional level, the performance of boys was higher in 3 LA's [Conwy +3.8%/Gwynedd +1.3%/Môn +1.1%]. Denbighshire had the largest gap of -4.1%.

- steady progress has been made in challenging TA [most notably within the Conwy/Denbighshire Hub]. Ensuring consistency in approach and a more robust regional standardisation and moderation programme will be prioritised over the current educational year.

b. Key Stage 2

- CSI performance for 2014 is 85.6% [a +1.9% improvement over rolling period 2012>2014 and a slight +0.1% 2013>2014 improvement compared to respective national improvements of +3.6% and +1.8%]. The increased focus placed on regional schools to improve standardisation and moderation has resulted in a re-calibration of assessments and thus the increase is lower than the national average. Three of the six LA's improved on their 2013 performance [Conwy, Denbighshire and Flintshire] with the greatest improvement seen in Flintshire [+1.1%]. Gwynedd [-0.6%], Môn [-0.2%] and Wrexham [-1.2%] have seen a decrease in the % attaining the expected level. In Môn, however, results have plateaued following significant increase between 2012 and 2013. The Core Subject Indicator (CSI) has improved year on year for the past three years in Conwy/Denbighshire and Flintshire.
- the region's performance at the expected levels and higher levels for the core subjects appears to have plateaued for many of the indicators and as a result, national 2014 performance and national improvement 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 for almost all indicators are higher the regional improvement rate. Performance for Welsh L5+ and Science L5+ are the only indicators where regional performance is higher than the national average for 2014.
- English L4+ 88.4% matches the national average and is a +2.6% improvement between 2012>2014 and +0.3% improvement from 2013 [respective national figures +3.2% and +1.3%]. Over the rolling period, the greatest improvements were seen in Flintshire [+5.1%] and Môn [+3.4%] whilst 2013 and 2014 results seem to have plateaued. At L5+ [37.5%] there is a +4.5% improvement between 2012>2014 and a 1.1% from 2013 [+5.1% and +2.3% nationally]. Greatest regional improvement rates between 2012>2014 were seen in Denbighshire [+6.9%] and Conwy [+5.3%] whilst results in Môn dipped -3.0% between 2013>2014.
- Welsh L4+ for 2014 was 87.2% and although -0.9% lower than national average, there is a +4.6% improvement between 2012>2014 [+4.1% nationally]. The most significant improvements between 2012>2014 were seen in Môn [+9.2%] and Flintshire [+11.1%] but there was a dip in performance in Denbighshire between 2013>2014 [-2.9%]. At L5+, the regional performance of

34.1% is slightly above the national average [+0.2%] but improvement between 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 [+6.0%/+2.5%] were lower than the corresponding figures for Wales [+7.3%/+3.5%]. The most notably regional improvements between 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 were seen in Conwy [+6.6%/+8.3%] and Flintshire [+6.7%/+5.4%]. Albeit, as noted above for the Foundation Phase, cohort size at regional, national and individual LA level needs to be taken into consideration.

- Mathematics L4+ [88.4%] mirrors the result for 2013 and is slightly below the national average [88.9%] for the first time in three years [2012>2014 improvement of 0.9% is also below the national average of +2.2%]. Performance at L5+ also mirrors the situation at L4+, with the 2014 regional figure slightly below the national average [37.9%/38.0%] for the first time in three years. The most significant regional gains between 2013>2014 were seen in Conwy [+2.9%] and Wrexham [+2.0%]. Môn was the only LA to witness a dip between 2013>2014 [-1.1%]
- Science L4+ [89.9%] mirrors the situation for Mathematics, where the regional performance has fallen below the national average for the first time in three years [by -0.4% in 2014]. The 2014 figure is also -1.1% lower than the 2013 performance [corresponding national improvement of +0.6%] and the dip from 2013>2014 is reflected in the performance of all 6 LA's with the most notable difference in Wrexham [-2.1%]. At L5+ [38.7%], the regional figure continues to be above the national average of 38.4% but the 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 improvements [+5.1%/+0.6%] are lower than the corresponding figures for Wales [+5.3%/+2.3%]. The most notable regional improvement over the respective periods has been in Gwynedd [+5.4% and +4.1%].
- Performance of boys and girls : CSI performance for both boys [82.5%] and girls [89.0%] improved slightly from 2013 [+0.2% boys and +0.9% girls] but was less than the corresponding improvement [+1.7%/+1.9%]. As a result, the performance of boys and girls has fallen below the national average for the first time in three years. The regional gap in performance between boys/girls, since 2012, has been wider than the national average. In 2012 there was a -6.7% regional gap, -6.6% in 2013 and -6.5% in 2014. In 2014 the most pronounced gap was seen in Gwynedd [-8.5%] and Conwy [-8.2%]. Across the core subjects, at the expected and higher levels, the regional gap for many of the indicators is wider than the national figure. The regional gap is widest for Welsh L5+ [-18.6%] and English L5+ [-11.9%]. The only indicator where the performance of boys is higher than the performance of girls is Mathematics L5+ [+1.0%]. In 2014, the most significant gaps in performance were seen in Wrexham for Welsh L4+ [-22.1%]; Conwy for Welsh L5+ [-15.3%]; Conwy for English L4+ [-11.0%]; Wrexham for English L5+ [-16.1%]; Gwynedd for Mathematics L4+ [-6.0%]; Denbighshire for Mathematics L5+ [+6.3%]; Flintshire for Science L4+ and L5+ [-5.3% and -6.7%].
- as noted above, although some progress has been made in challenging TA, we need to ensure better consistency in approach and a more robust regional standardisation and moderation programme will be prioritised over the current educational year.
- at both key stages in the primary sector, for some schools, the variance between performance and target has been significant and GwE will have to ensure that monitoring visits offer a more

robust challenge, not only to the target-setting processes in schools but also to monitoring the progress of individual pupils towards personal targets

c. KS3

- CSI performance for the region in 2014 was 83.8% - an improvement of 8.1% between 2012>2014 and 5.1% between 2013>2014 [in comparison to corresponding national figures of 8.5% and 4.0%]. All individual LA's improved on the 2013 figure but the greatest increases were seen in Denbighshire [11.3% and 8.2%] and Wrexham [8.3% and 6.1%]. In 2014, the only LA below the national average was Wrexham. [78.4%] but the performance was most encouraging and to some extent driven by the coordinated GwE/LA intervention with under-performing secondary schools. Gwynedd has been the highest performing LA in Wales for the last three years
- the region's performance at the expected levels and higher levels for all core subjects improved from 2013 and, with the exception of Science L5+, which matched the national increase [and Welsh L5+], regional improvement excelled on the national average. 2012>2014 improvements were greater at a regional level at L6+ for Welsh, English, Mathematics and Science but were lower than the national improvement rate for all core subjects at the expected level.
- English L5+ 88.4% : the regional figure has been above the national average for the past 3 years with a 6.5% increase between 2012>2014 and 4.1% between 2013>2014. The corresponding national figures are +6.6% and +3.0%. Greatest increases over the three year period were seen in Denbighshire [+10.9%]. At L6+ [50.5%], there has been significant improvement over the rolling period [+11.2% 2012>2014 and +7.3% 2013>2014]. The national improvement has been +10.5% and +5.8% respectively. 2012>2014 improvements have been greatest in Môn [+11.8%]; Denbighshire [+14.4%] and Flintshire [+15.2%]. Denbighshire and Conwy also saw significant 2013>2014 increases [+13.4% and +11.2% respectively]
- Welsh L5+ 89.7% : the 2014 figure sees the region fall below the national figure for the first time in 3 years [albeit only by 0.4%] but the size of the cohort being assessed must be taken into consideration [as it must when looking at individual LA performance]. Increases between 2012>2014 [+5.3%] and 2013>2014 [+1.0%] are lower than the national increases of +5.9% and +2.5%. Greatest increases [2012>2014 and 2013>2014] at individual LA level were seen in Wrexham [+13.0% and +3.4%] and Denbighshire [+8.4% and +5.5%]. Môn saw a slight dip of -0.7% from 2013, Conwy a -1.5% dip, with a significant reduction of -11.7% in Flintshire. At L6+ [55.1%], the region's performance places it 2.4% above the national average with a +12.6% increase between 2012>2014 and a +7.6% increase between 2013>2014 [national corresponding figures of +11.7% and +7.1%]. The greatest 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 increases at LA level were seen in Denbighshire [+26.1% and +15.3%] and Wrexham [+32.0% and +23.2%]. Conwy was the only regional LA to see a 2013>2014 dip [-2.0%].
- Mathematics L5+ 88.3% : 2012>2014 increase of +4.9% was lower than the corresponding national increase of 5.5% but the regional increase between 2013>2014 [+3.0%] was higher than the national increase of +2.7%. Greatest LA increase [2012>2014 and 2013>2014] was seen in

Denbighshire [+6.7% and 5.7%] and Wrexham [+5.4% and +3.4%]. At L6+, the regional performance of 59.2% is 3.0% higher than the national average and the increase between 2012>2014 [+6.7%] and 2013>2014 [+3.7%] is also higher than the corresponding national figures of +6.6% and +3.1%. Improvements between 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 were most significant in Môn [+10.3% and +7.3%], Gwynedd [+8.6% and +5.5%] and Denbighshire [+8.4% and +6.1%].

- Science L5+ 92.1% : the regional figure has been above the national average for the past 3 years with a +6.0% increase between 2012>2014 and +3.4% between 2013>2014. The corresponding national figures are +6.8% and +3.4%. Greatest increases between 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 were seen in Denbighshire [+8.2% and +7.5%], Gwynedd [+8.4% and +4.6%] and Wrexham [+7.4% and +4.2%]. At L6+ [57.5%], there has been significant improvement over the rolling period [+11.0% 2012>2014 and +7.5% 2013>2014]. The national improvement has been +10.8% and +6.0% respectively. 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 improvements have been greatest in Denbighshire [+11.0% and +12.1%] and Flintshire [+12.9% and +11.1%].
- Performance of boys/girls : CSI performance for both boys [79.2%] and girls [88.5%] improved from 2013>2014 [an increase of +4.9% and +5.2% respectively]. This is in comparison with a national increase of +4.4% for boys and +3.6% for girls. The regional gap has increased by 0.3% from 2013>2014 to 9.3% whilst the national figure has decreased by 0.8% to 8.7%. At LA level, the biggest gap in performance in 2014 was in Wrexham and Môn [13.6% and 11.9% respectively]. Across the core subjects [with the exception of English at L5+], the gap between boys/girls has increased from 2013. The most significant gap is seen in English and Welsh at the higher levels [-20.1% and -21.4% respectively]. At individual LA level, the greatest gaps in performance across the core subjects were as follows : Welsh L5+ [Flintshire -29.9% and Wrexham -16.9%]; Welsh L6+ [Gwynedd -23.7% and Denbighshire -24.5%]; English L5+ [Môn -11.7% and Wrexham -15.4%]; English L6+ [Gwynedd -25.7%, Flintshire -21.3% and Wrexham and Conwy -20.0%]; Mathematics L5+ [Môn -8.1% and Gwynedd -5.9%]; Mathematics L6+ [Gwynedd -9.7% and Wrexham -8.5%]; Science L5+ [Môn -8.8% and Wrexham -7.6%]; Science L6+ [Môn -15.5% and Conwy -12.4%].
- as with FP and KS2 there is variance in the rigour, quality and consistency of TA and GwE will need a clear strategy in place for improving local and regional standardisation and moderation

d. KS4

- L2+ : the region's performance increased 1.0% from 2013 to 57.0% in comparison to a 2.3% national increase. Between 2012>2014 the figure has increased by 3.8% [compared to a national increase of 4.0%]. Between 2013>2014, 3 regional LA's saw an improvement in their performance – Gwynedd +3.3%; Denbighshire +2.1% and Wrexham +2.9%, whilst Môn, Conwy and Flintshire witnessed a slight dip of -0.3%, -0.6% and -0.7% respectively. Between 2012>2014 all 6 regional LA's have seen an increase in their average with the greatest improvements in Gwynedd [+6.3%] and Wrexham [+6.0%]. The gap between the highest and lowest performing LA in the region was reduced from 13.8% in 2013 to 10.2%. The increase at individual LA level, and in particular Gwynedd and Wrexham, is directly linked to the coordinated GwE/LA

intervention with the under-performing secondary schools [Gwynedd : School A +10.1%; School B +10.7%; School C +10.3%; Wrexham : School A +6.2%; School B +9.7%; School C +11.5%; School D +13.4%]. However, the gains made in some of these schools is not always reflected in the performance of their FSM cohort [in School D in Gwynedd only 3.8% of FSM pupils gained the L2+ Threshold and the corresponding figure at School B in Wrexham was 15.7%]. Performance at School E in Wrexham, was especially disappointing where only 11.1% of FSM pupils gained the threshold indicator. The lack of improvement from 2013>2014 at School D in Gwynedd [-0.7%] is frustrating when considering the significant investment made. For Flintshire [61.5%], there has been a 0.7% decrease from 2013, with significant decreases seen in School A [-10.6%] and School B [-9.3%]. Denbighshire saw a +2.0% increase and there were significant gains in School A [+7.7%] and School B [+7.1%]. However, performance at School C was down by -8.4% from the corresponding figure for last year. The performance of their FSM pupils is also disappointing at 10.8%. In Conwy, there were disappointing performances at School A [-10.9%] and School B [-8.0%] whilst School A in Mon was down -9.0%. These performances have had a visible impact on this year's outcomes for the respective LA's. In Conwy, especially disappointing is the performance of FSM at School B with only 12.9% of the FSM pupils gaining the L2+ Threshold. Further analysis of the performance of the FSM cohort across all schools has been undertaken during our termly monitoring visits to gauge levels of underperformance against agreed targets and to ensure that more robust interventions are applied for the current Y11 cohort. There were also notable variations between targets and performance in some individual schools across the region and a robust challenge on variance was made during the GwE termly monitoring visit. We also scrutinise progress towards 2015 targets in all termly visits. Across many of the region's schools, there were significant differences between performance in Maths and English/Welsh which implies that further attention must be given to the effective use of read-across data scrutiny and individual pupil tracking.

- L2 performance also increased 2.9% to 84.0% from 81.1% in 2013 [in comparison with a +4.2% national increase]. The regional figure is still 2.0% above the national average. All 6 regional LA's saw an improvement from 2013, with the most notable increases in Gwynedd [+6.8%] and Mon [+3.2%]. Between 2012>2014 Gwynedd and Mon have seen increases of +13.2% and +12.5% respectively. At individual school level, there were significant 2013>2014 improvements : Mon School A [+16.2%]; Gwynedd School A [+15.5%]; School B [+14.9%]; School C [+12.2%]; School D [+15.0%]; Conwy School A [+10.1%]; Denbighshire School A [+13.4%] and Wrexham School A [+11.4%].
- L1 performance at 95.5% is 1.7% higher than the national average and improvements were seen in 4 regional LA's [slight -0.5% and -0.2% dip seen in Mon and Flint respectively]. Between 2012>2014 there has been a regional improvement of +1.9% and +0.9% between 2013>2014 [corresponding national figures are +2.1% and +0.7%]. The greatest gains at individual LA level over the rolling period can be seen in Mon [+4.3%] and Gwynedd [+5.1%]. The greatest improvements from 2013>2014 was seen in Wrexham [+2.5%].
- CSI [54.4%] has improved by 1.5% from 2013 and is 2.5% higher than the national average [albeit national improvement from 2013>2014 is higher at +2.7%]. Performance between 2012>2014 has improved by +3.2% [+3.0% nationally] with the greatest improvements seen in Gwynedd [+7.1%] and Conwy [+5.8%]. 2013>2014 improvements were greatest in Denbighshire [+3.6%]

and Wrexham [+3.1%] whilst Conwy and Flintshire witnessed slight dips of -0.5% and -0.9% respectively.

- CPS has improved from 332.8 in 2012 to 348.2 in 2014 [+15.4 compared to a national improvement of +16.5 – from 323.5>340.0]. At individual LA level the greatest improvements over the three year period were seen in Mon [+25.1] and Gwynedd [+30.3]. All 6 regional LA's improved their CPS between 2013>2014 with the greatest improvements in Gwynedd [+11.9] and Wrexham [+9.2]
- English A*-C has improved +2.1% from 2013 to 67.5% and +5.0% over the three year rolling period [in comparison with a 2013>2014 national increase of +3.3% to 66.1% and a + 3.9% increase from 2012]. In 2014 the highest performing LA in the region was Flintshire with 73.3% but the greatest improvements from 2013 and over the three year period were seen in Mon [+8.1% and +3.8%] and Wrexham [+6.5% and +3.5%].
- Welsh First Language A*-C has improved by +1.5% from 2013 to 72.7% [and by +1.2% over the three year period]. The national average for 2014 was 73.7% [+0.2% from 2013] but one has to take into account the number of entries to make any meaningful comparisons. 2014 performance was strongest in Mon [71.6%] and Gwynedd [73.3%] and in Mon the performance demonstrated an increase of + 5.3% from 2013 and +9.2% from 2012. 2013>2014 improvements was also seen in Denbighshire [+3.3] whilst Flintshire and Wrexham saw a -11.0% decrease in their average. Whilst the number of pupils being entered for Welsh First Language has increased in the region since 2012, it is predominantly because of an increase in Gwynedd. A drop in numbers between 2013>2014 across all LA's [with the exception of Wrexham], highlights the need for a continued drive by GwE to ensure increased participation and performance.
- Mathematics improved +2.5% between 2012>2014 to 63.4% but saw a slight dip between 2013>2014 [-0.1%]. The national average for 2014 was 61.7% with a +1.4% improvement from 2013 and a +3.4% improvement from 2012. In 2014 the highest performance was in Flintshire [68.4%] and Gwynedd [65.1%] with a +3.0% increase seen in Gwynedd from 2013. There was a - 3.4% dip in Conwy over the corresponding period [63.0%]. Between 2012>2014 the performance in Gwynedd improved by +6.5%, Conwy by +5.5% and Wrexham by +4.9%.
- Performance of boys/girls : across all indicators, the performance of regional boys and girls was higher than the national average. For the L2+, the gap was lower than the national average in 2014 [-8.1% compared to -8.4%]. In 2012 and 2013 the regional/national corresponding figures were -10.1%/-8.5% and -7.8%/-8.3%. In 2014 the gap was narrowest in Mon [-1.0%] and widest in Gwynedd [-10.2%] and Wrexham [-10.7%]. The performance of boys improved +0.8% from 2013 [+2.3% nationally] whilst the percentage of girls gaining the L2+ increased +1.1% [+2.4% nationally]. Over the rolling period 2012>2014, however, the performance of boys has improved +4.8% [+4.1% nationally]. At individual LA level the greatest increases in the performance of boys were seen in Denbighshire +2.0% and Wrexham +2.5%. At L2, the gap has gradually decreased by 4.1% over the rolling period 2012>2014 [-10.4%>-7.7%>-6.3%] compared to a 2.0% national decrease. Between 2013>2014 the performance of boys improved +3.6% [compared to +4.5% nationally] whilst the performance of girls improved by +2.2% [+3.9% nationally]. At individual LA level the greatest increases in the performance of boys were seen in Mon +4.3% and

Gwynedd +7.1%. At L1 the gap has gradually decreased by 1.7% over the rolling period 2012>2014 [-3.1%>-2.2%>-1.4%] compared to a 0.9% national decrease. Between 2013>2014 the performance of boys improved +1.3% [compared to +0.7% nationally] whilst the performance of girls improved by +0.5% [+0.6% nationally]. At individual LA level the greatest increases in the performance of boys were seen in Denbighshire [+2.2%] and Wrexham [+3.4%]. For the CSI, the gap between boys/girls has gradually decreased by 2.5% over the rolling period 2012>2014 [-9.4%>-7.1%>-6.9%] in comparison to a national increase of +0.2%. In 2014, at individual LA level, the gap was narrowest in Mon [-0.4%] and widest in Gwynedd at -9.3%. Between 2013>2014, the performance of boys increased by +1.6% [compared to a +2.5% national increase]. Performance of girls improved by +1.4% regionally and +2.8% nationally. For the CPS the gap has closed by 7.6 over a three year period whilst the corresponding national figure is 1.3. At individual LA level, in 2014 the gap was greatest in Wrexham [-28.5] and Mon [23.9]. From 2013, the performance of boys has improved by 7.7 compared to 6.8 nationally and improvements can be seen across all 6 regional LA's with the greatest improvement in Gwynedd [+12.5].

e. Post-16

- The percentage attaining Level 3 Threshold for 2014 was 97.0% [-0.1% below the national average]. Over the rolling period 2012>2014, the highest performing LA has been Ynys Mon. Between 2013>2014, performance in Wrexham dipped -4.3% to 90.3%, whilst Denbighshire saw an increase of 1.3% to 98.1%. The regional Average Wider Points Score for 2014 has been calculated at 804.3 with Gwynedd and Ynys Mon the highest performing LA's [883.6 and 875.9 respectively]. The only regional LA to witness a 2013>2014 increase was Conwy [+25.2] with a score of 829.4, whilst Wrexham dropped -45.0 to 695.4.
- Welsh Bac : the percentage of 17 year old learners gaining the Welsh BAC in 2013-14 was 56.2%, but there being inconsistencies in the percentages between Local Education Authorities and within Local Educational Authorities [Mon 89.4%; Gwynedd 63.1%; Conwy 53.8%; Denbighshire 34.4%; Flintshire 53.5% and Wrexham 64.4%]. Two secondary schools throughout the region had no 17 year old learners registered for the Welsh BAC. GwE is currently working with schools to manage a three year transition phase for change and to ensure high quality delivery and initial suggested target percentages [based on full-time cohort] are as follows :2015-16: maintain 2014-15 percentage or 40%, whichever is the higher; 2016-17: maintain 2014-15 percentage or 60%, whichever is the higher; 2017-18: maintain 2014-15 percentage or 80%, whichever is the higher; 2018-19: 100%

7. POST 16 PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION

- % has steadily improved from 85.8% 2011>87.2% 2012>87.9% 2013 [+2.1% increase in comparison to a 1.3% national increase over same period]. The 2013 figure is 2.8% above the national average and the most significant increase in an individual LA between 2012>2013 was in Wrexham [+2.0%] although their % still remains below the national average.

- The % of regional NEET's has fluctuated over the same period [3.3% 2011>2.9% 2012>3.4% 2013] whilst the national average has been steadily decreasing [from 4.4%>3.7%]. Gwynedd is the only LA in the region to have seen a decrease in the number of NEET's between 2012>2013.

8. ATTENDANCE

Attendance in primary schools increased by +0.6% from 2013 to 94.8% [national average in 2013 was 93.7%]. The % increased across all 6 regional LA's from 2013 [Mon and Conwy +0.6%; Gwynedd +0.8%; Flintshire and Wrexham +0.7% and Denbighshire + 0.4%]. Half day sessions missed due to authorised and unauthorised absences also decreased from 2013. Unauthorised absences decreased regionally by -0.1% to 0.5% and a decrease was witnessed in all LA's with the exception of Denbighshire where performance plateaued from 2013 at 0.6%. In secondary schools, regional attendance increased from 2013 by +0.9% to 93.6% [national average for 2013 was 92.6%]. Improvements were seen across all 6 regional LA's with the greatest gains in Mon [+1.1%], Gwynedd [+2.1%] and Conwy [+1.2%]. Half day sessions missed due to authorised absences decreased from 2013 by -0.6% to 5.3% [improvement in % across all 6 LA's with greatest improvement in Conwy at -1.0%]. Half day sessions missed due to unauthorised absences also dipped slightly from 2013 [-0.1% to 1.0%]. However, there were slight increases in 2 LA's [Mon +0.2% to 0.9% and Flintshire +0.1% to 0.5%]. Conwy's performance plateaued at 1.4%.

9. FSM PERFORMANCE

We need to bear in mind that, in the vast majority of schools, the cohort consists of only a very small number of FSM learners. This applies to both primary and secondary schools. If a high number of these individuals are also ALN learners, this can have a significant impact on the % achieving.

a. Foundation Phase :

In the main indicator, performance of FSM pupils has improved +1.2% across the region from 2013>2014 [compared to an increase of 1.0% for non FSM] with the most notable gains in Conwy [+4.4%], Wrexham [+1.3%] and Flintshire [+1.8%]. The gap with non-FSM has been reduced to -16.7%. The largest gap at LA level was seen in Mon [-21.3%]. The performance of FSM pupils who are not SEN also increased this year by +0.5% and in 4 LA's over 90%+ of this group of pupils gained the main indicator. The greatest increase was seen in Wrexham [+3.8%] and Flintshire [+2.4%] but Denbighshire and Môn saw a fall in their %. Discussion around why individual pupils failed to succeed are ongoing as part of challenge visits. On a regional level, across the other indicators, the performance of FSM pupils dipped slightly by -0.1% for LCE 05+ [in comparison to a +0.3% for non-FSM]. The largest gap was seen in Môn at -22.1%. FSM performance at LCE 06+ improved from 2013 by +1.8% [+2.4% for non-FSM] and the gap increased to -19.3% in 2014. At LA level, Flintshire had the largest gap at -26.2%. FSM performance for LCW 05+ increased +3.0% [+2.1% increase for non-FSM] and the gap was reduced to -13.2% [at LA level the biggest gap was seen in Môn -19.8%]. LCW 06+ dipped slightly from 2013 by -0.7% [compared to an increase of +2.9% for non-FSM]. This led to

a widening of the gap to -22.5% [at LA level widest in Wrexham -34.4% and Flintshire -24.0%]. MD 05+ for FSM pupils improved by +1.4% [+0.6% for non-FSM] and the gap was reduced to -12.4% in 2014. At LA level both Gwynedd and Môn had gaps of +16.0%. For 06+, performance of FSM pupils plateaued, whilst non-FSM increased by +1.0% leading to a 2014 gap of -17.1%. There was a slight dip for FSM pupils in 2014 for PSD 05+ [-0.7% compared to an increase of +0.8% for non-FSM. The gap increased to -9.0% in 2014 and this was widest in Gwynedd at -12.4%. At 06+, FSM performance plateaued, whilst non-FSM pupils increased their performance by +4.5%. The gap has now increased to -25.7% and is -20.0%+ in all 6 LA's.

b. Key Stage 2

In the main indicator, performance of FSM pupils has dropped -1.5% [70.7%] across the region from 2013>2014 with the most notable differences in Denbighshire [-5.0%]. Gwynedd [+5.9%] and Môn [+0.7%] were the only regional LA's which saw an improvement for this group of pupils from 2013. However, the gap between FSM and non-FSM was reduced to -16.1% [-20.4% in 2013] and is lower than the national gap of -18.3%. At individual LA level the gap was most prominent in Wrexham [-20.6%]. Môn had the highest performance % for FSM pupils [78.5%] but the gap between FMS and non-FSM was least in Denbighshire [-11.3%]. The performance of FSM pupils who are not SEN also dropped this year by -0.9% but in all 6 LA's the performance for the group was over 91%+ and above 94.0% for 4 LA's. The greatest drop from 2013 was seen in Môn [-2.2%] and Denbighshire [-2.6%] and discussion around why individual pupils failed to succeed are ongoing as part of challenge visit. On a regional level, across the other indicators, the performance of FSM pupils, in comparison with 2013 figures is patchy. Welsh, at both expected and higher level improved [+4.3% and +5.7% respectively] with the gap between FSM and non-FSM narrowing to -16.4% and -19.9% [gap was widest in Denbighshire for L4+ and L5+ -41.1% and -31.0%]; English improved at the higher level [+1.1%] but dropped for the expected level [-0.8%]. For English the gap with non-FSM pupils widened to -15.7% at L4+ but closed to -21.5% at the higher level. At individual LA level the gap was widest for both levels in Wrexham [-20.1% and -25.5%]. Maths dropped for expected level [-1.1%] but improved at higher level [+0.3%] but the gap with non-FSM widened at both expected and higher levels [-15.1% and -20.3%]. At LA level, the widest gap for L4+ was in Conwy -20.9% and for L5+ Wrexham at -23.4%. For the expected level, Science dropped -2.7% and 0.8% for the higher level. The gap between FSM and non-FSM widened at both levels [-14.8% and -23.1%] with the largest gap for L4+ in Conwy -18.7% and in Wrexham for L5+ -27.7%. When comparing 2013>2014, the greatest improvement for FSM pupils at individual LA level was as follows : English L4+ Gwynedd [+5.1%]; English L5+ Flintshire [+4.9%] and Gwynedd [+9.9%]; Welsh L4+ Flintshire [+11.4%]; Welsh L5+ Gwynedd [+9.5%], Conwy [+12.1%], Flintshire [+14.3%] and Wrexham [+12.2%]; Mathematics L4+ and L5+ Gwynedd [+4.5% and +8.0% respectively].

c. Key Stage 3 :

In the main indicator [CSI], the performance of FSM pupils has increased by +10.8% [65.2%] across the region from 2013>2014 in comparison to a +4.3% increase for non-FSM pupils [87.1%]. The gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils has also been significantly reduced from 28.4% in 2013 to 21.8%

in 2014. The only LA where the gap increased from 2013 was Wrexham [increase of 0.8% to 33.4%]. The most significant 2013>2014 increase for FSM performance at individual LA level was in Conwy [+14.5%] and Denbighshire [+18.6%]. The performance of FSM pupils who are not SEN also increased this year by a significant +11.5% with increases of +10.0% in all LA's with the exception of Môn which saw a +2.9% improvement from 2013. On a regional level, across all core subjects, at expected and higher levels, FSM pupils improved significantly on their 2013 performance [L5+ and L6+ improvements as follows : English +9.8%/+9.8%; Welsh +7.4%/+2.4%; Mathematics +7.6%/+4.1%; Science +11.0%/+11.4%] and the gap between FSM and non-FSM closed for all indicators with the exception of Welsh and Mathematics L6+. For both levels in Welsh, the largest gap between FSM and non-FSM was in Flintshire [-51.0% and -40.9%]. In English, the gap at both levels were 17.55 and -25.2% [most prominent at individual LA level in Wrexham -25.4% and -31.6%]. In Mathematics, the gap at L5+ was reduced to -17.4% but widened at L6+ to -30.0% [again, at LA level, the gap was widest in Wrexham -25.8% and -38.0%]. For Science, the gap reduced at both levels [-11.5%/-27.0%]. Wrexham also had the largest gap between FSM and non-FSM at both levels [-16.5% and -34.0%]. When comparing 2013>2014, the greatest improvement for FSM pupils at individual LA level was as follows : English L5+ Conwy [+16.4%]; English L6+ Conwy [+23.5%] and Denbighshire [+19.3%]; Welsh L5+ Môn [+13.4%], Denbighshire [+28.0%] and Wrexham [+16.7%]; Welsh L6+ Denbighshire [+20.3%]; Mathematics L5+ and L6+ Conwy [+13.3% and +12.7%] and Denbighshire [+14.7% and +14.4%]; Science L5+ and L6+ Conwy [+16.4% and +17.9%] and Denbighshire [+17.5% and +19.3%]. As a result of this improved performance, the gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils also closed across all indicators with the exception of Welsh and Mathematics at L6+. Whilst the nature of FSM cohorts can vary significantly from year to year, the improvements seen this year for FSM pupils is heartening - albeit further work is required to narrow and eventually close the gap with non-FSM pupils.

d. Key Stage 4 :

When analysing the performance of individual LA's from 2013>2014, the gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils has been narrowed across the majority of indicators. In 2014, 30.4% of FSM pupils gained L2+ Threshold [68.8% non-FSM] with Môn the highest performing regional LA [41.8%]. All regional LA's, with the exception of Conwy, saw an improvement from 2013>2014 for FSM pupils with the greatest gains in Wrexham [+4.2%]. The gap between FSM and non-FSM was lowest in Môn [-14.3%] and highest in Conwy and Denbighshire [-34.8%]. Performance at L2 was 67.2% [86.4% non-FSM] with Môn again the highest performing regional LA [75.5%]. The gap between FSM and non-FSM was lowest in Môn [-12.8%] and highest in Wrexham [-26.2%]. At L1, the regional average was 91.7% and the highest performing LA was Conwy with 97.0%. The gap between FSM and non-FSM was lowest in Conwy where FSM performed 0.8% higher than non-FSM pupils and highest in Wrexham [-11.1%]. The CSI regional average for FSM pupils was 29.3% but performance was significantly higher in Môn [40.8%] and higher in Flintshire [35.4%]. The gap between FSM and non-FSM was lowest in Môn [-14.0%] and highest in Gwynedd [-33.5%]. The gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils in the CPS, in comparison with 2013 figures, has been narrowed across all 6 LA's with a -46.1 points gap at regional level in 2014.

10. PERFORMANCE OF PUPILS WITH ALN

The performance in the Foundation Phase for the FPI improved +3.1% from 2013 to 49.6%. Performance across the range of indicators at the expected and higher levels also demonstrate improvements from last year : LCE05+ 53.2% [+1.6%], LCE 06+ 6.2% [+1.9%], LCW05+ 62.4% [+6.6%], LCW 06+ 4.3% [+0.4%], MD 05+ 61.6% [+1.8%], MD 06+ 6.4% [+1.2%], PSD 05+ 79.1% [+1.3%] and PSD 06+ 17.4% [+2.1%]. In KS2, there was a dip in the CSI from 2013 [down -1.7% from 54.3% to 52.6%]. With the exception of Mathematics L4+ [61.3% and -1.0% down from 2013] and Science L4+ [65.7% and -3.6% from 2013] all core subjects at expected and higher levels demonstrated an improvement from 2013 : Welsh L4+ 60.0% [+2.6%], Welsh L5+ 4.2% [+0.4%], English L4+ 60.0% [+0.2%], English L5+ 6.0% [+1.4%], Mathematics L5+ 8.6% [+1.1%] and Science L5+ 8.8% [+1.7%]. In KS3, the CSI improved significantly by +10.1% from 2013 to 48.9%. Improvements were also seen across the range of core subjects at the expected and higher levels : Welsh L5+ 65.5% [+7.5%], Welsh L6+ 13.7% [+2.5%], English L5+ 60.6% [+10.3%], English L6+ 13.1% [+3.7%], Mathematics L5+ 61.9% [+7.5%], Mathematics L6+ 20.8% [+3.1%], Science L5+ 72.5% [+11.2%] and Science L6+ 19.0% [+3.9%].

11. PERFORMANCE OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

When analysing the percentages, we need to bear in mind that the cohort consists of only a very small number of learners. In the Foundation Phase, the percentage gaining the FPI was down -5.0% from the corresponding figure in 2013 [51.8%>46.8%] The highest performance was seen in Denbighshire with 83.3% and Wrexham with 75.0%. For the other indicators, performance was as follows [2013>2014 difference in brackets] : LCE 05+ 57.1% [-4.0%]; LCE 06+ 21.4% [+10.3%]; LCW 05+ 57.9% [-7.1%], LCW 06+ 10.5% [+5.5%], MD 05+ 59.6% [-8.3%], MD 06+ 8.5% [-0.4%], PSD 05+ 72.3% [-6.9%] and PSD 06+ 19.1% [+4.8%]. In KS2 the 2014 CSI was 65.2% [+12.5%] with the highest percentage in Gwynedd [70.0%], Denbighshire [85.7%] and Flintshire [87.5%]. Performance across the core subjects was as follows : Welsh L4+ 73.7% [+11.2%], Welsh L5+ 5.3% [-7.2%], English L4+ 68.1% [+6.3%], English L5+ 10.1% [+1.0%], Mathematics L4+ 72.5% [+19.8%], Mathematics L5+ 10.1% [+2.8%], Science L4+ 71.0% [+9.2%] and Science L5+ 13.0% [+2.1%]. In KS3 55.2% [+16.1%] gained the CSI with the highest regional performance in Mon [83.3%]. Across all the core subjects performance improved on 2013 at the expected level : Welsh 92.3% [+12.3%], English 68.7% [+20.2%], Mathematics 61.2% [+15.5%], Science 71.6% [+19.4%]. At the higher levels, performance was lower than the corresponding 2013 figure for Welsh 7.7% [-22.3%] and Mathematics 17.9% [-8.2%] but higher for English 19.4% [+2.0%] and Science 16.4% [+1.2%]. Data for performance in KS4 was not available at time of analyses.

12. NATIONAL TESTS

a. Reading Tests

As last year's tests were restandardised, there is little to be gained from making comparisons between the 2013 and 2014 data. GwE's performance in the English Reading test (SS >85) was above the Wales average in 2014 – GwE 83.7% Wales average 83.2 In two LAs (Denbighshire and

Wrexham) performance fell below the Wales and GwE average. In the >115 indicator, however, the region's performance was below the Wales average – GwE 16.1% Wales 16.5%. Performance in three LAs was below the Wales and GwE average (Conwy, Denbighshire and Wrexham). The region's strongest performing LA was Môn with 84.8% achieving a SS over 85 and 17.5% achieving a SS over 115. In the region's lowest performing 50 schools there were only 3 from Môn, whilst there were 9 schools amongst the region's highest performing 50. The region's lowest performing LA was Wrexham with 82.1% achieving a SS over 85 and 15.6% achieving a SS over 115. Amongst the region's lowest performing 50 schools there were 6 from Wrexham (2 of these were PRUs) and 4 in the highest performing 50. Caution is needed when analysing the results of the Welsh reading tests as cohort size varies significantly, both within the region and at a national level. Across GwE 18,552 pupils sat the test in 2014 – a similar size cohort to ERW and substantially larger than CSC and EAS. Within GwE cohort size varied from 732 in Flintshire to 9,083 in Gwynedd. Linguistic context within the region is also diverse. GwE's performance in 2014 was marginally below the Wales average of 84.4% (GwE 84.3%). Similarly with SS>115 GwE's performance trailed behind the Wales average of 17.5% (GwE 17.1%). Performance in 2 LAs was below the Wales and GwE average (Môn and Wrexham). The region's strongest performing LA was Denbighshire with 87.4% achieving a SS over 85 and 20.5% achieving a score over 115. There were 5 Denbighshire schools amongst the region's lowest performing 50 schools and 6 in the highest performing. The region's lowest performing LA was Môn (SS >85 – 81.1% and SS>115 – 16%), whose performance was the region's highest in the English Reading test. This is an area which will be investigated in detail by GwE's literacy Associate Partners during the year. 13 schools from Môn were amongst the region's lowest performing schools but 9 were amongst the region's highest performing.

b. Numeracy Tests

GwE's performance in the Procedural Numeracy test (SS>85) was above the Wales average of 82.8% in 2014 – GwE 83.6%. Performance in 2 of the regions' LAs fell below the Wales average (Denbighshire and Wrexham). In the >115 indicator too GwE's performance was marginally above the Wales average, although this masks the fact that in 4/6 LAs it was below. Strong performance on this indicator in Môn and Gwynedd compensated for the region's weakest performing LAs in this indicator – Denbighshire, Flintshire and Conwy. The region's highest performing LA was Gwynedd with 86.8% of learners achieving a SS above 85 and the lowest was Wrexham with 81.1% achieving this indicator. Amongst the region's highest performing 20 schools, 17 of them were in Gwynedd, and only 3 (including 1 PRU) in the lowest performing 20. The region's performance in the Numerical Reasoning test was stronger than in the Procedural test, with the % of learners scoring <85 lower in all LAs (apart from Môn) and the % scoring >115 higher in all LAs (apart from Gwynedd, which was 0.1% lower). With 84.3% of the region's learners achieving a SS>85, GwE's performance was above the Wales average of 82.2%. Only one of the region's LAs fell below the Wales average (Wrexham 0.2% below). Performance on the >115 indicator was also positive with Gwynedd and Môn well above the Wales average and Wrexham and Flintshire only 0.1% below. The region's highest performing LA was Gwynedd with 87.3% of learners achieving a SS above 85 and the lowest was Wrexham achieving 82%. The same Gwynedd schools that were in the highest performing 20 schools in the region on the Procedural test also did well in the Reasoning test. WG did not issue progress scores in 2014 so comparison with 2013 data for the procedural test is also unsound. Disapplication

rates fell in GwE in 2014, whilst the national % of disapplying learners rose slightly. With GwE taking responsibility for giving consistent advice and guidance about disapplying pupils there was less variation in the % of disapplications across the region too. In 2013 the difference between the LA with the highest and lowest disapplication rates in the region was 1.0% - 2.6% in the numeracy test and 1.2% and 2.9% in the reading tests. In 2014 the difference was reduced to 1.0% - 2.1% in the numeracy tests and 1.1% - 2.2% in the reading tests.

13. KEY STRENGTHS :

- Performance in main indicators at FP, KS3 and KS4 above national average.
- Performance of FSM pupils [and especially FSM non-SEN] at FP and KS3.
- Reduction in variance between performance of individual LA's in main indicator [difference between highest and lowest performing LA in region - FP reduced from 5.4%>2.4%; KS2 from 4.9%>3.7% ; KS3 from 13.2%>10.7%; KS4 from 13.8%>10.2%].
- Improvement of several under-performing secondary schools at KS4 directly linked to the coordinated GwE/LA intervention.
- Performance in the Numerical Reasoning test in Gwynedd and Môn schools

14. KEY AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- Improve performance in main indicators at KS2 and raise performance above the national average.
- Improve performance in L2+ Threshold and ensure increase is greater than the national improvement in 2015.
- Further improve achievement of FSM pupils and increase the % who gain the L2+ Threshold [with specific focus on individual schools]
- Close the gap in performance between boys/girls in KS3 across all core subjects and especially at higher levels in both languages.
- Ensure that all the schools across the region have more robust systems for target setting and that they make more effective use of data/assessments to track/challenge and target intervention.

- Ensure that schools make effective use of read-across data scrutiny and individual pupil tracking to address the significant differences between performance in Maths and English/Welsh at KS4 [where applicable].
- Support and work with LAs to implement their intervention powers to tackle schools which continue to underperform.
- Ensure that LAs/GwE robustly challenge the target setting processes in schools and that effective and timely monitoring of progress towards targets is implemented.
- Ensure that coasting ‘good’ schools [and individual departments] are challenged and supported to aim for excellence.
- Collaborate effectively with key stakeholders to implement a range of strategies to reduce % of NEET’s across region
- Challenge the variance in the rigour, quality and consistency of TA across the FP, KS2 and KS3, and develop a clear strategy to improve local and regional standardisation and moderation.
- Increase the % of learners achieving a SS above 115 in all 4 national tests
- Ensure that Associate Partner support is targeted towards the schools and LAs where performance in the National Tests is below the regional/Wales average.

15. GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

The six Councils are fully committed to a high level of collaboration across the region and there is a strong political will across the 6 authorities to support and promote GwE’s work. This is supported by the fact that the 6 councils have agreed to safeguard the level of financial contributions to GwE for 3 years in the first instance, and to ensure an annual commissioning budget of £250,000 in order to target ‘at risk’ schools.

a. Internal Management of GwE :

A significant concern over the last 12 months has been the lack of dedicated leadership support around the Managing Director. This was largely because of the role that GwE had designed for itself prior to the agreement around the National Model i.e. prior to the expectations laid out by Welsh Government, it was intended that GwE would be far smaller and less universal in its provision than the requirements of the National Model. Key players within the GwE SLT were expected to work with a significant number of contact schools and as such were allocated minimal leadership time to contribute to and execute wider responsibilities. These matters became a significant concern during Spring 2014 as Welsh Government considerably raised the expectations for regional services to deliver national initiatives of purport.

Since September 2014, specific action has been taken to increase capacity within GwE's SLT in an attempt to ensure that the service can respond effectively and early to both national and local requirements. The current leadership structure comprises of a Managing Director, Head of Support and Brokerage, Head of Standards [from January 2015 onwards], three Senior Challenge Advisers, Senior Challenge Adviser for Literacy/Numeracy and a Business Manager. Due to the geographical and cultural diversity of the region, the service comprises of 3 hubs [Gwynedd/Anglesey + Conwy/Denbighshire + Flintshire/Wrexham]. The team of Challenge Advisers in every hub are effectively led and quality assured by the relevant Senior Challenge Adviser. The central SMT and the 3 hubs are effectively supported by the business/administrative team.

GwE's brief Business Plan for March 2014 was clearly aligned with the requirements of the national model and national and regional priorities reflected in the Business Plans for the respective LA's and work has been completed to transpose the intentions into meaningful programmes of work that will drive the work across the 3 Hubs. Further work has been done during September 2014 to build a more robust plan, to include the appropriate level of financial detail and to ensure differentiation between commissions at a regional level and individual authority level.

From October 2014 onwards, the regional service has established self-evaluation structures and Performance Management procedures [based on National Standards for Challenge Advisers and requirements of the national model], and these have been used appropriately to identify staff training and developmental needs. A regional training programme has been implemented to augment the national programme. This will allow for a sharper accountability structure and a better system for identifying and meeting individual training and development needs, as well as the needs of the wider service. However, there is a need to further hone self-evaluation structures and develop ways of measuring the impact of our actions whilst ensuring that the findings of those processes are used effectively to set appropriate and challenging targets and quality indicators to improve the performance of the service and schools.

When establishing GwE, emphasis was put on appointing individuals who could demonstrate strength in delivering the statutory requirements of monitoring and challenging school performance. An 'assessment centre' style approach was employed to ensure that the most suitable individuals were appointed and those exact mature recruitment procedures have meant that the regional service boasts a very high percentage of staff with the expertise and appropriate understanding to ensure challenge and quality support for schools. A high % of Challenge Advisers are very experienced and a good number have wide-ranging experience of high level leadership; of working as facilitators of change, and of inspecting alongside/accompanying Estyn on second visits. Those experiences and expertise are further enriched by an extended team of part-time and temporary seconded Headteachers and SMT members from successful schools. This has ensured a more flexible and manageable team to respond to the range of requirements by stakeholders. From September

2014 onwards, the contributions of successful practising Headteachers has further developed the capacity, expertise and profile of GwE with stakeholders and has allowed for an effective process of upskilling to the small number of full-time team member with no previous senior management experience in schools. Commissioning practitioners reflects GwE's commitment to immersing schools in developments and ensuring that institutional capacity and expertise are developed appropriately [need to refer to examples where there has been a positive impact]. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that there is a need to continue to upskill Challenge Advisers across the 3 hubs to ensure an even higher level of consistency in challenge. This is currently done via team training sessions; by sharing good practice and modelling reports; by issuing clear guidance and quality documents prior to visits and by agreeing on common criteria for visits. Shadow visits are also organised. There are robust arrangements for verifying and assuring quality which include monitoring a sample of visits across the region by the SMT and a number of specific internal visits in each hub by the Senior Challenge Adviser. A high percentage of reports are checked by the Senior Challenge Adviser and hub/team meetings are used to disseminate and share good practice. A stakeholder questionnaire and meetings of the User Group are also used to seek the opinions of schools on several aspects of the visits, which have been extremely well-received. For all termly monitoring visits undertaken, there has been a 90.0%+ positive response to questions related to the level of challenge, usefulness of meeting in moving school forward and in the quality of guidance and support. The extremely high level of positive responses from both questionnaire and User Group feedback, testifies to the effectiveness of the work carried out by Challenge Advisers. The national training programme also serves as a platform for driving this agenda forward even further. However we need to be proactive in relation to planning regional training programmes which complement the national programme and which are tailored and differentiated to accommodate the level of existing expertise within the team.

b. Governance of GwE : Structures for Decision Making and Accountability :

GwE was established with a Joint Committee of portfolio holders providing the key decision making and accountability, and the organisation being hosted by Gwynedd LA as a host authority. At present, governance and leadership procedures and structures are in the process of being fully aligned with the requirements of the national model. A Joint Committee has been established since 2013 which comprises of appropriate membership and which operates effectively in its responsibilities for developing a strategic overview and holding GwE officers to account. However, it is recognised that there is a need to adopt a more manageable and streamlined system for making some executive decisions which will lead to a more effective and efficient response to needs. The accountability framework for GwE will build on and further enrich the existing current agreement between the authorities, and will clarify the arrangements with regard to decision making at the various levels i.e. GwE Joint Committee/Advisory Board/SLT and which will highlight 'authorisation limits' for GwE's SLT. The establishment of an Advisory Executive Board to ensure high quality and professional guidance and challenge to the GwE MD/SLT has also been agreed by the Joint Committee and by early November 2014, GwE will have a fully formed Advisory Board and a clarity of roles between the Joint Committee, Advisory Board, the six LA education leads and the GwE Leadership Team and its Headteacher and Governor representative group.

In response to the additional responsibilities brought about by the requirements of the national model, a Project Plan has been established to identify different options for the remit areas. Representatives from the 6 authorities and Joint Committee will consider the selected options and decide on the most effective approach by December 2014 with plans for a phased approach from April 2015. The service is confident that accessing grants will allow for improved targeting to promote initiatives at a regional, authority and individual school level. There is a firm basis for ensuring success in these areas due to the mature models of collaborating and sharing resources that are already in place either across the region, or sub-region e.g. collaborating on aspects of SEN child support service; 14-19 collaboration; SEG collaboration etc. As there are cross-regional structures for managing these projects and developments, leaders at every level are confident that the proposed provision will be of the highest possible standard from April 2015 onwards.

There exists an extremely positive and effective working relationship between the representatives of the 6 authorities and GwE's SLT and expectations and responsibilities have been clearly highlighted and defined by the Business Plan and SLA. This avoids any unnecessary duplication between LA officers and Challenge Advisers. Termly visits to schools evaluate standards and the quality of leadership and management and this allows for more effective targeting of resources, and identification of situations that require an alternative solution. All monitoring visits to every school are followed up by written reports by the Challenge Advisers which inform officers, elected members and governors of the standards and the issues which need further addressing and on the required support level to cluster/individual schools. Through the management team and quality group meetings of the 6 authorities, GwE's SLT is held accountable and the meetings are used to set appropriate and challenging targets and quality indicators for improving the performance of the authority and its schools; to discuss the content of GwE monitoring reports [individual link Challenge Advisers are included when required], to identify, manage and minimise risks in the context of specific schools and to decide on a school's risk category. As a result of the regional work undertaken to standardise the Partnership Agreement [and its use], there is better consistency of approach in the use of categorisation processes across the 6 authorities. It is also fair to note that schools across the region now have a better understanding of why they are in a specific category. Further work remains to be done to ensure that GwE effectively supports the authorities to make timely use of their statutory intervention powers. There are a few examples of where intervention should have been instigated sooner.

c. Governance of GwE : Supervision of Leadership and Resource Allocation

The commissioning budget are both managed effectively by the Business Manager and, from September 2014 onwards, the management element will be further enriched with the appointment of a Head of Support and Brokerage. This has had an impact on achievement in a very high percentage of schools and particularly so in amber/red category schools and Estyn category schools. However, during GwE's first year, an unsatisfactory situation unveiled in that there was a very high percentage of under expenditure [£776,662]. A breakdown of expenditure shows that there were

several contributing factors, namely an underspend on salaries where salary scales had been set lower than the allocation in the full business case and a significant number of staff appointed on lower spines; phased movement towards appointments, some appointments being completed over the year and some post having to remain vacant for a considerable period; eligibility of SEG funding for aspects of targeted support and inability to re-direct commissioning budget; lower office rental fees incurred and significantly lower than expected travel costs for Challenge Advisers due to reduced number in team. These matters have been reported to the Joint Committee and to Chief Officers within the authorities, as well as to members of the User Group with specific action taken to minimise balances and avoid a similar situation arising in future. In September 2014 the Joint Committee discussed the proposed use of the underspend carried forward from the 2013/14 budget and agreed that 64.0% of the total [£500,000] be delegated to schools to promote and facilitate school>school collaboration as part of the implementation of a wider strategy by GwE. A further sum of £51,000 was allocated to deliver a regional showcase event to share best practice and to support schools to participate in a national pilot for PISA style tests. It is intended that this event ensures that every school in the GwE Region should be aware of the key components required to deliver the new GCSEs effectively, and should be provided with the tools to do so. Additionally, schools from the rest of Wales will be invited, in order to encourage them to share their practice and benefit from what is going on within GwE.

d. Scrutiny functions and informing forward planning by the Local Authorities

The commitment of the 6 councils and the decision to safeguard the budget as we deliver the national model is a clear statement of intent and of the region's commitment to the school improvement agenda. This is particularly true given the current financial climate. There are appropriate arrangements across the 6 councils with regard to scrutinising performance and holding the regional service to account for standards of achievement.

GwE, since September 2014, has been fully resourced with 3 Hub Leaders who have been given the time to focus on work within their respective hubs. This will involve developing very close relationship with the Local Authority to ensure that they are well informed about their schools, and can make well-informed decisions with GwE to support school improvement. A key component of this work will be their contribution to each LA's scrutiny function. It is expected that the relevant Director in each authority will be able to call upon the GwE Senior Challenge Adviser to play a full part in the LA's education scrutiny function. Alongside this development, GwE will need to develop an effective feedback loop to influence corporate planning and decision making. In essence, GwE will be held to account at scrutiny processes, and the feedback from scrutiny members in each LA will be brought back to GwE's SLT, the Director's forum, the Advisory Board and Joint Committee.

e. Schools, Headteachers and Governors

GwE, from the outset has facilitated a representative Headteachers and Governors' Forum [User Group]. These meetings have provided GwE with a very useful feedback loop so that planning can

benefit from a clear user voice. Meetings are held frequently, and increasingly the group is able to influence the direction of travel. All development in GwE have been communicated with the Forum and they have helped form policy on matters such as defining the nature of termly visits and the associated documentation to be deployed. In the vast majority of instances, schools understand the scope of the support available to them, and GwE's approach to monitoring and challenging progress. This is clearly reflected in the overwhelming positive responses via the stakeholder surveys. Appropriate use is made of Headteacher Performance Management procedures to drive the programme of desired improvements, however it needs to be ensured that the guidance and support issued facilitates the work of leaders in schools to make more effective and timely use of capability procedures. Overall, there is a high level of satisfaction in the quality of the service provided [see analysis of stakeholder survey below]. However, whilst there is firm evidence that there is a higher degree of consistency of approach, that the gap is closing and that the more flexible approach adopted has allowed for a swifter and more effective response to specific risks, we acknowledge that further work is required within and across every hub

f. Key Strengths :

- the six authorities have played their full part in the creation of GwE and its alignment with the National Model – at both political and officer level
- an effective relationship has enabled the key leads [Chair, Lead Director, Lead CEX, to work well with the Managing Director in developing GwE.
- a strong leadership team is now in place to ensure that GwE is able to move ahead with its enhanced role more effectively
- links with Welsh Government have been good, and GwE has been able to work to a manageable time-scale whilst giving full attention to supporting school improvement
- a strong group of individuals with expertise have been attracted to the Advisory Board
- Headteachers and Governors have expressed their views clearly throughout the development of GwE.

g. Key Areas For Development:

- adopt a more manageable and streamlined system for making executive decisions which will lead to a more effective and efficient response to needs
- ensure that the business support function is fully staffed so that the budget is deployed more fully.
- ensure that GwE effectively supports the authorities so that they are able to make more timely use of statutory intervention powers

- ensure that the guidance and support issued to schools facilitates the work of leaders to make more effective and timely use of capability procedures
- ensure higher degree of consistency of approach in level of challenge and support within and across every hub
- ensure the appropriate level of financial detail in Business Plan and appropriate differentiation between commissioning at regional and individual authority level
- further hone self-evaluation structures and develop ways of measuring the impact of actions [whilst also ensuring that the findings of those processes are used effectively to set appropriate and challenging targets and quality indicators to improve performance of the service and schools]
- ensure effective use of national and regional training programme to upskill Challenge Advisors

PROVISION AND SERVICES

There are processes in place to gather stakeholder opinions via an annual survey on the quality of service and a termly questionnaire where we gather judgements and opinions on the quality and impact of our termly monitoring visits. The stakeholder response has been extremely positive. The annual survey was conducted during November 2014 and based on responses obtained from 180 schools [31 secondary, 145 primary, 2 Special Schools + 2 unknown], judgements were as follows :

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
As a Headteacher, I'm aware of the strategic direction and priorities of the school improvement service	32.2%	64.4%	2.2%	0	1.1%
I am confident that I understand the respective roles of the LA and GwE	28.3%	62.8%	7.2%	0	1.7%
GwE listens and responds to our needs	33.9%	55.6%	8.3%	1.1%	1.1%
GwE visits are conducted in a professional manner	82.2%	15.6%	0.5%	0.5%	1.1%
GwE's communications with the school is good	52.8%	43.3%	2.8%	0	1.1%
The details given on the services provided by GwE are clear to the school	20.0%	60.6%	16.7%	1.1%	1.6%
GwE is well-informed about the school's standards	58.3%	36.7%	2.8%	0.5%	1.7%

After the school was placed in an Estyn monitoring category and/or local amber/red category (if applicable), GwE's support helped us to improve.	17.2%	19.4%	2.8%	1.7%	58.9%
Directions, requirements and expectations prior to a visit(s) from GwE Advisers are clear	61.2%	34.4%	3.3%	0	1.1%
GwE visits set appropriate challenges for the school	51.7%	42.8%	3.3%	1.1%	1.1%
The discussion and recommendations for improvement during visits help to move the school forward	56.7%	36.1%	4.4%	1.7%	1.1%
The timetable for receiving a report following a visit is good	60.6%	36.1%	2.2%	0	1.1%
Good support is available for analysing and challenging pupil performance data in order to ensure school improvement	40.0%	50.0%	8.9%	0	1.1%
Good support is available for improving the school's self-evaluation & school development plan	43.9%	43.9%	9.4%	1.1%	1.7%
The support for management and leadership in your school is good	37.2%	49.4%	10.6%	1.7%	1.1%
The support for teachers' continuous professional development is good	12.2%	51.7%	30.6%	4.4%	1.1%
The support for continuous professional development for middle leaders is good	12.8%	46.7%	35.5%	3.9%	1.1%
Targeted support (if applicable) for literacy and numeracy is effective	10.0%	41.1%	17.2%	2.2%	29.4%
GwE has effectively facilitated school>school support	16.1%	54.4%	25.6%	1.7%	2.2%
Overall, GwE provides a good service	34.4%	53.9%	8.3%	1.7%	1.7%

The positive feedback [strongly agree/agree] received across the range of questions, is heartening and particularly so where 91.1% of stakeholders were confident in their understanding of the respective roles of GwE and the LA's; 89.5% noted that GwE listened and responded to their needs; an extremely high 97.8% noted that GwE visits were conducted in a professional manner and where 94.5% believed that an appropriate challenge was set. 92.8% also felt that the discussions and challenge by GwE helped to move the school forward. 90.0% believed that GwE offered good support for analysing and challenging performance data whilst 87.9% felt that good support was available for improving the school's self-evaluation & school development plan. The % who disagreed [or strongly disagreed] is low over many of the aspects related to challenge but is more noteworthy in relation to questions about levels of support. The aspect where the highest levels of

concerns were raised were about the clarity of details given to schools on the services provided by GwE; about the support for CPD to teachers and middle leaders and the role of GwE in promoting and facilitating school>school support. GwE SLT fully accept the criticism and concerns and robust steps have been taken to address the related issues within our Business Plan for 2014-15.

Responses to the three termly meetings have also been overwhelming positive :

AUTUMN TERM MONITORING VISIT					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	N/C
Head teacher and school benefited from the process	58.6%	36.3%	3.2%	1.9%	0
Directions and requirements prior to visit were clear	46.5%	48.4%	5.1%	0	0
Discussion and recommendations helped move the school forwards	57.3%	36.3%	4.5%	1.9%	0
Appropriate level of challenge	52.2%	41.4%	5.1%	1.3%	0
SPRING TERM MONITORING VISIT					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	N/C
Head teacher and school benefited from the process	64.9%	31.4%	2.9%	0	0.8%
Directions and requirements prior to visit were clear	56.2%	38.7%	4.4%	0	0.7%
Discussion and recommendations helped move the school forwards	62.0%	32.8%	4.4%	0	0.7%
Appropriate level of challenge	59.8%	38.0%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%
SUMMER TERM MONITORING VISIT					
	Strongly	Agree	Strongly	Disagree	N/C

	agree		disagree		
Head teacher and school benefited from the process	62.7%	35.7%	1.6%	0	0
Directions and requirements prior to visit were clear	55.5%	42.9%	1.6%	0	0
Discussion and recommendations helped move the school forwards	59.5%	37.3%	2.4%	0.8%	0
Appropriate level of challenge	52.8%	44.8%	0.8%	1.6%	0

Monitoring and Challenging and Supporting

Under the guidance of the management teams and quality groups of the 6 authorities, and through Partnership Agreement arrangements [with common elements across the 6 authorities], action taken is much more effective to support, monitor, challenge and intervene in schools [including moving schools demonstrating unsatisfactory progress earlier on through intervention processes]. These arrangements have been set out clearly for schools in the LA>School Partnership Agreement and work with specific schools in amber and red categories has been characterised by clear timetables for action and definitive agreed targets and outcomes. As the service which undertakes termly monitoring visits on behalf of the authorities, GwE is well-informed about standards of achievement in schools, and this is supported by the judgements of the institutions themselves in a recent stakeholder survey [see above] of those who responded either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement. In addition to the annual survey, GwE collates stakeholder response after each termly visit and for all three termly visits, stakeholder surveys have shown that well over 90% of schools strongly agreed or agreed that Headteachers and schools had benefited from the process, that the discussion and recommendations helped to move the school forward and that the visit offered an appropriate level of challenge. Both data and contextual information are used forensically to categorise schools and to agree on an appropriate level of intervention and support. GwE internal quality assurance procedures has improved the quality of challenge and support across the three hubs and has also led to higher quality reporting and evidence base for local categorisation. Challenge Advisers know their link schools well which has also resulted in better quality pre-inspection reports for Estyn, and better relevancy of judgements to the findings of the regulatory body. There has been a relentless focus on standards in those schools which have been targeted and there is evidence from a number of sources, including Estyn inspection and end of key stage performance that a high percentage of those schools have improved radically since 2012/2013. It is judged that GwE's strategies and procedures for challenging and supporting schools which were significantly underperforming have been very effective and have resulted in firm improvements. Although there are strengths in the support element of GwE's work with amber/red category school e.g. developing more robust self-evaluation procedures and more effective use of data, which has resulted in improvements across both sectors, it is judged that further work remains

to be done to ensure that a more appropriate balance is struck between challenging and supporting so that all schools can easily access quality guidance, across a range of aspects and priorities. Involvement with and impact on 'coasting' good schools has been much less significant and is being addressed as part of our work programme for 2014-2015.

Use of data

To further enable the school improvement service to more effectively meet priorities agreed with the individual authorities, work is currently undertaken by the 6 Directors of Education and GwE to improve the ability of the regional service to collect and collate data from local authorities and schools on pupil performance and progress and on using that data to benchmark and challenge school performance and pupil progress and, with LA's and schools, to set challenging targets for improvements. This will also allow for a more robust examination of performance with school leaders and chairs of governors at whole-school level; different subjects/year groups and sub-categories of pupils and to identify areas of underperformance and achievement gap. Effective use has made of a vast range of data on standards and quality of education to monitor and evaluate performance and to challenge schools and individual subject departments but the impact of the work has been more significant in underperforming schools where a high percentage have made more mature use of data when evaluating and findings trends, when identifying areas for improvement and when prioritising courses of action in relation to standards. A more mature level of approach is also evident in these schools re: target setting procedures e.g. more intelligent use of assessments, FFT data, FSM family performance thresholds and lines of regression etc. However, a more consistent approach must be taken to ensure that schools across the performance range are challenged on their performance and specifically on the achievements of individual pupils/groups of pupils.

Termly monitoring visits

Termly visits are conducted to every school to monitor and challenge standards and quality of leadership. Those schools of concern locally or/and in an Estyn follow-up category are visited more frequently. The findings of these visits are used to help authorities determine a risk category for their schools and to target additional support. In each instance, a report is sent to the Head teacher and Chair of Governors. As a result of this additional support and the intensified scrutiny and accountability, the majority of schools have made good progress. In specific instances, the Challenge Adviser attends meetings of the Governing Body [or relevant Sub-groups] to present their reports. Each monitoring visit has a focus area however standards of achievement and progress towards priorities and targets are a common thread. Self-evaluations and School Development Plans are crucial to driving improvements within institutions and are therefore central to all discussions with schools.

The autumn visit focuses additionally on outcomes; the spring visit on standards of achievement in learners' books; and the summer visit on quality of leadership at all levels. In an attempt to ensure

consistency and transparency of visits, a matrix is used to reach a judgement on the quality of the various elements. This ensures that regional themes are operational, that good practices are identified and shared, and that further support is targeted on a risk basis. As a result of the above action [and specific focus on joint observation and scrutiny], the capacity of the Senior Management Teams and Middle Leaders to evaluate quality of teaching and learning in schools, has improved dramatically. However, a minority of schools need further support to evaluate standards in specific departments.

RESPONDING TO NATIONAL INITIATIVES

Developing Leadership :

The 6 authorities and GwE firmly believe that improving quality of leadership, at every level, is fundamental to ensuring the sustainability of recent improvements and ensuring that high risk category schools make the necessary progress. As well as prioritising the area as part of termly monitoring visits, GwE has intensified the work with a number of schools and individuals using a targeted approach. There are several examples of Challenge Advisers working with 'good practice' school head teachers to provide target schools with guidance and support – in the form of individual sessions or group workshops. Good practice in SDPs and self-evaluations has been shared in strategic forums and presented directly to category schools too. Across the 3 Hubs, a range of training or guidance sessions have been delivered by either the LA or GwE for senior and middle leaders across a range of developmental work. However, it has not been a coherent delivery across the region and it is acknowledged that there is a need to move to adopting a universal approach to ensure consistency in the quality of provision. Work is in progress to address this and, during the autumn term, an audit and evaluation of current practice was undertaken before formulating a regional offer of GwE services/training. GwE have considered the priorities noted by the NLDB and will, therefore, firstly offer an effective development programme across the region for middle leaders from January/February 2015 onwards focusing on developing the key skills required to be an effective middle leader in the respective sector. It is intended to utilise existing GwE staff to deliver the development training, in partnership with external individuals/organisations and successful regional practitioners. The GwE Middle Leadership Development Programme, delivered over 6 days [and will include taught days; link visits to schools to identify excellent practice; job shadowing; the support of an identified 'mentor' to support/challenge the candidate; action led research in school] is intended to be a broader and more enriching experience than just a training session. Participants will be supported to develop personal skills against the Leadership standards and the Leadership Development Pathway priorities eg mentoring/coaching. Reflective practice and action research will be a key feature of the programme and alongside personal development, participants must be able to display impact and outcomes in relation to their work back at their school. ie: improved standards

in learner achievement or improved behaviour/attendance and action research will form an essential part of the programme.

The intention is to progress to offer effective developmental packages for senior leader development from September 2015 onwards. GwE currently provides a variety of effective support and guidance for Headteachers, with the existing support for new Headteachers progressing effectively. GwE has also given attention to the development of the Executive Head role, aligning with the key priorities noted by the NLDB. A jointly arranged Executive Head Conference between the NLDB, GwE and ERW will be held in January 2015 in order to showcase and share effective practice across the regions. An initial Phase 1 Prospectus/brochure of middle leadership development training offered across the region by GwE will be published in January 2015, with Phase 2 and 3 included when appropriate. This will also focus on senior leadership development training [Deputy Headteacher, Headteacher, Executive Headteacher]. Since September 2014 GwE is the Strategic Project Manager of the North Wales NPQH programme. Effective NPQH selection, support and assessment processes are operational with GwE utilising current recognised effective leaders within the education sector in North Wales as part of the GwE NPQH team.

GwE also has a central and pivotal role to play in Head teachers' Performance Management procedures and all Challenge Advisers have been trained to act as a member of the relevant Governing Body panel. Effective use is made of the Autumn Term Monitoring Visit to collate evidence for determining possible objectives and progress is monitored in subsequent meetings. GwE regards that governors are central to developing and challenging schools and there is a need to further strengthen their role as a 'critical friend' in schools. Work has been undertaken in some areas, in collaboration with the authorities, to upskill Governors and Elected Members with priority given to improving their understanding of data and of the requirements of challenging Head teachers. As above, there is a need to ensure that the guidance is consistent across the region and that there is a high level of commitment.

School>School Collaboration

When developing a collaborative school>school model, GwE has taken, as its building blocks, the content of the recent report by Robert Hill Consulting, The National Model for Regional Working and the priorities outlined by the NLDB. GwE is fully committed to developing what is recognised globally as a self-improving school system and we fully acknowledge that to establish such a system requires all partners and education stakeholders in North Wales to fully undertake an active role. All 6 Authorities and GwE recognise that effective leadership has to come from within schools and that schools must take shared responsibility for their own improvement. Thus, our adopted approach to promoting effective collaboration does not enforce a single method or model on schools, but rather, builds on effective local practice which was already operational. GwE also accepts that there has to be a multi-dimensional and multi-layered approach, because not all schools are starting from the same solid base of effective partnership working and not all schools have the capacity and

understanding to effectively challenge peer performance. For most of our schools, our input is one of promoting, facilitating, monitoring, evaluating and ensuring that lessons from best practice are actively cascaded and that all partners are placed in a win-win situation. For a minority of our targeted schools, GwE takes a more proactive and, at times, prescriptive approach. When facilitating and promoting collaboration for such schools, we are always mindful of the ladders-of-learning principle.

GwE Challenge Advisors monitor and evaluate progress on a termly basis to ensure accountability and effective progress across the region and school>school collaboration is now included as a line of inquiry in all termly monitoring visits.

During the 2014 Autumn Term, GwE used a significant percentage of its previous underspend to promote school>school collaboration. Based on an agreed formula all schools received a financial contribution to support developments [with specific agreed engagement conditions]. Primary schools were also given an opportunity to apply for further funding to support cross-border [LA and/or region] collaboration. Developments and progress will be monitored during the 2015 Spring Term and evaluated in the 2015 Summer Term.

As part of the wider strategy, and the multi-layered approach, GwE and the Local Authorities, in partnership with Headteachers, have identified [and kit-marked] best practice relating to leadership and teaching and learning. Schools/departments and individuals, supported by GwE funding, will operate as lead practitioners to support peers. The established model will ensure that we will have ease of access to a wider support package for schools and that the support is rooted in best regional practice. The model also allows for capacity building at our best performing schools. Plans are currently in place to arrange a regional showcase conference in June / July 2015. Also, during the 2014-15 educational year, we will develop an online compendium [to be accessed via GwE website] which will allow practitioners across the region to see where scheduled opportunities for accessing best practice are available. The model also builds on the approach taken by GwE to ensure regional support for GCSE 2015/Pisa developments. National grant funding and GwE core funding, has been used effectively to establish a central team of 7 lead personnel [including 2 members from SLT] which is further supported by 6 lead regional schools [Ysgol yr Alun for Science; Ysgol Eirias for Mathematics; Ysgol Bryn Elan for English and Ysgolion Tryfan/Dyffryn Ogwen/Botwnnog for Welsh. The Welsh dimension for Science is further enriched by the lead from the 5 secondary schools on Ynys Mon, whilst Ysgol Glan Clwyd supports the delivery in Mathematics]. Schools have warmly welcome the opportunity to take this lead role and the project has allowed us to work with our best practitioners in undertaking action research.

The NTEN Teacher Development Programme and the HeadSprouts Reading Initiative Programme are two examples of effective collaboration facilitated by GwE. As part of our school improvement programme, the Teacher Development Trust (TDT) agreed to work with GwE to deliver a regional

equivalent of their successful National Teacher Enquiry Network (NTEN). This would enable schools to develop more effective CPD provision through a greater focus on evidence-based professional development and sustainable peer-to-peer support systems. As well as offering schools an initial CPD audit and access to a library of education research journals, a key principle of the GwE model is the use of the lesson study approach characterized by a teacher-led, collaborative approach to lesson observations building on feedback and advice from colleagues using evidence-based strategies. The main focus of the GwE NTEN project is to help schools improve the quality of learning in a specific – and measurable – aspect of provision. In this regard the model has been shown to be both supportive and very effective. Our NTEN project is supported by the use of IRIS Connect video technology to record evidence as part of lesson study. We have 12 schools on our pilot NTEN project for 2014-15. Within each school, nominated teachers undertake an initial CPD audit of provision in their school; assist in the audit of CPD provision in a partner school; identify an aspect of learning that the school wishes to improve (measurable and standards-linked); identify possible evidence-based solutions for the identified area of improvement; commence the Lesson Study/action research as identified and evaluate the outcomes of the project and share with schools. In September 2014 an introductory event was held, delivered by CUREE (Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education) coupled with an introduction to NTEN lesson study, delivered by Teacher Development Trust (TDT). The introductory workshops helped teachers identify workable, practical aims and ‘research questions’ to take forward through the lesson study process; understand the idea of collecting pupil evidence at classroom level (and to give them some diagnostic examples and activities to practice on); recognize the features of lesson study in the classroom related to key aspects of teaching and learning; and plan for their own aims and foci, and to refine them for lesson study (in the sense of testing the scope and practicality and identifying the evidence they might collect and use). They also underpinned the project’s clear focus on improving the quality of teaching through the evaluative use of performance data. A full evaluation of impact will be undertaken at the end of the period.

HeadSprout Reading Intervention Project : GwE has formed a partnership with Bangor University to provide training and support for schools who wish to use the HeadSprout evidence-based reading intervention. HeadSprout is an online reading intervention that provides pupils with individualized teaching that can be delivered either by teachers or teaching assistants. HeadSprout Early Reading comprises 80 lessons and is designed to take beginning readers to the equivalent of Year 3 reading standard in around 30 hours of instruction. The programme has undergone extensive research analysis that has demonstrated its effectiveness from Year 2 to Year 7 (including mainstream pupils and those with intellectual disabilities and autism). HeadSprout has been successfully trialled across a number of schools (both mainstream and special) in Conwy and Gwynedd over recent years. In June 2014 GwE and Bangor University offered a range of implementation and support packages for additional schools who wish to use the programme and a further nine schools joined the 2014-15 project. The current HeadSprout schools have used the intervention on pupils deemed to be at risk of not making appropriate progress in the standard of their reading and/or comprehension skills. GwE, Bangor and Warwick University have a proposal for a new regional study that would be focused on evaluating the wider impact of the HeadSprout programmes on the attainment of disadvantaged pupils across North Wales. All participating schools have received initial setup training

and support with administering placement tests for each pupil and have commenced HeadSprout interventions from November 2014. A full evaluation will be undertaken at the end of the year.

GwE has also facilitated and supported several collaborative cross region and LA based projects. Best examples include supporting the development of KS2 science in Conwy schools : a GwE facilitated science workshop was arranged for 11 targeted primary schools - chosen on the basis of either static or declining trends in Level 4 and/or Level 5 attainment over the past 3 years, or where there was a significantly low percentage of Level 5 attainment over recent years. The aim of the workshop was to help teachers improve provision for Level 4 and Level 5 skills, and assessment and to make accurate and robust end-of-key stage moderated judgements. The session focused on establishing an accurate understanding of higher order science enquiry skills at Level 4 and Level 5 (standardization); improving the quality of curriculum planning and associated provision; applying this knowledge to a range of learners' work from your school (moderation); reviewing the standard of LNF skills (and also the provision for these skills) in pupils' science work; and providing teachers with the opportunity to network with other schools to share good practice/strategies. Each teacher who attended the first session was allocated an additional day to improve identified areas of provision. 10 out of 11 schools engaged fully with the support on offer; 4 out of the 10 schools achieved significant increases in either Level 4 and/or Level 5 data in summer 2014 (from +10 to +25% improvement); 4 out of the 11 schools achieved an improved benchmark position by +1 quartile place for either Level 4 and/or Level 5; 2 of the schools benefitted from the successful 2013-14 moderation programme.

Other examples include : Welsh Second Language + Literacy support via Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy for 6 other secondary schools; PLC established to look at action research, use of effect size, secondary groups to share good practice; GwE leading 3 training days for schools leaders in the Caernarfon catchment area [based on categorisation needs]; partnerships developed with the Teacher Development Network and 10 schools in Conwy looking at developing cross sector pedagogy [Iris Connect is involved in this scheme]; cross sector leadership and middle manager development network for 20 middle leaders from Conwy/Denbighshire [16 primary head teachers and secondary deputies looking at developing personal skills and self-perception]; funding a Mentoring Scheme in Flintshire where effective Headteachers are supporting less effective Heads. GwE have also facilitated the iNet Lead Practitioner project in Flintshire and have undertaken a key role within the steering group and the provision for the North Wales Strategic Heads Group for bilingual/Welsh medium schools.

Literacy and Numeracy:

A regional Literacy and Numeracy Strategy is being developed during the autumn term 2014, in collaboration with key partners including representatives from schools, LA teams, who are still delivering support on specific aspects of this agenda (e.g. Welsh Advisory Teams, Foundation Phase) and the National Support Programme. In December 2014 the strategy will be shared for consultation

with stakeholders before being finalised and published in January 2015. This will ensure wider ownership of the agenda and guarantee that individual LA and schools' priorities have been fully incorporated and that there is no unnecessary duplication, either locally, between GwE and LAs, or nationally between GwE and the NSP. Once the strategy has been finalised a Regional Literacy and Numeracy Strategic group will be convened who will have overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the strategy. This group will include a range of stakeholders from schools, GwE, the LA and the NSP. Currently GwE does not have a sufficiently comprehensive overview of the provision for literacy and numeracy across the whole region and this is an area that needs further development. The L/N SSL reports to the user group on a regular basis who then report back to headteachers' federations in each of the LAs through their representatives. She also currently meets separately with representatives from the LAs to align priorities and work programmes, although it is anticipated that the Regional Strategic Group meetings will be sufficient in the future. Generally, in the 2014 National Tests GwE's performance was above the Wales average on the SS>85 indicator in all except the Welsh Reading test. Performance was strongest in the Numerical Reasoning test. A common area for development in 3 of the 4 tests is the % of GwE learners achieving the higher score indicator of >115. During the coming year the analysis of the National Tests will be used to support the targeting of specific schools and LAs e.g. Welsh Reading in Mon, English Reading in Denbighshire, Numeracy (both Procedural and Reasoning) in Wrexham, with a particular focus on reducing the % of learners scoring SS>85. During the financial year 2013/14 GwE were given £350,000 of the regional SEG to fund a small team of 6.6 FTE literacy and numeracy Associate Partners. These individuals were identified as outstanding classroom practitioners and are seconded to GwE from schools within the region. During the academic year 2013/14 their support was allocated in response to requests from System Leaders and NSP Partners, and was focussed on individual teachers with regards to planning and delivery of the LNF. During the year the team made 509 support visits to 123 primary schools. Around half those visits were single visits to reassure schools that they were implementing the LNF appropriately and that their planning was in line with expectations. However, in the case of around 25 schools, the visits were sustained for a longer period of time, supporting schools in Estyn follow-up, or schools that did not have the leadership capacity to implement the LNF without additional help. This worked well and evidence is available from heads' questionnaire and CA visit reports, as well as 2014 performance data in a few schools where there has been more intense support, and in Estyn reports where schools have been removed from monitoring. In the schools where the support was most effective, the APs input, as part of a wider team including the Challenge Advisor, led to an improvement in the quality of teaching, as noted by Estyn or GwE reviews. Where the support was less effective it has led to competency procedures subsequently being initiated with the teachers who received the support. GwE has increased capacity and broadened the remit of this team from September 2014 until August 2015, as a few LAs have used an increased percentage of their retained SEG to commission additional literacy and numeracy support for their schools. Four additional full time secondments have been made, including a secondary practitioner. The total capacity now is 10.6 FTE. The secondary Associate Partner visits secondary schools literacy and numeracy co-ordinators, support where necessary, establish networks of practitioners and facilitate the sharing of good practice. She does not have the capacity to deliver this support through the medium of Welsh, but has developed contacts with lead practitioners in Welsh medium schools to ensure equal access to provision. Primary colleagues have also extended their brief, under the leadership and direction of the Head of Brokerage and Support, and are now able to offer training, with follow-up support being targeted according to need. Training

on Numerical Reasoning for Numeracy Co-ordinators, offered to the region's primary schools in November 2014, was over-subscribed. 270 places were available on 9 sessions in venues across the region. A further training event on Extended Writing is being offered in Flintshire LA only, in response to a request from the LA, in November. This will be rolled out to other LAs as required in the Spring and Summer terms. All training will be followed-up by practical class-based support in targeted schools. This supports individual teachers' and teaching assistants' Performance Management and aligns with the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy which will have been shared and agreed by stakeholders. More comprehensive and cohesive training and support for secondary schools is at an early stage of development. Schools started on Phase 3 of the NSP in September 2014 which means that they have therefore spent over a year on Stage 1 and 2 [i.e. completing the audit to determine their priorities]. This has caused frustration for many schools at both ends of the scale – the better ones being held back and not able to forge ahead, and the ones who needed more support not receiving it soon enough. In October 2014 GwE and the NSP came to an agreement about support for the region's schools as part of the rollout of the NSP into Phase 3 of their programme. It was agreed that NSP Partners would offer support to schools on strategic, whole school issues relating to the implementation of the LNF, whilst GwE's Associate Partners would offer support on teaching and learning. This approach was shared with, and approved by WG officials. This was communicated to schools in October, as previously there was a high level of confusion amongst headteachers about the roles and responsibilities of the various partners. The L/N SSL meets on a fortnightly basis with the NSP's Senior Partner in the north and as a result, communication between GwE and the NSP has improved this year. Schools' requests for support from the NSP, as part of their progress trackers, have been shared with GwE and this supports the targeting of support, along with information from Challenge Advisers. There is a need to further improve collaboration and communication between the NSP and GwE at a national level. GwE have secured a regional agreement with Catch Up, which is supported by the 6 Directors. As the L/N SSL, 2 other SLs and 1 associate partner have been trained to deliver this training, schools are able to access the training at a reduced cost. The intervention is one recommended by WG to support struggling learners. Between April 2013 and December 2014 GwE will have facilitated 15 Catch Up/Dyfal Donc literacy and numeracy training sessions. 5 Welsh medium literacy sessions and 2 English medium have been organised and delivered, and 5 Welsh medium and 3 English medium numeracy sessions. In total 387 teachers and teaching assistants have been trained to deliver this intervention to learners. At present, pupil level data is not collated centrally [as used to happen with individual LAs in past] but, as a regional tracking system is developed, this should become possible. The monitoring and evaluation of the impact of these programmes on learner achievement are part of schools' plans and, as such, are monitored and challenged by Challenge Advisors during their termly focus visits. NQT support and training already takes place at a regional level under the leadership of a specific member of part-time staff. However, the Associate Partners have developed a support package for NQTs on literacy and numeracy, and discussions are ongoing about how best to deliver this across the region.

Standardisation/Moderation/Assessment:

GwE acknowledges that there is inconsistency in the standardisation and moderation of learners' work across the LAs of North Wales and that there is a need for a regional steer to allow for a more

systematic approach to quality assure and to facilitate the sharing and dissemination of best practice. During 2012-2013, best practice involved internal standardisation being monitored by Challenge Advisor as part of termly monitoring visits; moderation by the SMT/Heads of Department leading to follow-up training and support for those requiring further development and secondary teachers meeting with primary counterparts to moderate samples. GwE was actively involved in a number of cases, including the moderation of KS3 work in Denbighshire where each school was asked to submit a portfolio of level 5, 6 and 7 literacy work which was scrutinised and moderated by a panel of literacy expert practitioners and a GwE Challenge Advisor lead. A report was written for each school which was shared with the Headteacher and LA. Other cases of best practice involves GwE facilitated and supported projects at Ysgol Emrys ap Iwan, Ysgol Uwchradd Dinbych and Ysgol Uwchradd Rhyl [cross hub working to improve aspects of assessment]; cross region [Conwy, Denbigh and Gwynedd] Science MAT research group looking at teaching and learning of science with a view to increase the numbers of learners gaining level 5 and 6; Denbighshire secondary schools PLC for moderation of English at KS3 which led to increased consistency and reliability of TA at KS3 in portfolios and learner profiles; cross region collaborative working where Ysgol Cerrigydrudion, Ysbyty Ifan (Conwy) , Prion (Denbigh) and Brithdir (Gwynedd) moderated core subject teacher assessment as a family group. The pilot work undertaken last year has allowed for a more focused approach from 2014 onwards and is acknowledged as one of our main priorities within the Business Plan. GwE has SMT representation on the National Steering Group for TA Standardisation and Moderation under the leadership of David Heath and have contributed extensively to national discussions and direction for moving the agenda forward. As a result of those discussions, we have established a strategy for roll out during 2014-15 where a GwE Teacher Assessment Working Group has been established [incorporating secondary and primary specialist for each of the core subjects]. These practitioners are developing a set of guidelines on best practice and expected cluster actions with regard to standardisation and moderation of teacher assessment. They will also develop a levelled portfolio with commentary to support the professional dialogue and to serve as exemplars in cluster meetings. Guidelines and portfolios are to be distributed and discussed at the relevant SMT strategic forums across the region and will outline the expectations re: moderation practice for each cluster. A quality assurance process will be agreed where Challenge Advisors will be required to participate in around 20% of cluster moderation meetings and will include a cross section of core subjects and LAs. At the end of the year, a report will be written by the GwE SMT regarding the region's practices. During 2015-16, following an evaluation of this year's processes, a plan for a training package for all schools will be developed which will be rolled out in Autumn 2015.

Schools Challenge Cymru

Five schools within the Consortium are part of the Schools Challenge Cymru programme (Ysgol Caergybi, Anglesey; Ysgol Bryn Alyn, Wrexham; Ysgol Clywedog, Wrexham; Ysgol Rhosnesni, Wrexham and Holywell High School, Flint) and all five have worked effectively with their SCC Advisers to produce their 'Single School Development Plan' to the SCC team at Welsh Government by the July deadline. During the period of their compilation, SCC Advisers kept GwE SMT updated on progress and advice was provided where appropriate to ensure consistency across the region. The 'Single School Development Plan' for each of the five schools have been approved by Welsh Government,

and funding identified to support the priorities within the plans. All five schools have been allocated revenue and capital funding.

GwE management of the SCC project : in September 2015 a seconded Headteacher was appointed as SCC Consortium Link Officer to co-ordinate and over-see the work of the SCC Advisers and to take responsibility of the Consortium SCC grant. He also advises GwE SMT on developmental work and ensures appropriate administrative support. He meets regularly with the SCC Advisers, and liaises with SCC SMT's, the partner schools and SCC Business Managers, leading to the establishment of common protocols for the management of the SCC funding. The core purpose is to maximise the impact of the SCC project by providing high quality support for schools through both the deployment and maximisation of funding. Although in its initial phase, it is already evident that the school to school support being brokered by SCC schools aligns well with GwE's objective of building regional capacity. Between SCC and the PISA project there is already clear evidence of the engagement of significant numbers of our secondary schools with this important agenda.

The GwE central capacity-building funding had previously been approved and therefore all plans presented to the SCC team contained links to that central GwE funding where clearly identified elements of GwE capacity-building funding would be accessed. Grant funding includes an allocation of £513,000 to support capacity building within the five schools. Within this allocation are two themes, 'Leadership and Management' and 'Teaching and Learning' and the allocation is being used to develop school-to-school collaboration opportunities which were identified during the production of the 'Single School Development Plan'. Leadership and Management funding is being used to release members of SMT of other identified schools to work with the Schools Challenge Cymru schools - to share expertise in leadership, support improvement strategies, offer specialist support with assessment/tracking/learner outcomes in specific departments and promoting cross sector collaboration. This work will build leadership capacity within SCC schools. Teaching and Learning funding is being used to release experienced and effective teachers (including Heads of Department) to work with SCC schools to share plans, to observe teaching and learning and to mentor staff – the priority being to develop internal capacity building in core subjects.

All SCC schools have established their AIBs and the first meetings have taken place. Leadership and management support by partner schools is developing at whole-school and departmental level. Although still in its early stages, each SCC school has a plan that initially includes at least one lead partner school and other management support will be sourced as identified in their capacity-building bids to GwE. Cross-phase working is developing within clusters during this term. Taken together, this work will build leadership capacity both within SCC schools and more widely across the region. Teaching and learning support has been tailored to the needs of each school. In some cases the priority has been internal capacity building in core subjects, whilst in others an integrated approach to the involvement of the lead school has meant that sharing of expertise has begun. The impact upon SCC schools will be more immediately evident, but the longer-term legacy of the development

of coaching and leadership skills in subject leaders across the region is in line with one of GwE's wider objectives.

Promoting and developing the Welsh Language

A full evaluation of regional standards in Welsh is included as part of the commentary and evidence section for the first aspect [see above – Impact on primary and secondary schools' standards of achievement]. 2014 Welsh First Language assessment data for key indicators across all phases and against cohort and candidates are summarised below :

2014: Welsh First Language Outcomes – GwE region				
KS	Cohort	% of cohort assessed Welsh 1 st language	% of cohort achieved expected level	% of candidates achieved expected level
FP	7537	34.5%	30.5% (LCW5+)	88.4% (LCW5+)
KS2	6880	33.4%	29.1% (L4+)	87.2% (L4+)
KS3	7137	29.4%	26.4% (L5+)	89.7% (L5+)
KS4	7408	29.6%	21.2% (GCSE A*-C)	71.6% (GCSE A*-C)

The numbers of learners sitting GCSE Welsh First Language have risen over the last three years and statistics from individual LA's, such as Wrexham, also show an increase in KS2>KS3 numbers as a result of the success of their immersion course. A Welsh-Medium and Capacity Building Sub-Group has been established, and is chaired by a representative from ADEW. The group aims to promote greater collaboration and sharing of expertise in Welsh-medium education and to improve the equality of provision. Their work has focused on joint-scrutiny of national and LA policies, strategic plans and practices to ensure better understanding and collaboration across the region [specifically in relation to the document One Language for All, the WESP and the effective use of the WEG. It has also promoted and supported the Welsh Language Sabbatical Scheme across the region and has recently commissioned GwE to undertake an audit and evaluation of provision and ethos for the development of Welsh across the region. Effective collaboration between GwE and the respective LA's has also led to joint-evaluative exercises being conducted in targeted schools and a full time two-term secondment has been advertised for a SMT member to lead on further regional developments. There are currently many strengths across the region in relation to the promotion, the development and the standards in Welsh First Language with excellent practice identified in

Gwynedd [and corroborated in recent Estyn Thematic Inspection] and Ynys Mon eg Language Charter.

KEY STRENGTHS

- impact on performance and outcomes
- impact on performance and quality of leadership in the majority of targeted schools
- effective literacy and numeracy targeted support via GwE Associate Partners
- effective cross-region and cross-phase collaboration to develop 14-19 provision
- effective facilitation and promotion of school-to-school collaboration in specific clusters

KEY AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- further enable the school improvement service to more effectively meet priorities agreed with the individual authorities by developing the regional data collation/analysis service
- further develop our school-to-school model so that all schools are actively and effectively engaged in collaborative working
- establish robust programmes for developing leadership across the region
- increase level of challenge and support for good 'coasting' good schools so that they become great schools
- further strengthen the role of the Governing Body as a 'critical friend' in schools
- further improve the quality of support to improve self-evaluation and improvement planning in schools
- further develop work done by Gwynedd and Ynys Mon re: use of Language Charter to promote the development of the Welsh language across the region



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

17 DECEMBER 2014

Report by: GwE Managing Director

Subject: GwE Self-Evaluation

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To present the self-evaluation to the Joint Committee members in preparation for the Estyn & Wales Audit Office (WAO) Thematic Survey.

2.0 Background

2.1 Estyn & the WAO are undertaking a thematic survey of regional school improvement services and Auditor General VFM study on Educational Consortia in Wales.

2.2 Both Estyn & WAO will be visiting GwE during the week commencing 12 January 2015. In preparation for the visit, GwE have conducted a self-evaluation based on the 1st year of the service being operational.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 The self-evaluation focuses on 3 main areas:

- Impact on primary & secondary schools' standards of achievement;
- Effectiveness of Governance of Leadership procedures;
- Quality of Provision & Services.

3.2 It includes a concise judgement & key areas for development for each of the 3 main areas.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 The Joint Committee is asked to note the content of the report.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6.0 Equalities Impact

6.1 There are no new equalities impact arising from this report.

7.0 Personnel Implications

7.1 There are no new personnel implications arising from this report.

8.0 Consultation Undertaken

8.1 The North Wales ADEW Group have been consulted during the development of the document.

9.0 Appendices

9.1 GwE Self-Evaluation: Estyn Thematic Report (January 2015)

SELF EVALUATION: ESTYN THEMATIC REPORT [JANUARY 2015]

Regional Overview	Number of schools	Number of Welsh medium schools	Number of pupils	FSM 2013	SEN pupils
Primary	379	199	58787	8979 / 15%	11545 / 20%
Secondary	54	24	40805	5460 / 13%	8019 / 20%
Middle	1	0	477	23 / 5%	109 / 23%
Special	9	-	1153	451 / 39%	1153 / 100%

ASPECT : IMPACT ON PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS' STANDARDS OF ACHIEVEMENT

Concise Judgement

Improving quality and standards is a main priority for GwE and its partners and has a positive impact on experiences and outcomes for children and young people. GwE believes that standards across the FP, KS2, KS3 and KS5 are generally good and that recent trends suggest plateauing at FP and KS2 with further improvements at KS3 and KS4.

However, it is recognised that 2013>2014 national progress has been greater across the main indicators in all key stages [with the exception of KS3] and that there are still variations in performance between establishments in both sectors, across the region. Too many individual schools find that their rolling position is typified by performance in the main indicators which is below the median in national FSM benchmarks or in the bottom quartile. Specific strategies have been implemented with establishments with a history of underperformance [including adopting quality improvement plans and agreeing on a tight and regular timetable of monitoring and challenging] which has resulted in good improvements in a substantial percentage of them. With a minority of those schools making inadequate progress, the Authorities, in full cooperation with GwE, have taken action in accordance with the powers and responsibilities as defined in the Authority/School Partnership Agreement [Section 197 Education Act 2007].

The biggest challenge remains with improving performance in a number of targeted secondary schools and consolidating the recent improvement seen in a number of others as well as securing improvements in standards and leadership across underperforming primary schools. The intense and focused action in these schools since 2013 reflects the commitment of the authorities and GwE's Senior Management Team to ensuring improvements for every learner, regardless of their location within the region.

Performance in the main indicator at the end of every key stage: in comparison with the national situation, the performance of GwE's region in the main indicator is good at KS3 and KS4 [although 2013>2014 KS4 progress at national level surpasses local improvement rate]. Performance at FP and KS2 are below the national average for the first time in three years and further work needs to be undertaken to support assessment, standardisation and moderation across the region.

Indicator	2013		+/-	2014		+/-	Progress 2012>2013		Progress 2013>2014	
	GwE	Wales		GwE	Wales		GwE	Wales	GwE	Wales
FPI	83.5	83.0	+0.5	84.3	85.2	-0.9	+1.8	+2.5	+0.8	+2.2
CSI KS2	85.5	84.3	+1.2	85.6	86.1	-0.5	+1.9	+1.7	+0.1	+1.8
CSI KS3	78.7	77.0	+1.7	83.7	81.0	+2.7	+3.0	+4.5	+5.1	+4.0
TL2+	56.0	52.7	+3.3	57.0	55.1	+1.9	+2.8	+1.6	+1.0	+2.4

Source of evidence of processes and impact

Regional performance data for FP; KS2; KS3; KS4; KS5 + national tests [2012/2013/2014]

LA Core Data Set x6 [2012/2013/2014]

2013/2014 MD's Annual Report on Performance to Joint Committee.

2012/2013/2014 LA Annual Report to Elected Members x6

2013 Banding data and 2014 National categorisation data [primary and secondary].

Summary of Estyn judgements for primary/secondary schools x 6 LA between 2012>2014.

Secondary Banding : for 2013, in comparison with the national situation, the picture is very positive with a substantially higher % of GwE school in Band 1 and 2 [50.9%] and a significantly lower % in Band 4 and 5. [18.1%]. Between 2012>2013 14 schools in Band 4 or 5 had improved their banding position and across the region, there has been a significant reduction in the number of schools in Band 5 which reflects the impact of the targeted and brokered support by GwE over the period. In 2013 there was only one school in the lowest Band but there was a +11.5% improvement in their performance in 2014. Overall performance of Band 4 schools for 2014 was also most encouraging and in many cases again reflects the support GwE had brokered on their behalf – examples of improvement include School A Wrexham +7%, School B Wrexham + 11% [although despite overall improvement, the performance of FSM pupils was lower than the previous year]; School C Wrexham +12%; School A Flint +10%, School A Gwynedd +13%. Two schools [one in Wrexham and one in Gwynedd] were the only schools in the bottom two bands to see a slight drop. Intervention strategies for these schools in the coming year are already underway and include the personal input of the respective Senior System Leader. However, whilst there has also been a reduction in the number of schools in Band 4 and 5 [from 17 in 2012 to 10 in 2013], we feel that the % is still too high and we will continue to work with key stakeholders to support, monitor and challenge underperforming schools. An enhanced menu of leadership support and school>school collaboration will be delivered in 2014-15 to help achieve the necessary improvements. The LA with the strongest profile for the banding is Mon where all 5 schools, in 2013, were in Band 1 or 2.

Secondary National Categorisation : with the changes in the categorisation process, the reduction in groups/bands from 5 to 4 and additional indicators and differentiated weightings being taken into consideration, the number of schools in the lowest categories has increased to xx%. The number of schools performing in the highest category has to be increased and we need to address and clarify to stakeholders how GwE will support ‘good’ schools on their improvement journey to becoming ‘excellent’ schools. *Need to update with 2014 national categorisation data.*

Secondary National Categorisation Profile 2014-2015 [Stage 1 – Data]								
	Number of schools in Category 1	% C1	Number of schools in Category 2	% C2	Number of schools in Category 3	% C3	Number of schools in Category 4	% C4
Anglesey								
Gwynedd								
Conwy								
Denbighshire								
Flintshire								
Wrexham								
GwE								
Wales								

	Number of schools in Category 1 and 2	% C1 and 2	Number of schools in Category 3 and 4	% C3 and 4
Anglesey				
Gwynedd				
Conwy				
Denbighshire				
Flintshire				
Wrexham				
GwE				
Wales				

Primary National Categorisation : when compared to local categorisation for 2013, there are significant variations in the placements of some schools [many of these small schools with small cohorts] at Stage 1 of the process. The % of schools in the lowest two categories is too high and further work is needed to improve standards as well as the accuracy of TA at both key stages. Stage 2 has led to the final category being higher, for a number of these schools as a result of good quality leadership, high quality teaching and learning or where very small cohorts impact quartile placement and do not fairly represent standards. Further work needs to be done also to examine the correlation between the outcomes in the national tests and school based assessments of the NC. As with the secondary sector, the % of schools in the highest band/group is also disappointing and we need to address how GwE will support the improvement journey of good schools to become excellent schools.

	Number of schools in Category 1	% C1	Number of schools in Category 2	% C2	Number of schools in Category 3	% C3	Number of schools in Category 4	% C4
Anglesey	11	22.92%	16	33.33%	14	29.17%	7	14.58%
Gwynedd	14	14.43%	32	32.99%	35	36.08%	16	16.49%
Conwy	6	10.17%	21	35.59%	25	42.37%	7	11.86%
Denbighshire	4	8.33%	16	33.33%	24	50.00%	4	8.33%
Flintshire	10	14.71%	21	30.88%	25	36.76%	12	17.65%
Wrexham	6	10.17%	19	32.20%	27	45.76%	7	11.86%
GwE	51	13.46%	125	32.98%	150	39.58%	53	13.98%
Wales	186	13.77%	487	36.05%	503	37.23%	175	12.95%

	Number of schools in Category 1 and 2	% C1 and 2	Number of schools in Category 3 and 4	% C3 and 4
Anglesey	27	56.25%	21	43.75%
Gwynedd	46	47.42%	51	52.58%
Conwy	27	45.76%	32	54.24%
Denbighshire	20	41.67%	28	58.33%
Flintshire	31	45.59%	37	54.41%
Wrexham	25	42.37%	34	57.63%
GwE	176	46.44%	203	53.56%
Wales	673	49.81%	678	50.19%

Estyn Inspections :

The regional profile for schools inspected between Summer 2013 and Autumn 2014, is generally positive with only 9 [2.0%] of schools in a statutory category [Significant Improvement or Special Measures]. Individual LA profiles as follows :

Mon school inspections [total of 15 inspections]	Inspection profile	Outcome of follow-up action by GwE
2013>2014 educational year [Summer] : 3 primary schools	1 school no follow-up; 2 schools Estyn Monitoring	1 school has made the expected progress and has been removed from follow-up category. The other school is awaiting a visit on 18 November with firm prospects that it will be removed from the category.
2013>2014 educational year [Autumn/Spring/Summer]: 8 primary schools and 1 secondary school	4 schools no follow-up; 1 LA monitoring; 4 Estyn Monitoring [the situation of 2 of these schools was historically vulnerable and considerable progress was made in a short space of time to get them into this category].	No revisits have taken place.
2014>2015 educational year [Autumn]: 1 primary school, 1 special school and 1 secondary school	Although the reports have not been published, no school was placed in a follow-up category.	NA
Current profile for Mon [all schools] : - Number/% schools in LA monitoring category: 1 [1.8%] - Number/% schools in Estyn monitoring category: 5 [9.2%] - Number/% schools in need of Significant Improvement: 0 [0.0%] - Number/% schools in Special Measures: 0 [0.0%]		
Judgement profile [of the schools inspected in the period]: - Number/% where Good or better was awarded across the 3 Key Questions: 8 [53.3%] - Number% where KQ1 was judged to be Good or better: 11 [73.3%] - Number% where KQ2 was judged to be Good or better: 10 [66.6%] - Number% where KQ3 was judged to be Good or better: 9 [60.0%] - Number/% where one of the Key Questions was judged to be unsatisfactory: 0 [0.0%] - Number/% schools where a Key Question/Overall Judgement was judged to be Excellent: 1 [1.8%]		
Gwynedd school inspections [total of 27 inspections]	Inspection profile	Outcome of follow-up action by GwE
2013>2014 educational year [Summer] : 5 primary schools	No follow up in any school	N/A
2013>2014 educational year [Autumn/Spring/Summer]: 15 primary schools; 4 secondary and 1 special schools	2 Significant Improvement; 6 Estyn Monitoring; 3 LA Monitoring; 9 schools no follow-up	Estyn have re-visited 2 schools [1 Estyn Monitoring category and 1 Significant Improvement – which had remained in category since 2012] and have removed them from their respective categories
2014>2015 educational year [Autumn]: 2 primary schools	1 Estyn Monitoring; 1 school no follow-up	N/A
Current profile for Gwynedd [% based on all schools] :		

- Number/% schools in LA Monitoring : 3 [2.6%]
- Number/% schools in Estyn Monitoring : 6 [5.3%]
- Number/% schools in Significant Improvement : 2 [1.7%]
- Number/% Special Measures : 0 [0.0%]

Judgement profile [based on the 27 schools which have been inspected during the period in question] :

- Number/% judged Good or better across all 3 key questions : 19 [70.3%]
- Number/% judged Good or better for KQ1 : 20 [74.0%]
- Number/% judged Good or better for KQ2 : 21 [77.7%]
- Number/% judged Good or better for KQ3 : 20 [74.0%]
- Number/% judged Unsatisfactory for one or more of the key questions : 1 [3.7%]
- Number/% judged Excellent for one or more of the key questions : 4 [14.8%]

Conwy school inspections [total of 14 inspections]	Inspection profile	Outcome of follow-up action by GwE
2013>2014 educational year [Summer] : 3 schools	1 LA Monitoring; 1 Estyn Monitoring; 1 school no follow-up	Both schools out of category
2013>2014 educational year [Autumn/Spring/Summer]: 11 schools	4 Estyn Monitoring; 7 schools no follow-up	No revisits have taken place.
2014>2015 educational year [Autumn]: 0	N/A	N/A
Current profile for Conwy [all schools] :		
• Number/% schools in LA monitoring category: 0 [%] • Number/% schools in Estyn monitoring category: 4 [6.2%] • Number/% schools in need of Significant Improvement: 0 [0%] • Number/% schools in Special Measures: 0 [0%]		
Judgement profile [of the schools inspected in the period]:		
• Number/% where Good or better was awarded across the 3 Key Questions: 9 [64.2%] • Number% where KQ1 was judged to be Good or better: 9 [64.2%] • Number% where KQ2 was judged to be Good or better: 9 [64.2%] • Number% where KQ3 was judged to be Good or better: 10 [71.4%] • Number/% where one of the Key Questions was judged to be unsatisfactory: 0 [0%] • Number/% schools where a Key Question/Overall Judgement was judged to be Excellent: 1 [7.1%]		

Denbighshire school inspections [total of 13 inspections]	Inspection profile	Outcome of follow-up action by GwE
2013>2014 educational year [Summer] : 2 schools	1 Estyn Monitoring; 1 school no follow-up	Out of category
2013>2014 educational year [Autumn/Spring/Summer]: 9 schools	2 LA Monitoring; 2 Estyn Monitoring 5 schools no follow-up	One LA Monitoring out of category
2014>2015 educational year [Autumn]: 2 schools	1 LA Monitoring; 1 Estyn Monitoring	N/A

Current profile for Denbighshire [all schools] :

- Number/% schools in LA monitoring category: 1 [2.1%]
- Number/% schools in Estyn monitoring category: 3 [6.4%]
- Number/% schools in need of Significant Improvement: 0 [%]
- Number/% schools in Special Measures: 0 [%]

Judgement profile [of the schools inspected in the period]:

- Number/% where Good or better was awarded across the 3 Key Questions: 9 [69.2%]
- Number/% where KQ1 was judged to be Good or better: 9 [69.2%]
- Number/% where KQ2 was judged to be Good or better: 9 [69.2%]
- Number/% where KQ3 was judged to be Good or better: 9 [69.2%]
- Number/% where one of the Key Questions was judged to be unsatisfactory: 0 [%]
- Number/% schools where a Key Question/Overall Judgement was judged to be Excellent: 0 [%]

Flintshire school inspections [total of 18 inspections]	Inspection profile	Outcome of follow-up action by GwE
2013>2014 educational year [Summer] : 3 Primary	1 LA Monitoring; 1 Estyn Monitoring; 1 school no follow-up	All schools out of category
2013>2014 educational year [Autumn/Spring/Summer]: 12 Primary and 1 Secondary	1 Special Measures; 2 Estyn Monitoring; 4 LA Monitoring; 6 schools no follow-up	1 school remains in Special Measures
2014>2015 educational year [Autumn]: 2 Primary	1 LA Monitoring; 1 Estyn Monitoring	N/A
Current profile for Flintshire [% based on all schools] :		
• Number/% schools in LA Monitoring : 5 [6.2%] • Number/% schools in Estyn Monitoring : 3 [3.7%] • Number/% schools in Significant Improvement : 2 [2.5%] • Number/% Special Measures : 1[1.2%]		
Judgement profile [based on the 18 schools which have been inspected during the period in question] :		
• Number/% judged Good or better across all 3 key questions : 13 [72.2%] • Number/% judged Good or better for KQ1 : 14 [77.8%] • Number/% judged Good or better for KQ2 : 14 [77.8%] • Number/% judged Good or better for KQ3 : 15[83.3%] • Number/% judged Unsatisfactory for one or more of the key questions : 1 [5.6%] • Number/% judged Excellent for one or more of the key questions : 1 [5.6%]		
Wrexham school inspections [total of 19 inspections]	Inspection profile	Outcome of follow-up action by GwE
2013>2014 educational year [Summer] : 2 Primary	1 Estyn Monitoring; 1 school no follow-up	Out of category
2013>2014 educational year [Autumn/Spring/Summer]: 10 Primary; 4 Secondary and 1 Special School	2 Special Measures; 7 Estyn Monitoring; 2 LA Monitoring; 4 schools no follow-up	Remain in Special Measures

2014>2015 educational year [Autumn]: 2 Primary	1 Estyn Monitoring; 1 school no follow-up	N/A
Current profile for Wrexham [% based on all schools] :		
- Number/% schools in LA Monitoring : 4 [6.0%] - Number/% schools in Estyn Monitoring : 8 [11.9%] - Number/% schools in Significant Improvement : 0 [0.0%] - Number/% Special Measures : 4 [6.0%]		
Judgement profile [based on the 19 schools which have been inspected during the period in question] :		
- Number/% judged Good or better across all 3 key questions : 8 [42.1%] - Number/% judged Good or better for KQ1 : 11 [57.9%] - Number/% judged Good or better for KQ2 : 13 [68.4%] - Number/% judged Good or better for KQ3 : 13 [68.4%] - Number/% judged Unsatisfactory for one or more of the key questions : 2 [10.5%] - Number/% judged Excellent for one or more of the key questions : 1 [5.3%]		
Foundation Phase - on a regional basis, performance continues to improve with a +1.1% increase from last year and a +2.9% increase from 2012>2014. However, a national increase of 2.2% this year [coupled with a 4.7% increase over rolling period] has meant that the regional performance falls slightly below the national average for the first time. The greatest regional increases was seen in Conwy [+4.6% and +4.1] but for Mon [-1.3%] and Wrexham [-0.6%] the 2014 performance was lower than the corresponding figure for 2013. - LCE 05+ [86.4%] is -0.2% lower than the national average [for the first time in 3 years]. A +2.5% improvements from 2012>2014 and +0.3% between 2013>2014 were lower than the corresponding national figures of +3.2% and +1.4%. The greatest dip was seen in Mon [-2.6% on previous year] while Gwynedd improved by the highest margin [+1.8%]. At 06+ [32.3%], the regions performance was slightly above the national average [+0.1%] as was the improvements over the three year period 2012>2014 [+6.7% in comparison to a national figure of +6.6%]. However, improvements from 2013>2014 were higher nationally [+2.7% in comparison to a regional figure of +2.5%]. On an individual LA basis, only Mon witnessed a dip from 2013 [-2.0%] and the greatest improvements from last year were seen in Gwynedd [+8.0%] and Denbighshire [+6.0%] - LCW 05+ [88.4%] is lower than the national average for the second year in succession [three year improvement of +1.8% compared to national figure of +3.9% and 2013>2014 improvement of +2.3% compared to national +3.1%]. The most significant improvements 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 were seen in Conwy [+6.4% and +8.8%] whilst Wrexham witnessed a corresponding dip of -2.3% and -1.2%. LCW 06+ improved +2.4% to 34.1% [compared to a +3.3% national improvement. However, the regional % is still above the national average for the third year in succession. 2012>2014 improvements were +4.5% compared to +3.7% nationally. - MD 05+ at 88.8% was +0.1% higher than the national average but the improvement rate between 2012>2014 [+1.2%] and 2013>2014 [+0.8%] is less than the corresponding national figures [+2.1%/+1.3%]. Two LA's saw a dip between 2013>2014 [Flintshire -0.7% and Mon -2.1%]. At MD 06+, the regional performance has fallen below the national average for the first time in 3 years [-0.6%]. Wales has seen a +6.1% improvement from 2012>2014 whilst the regional figure is +5.0% [and +0.9% between 2013>2014]. At individual LA level, the biggest increase from 2013 was seen in Gwynedd +4.9%. - PSD 05+ [94.4%] is slightly above the national average. 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 improvements, however, are less than the national improvement rates [GwE +2.6% and + 0.6%/Wales +3.3% and +1.2%]. Mon and Wrexham saw performance dip from 2013 [-1.1% and -1.0% respectively]. PSD 06+ at 52.7% is +1.2% higher than the national average but national improvements from 2012>2014 are +20.9% [compared to +10.6 regionally]. The most significant improvements from 2013>2014 were seen in Gwynedd [+7.2%] and Conwy [+8.1%]. - Performance of boys and girls : the gap between boys and girls has closed across all the main indicators with the exception of LCE 06+. The gap is less than the national average for LCE 05+ and 06+ and MD 05+. The performance of boys, when compared to 2013 figures has also improved across all		

indicators with the exception of MD 06+ [-0.2%]. In the main indicator [FPI], the gap was reduced to -8.6% with a 2.0% improvement for boys [corresponding national figures of -8.5%/+2.1%]. The biggest gap in regional performance was seen in Wrexham -10.0%, Gwynedd -9.3% and Mon -9.0%. For LCE 05+, the gap was reduced to -7.3% [-8.3% nationally] with a 1.4% improvement for boys from 2013 [+1.1% nationally]. There was a significant gap of -37.9% between boys/girls in Gwynedd]. For LCE 06+, the gap increased to -11.9% [-12.1% nationally] but a 2.0% improvement for boys from 2013 [+2.2% nationally]. The gap for LCW 05+ and 06+ was reduced from 2013 [-9.9%/-13.7% compared to national gap of -7.9%/-12.3%]. Boys improved by 2.8% at both levels [+3.9%/+4.6% nationally]. Largest regional gap seen in Wrexham -18.2% for 05+ and Mon for 06+ -17.7%. For Mathematical Development, the gap was reduced between 2013>2014 [to -4.3% for 05+ and -0.2% for 06+ / national figures of -5.0%/+0.9%]. At 05+ boys improved +1.0% from last year [+0.9% nationally] but there was a slight drop at 06+ [-0.2% - +0.8% nationally]. At regional level, the performance of boys was higher in 3 LA's [Conwy +3.8%/Gwynedd +1.3%/Mon +1.1%]. Denbighshire had the largest gap of -4.1%.

- steady progress has been made in challenging TA [most notably within the Conwy/Denbighshire Hub]. Ensuring consistency in approach and a more robust regional standardisation and moderation programme will be prioritised over the current educational year.

Key Stage 2

- CSI performance for 2014 is 85.6% [a +1.9% improvement over rolling period 2012>2014 and a slight +0.1% 2013>2014 improvement compared to respective national improvements of +3.6% and +1.8%]. The increased focus placed on regional schools to improve standardisation and moderation has resulted in a re-calibration of assessments and thus the increase is lower than the national average. Three of the six LA's improved on their 2013 performance [Conwy, Denbighshire and Flintshire] with the greatest improvement seen in Flintshire [+1.1%]. Gwynedd [-0.6%], Mon [-0.2%] and Wrexham [-1.2%] have seen a decrease in the % attaining the expected level. In Mon, however, results have plateaued following significant increase between 2012 and 2013. The Core Subject Indicator (CSI) has improved year on year for the past three years in Conwy/Denbighshire and Flintshire.
- the region's performance at the expected levels and higher levels for the core subjects appears to have plateaued for many of the indicators and as a result, national 2014 performance and national improvement 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 for almost all indicators are higher the regional improvement rate. Performance for Welsh L5+ and Science L5+ are the only indicators where regional performance is higher than the national average for 2014.
- English L4+ 88.4% matches the national average and is a +2.6% improvement between 2012>2014 and +0.3% improvement from 2013 [respective national figures +3.2% and +1.3%]. Over the rolling period, the greatest improvements were seen in Flintshire [+5.1%] and Mon [+3.4%] whilst 2013 and 2014 results seem to have plateaued. At L5+ [37.5%] there is a +4.5% improvement between 2012>2014 and a 1.1% from 2013 [+5.1% and +2.3% nationally]. Greatest regional improvement rates between 2012>2014 were seen in Denbighshire [+6.9%] and Conwy [+5.3%] whilst results in Mon dipped -3.0% between 2013>2014.
- Welsh L4+ for 2014 was 87.2% and although -0.9% lower than national average, there is a +4.6% improvement between 2012>2014 [+4.1% nationally]. The most significant improvements between 2012>2014 were seen in Mon [+9.2%] and Flintshire [+11.1%] but there was a dip in performance in Denbighshire between 2013>2014 [-2.9%]. At L5+, the regional performance of 34.1% is slightly above the national average [+0.2%] but improvement between 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 [+6.0%/+2.5%] were lower than the corresponding figures for Wales [+7.3%/+3.5%]. The most notably regional improvements between 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 were seen in Conwy [+6.6%/+8.3%] and Flintshire [+6.7%/+5.4%]. Albeit, as noted above for the Foundation Phase, cohort size at regional, national and individual LA level needs to be taken into consideration.
- Mathematics L4+ [88.4%] mirrors the result for 2013 and is slightly below the national average [88.9%] for the first time in three years [2012>2014 improvement of 0.9% is also below the national average of +2.2%]. Performance at L5+ also mirrors the situation at L4+, with the 2014 regional figure slightly below the national average [37.9%/38.0%] for the first time in three years. The most significant regional gains between 2013>2014 were seen in Conwy [+2.9%] and Wrexham [+2.0%]. Mon was the only LA to witness a dip between 2013>2014 [-1.1%]
- Science L4+ [89.9%] mirrors the situation for Mathematics, where the regional performance has fallen below the national average for the first time in three years [by -0.4% in 2014]. The 2014 figure is also -1.1% lower than the 2013 performance [corresponding national improvement of +0.6%] and the dip from 2013>2014 is reflected in the performance of all 6 LA's with the most notable difference in Wrexham [-2.1%]. At L5+ [38.7%], the regional figure continues to be above the national average of 38.4% but the 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 improvements [+5.1%/+0.6%] are lower than the corresponding figures for Wales [+5.3%/+2.3%]. The most notable regional improvement over the respective periods has been in Gwynedd [+5.4%

and +4.1%].

- Performance of boys and girls : CSI performance for both boys [82.5%] and girls [89.0%] improved slightly from 2013 [+0.2% boys and +0.9% girls] but was less than the corresponding improvement [+1.7%/+1.9%]. As a result, the performance of boys and girls has fallen below the national average for the first time in three years. The regional gap in performance between boys/girls, since 2012, has been wider than the national average. In 2012 there was a -6.7% regional gap, -6.6% in 2013 and -6.5% in 2014. In 2014 the most pronounced gap was seen in Gwynedd [-8.5%] and Conwy [-8.2%]. Across the core subjects, at the expected and higher levels, the regional gap for many of the indicators is wider than the national figure. The regional gap is widest for Welsh L5+ [-18.6%] and English L5+ [-11.9%]. The only indicator where the performance of boys is higher than the performance of girls is Mathematics L5+ [+1.0%]. In 2014, the most significant gaps in performance were seen in Wrexham for Welsh L4+ [-22.1%]; Conwy for Welsh L5+ [-15.3%]; Conwy for English L4+ [-11.0%]; Wrexham for English L5+ [-16.1%]; Gwynedd for Mathematics L4+ [-6.0%]; Denbighshire for Mathematics L5+ [+6.3%]; Flintshire for Science L4+ and L5+ [-5.3% and -6.7%].
- as noted above, although some progress has been made in challenging TA, we need to ensure better consistency in approach and a more robust regional standardisation and moderation programme will be prioritised over the current educational year.
- at both key stages in the primary sector, for some schools, the variance between performance and target has been significant and GwE will have to ensure that monitoring visits offer a more robust challenge, not only to the target-setting processes in schools but also to monitoring the progress of individual pupils towards personal targets

KS3

- CSI performance for the region in 2014 was 83.8% - an improvement of 8.1% between 2012>2014 and 5.1% between 2013>2014 [in comparison to corresponding national figures of 8.5% and 4.0%]. All individual LA's improved on the 2013 figure but the greatest increases were seen in Denbighshire [11.3% and 8.2%] and Wrexham [8.3% and 6.1%]. In 2014, the only LA below the national average was Wrexham. [78.4%] but the performance was most encouraging and to some extent driven by the coordinated GwE/LA intervention with under-performing secondary schools. Gwynedd has been the highest performing LA in Wales for the last three years
- the region's performance at the expected levels and higher levels for all core subjects improved from 2013 and, with the exception of Science L5+, which matched the national increase [and Welsh L5+], regional improvement excelled on the national average. 2012>2014 improvements were greater at a regional level at L6+ for Welsh, English, Mathematics and Science but were lower than the national improvement rate for all core subjects at the expected level.
- English L5+ 88.4% : the regional figure has been above the national average for the past 3 years with a 6.5% increase between 2012>2014 and 4.1% between 2013>2014. The corresponding national figures are +6.6% and +3.0%. Greatest increases over the three year period were seen in Denbighshire [+10.9%]. At L6+ [50.5%], there has been significant improvement over the rolling period [+11.2% 2012>2014 and +7.3% 2013>2014]. The national improvement has been +10.5% and +5.8% respectively. 2012>2014 improvements have been greatest in Mon [+11.8%]; Denbighshire [+14.4%] and Flintshire [+15.2%]. Denbighshire and Conwy also saw significant 2013>2014 increases [+13.4% and +11.2% respectively]
- Welsh L5+ 89.7% : the 2014 figure sees the region fall below the national figure for the first time in 3 years [albeit only by 0.4%] but the size of the cohort being assessed must be taken into consideration [as it must when looking at individual LA performance]. Increases between 2012>2014 [+5.3%] and 2013>2014 [+1.0%] are lower than the national increases of +5.9% and +2.5%. Greatest increases [2012>2014 and 2013>2014] at individual LA level were seen in Wrexham [+13.0% and +3.4%] and Denbighshire [+8.4% and +5.5%]. Mon saw a slight dip of -0.7% from 2013, Conwy a -1.5% dip, with a significant reduction of -11.7% in Flintshire. At L6+ [55.1%], the region's performance places it 2.4% above the national average with a +12.6% increase between 2012>2014 and a +7.6% increase between 2013>2014 [national corresponding figures of +11.7% and +7.1%]. The greatest 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 increases at LA level were seen in Denbighshire [+26.1% and +15.3%] and Wrexham [+32.0% and +23.2%]. Conwy was the only regional LA to see a 2013>2014 dip [-2.0%].
- Mathematics L5+ 88.3% : 2012>2014 increase of +4.9% was lower than the corresponding national increase of 5.5% but the regional increase between 2013>2014 [+3.0%] was higher than the national increase of +2.7%. Greatest LA increase [2012>2014 and 2013>2014] was seen in Denbighshire [+6.7% and 5.7%] and Wrexham [+5.4% and +3.4%]. At L6+, the regional performance of 59.2% is 3.0% higher than the national average and the increase between 2012>2014 [+6.7%] and 2013>2014 [+3.7%] is also higher than the corresponding national figures of +6.6% and +3.1%.

Improvements between 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 were most significant in Mon [+10.3% and +7.3%], Gwynedd [+8.6% and +5.5%] and Denbighshire [+8.4% and +6.1%].

- Science L5+ 92.1% : the regional figure has been above the national average for the past 3 years with a +6.0% increase between 2012>2014 and +3.4% between 2013>2014. The corresponding national figures are +6.8% and +3.4%. Greatest increases between 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 were seen in Denbighshire [+8.2% and +7.5%], Gwynedd [+8.4% and +4.6%] and Wrexham [+7.4% and +4.2%]. At L6+ [57.5%], there has been significant improvement over the rolling period [+11.0% 2012>2014 and +7.5% 2013>2014]. The national improvement has been +10.8% and +6.0% respectively. 2012>2014 and 2013>2014 improvements have been greatest in Denbighshire [+11.0% and +12.1%] and Flintshire [+12.9% and +11.1%].
- Performance of boys/girls : CSI performance for both boys [79.2%] and girls [88.5%] improved from 2013>2014 [an increase of +4.9% and +5.2% respectively]. This is in comparison with a national increase of +4.4% for boys and +3.6% for girls. The regional gap has increased by 0.3% from 2013>2014 to 9.3% whilst the national figure has decreased by 0.8% to 8.7%. At LA level, the biggest gap in performance in 2014 was in Wrexham and Mon [13.6% and 11.9% respectively]. Across the core subjects [with the exception of English at L5+], the gap between boys/girls has increased from 2013. The most significant gap is seen in English and Welsh at the higher levels [-20.1% and -21.4% respectively]. At individual LA level, the greatest gaps in performance across the core subjects were as follows : Welsh L5+ [Flintshire -29.9% and Wrexham -16.9%]; Welsh L6+ [Gwynedd -23.7% and Denbighshire -24.5%]; English L5+ [Mon -11.7% and Wrexham -15.4%]; English L6+ [Gwynedd -25.7%, Flintshire -21.3% and Wrexham and Conwy -20.0%]; Mathematics L5+ [Mon -8.1% and Gwynedd -5.9%]; Mathematics L6+ [Gwynedd -9.7% and Wrexham -8.5%]; Science L5+ [Mon -8.8% and Wrexham -7.6%]; Science L6+ [Mon -15.5% and Conwy -12.4%].
- as with FP and KS2 there is variance in the rigour, quality and consistency of TA and GwE will need a clear strategy in place for improving local and regional standardisation and moderation

KS4

- L2+ : the region's performance increased 1.0% from 2013 to 57.0% in comparison to a 2.3% national increase. Between 2012>2014 the figure has increased by 3.8% [compared to a national increase of 4.0%]. Between 2013>2014, 3 regional LA's saw an improvement in their performance – Gwynedd +3.3%; Denbighshire +2.1% and Wrexham +2.9%, whilst Mon, Conwy and Flintshire witnessed a slight dip of -0.3%, -0.6% and -0.7% respectively. Between 2012>2014 all 6 regional LA's have seen an increase in their average with the greatest improvements in Gwynedd [+6.3%] and Wrexham [+6.0%]. The gap between the highest and lowest performing LA in the region was reduced from 13.8% in 2013 to 10.2%. The increase at individual LA level, and in particular Gwynedd and Wrexham, is directly linked to the coordinated GwE/LA intervention with the under-performing secondary schools [Gwynedd : School A +10.1%; School B +10.7%; School C +10.3%; Wrexham : School A +6.2%; School B +9.7%; School C +11.5%; School D +13.4%]. However, the gains made in some of these schools is not always reflected in the performance of their FSM cohort [in School D in Gwynedd only 3.8% of FSM pupils gained the L2+ Threshold and the corresponding figure at School B in Wrexham was 15.7%]. Performance at School E in Wrexham, was especially disappointing where only 11.1% of FSM pupils gained the threshold indicator. The lack of improvement from 2013>2014 at School D in Gwynedd [-0.7%] is frustrating when considering the significant investment made. For Flintshire [61.5%], there has been a 0.7% decrease from 2013, with significant decreases seen in School A [-10.6%] and School B [-9.3%]. Denbighshire saw a +2.0% increase and there were significant gains in School A [+7.7%] and School B [+7.1%]. However, performance at School C was down by -8.4% from the corresponding figure for last year. The performance of their FSM pupils is also disappointing at 10.8%. In Conwy, there were disappointing performances at School A [-10.9%] and School B [-8.0%] whilst School A in Mon was down -9.0%. These performances have had a visible impact on this year's outcomes for the respective LA's. In Conwy, especially disappointing is the performance of FSM at School B with only 12.9% of the FSM pupils gaining the L2+ Threshold. Further analysis of the performance of the FSM cohort across all schools has been undertaken during our termly monitoring visits to gauge levels of underperformance against agreed targets and to ensure that more robust interventions are applied for the current Y11 cohort. There were also notable variations between targets and performance in some individual schools across the region and a robust challenge on variance was made during the GwE termly monitoring visit. We also scrutinise progress towards 2015 targets in all termly visits. Across many of the region's schools, there were significant differences between performance in Maths and English/Welsh which implies that further attention must be given to the effective use of read-across data scrutiny and individual pupil tracking.

- L2 performance also increased 2.9% to 84.0% from 81.1% in 2013 [in comparison with a +4.2% national increase]. The regional figure is still 2.0% above the national average. All 6 regional LA's saw an improvement from 2013, with the most notable increases in Gwynedd [+6.8%] and Mon [+3.2%]. Between 2012>2014 Gwynedd and Mon have seen increases of +13.2% and +12.5% respectively. At individual school level, there were significant 2013>2014 improvements : Mon School A [+16.2%]; Gwynedd School A [+15.5%]; School B [+14.9%]; School C [+12.2%]; School D [+15.0%]; Conwy School A [+10.1%]; Denbighshire School A [+13.4%] and Wrexham School A [+11.4%].
- L1 performance at 95.5% is 1.7% higher than the national average and improvements were seen in 4 regional LA's [slight -0.5% and -0.2% dip seen in Mon and Flint respectively]. Between 2012>2014 there has been a regional improvement of +1.9% and +0.9% between 2013>2014 [corresponding national figures are +2.1% and +0.7%]. The greatest gains at individual LA level over the rolling period can be seen in Mon [+4.3%] and Gwynedd [+5.1%]. The greatest improvements from 2013>2014 was seen in Wrexham [+2.5%].
- CSI [54.4%] has improved by 1.5% from 2013 and is 2.5% higher than the national average [albeit national improvement from 2013>2014 is higher at +2.7%]. Performance between 2012>2014 has improved by +3.2% [+3.0% nationally] with the greatest improvements seen in Gwynedd [+7.1%] and Conwy [+5.8%]. 2013>2014 improvements were greatest in Denbighshire [+3.6%] and Wrexham [+3.1%] whilst Conwy and Flintshire witnessed slight dips of -0.5% and -0.9% respectively.
- CPS has improved from 332.8 in 2012 to 348.2 in 2014 [+15.4 compared to a national improvement of +16.5 – from 323.5>340.0]. At individual LA level the greatest improvements over the three year period were seen in Mon [+25.1] and Gwynedd [+30.3]. All 6 regional LA's improved their CPS between 2013>2014 with the greatest improvements in Gwynedd [+11.9] and Wrexham [+9.2]
- English A*-C has improved +2.1% from 2013 to 67.5% and +5.0% over the three year rolling period [in comparison with a 2013>2014 national increase of +3.3% to 66.1% and a + 3.9% increase from 2012]. In 2014 the highest performing LA in the region was Flintshire with 73.3% but the greatest improvements from 2013 and over the three year period were seen in Mon [+8.1% and +3.8%] and Wrexham [+6.5% and +3.5%].
- Welsh First Language A*-C has improved by +1.5% from 2013 to 72.7% [and by +1.2% over the three year period]. The national average for 2014 was 73.7% [+0.2% from 2013] but one has to take into account the number of entries to make any meaningful comparisons. 2014 performance was strongest in Mon [71.6%] and Gwynedd [73.3%] and in Mon the performance demonstrated an increase of + 5.3% from 2013 and +9.2% from 2012. 2013>2014 improvements was also seen in Denbighshire [+3.3] whilst Flintshire and Wrexham saw a -11.0% decrease in their average. Whilst the number of pupils being entered for Welsh First Language has increased in the region since 2012, it is predominantly because of an increase in Gwynedd. A drop in numbers between 2013>2014 across all LA's [with the exception of Wrexham], highlights the need for a continued drive by GwE to ensure increased participation and performance.
- Mathematics improved +2.5% between 2012>2014 to 63.4% but saw a slight dip between 2013>2014 [-0.1%]. The national average for 2014 was 61.7% with a +1.4% improvement from 2013 and a +3.4% improvement from 2012. In 2014 the highest performance was in Flintshire [68.4%] and Gwynedd [65.1%] with a +3.0% increase seen in Gwynedd from 2013. There was a -3.4% dip in Conwy over the corresponding period [63.0%]. Between 2012>2014 the performance in Gwynedd improved by +6.5%, Conwy by +5.5% and Wrexham by +4.9%.
- Performance of boys/girls : across all indicators, the performance of regional boys and girls was higher than the national average. For the L2+, the gap was lower than the national average in 2014 [-8.1% compared to -8.4%]. In 2012 and 2013 the regional/national corresponding figures were -10.1%/-8.5% and -7.8%/-8.3%. In 2014 the gap was narrowest in Mon [-1.0%] and widest in Gwynedd [-10.2%] and Wrexham [-10.7%]. The performance of boys improved +0.8% from 2013 [+2.3% nationally] whilst the percentage of girls gaining the L2+ increased +1.1% [+2.4% nationally]. Over the rolling period 2012>2014, however, the performance of boys has improved +4.8% [+4.1% nationally]. At individual LA level the greatest increases in the performance of boys were seen in Denbighshire +2.0% and Wrexham +2.5%. At L2, the gap has gradually decreased by 4.1% over the rolling period 2012>2014 [-10.4%>-7.7%>-6.3%] compared to a 2.0% national decrease. Between 2013>2014 the performance of boys improved +3.6% [compared to +4.5% nationally] whilst the performance of girls improved by +2.2% [+3.9% nationally]. At individual LA level the greatest increases in the performance of boys were seen in Mon +4.3% and Gwynedd +7.1%. At L1 the gap has gradually decreased by 1.7% over the rolling period 2012>2014 [-3.1%>-2.2%>-1.4%] compared to a 0.9% national decrease. Between 2013>2014 the performance of boys improved +1.3% [compared to +0.7% nationally] whilst the performance of girls improved by +0.5% [+0.6% nationally]. At individual LA level the greatest increases in the performance of boys were seen in Denbighshire [+2.2%] and Wrexham [+3.4%]. For the CSI, the gap between boys/girls has gradually decreased by 2.5% over the rolling period 2012>2014 [-9.4%>-7.1%>-6.9%] in comparison to a national increase of +0.2%. In 2014, at individual LA level, the gap

was narrowest in Mon [-0.4%] and widest in Gwynedd at -9.3%. Between 2013>2014, the performance of boys increased by +1.6% [compared to a +2.5% national increase]. Performance of girls improved by +1.4% regionally and +2.8% nationally. For the CPS the gap has closed by 7.6 over a three year period whilst the corresponding national figure is 1.3. At individual LA level, in 2014 the gap was greatest in Wrexham [-28.5] and Mon [23.9]. From 2013, the performance of boys has improved by 7.7 compared to 6.8 nationally and improvements can be seen across all 6 regional LA's with the greatest improvement in Gwynedd [+12.5].

Post-16

- The percentage attaining Level 3 Threshold for 2014 was 97.0% [-0.1% below the national average]. Over the rolling period 2012>2014, the highest performing LA has been Ynys Mon. Between 2013>2014, performance in Wrexham dipped -4.3% to 90.3%, whilst Denbighshire saw an increase of 1.3% to 98.1%. The regional Average Wider Points Score for 2014 has been calculated at 804.3 with Gwynedd and Ynys Mon the highest performing LA's [883.6 and 875.9 respectively]. The only regional LA to witness a 2013>2014 increase was Conwy [+25.2] with a score of 829.4, whilst Wrexham dropped -45.0 to 695.4.
- Welsh Bac : the percentage of 17 year old learners gaining the Welsh BAC in 2013-14 was 56.2%, but there being inconsistencies in the percentages between Local Education Authorities and within Local Educational Authorities [Mon 89.4%; Gwynedd 63.1%; Conwy 53.8%; Denbighshire 34.4%; Flintshire 53.5% and Wrexham 64.4%]. Two secondary schools throughout the region had no 17 year old learners registered for the Welsh BAC. GwE is currently working with schools to manage a three year transition phase for change and to ensure high quality delivery and initial suggested target percentages [based on full-time cohort] are as follows :2015-16: maintain 2014-15 percentage or 40%, whichever is the higher; 2016-17: maintain 2014-15 percentage or 60%, whichever is the higher; 2017-18: maintain 2014-15 percentage or 80%, whichever is the higher; 2018-19: 100%

Post 16 Participation in education :

- % has steadily improved from 85.8% 2011>87.2% 2012>87.9% 2013 [+2.1% increase in comparison to a 1.3% national increase over same period]. The 2013 figure is 2.8% above the national average and the most significant increase in an individual LA between 2012>2013 was in Wrexham [+2.0%] although their % still remains below the national average.
- The % of regional NEET's has fluctuated over the same period [3.3% 2011>2.9% 2012>3.4% 2013] whilst the national average has been steadily decreasing [from 4.4%>3.7%]. Gwynedd is the only LA in the region to have seen a decrease in the number of NEET's between 2012>2013.

Attendance

Attendance in primary schools increased by +0.6% from 2013 to 94.8% [national average in 2013 was 93.7%]. The % increased across all 6 regional LA's from 2013 [Mon and Conwy +0.6%; Gwynedd +0.8%; Flintshire and Wrexham +0.7% and Denbighshire + 0.4%]. Half day sessions missed due to authorised and unauthorised absences also decreased from 2013. Unauthorised absences decreased regionally by -0.1% to 0.5% and a decrease was witnessed in all LA's with the exception of Denbighshire where performance plateaued from 2013 at 0.6%. In secondary schools, regional attendance increased from 2013 by +0.9% to 93.6% [national average for 2013 was 92.6%]. Improvements were seen across all 6 regional LA's with the greatest gains in Mon [+1.1%], Gwynedd [+2.1%] and Conwy [+1.2%]. Half day sessions missed due to authorised absences decreased from 2013 by -0.6% to 5.3% [improvement in % across all 6 LA's with greatest improvement in Conwy at -1.0%]. Half day sessions missed due to unauthorised absences also dipped slightly from 2013 [-0.1% to 1.0%]. However, there were slight increases in 2 LA's [Mon +0.2% to 0.9% and Flintshire +0.1% to 0.5%]. Conwy's performance plateaued at 1.4%.

FSM Performance

We need to bear in mind that, in the vast majority of schools, the cohort consists of only a very small number of FSM learners. This applies to both primary and secondary schools. If a high number of these individuals are also ALN learners, this can have a significant impact on the % achieving.

Foundation Phase :

In the main indicator, performance of FSM pupils has improved +1.2% across the region from 2013>2014 [compared to an increase of 1.0% for non FSM]

with the most notable gains in Conwy [+4.4%], Wrexham [+1.3%] and Flintshire [+1.8%]. The gap with non-FSM has been reduced to -16.7%. The largest gap at LA level was seen in Mon [-21.3%]. The performance of FSM pupils who are not SEN also increased this year by +0.5% and in 4 LA's over 90%+ of this group of pupils gained the main indicator. The greatest increase was seen in Wrexham [+3.8%] and Flintshire [+2.4%] but Denbighshire and Mon saw a fall in their %. Discussion around why individual pupils failed to succeed are ongoing as part of challenge visits. On a regional level, across the other indicators, the performance of FSM pupils dipped slightly by -0.1% for LCE 05+ [in comparison to a +0.3% for non-FSM]. The largest gap was seen in Mon at -22.1%. FSM performance at LCE 06+ improved from 2013 by +1.8% [+2.4% for non-FSM] and the gap increased to -19.3% in 2014. At LA level, Flintshire had the largest gap at -26.2%. FSM performance for LCW 05+ increased +3.0% [+2.1% increase for non-FSM] and the gap was reduced to -13.2% [at LA level the biggest gap was seen in Mon -19.8%]. LCW 06+ dipped slightly from 2013 by -0.7% [compared to an increase of +2.9% for non-FSM]. This led to a widening of the gap to -22.5% [at LA level widest in Wrexham -34.4% and Flintshire -24.0%]. MD 05+ for FSM pupils improved by +1.4% [+0.6% for non-FSM] and the gap was reduced to -12.4% in 2014. At LA level both Gwynedd and Mon had gaps of +16.0%. For 06+, performance of FSM pupils plateaued, whilst non-FSM increased by +1.0% leading to a 2014 gap of -17.1%. There was a slight dip for FSM pupils in 2014 for PSD 05+ [-0.7% compared to an increase of +0.8% for non-FSM]. The gap increased to -9.0% in 2014 and this was widest in Gwynedd at -12.4%. At 06+, FSM performance plateaued, whilst non-FSM pupils increased their performance by +4.5%. The gap has now increased to -25.7% and is -20.0%+ in all 6 LA's.

Key Stage 2 :

In the main indicator, performance of FSM pupils has dropped -1.5% [70.7%] across the region from 2013>2014 with the most notable differences in Denbighshire [-5.0%]. Gwynedd [+5.9%] and Mon [+0.7%] were the only regional LA's which saw an improvement for this group of pupils from 2013. However, the gap between FSM and non-FSM was reduced to -16.1% [-20.4% in 2013] and is lower than the national gap of -18.3%. At individual LA level the gap was most prominent in Wrexham [-20.6%]. Mon had the highest performance % for FSM pupils [78.5%] but the gap between FSM and non-FSM was least in Denbighshire [-11.3%]. The performance of FSM pupils who are not SEN also dropped this year by -0.9% but in all 6 LA's the performance for the group was over 91%+ and above 94.0% for 4 LA's. The greatest drop from 2013 was seen in Mon [-2.2%] and Denbighshire [-2.6%] and discussion around why individual pupils failed to succeed are ongoing as part of challenge visit. On a regional level, across the other indicators, the performance of FSM pupils, in comparison with 2013 figures is patchy. Welsh, at both expected and higher level improved [+4.3% and +5.7% respectively] with the gap between FSM and non-FSM narrowing to -16.4% and -19.9% [gap was widest in Denbighshire for L4+ and L5+ -41.1% and -31.0%]; English improved at the higher level [+1.1%] but dropped for the expected level [-0.8%]. For English the gap with non-FSM pupils widened to -15.7% at L4+ but closed to -21.5% at the higher level. At individual LA level the gap was widest for both levels in Wrexham [-20.1% and -25.5%]. Maths dropped for expected level [-1.1%] but improved at higher level [+0.3%] but the gap with non-FSM widened at both expected and higher levels [-15.1% and -20.3%]. At LA level, the widest gap for L4+ was in Conwy -20.9% and for L5+ Wrexham at -23.4%. For the expected level, Science dropped -2.7% and 0.8% for the higher level. The gap between FSM and non-FSM widened at both levels [-14.8% and -23.1%] with the largest gap for L4+ in Conwy -18.7% and in Wrexham for L5+ -27.7%. When comparing 2013>2014, the greatest improvement for FSM pupils at individual LA level was as follows : English L4+ Gwynedd [+5.1%]; English L5+ Flintshire [+4.9%] and Gwynedd [+9.9%]; Welsh L4+ Flintshire [+11.4%]; Welsh L5+ Gwynedd [+9.5%], Conwy [+12.1%], Flintshire [+14.3%] and Wrexham [+12.2%]; Mathematics L4+ and L5+ Gwynedd [+4.5% and +8.0% respectively].

Key Stage 3 :

In the main indicator [CSI], the performance of FSM pupils has increased by +10.8% [65.2%] across the region from 2013>2014 in comparison to a +4.3% increase for non-FSM pupils [87.1%]. The gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils has also been significantly reduced from 28.4% in 2013 to 21.8% in 2014. The only LA where the gap increased from 2013 was Wrexham [increase of 0.8% to 33.4%]. The most significant 2013>2014 increase for FSM performance at individual LA level was in Conwy [+14.5%] and Denbighshire [+18.6%]. The performance of FSM pupils who are not SEN also increased this year by a significant +11.5% with increases of +10.0% in all LA's with the exception of Mon which saw a +2.9% improvement from 2013. On a regional level, across all core subjects, at expected and higher levels, FSM pupils improved significantly on their 2013 performance [L5+ and L6+ improvements as follows : English +9.8%/+9.8%; Welsh +7.4%/+2.4%; Mathematics +7.6%/+4.1%; Science +11.0%/+11.4%] and the gap between FSM and non-FSM closed for all indicators with the exception of Welsh and Mathematics L6+. For both levels in Welsh, the largest gap between FSM and non-FSM was in Flintshire [-51.0% and -40.9%]. In English, the gap at both levels were 17.55 and -25.2% [most prominent at individual LA level in Wrexham -

25.4% and -31.6%]. In Mathematics, the gap at L5+ was reduced to -17.4% but widened at L6+ to -30.0% [again, at LA level, the gap was widest in Wrexham -25.8% and -38.0%]. For Science, the gap reduced at both levels [-11.5%/-27.0%]. Wrexham also had the largest gap between FSM and non-FSM at both levels [-16.5% and -34.0%]. When comparing 2013>2014, the greatest improvement for FSM pupils at individual LA level was as follows : English L5+ Conwy [+16.4%]; English L6+ Conwy [+23.5%] and Denbighshire [+19.3%]; Welsh L5+ Mon [+13.4%], Denbighshire [+28.0%] and Wrexham [+16.7%]; Welsh L6+ Denbighshire [+20.3%]; Mathematics L5+ and L6+ Conwy [+13.3% and +12.7%] and Denbighshire [+14.7% and +14.4%]; Science L5+ and L6+ Conwy [+16.4% and +17.9%] and Denbighshire [+17.5% and +19.3%]. As a result of this improved performance, the gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils also closed across all indicators with the exception of Welsh and Mathematics at L6+. Whilst the nature of FSM cohorts can vary significantly from year to year, the improvements seen this year for FSM pupils is heartening - albeit further work is required to narrow and eventually close the gap with non-FSM pupils.

Key Stage 4 :

When analysing the performance of individual LA's from 2013>2014, the gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils has been narrowed across the majority of indicators. In 2014, 30.4% of FSM pupils gained L2+ Threshold [68.8% non-FSM] with Mon the highest performing regional LA [41.8%]. All regional LA's, with the exception of Conwy, saw an improvement from 2013>2014 for FSM pupils with the greatest gains in Wrexham [+4.2%]. The gap between FSM and non-FSM was lowest in Mon [-14.3%] and highest in Conwy and Denbighshire [-34.8%]. Performance at L2 was 67.2% [86.4% non-FSM] with Mon again the highest performing regional LA [75.5%]. The gap between FSM and non-FSM was lowest in Mon [-12.8%] and highest in Wrexham [-26.2%]. At L1, the regional average was 91.7% and the highest performing LA was Conwy with 97.0%. The gap between FSM and non-FSM was lowest in Conwy where FSM performed 0.8% higher than non-FSM pupils and highest in Wrexham [-11.1%]. The CSI regional average for FSM pupils was 29.3% but performance was significantly higher in Mon [40.8%] and higher in Flintshire [35.4%]. The gap between FSM and non-FSM was lowest in Mon [-14.0%] and highest in Gwynedd [-33.5%]. The gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils in the CPS, in comparison with 2013 figures, has been narrowed across all 6 LA's with a -46.1 points gap at regional level in 2014.

Performance of Pupils with ALN

The performance in the Foundation Phase for the FPI improved +3.1% from 2013 to 49.6%. Performance across the range of indicators at the expected and higher levels also demonstrate improvements from last year : LCE05+ 53.2% [+1.6%], LCE 06+ 6.2% [+1.9%], LCW05+ 62.4% [+6.6%], LCW 06+ 4.3% [+0.4%], MD 05+ 61.6% [+1.8%], MD 06+ 6.4% [+1.2%], PSD 05+ 79.1% [+1.3%] and PSD 06+ 17.4% [+2.1%]. In KS2, there was a dip in the CSI from 2013 [down -1.7% from 54.3% to 52.6%]. With the exception of Mathematics L4+ [61.3% and -1.0% down from 2013] and Science L4+ [65.7% and -3.6% from 2013] all core subjects at expected and higher levels demonstrated an improvement from 2013 : Welsh L4+ 60.0% [+2.6%], Welsh L5+ 4.2% [+0.4%], English L4+ 60.0% [+0.2%], English L5+ 6.0% [+1.4%], Mathematics L5+ 8.6% [+1.1%] and Science L5+ 8.8% [+1.7%]. In KS3, the CSI improved significantly by +10.1% from 2013 to 48.9%. Improvements were also seen across the range of core subjects at the expected and higher levels : Welsh L5+ 65.5% [+7.5%], Welsh L6+ 13.7% [+2.5%], English L5+ 60.6% [+10.3%], English L6+ 13.1% [+3.7%], Mathematics L5+ 61.9% [+7.5%], Mathematics L6+ 20.8% [+3.1%], Science L5+ 72.5% [+11.2%] and Science L6+ 19.0% [+3.9%].

Performance of Looked After Children

When analysing the percentages, we need to bear in mind that the cohort consists of only a very small number of learners. In the Foundation Phase, the percentage gaining the FPI was down -5.0% from the corresponding figure in 2013 [51.8%>46.8%] The highest performance was seen in Denbighshire with 83.3% and Wrexham with 75.0%. For the other indicators, performance was as follows [2013>2014 difference in brackets] : LCE 05+ 57.1% [-4.0%]; LCE 06+ 21.4% [+10.3%]; LCW 05+ 57.9% [-7.1%], LCW 06+ 10.5% [+5.5%], MD 05+ 59.6% [-8.3%], MD 06+ 8.5% [-0.4%], PSD 05+ 72.3% [-6.9%] and PSD 06+ 19.1% [+4.8%]. In KS2 the 2014 CSI was 65.2% [+12.5%] with the highest percentage in Gwynedd [70.0%], Denbighshire [85.7%] and Flintshire [87.5%]. Performance across the core subjects was as follows : Welsh L4+ 73.7% [+11.2%], Welsh L5+ 5.3% [-7.2%], English L4+ 68.1% [+6.3%], English L5+ 10.1% [+1.0%], Mathematics L4+ 72.5% [+19.8%], Mathematics L5+ 10.1% [+2.8%], Science L4+ 71.0% [+9.2%] and Science L5+ 13.0% [+2.1%]. In KS3 55.2% [+16.1%] gained the CSI with the highest regional performance in Mon [83.3%]. Across all the core subjects performance improved on 2013 at the expected level : Welsh 92.3% [+12.3%], English 68.7% [+20.2%], Mathematics 61.2% [+15.5%], Science 71.6%

[+19.4%]. At the higher levels, performance was lower than the corresponding 2013 figure for Welsh 7.7% [-22.3%] and Mathematics 17.9% [-8.2%] but higher for English 19.4% [+2.0%] and Science 16.4% [+1.2%]. Data for performance in KS4 was not available at time of analyses.

Reading Tests

As last year's tests were restandardised, there is little to be gained from making comparisons between the 2013 and 2014 data. GwE's performance in the English Reading test (SS >85) was above the Wales average in 2014 – GwE 83.7% Wales average 83.2. In two LAs (Denbighshire and Wrexham) performance fell below the Wales and GwE average. In the >115 indicator, however, the region's performance was below the Wales average – GwE 16.1% Wales 16.5%. Performance in three LAs was below the Wales and GwE average (Conwy, Denbighshire and Wrexham). The region's strongest performing LA was Mon with 84.8% achieving a SS over 85 and 17.5% achieving a SS over 115. In the region's lowest performing 50 schools there were only 3 from Mon – Llanddona (where only 7 pupils sat the test), Amlwch and Llangoed, whilst there were 9 schools amongst the region's highest performing 50. The region's lowest performing LA was Wrexham with 82.1% achieving a SS over 85 and 15.6% achieving a SS over 115. Amongst the region's lowest performing 50 schools there were 6 from Wrexham (2 of these were PRUs) and 4 in the highest performing 50. Caution is needed when analysing the results of the Welsh reading tests as cohort size varies significantly, both within the region and at a national level. Across GwE 18,552 pupils sat the test in 2014 – a similar size cohort to Erw's and substantially larger than CS and EAS. Within GwE cohort size varied from 732 in Flintshire to 9,083 in Gwynedd. Linguistic context within the region is also diverse. GwE's performance in 2014 was marginally below the Wales average of 84.4% (GwE 84.3%). Similarly with SS>115 GwE's performance trailed behind the Wales average of 17.5% (GwE 17.1%). Performance in 2 LAs was below the Wales and GwE average (Mon and Wrexham). The region's strongest performing LA was Denbighshire with 87.4% achieving a SS over 85 and 20.5% achieving a score over 115. There were 5 Denbighshire schools amongst the region's lowest performing 50 schools and 6 in the highest performing. The region's lowest performing LA was Mon (SS >85 – 81.1% and SS>115 – 16%), whose performance was the region's highest in the English Reading test. This is an area which will be investigated in detail by GwE's literacy Associate Partners during the year. 13 schools from Mon were amongst the region's lowest performing schools but 9 were amongst the region's highest performing.

Numeracy Tests

GwE's performance in the Procedural Numeracy test (SS>85) was above the Wales average of 82.8% in 2014 – GwE 83.6%. Performance in 2 of the region's LAs fell below the Wales average (Denbighshire and Wrexham). In the >115 indicator too GwE's performance was marginally above the Wales average, although this masks the fact that in 4/6 LAs it was below. Strong performance on this indicator in Mon and Gwynedd compensated for the region's weakest performing LAs in this indicator – Denbighshire, Flintshire and Conwy. The region's highest performing LA was Gwynedd with 86.8% of learners achieving a SS above 85 and the lowest was Wrexham with 81.1% achieving this indicator. Amongst the region's highest performing 20 schools, 17 of them were in Gwynedd, and only 3 (including 1 PRU) in the lowest performing 20. The region's performance in the Numerical Reasoning test was stronger than in the Procedural test, with the % of learners scoring <85 lower in all LAs (apart from Mon) and the % scoring >115 higher in all LAs (apart from Gwynedd, which was 0.1% lower). With 84.3% of the region's learners achieving a SS>85, GwE's performance was above the Wales average of 82.2%. Only one of the region's LAs fell below the Wales average (Wrexham 0.2% below). Performance on the >115 indicator was also positive with Gwynedd and Mon well above the Wales average and Wrexham and Flintshire only 0.1% below. The region's highest performing LA was Gwynedd with 87.3% of learners achieving a SS above 85 and the lowest was Wrexham achieving 82%. The same Gwynedd schools that were in the highest performing 20 schools in the region on the Procedural test also did well in the Reasoning test. WG did not issue progress scores in 2014 so comparison with 2013 data for the procedural test is also unsound. Disapplication rates fell in GwE in 2014, whilst the national % of disapplying learners rose slightly. With GwE taking responsibility for giving consistent advice and guidance about disapplying pupils there was less variation in the % of disapplications across the region too. In 2013 the difference between the LA with the highest and lowest disapplication rates in the region was 1.0% - 2.6% in the numeracy test and 1.2% and 2.9% in the reading tests. In 2014 the difference was reduced to 1.0% - 2.1% in the numeracy tests and 1.1% - 2.2% in the reading tests.

KEY STRENGTHS :

- Performance in main indicators at FP, KS3 and KS4 [TBC] above national average.
- Performance of FSM pupils [and especially FSM non-SEN] at FP and KS3.

- Reduction in variance between performance of individual LA's in main indicator [difference between highest and lowest performing LA in region - FP reduced from 5.4%>2.4%; KS2 from 4.9%>3.7% ; KS3 from 13.2%>10.7%; KS4 from 13.8%>11.6% *unverified].
- Improvement of several under-performing secondary schools at KS4 directly linked to the coordinated GwE/LA intervention.
- Performance in the Numerical Reasoning test in Gwynedd and Mon schools

KEY AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- Improve performance in main indicators at KS2 and raise performance above the national average.
- Improve performance in L2+ Threshold and ensure increase is greater than the national improvement in 2015.
- Ensure sustainability of the recent improvements seen in the lowest performing schools at KS4.
- Further improve achievement of FSM pupils and increase the % who gain the L2+ Threshold [with specific focus on individual schools]
- Close the gap in performance between boys/girls in KS3 across all core subjects and especially at higher levels in both languages.
- Ensure that all the schools across the region have more robust systems for target setting and that they make more effective use of data/assessments to track/challenge and target intervention.
- Increase the number of pupils entered for GCSE Welsh First Language at KS4.
- Ensure that schools make effective use of read-across data scrutiny and individual pupil tracking to address the significant differences between performance in Maths and English/Welsh at KS4 [where applicable].
- Support and work with LA's to implement their intervention powers to tackle schools which continue to underperform.
- Ensure that LA's/GwE robustly challenge the target setting processes in schools and that effective and timely monitoring of progress towards targets is implemented.
- Ensure that coasting 'good' schools [and individual departments] are challenged and supported to aim for excellence.
- Collaborate effectively with key stakeholders to implement a range of strategies to reduce % of NEET's across region
- Challenge the variance in the rigour, quality and consistency of TA across the FP, KS2 and KS3, and develop a clear strategy to improve local and regional standardisation and moderation.
- Increase the % of learners achieving a SS above 115 in all 4 national tests
- Ensure that Associate Partner support is targeted towards the schools and LAs performance in the National Tests is below the regional/Wales average.

ASPECT : EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE OF LEADERSHIP PROCEDURES

Concise Judgement	Source of evidence of processes and impact
It is judged that leadership is sound in the 6 councils/authorities; GwE Joint Committee and within GwE's SLT which is starting to have an impact on the quality of provision, challenge and support available to schools, and on outcomes for learners. The Councils are fully committed to this high level of collaboration across the region and there is a strong political will across the 6 authorities to support and promote GwE's work. This is supported by the fact that the 6 councils have agreed to safeguard the level of financial contributions to GwE for 3 years in the first instance, and to ensure an annual commissioning budget of £250,000 in order to target 'at risk' schools. <i>Internal Management of GwE :</i> A significant concern over the last 12 months has been the lack of dedicated leadership support around the Managing Director. This was largely because of the role that GwE had designed for itself prior to the agreement around the National Model i.e. prior to the expectations laid out by Welsh Government, it was intended that GwE would be far smaller and less universal in its provision than the requirements of the National Model. Key players within the GwE SLT were expected to work with a significant number of contact schools and as such were allocated minimal leadership time to contribute to and execute wider responsibilities. These matters became a significant concern during Spring 2014 as Welsh Government considerably raised the expectations for regional services to deliver national initiatives of purport.	Documents relating to 6 LA commitment to GwE partnership working [?]. Documents related to financial contributions from 6 LA's. Documents related to GwE governance and leadership structures + Joint Committee/Advisory Board and User Group Membership. Business Plan 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. GwE Financial Accounts for 2013-2104 and 2014-2015 [balance sheets].



Since September 2014, specific action has been taken to increase capacity within GwE's SLT in an attempt to ensure that the service can respond effectively and early to both national and local requirements. The current leadership structure comprises of a Managing Director, Head of Support and Brokerage, Head of Standards [from January 2015 onwards], three Senior Challenge Advisers, Senior Challenge Adviser for Literacy/Numeracy and a Business Manager. Due to the geographical and cultural diversity of the region, the service comprises of 3 hubs [Gwynedd/Anglesey + Conwy/Denbighshire + Flintshire/Wrexham]. The team of Challenge Advisers in every hub are effectively led and quality assured by the relevant Senior Challenge Adviser. The central SMT and the 3 hubs are effectively supported by the business/administrative team.

GwE's brief Business Plan for March 2014 was clearly aligned with the requirements of the national model and national and regional priorities reflected in the Business Plans for the respective LA's and work has been completed to transpose the intentions into meaningful programmes of work that will drive the work across the 3 Hubs. Further work has been done during September 2014 to build a more robust plan, to include the appropriate level of financial detail and to ensure differentiation between commissions at a regional level and individual authority level.

From October 2014 onwards, the regional service has established self-evaluation structures and Performance Management procedures [based on National Standards for Challenge Advisers and requirements of the national model], and these have been used appropriately to identify staff training and developmental needs. A regional training programme has been implemented to augment the national programme. This will allow for a sharper accountability structure and a better system for identifying and meeting individual training and development needs, as well as the needs of the wider service. However, there is a need to further hone self-evaluation structures and develop ways of measuring the impact of our actions whilst ensuring that the findings of those processes are used effectively to set appropriate and challenging targets and quality indicators to improve the performance of the service and schools.

When establishing GwE, emphasis was put on appointing individuals who could demonstrate strength in delivering the statutory requirements of monitoring and challenging school performance. An 'assessment centre' style approach was employed to ensure that the most suitable individuals were appointed and those exact mature recruitment procedures have meant that the regional service boasts a very high percentage of staff with the expertise and appropriate understanding to ensure challenge and quality support for schools. A high % of Challenge Advisers are very experienced and a good number have wide-ranging experience of high level leadership; of working as facilitators of change, and of inspecting alongside/accompanying Estyn on second visits. Those experiences and expertise are further enriched by an extended team of part-time and temporary seconded Headteachers and SMT members from successful schools. This has ensured a more flexible and manageable team to respond to the range of requirements by stakeholders. From September 2014 onwards, the contributions of successful practising Headteachers has further developed the capacity, expertise and profile of GwE with stakeholders and has allowed for an effective process of upskilling to the small number of full-time team member with no previous senior management experience in schools. Commissioning practitioners reflects GwE's commitment to immersing schools in developments and ensuring that institutional capacity and expertise are developed appropriately [need to refer to examples where there has been a positive impact]. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that there is a need to continue to upskill Challenge Advisers across the 3 hubs to ensure an even higher level of consistency in challenge. This is currently done via team training sessions; by sharing good practice and modelling reports; by issuing clear guidance and quality documents prior to visits and by agreeing on common criteria for visits. Shadow visits are also organised. There are robust arrangements for verifying and assuring quality which include monitoring a sample of visits across the region by the SMT and a number of specific internal visits in each hub by the Senior Challenge Adviser. A high percentage of reports are checked by the Senior Challenge Adviser and hub/team meetings are used to disseminate and share good practice. A stakeholder questionnaire and meetings of the User Group are also used to seek the opinions of schools on several aspects of the visits, which have been extremely well-received. For all termly monitoring visits undertaken, there has been a 90.0%+ positive response to questions related to the level of challenge, usefulness of meeting in moving school forward and in the quality of guidance and support. The extremely high level of positive responses from both questionnaire and User Group feedback, testifies to the effectiveness of the work carried out by Challenge Advisers. The national training programme also serves as a platform for driving this agenda forward even further. However we need to be proactive in relation to planning regional training programmes which complement the national programme and which are tailored and differentiated to accommodate the level of existing expertise within the team.

Financial Reports to Joint Committee.

ISA260 Financial Report by Wales Audit Office.

Documents related to use of 2013-2014 underspend.

Document outlining revised delegated decision making powers to MD/SMT and Lead Director.

Documents related to option appraisals re: delivering on full National Model expectations from April 2015.

Scrutiny reports to individual LA's

Examples of :

- i. minutes from LA SMT and/or Quality Group meetings
- ii. Gwe SMT meetings
- iii. pre termly monitoring visit briefing documents for Challenge Advisers
- iv. agenda for GwE Team Meetings
- v. termly monitoring visit reports [Visit 1/2/3 for 2013-14 and 2014-15 – primary and secondary]
- vi. quality assurance monitoring reports by SMT for termly visits
- vii. analysis of feedback from stakeholder survey following all termly visits
- viii. Performance Management objectives for GwE SMT and Challenge Advisers [anonymised]

LA>School Partnership Agreement x6

Analysis of 2014-15 categorisation of regional schools.

Details of national and regional training programme for CA's.



Governance of GwE : Structures for Decision Making and Accountability :

GwE was established with a Joint Committee of portfolio holders providing the key decision making and accountability, and the organisation being hosted by Gwynedd LA as a host authority. At present, governance and leadership procedures and structures are in the process of being fully aligned with the requirements of the national model. A Joint Committee has been established since 2013 which comprises of appropriate membership and which operates effectively in its responsibilities for developing a strategic overview and holding GwE officers to account. However, it is recognised that there is a need to adopt a more manageable and streamlined system for making some executive decisions which will lead to a more effective and efficient response to needs. The accountability framework for GwE will build on and further enrich the existing current agreement between the authorities, and will clarify the arrangements with regard to decision making at the various levels i.e. GwE Joint Committee/Advisory Board/SLT and which will highlight ‘*authorisation limits*’ for GwE’s SLT. The establishment of an Advisory Executive Board to ensure high quality and professional guidance and challenge to the GwE MD/SLT has also been agreed by the Joint Committee and by early November 2014, GwE will have a fully formed Advisory Board and a clarity of roles between the Joint Committee, Advisory Board, the six LA education leads and the GwE Leadership Team and its Headteacher and Governor representative group.

In response to the additional responsibilities brought about by the requirements of the national model, a Project Plan has been established to identify different options for the remit areas. Representatives from the 6 authorities and Joint Committee will consider the selected options and decide on the most effective approach by December 2014 with plans for a phased approach from April 2015. The service is confident that accessing grants will allow for improved targeting to promote initiatives at a regional, authority and individual school level. There is a firm basis for ensuring success in these areas due to the mature models of collaborating and sharing resources that are already in place either across the region, or sub-region e.g. collaborating on aspects of SEN child support service; 14-19 collaboration; SEG collaboration etc. As there are cross-regional structures for managing these projects and developments, leaders at every level are confident that the proposed provision will be of the highest possible standard from April 2015 onwards.

There exists an extremely positive and effective working relationship between the representatives of the 6 authorities and GwE’s SLT and expectations and responsibilities have been clearly highlighted and defined by the Business Plan and SLA. This avoids any unnecessary duplication between LA officers and Challenge Advisers. Termly visits to schools evaluate standards and the quality of leadership and management and this allows for more effective targeting of resources, and identification of situations that require an alternative solution. All monitoring visits to every school are followed up by written reports by the Challenge Advisers which inform officers, elected members and governors of the standards and the issues which need further addressing and on the required support level to cluster/individual schools. Through the management team and quality group meetings of the 6 authorities, GwE’s SLT is held accountable and the meetings are used to set appropriate and challenging targets and quality indicators for improving the performance of the authority and its schools; to discuss the content of GwE monitoring reports [individual link Challenge Advisers are included when required], to identify, manage and minimise risks in the context of specific schools and to decide on a school’s risk category. As a result of the regional work undertaken to standardise the Partnership Agreement [and its use], there is better consistency of approach in the use of categorisation processes across the 6 authorities. It is also fair to note that schools across the region now have a better understanding of why they are in a specific category. Further work remains to be done to ensure that GwE effectively supports the authorities to make timely use of their statutory intervention powers. There are a few examples of where intervention should have been instigated sooner.

Governance of GwE : Supervision of Leadership and Resource Allocation :

The commissioning budget are both managed effectively by the Business Manager and, from September 2014 onwards, the management element will be further enriched with the appointment of a Head of Support and Brokerage. This has had an impact on achievement in a very high percentage of schools and particularly so in amber/red category schools and Estyn category schools. However, during GwE’s first year, an unsatisfactory situation unveiled in that there was a very high percentage of under expenditure [£776,662]. A breakdown of expenditure shows that there were several contributing factors, namely an underspend on salaries where salary scales had been set lower than the allocation in the full business case and a significant number of staff appointed on lower spines; phased movement towards appointments, some appointments being completed over the year and some post having to remain vacant for a considerable period; eligibility of SEG funding for aspects of targeted support and inability to re-direct commissioning budget; lower office rental fees

Details re: lead roles for GwE SLT.

Details re: level/quality of experience of extended team [seconded headteachers].

Minutes from LA scrutiny committees

incurred and significantly lower than expected travel costs for Challenge Advisers due to reduced number in team. These matters have been reported to the Joint Committee and to Chief Officers within the authorities, as well as to members of the User Group with specific action taken to minimise balances and avoid a similar situation arising in future. In September 2014 the Joint Committee discussed the proposed use of the underspend carried forward from the 2013/14 budget and agreed that 64.0% of the total [£500,000] be delegated to schools to promote and facilitate school>school collaboration as part of the implementation of a wider strategy by GwE. A further sum of £51,000 was allocated to deliver a regional showcase event to share best practice and to support schools to participate in a national pilot for PISA style tests. It is intended that this event ensures that every school in the GwE Region should be aware of the key components required to deliver the new GCSEs effectively, and should be provided with the tools to do so. Additionally, schools from the rest of Wales will be invited, in order to encourage them to share their practice and benefit from what is going on within GwE.

Governance of GwE : Scrutiny functions and informing forward planning by the Local Authorities :

The commitment of the 6 councils and the decision to safeguard the budget as we deliver the national model is a clear statement of intent and of the region's commitment to the school improvement agenda. This is particularly true given the current financial climate. There are appropriate arrangements across the 6 councils with regard to scrutinising performance and holding the regional service to account for standards of achievement.

GwE, since September 2014, has been fully resourced with 3 Hub Leaders who have been given the time to focus on work within their respective hubs. This will involve developing very close relationship with the Local Authority to ensure that they are well informed about their schools, and can make well-informed decisions with GwE to support school improvement. A key component of this work will be their contribution to each LA's scrutiny function. It is expected that the relevant Director in each authority will be able to call upon the GwE Senior Challenge Adviser to play a full part in the LA's education scrutiny function. Alongside this development, GwE will need to develop an effective feedback loop to influence corporate planning and decision making. In essence, GwE will be held to account at scrutiny processes, and the feedback from scrutiny members in each LA will be brought back to GwE's SLT, the Director's forum, the Advisory Board and Joint Committee.

Governance of GwE : Schools, Headteachers and Governors

GwE, from the outset has facilitated a representative Headteachers and Governors' Forum [User Group]. These meetings have provided GwE with a very useful feedback loop so that planning can benefit from a clear *user voice*. Meetings are held frequently, and increasingly the group is able to influence the direction of travel. All development in GwE have been communicated with the Forum and they have helped form policy on matters such as defining the nature of termly visits and the associated documentation to be deployed. In the vast majority of instances, schools understand the scope of the support available to them, and GwE's approach to monitoring and challenging progress. This is clearly reflected in the overwhelming positive responses via the stakeholder surveys. Appropriate use is made of Headteacher Performance Management procedures to drive the programme of desired improvements, however it needs to be ensured that the guidance and support issued facilitates the work of leaders in schools to make more effective and timely use of capability procedures. Overall, there is a high level of satisfaction in the quality of the service provided [see analysis of stakeholder survey below]. However, whilst there is firm evidence that there is a higher degree of consistency of approach, that the gap is closing and that the more flexible approach adopted has allowed for a swifter and more effective response to specific risks, we acknowledge that further work is required within and across every hub

Regional Strategic Sub-group

Six sub-groups, under the strategic leadership of one of the Directors of Education have been established to drive improvements. The sub-groups are as follows:

- *Performance and Sustainability Sub-Group* : established to monitor and take oversight of the performance of the Consortium against its objectives, to ensure adequate capacity to deliver its programmes and to ensure that the region is addressing the requirements of Welsh Government and regulators in its management of the education agenda at regional level.
- *School Effectiveness Sub-Group* : monitoring the effectiveness of the Regional School Effectiveness and Improvement Service and developing policies and practices to meet the demands of raising standards and improving school performance at regional level [comprises school improvement client officers from the six authorities].

- *Wellbeing and Partnerships Sub-Group* : addressing issues relating to enabling pupils to partake fully and equitably of the education service's provision in order to improve standards [comprises the identified specialists in these areas of activity from each authority and partnership representation to ensure coherence].
- *Finance and Resources Sub-Group* : addressing issues relating to school finances, provision of places, capital programmes etc in the context of developing value for money joint-working arrangements, coherence in policies and practices, and joint-commissioning cost agreements [comprises the six heads of service].
- *ICT and Data Sub-Group* : established to oversee the creation of common software platforms and databases for the education service in the region with a view to enhancing and sustaining joint-working [comprises the identified specialists in these areas of activities from each authority].
- *Welsh-Medium and Capacity Building Sub-Group* : to promote greater collaboration and sharing of expertise in Welsh-medium education to meet the diverse needs of the region and improve equality of provision and coherence together with developing policies and practices to share specialisms in other activity areas as demanded by the authorities individually and collectively.

KEY STRENGTHS :

- the six authorities have played their full part in the creation of GwE and its alignment with the National Model – at both political and officer level
- an effective relationship has enabled the key leads [Chair, Lead Director, Lead CEX, to work well with the Managing Director in developing GwE.
- a strong leadership team is now in place to ensure that GwE is able to move ahead with its enhanced role more effectively
- links with Welsh Government have been good, and GwE has been able to work to a manageable time-scale whilst giving full attention to supporting school improvement
- a strong group of individuals with expertise have been attracted to the Advisory Board
- Headteachers and Governors have expressed their views clearly throughout the development of GwE.

KEY AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- adopt a more manageable and streamlined system for making executive decisions which will lead to a more effective and efficient response to needs
- ensure that the business support function is fully staffed so that the budget is deployed more fully.
- ensure that GwE effectively supports the authorities so that they are able to make more timely use of statutory intervention powers
- ensure that the guidance and support issued to schools facilitates the work of leaders to make more effective and timely use of capability procedures
- ensure higher degree of consistency of approach in level of challenge and support within and across every hub
- ensure the appropriate level of financial detail in Business Plan and appropriate differentiation between commissioning at regional and individual authority level
- further hone self-evaluation structures and develop ways of measuring the impact of actions [whilst also ensuring that the findings of those processes are used effectively to set appropriate and challenging targets and quality indicators to improve performance of the service and schools]
- ensure effective use of national and regional training programme to upskill Challenge Advisors

ASPECT : QUALITY OF PROVISION AND SERVICES

Concise Judgement	Source of evidence of processes and impact
There are processes in place to gather stakeholder opinions via an annual survey on the quality of service and a termly questionnaire where we gather judgements and opinions on the quality and impact of our termly monitoring visits. The stakeholder response has been extremely positive. The annual survey was conducted during November 2014 and based on responses obtained from 180 schools [31 secondary, 145 primary, 2 Special Schools + 2 unknown], judgements were as follows :	LA>School Partnership Agreement x6 Examples of : i. Gwe SMT meetings ii. Hub meetings iii. pre termly monitoring visit briefing

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
As a Headteacher, I'm aware of the strategic direction and priorities of the school improvement service	32.2%	64.4%	2.2%	0	1.1%
I am confident that I understand the respective roles of the LA and GwE	28.3%	62.8%	7.2%	0	1.7%
GwE listens and responds to our needs	33.9%	55.6%	8.3%	1.1%	1.1%
GwE visits are conducted in a professional manner	82.2%	15.6%	0.5%	0.5%	1.1%
GwE's communications with the school is good	52.8%	43.3%	2.8%	0	1.1%
The details given on the services provided by GwE are clear to the school	20.0%	60.6%	16.7%	1.1%	1.6%
GwE is well-informed about the school's standards	58.3%	36.7%	2.8%	0.5%	1.7%
After the school was placed in an Estyn monitoring category and/or local amber/red category (if applicable), GwE's support helped us to improve.	17.2%	19.4%	2.8%	1.7%	58.9%
Directions, requirements and expectations prior to a visit(s) from GwE Advisers are clear	61.2%	34.4%	3.3%	0	1.1%
GwE visits set appropriate challenges for the school	51.7%	42.8%	3.3%	1.1%	1.1%
The discussion and recommendations for improvement during visits help to move the school forward	56.7%	36.1%	4.4%	1.7%	1.1%
The timetable for receiving a report following a visit is good	60.6%	36.1%	2.2%	0	1.1%
Good support is available for analysing and challenging pupil performance data in order to ensure school improvement	40.0%	50.0%	8.9%	0	1.1%
Good support is available for improving the school's self-evaluation & school development plan	43.9%	43.9%	9.4%	1.1%	1.7%
The support for management and leadership in your school is good	37.2%	49.4%	10.6%	1.7%	1.1%
The support for teachers' continuous professional development is good	12.2%	51.7%	30.6%	4.4%	1.1%
The support for continuous professional development for middle leaders is good	12.8%	46.7%	35.5%	3.9%	1.1%
Targeted support (if applicable) for literacy and numeracy is effective	10.0%	41.1%	17.2%	2.2%	29.4%
GwE has effectively facilitated school>school support	16.1%	54.4%	25.6%	1.7%	2.2%
Overall, GwE provides a good service	34.4%	53.9%	8.3%	1.7%	1.7%

The positive feedback [*strongly agree/agree*] received across the range of questions, is heartening and particularly so where 91.1% of stakeholders were confident in their understanding of the respective roles of GwE and the LA's; 89.5% noted that GwE listened and responded to their needs; an extremely high 97.8% noted that GwE visits were conducted in a professional manner and where 94.5% believed that an appropriate challenge was set. 92.8% also felt that the discussions and challenge by GwE helped to move the school forward. 90.0% believed that GwE offered good support for analysing and challenging performance data whilst 87.9% felt that good support was available for improving the school's self-evaluation & school development plan. The % who disagreed [or strongly disagreed] is low over many of the aspects related to challenge but is more noteworthy in relation to questions about levels of support. The aspect where the highest levels of concerns were raised were about the clarity of details given to schools on the services provided by GwE; about the support for CPD to teachers and middle leaders and the role of GwE in promoting and facilitating school>school support. GwE SLT fully accept the criticism and concerns and robust steps have been taken to address the related issues within our Business Plan for 2014-15.

Responses to the three termly meetings have also been overwhelming positive :

iv. documents for Challenge Advisers termly monitoring visit reports [Visit 1/2/3 for 2013-14 and 2014-15 – primary and secondary]

v. quality assurance monitoring reports by SMT for termly visits

vi. Performance Management objectives for GwE SMT and Challenge Advisers [anonymised]

Analysis of stakeholder survey conducted for s/e purposes

Analysis of feedback from stakeholder survey following all termly visits.

Analysis of impact with targeted amber/red schools.

Case studies showing impact of targeted work with individual schools

RMIS Business Case.

Prospectus of GwE Development Programme for Leadership.

School>School Regional Strategy

Action Plan re: deployment of underspend to support S>S Strategy

Regional Literacy and Numeracy Strategy

Case studies of successful School>School collaboration

Analysis of Reading/Numeracy Tests.

Documents related to NSP/GwE support.

Evaluation of catch-up programmes.

AUTUMN TERM MONITORING VISIT					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	N/C
Head teacher and school benefited from the process	58.6%	36.3%	3.2%	1.9%	0
Directions and requirements prior to visit were clear	46.5%	48.4%	5.1%	0	0
Discussion and recommendations helped move the school forwards	57.3%	36.3%	4.5%	1.9%	0
Appropriate level of challenge	52.2%	41.4%	5.1%	1.3%	0
SPRING TERM MONITORING VISIT					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	N/C
Head teacher and school benefited from the process	64.9%	31.4%	2.9%	0	0.8%
Directions and requirements prior to visit were clear	56.2%	38.7%	4.4%	0	0.7%
Discussion and recommendations helped move the school forwards	62.0%	32.8%	4.4%	0	0.7%
Appropriate level of challenge	59.8%	38.0%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%
SUMMER TERM MONITORING VISIT					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	N/C
Head teacher and school benefited from the process	62.7%	35.7%	1.6%	0	0
Directions and requirements prior to visit were clear	55.5%	42.9%	1.6%	0	0
Discussion and recommendations helped move the school forwards	59.5%	37.3%	2.4%	0.8%	0
Appropriate level of challenge	52.8%	44.8%	0.8%	1.6%	0

Monitoring and Challenging and Supporting :

Under the guidance of the management teams and quality groups of the 6 authorities, and through Partnership Agreement arrangements [with common elements across the 6 authorities], action taken is much more effective to support, monitor, challenge and intervene in schools [including moving schools demonstrating unsatisfactory progress earlier on through intervention processes]. These arrangements have been set out clearly for schools in the LA>School Partnership Agreement and work with specific schools in amber and red categories has been characterised by clear timetables for action and definitive agreed targets and outcomes. As the service which undertakes termly monitoring visits on behalf of the authorities, GwE is well-informed about standards of achievement in schools, and this is supported by the judgements of the institutions themselves in a recent stakeholder survey [see above] of those who responded either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement. In addition to the annual survey, GwE collates stakeholder response after each termly visit and for all three termly visits, stakeholder surveys have shown that well over 90% of schools strongly agreed or agreed that Headteachers and schools had benefited from the process, that the discussion and recommendations helped to move the school forward and that the visit offered an appropriate level of challenge. Both data and contextual information are used forensically to categorise schools and to agree on an appropriate level of intervention and support. GwE internal quality assurance procedures has improved the quality of challenge and support across the three hubs and has also led to higher quality reporting and evidence base for local categorisation. Challenge Advisers know their link schools well which has also resulted in better quality pre-inspection reports for Estyn, and better relevancy of judgements to the findings of the regulatory body. There has been a relentless focus on standards in those schools which have been targeted and there is evidence from a number of sources, including Estyn inspection and end of key stage performance that a high percentage of those schools have improved radically since 2012/2013. It is judged that GwE's strategies and procedures for challenging and supporting schools which were significantly underperforming have been very effective and have resulted in firm improvements. Although there are strengths in the support element of GwE's work with amber/red category school e.g. developing more robust self-evaluation procedures and more effective use of data, which has resulted in improvements across both sectors, it is judged that further work remains to be done to ensure that a more appropriate balance is struck between challenging and supporting so that all schools can easily access quality guidance, across a range of aspects and

Case studies of impact re: Literacy and Numeracy [see evaluative comments]

Case studies of impact re: Standardisation and Moderation of TA [see evaluative comments]

SCC Capacity Building Bid

SCC Action Plans for regional schools

Case studies of impact re: SCC Programme [see evaluative comments]

priorities. **Involvement with and impact on ‘coasting’ good schools has been much less significant and is being addressed as part of our work programme for 2014-2015.**

Use of data:

To further enable the school improvement service to more effectively meet priorities agreed with the individual authorities, work is currently undertaken by the 6 Directors of Education and GwE to improve the ability of the regional service to collect and collate data from local authorities and schools on pupil performance and progress and on using that data to benchmark and challenge school performance and pupil progress and, with LA’s and schools, to set challenging targets for improvements. This will also allow for a more robust examination of performance with school leaders and chairs of governors at whole-school level; different subjects/year groups and sub-categories of pupils and to identify areas of underperformance and achievement gap. Effective use has made of a vast range of data on standards and quality of education to monitor and evaluate performance and to challenge schools and individual subject departments but the impact of the work has been more significant in underperforming schools where a high percentage have made more mature use of data when evaluating and findings trends, when identifying areas for improvement and when prioritising courses of action in relation to standards. A more mature level of approach is also evident in these schools re: target setting procedures e.g. more intelligent use of assessments, FFT data, FSM family performance thresholds and lines of regression etc. However, a more consistent approach must be taken to ensure that schools across the performance range are challenged on their performance and specifically on the achievements of individual pupils/groups of pupils.

Termly monitoring visits:

Termly visits are conducted to every school to monitor and challenge standards and quality of leadership. Those schools of concern locally or/and in an Estyn follow-up category are visited more frequently. The findings of these visits are used to help authorities determine a risk category for their schools and to target additional support. In each instance, a report is sent to the Head teacher and Chair of Governors. As a result of this additional support and the intensified scrutiny and accountability, the majority of schools have made good progress. In specific instances, the Challenge Adviser attends meetings of the Governing Body [or relevant Sub-groups] to present their reports. Each monitoring visit has a focus area however standards of achievement and progress towards priorities and targets are a common thread. Self-evaluations and School Development Plans are crucial to driving improvements within institutions and are therefore central to all discussions with schools.

The autumn visit focuses additionally on outcomes; the spring visit on standards of achievement in learners’ books; and the summer visit on quality of leadership at all levels. In an attempt to ensure consistency and transparency of visits, a matrix is used to reach a judgement on the quality of the various elements. This ensures that regional themes are operational, that good practices are identified and shared, and that further support is targeted on a risk basis. As a result of the above action [and specific focus on joint observation and scrutiny], the capacity of the Senior Management Teams and Middle Leaders to evaluate quality of teaching and learning in schools, has improved dramatically. However, a minority of schools need further support to evaluate standards in specific departments.

RESPONDING TO NATIONAL INITIATIVES

Developing Leadership :

The 6 authorities and GwE firmly believe that improving quality of leadership, at every level, is fundamental to ensuring the sustainability of recent improvements and ensuring that high risk category schools make the necessary progress. As well as prioritising the area as part of termly monitoring visits, GwE has intensified the work with a number of schools and individuals using a targeted approach. There are several examples of Challenge Advisers working with ‘good practice’ school head teachers to provide target schools with guidance and support – in the form of individual sessions or group workshops. Good practice in SDPs and self-evaluations has been shared in strategic forums and presented directly to category schools too. Across the 3 Hubs, a range of training or guidance sessions have been delivered by either the LA or GwE for senior and middle leaders across a range of developmental work. However, it has not been a coherent delivery across the region and it is acknowledged that there is a need to move to adopting a universal approach to ensure consistency in the quality of provision. Work is in progress to address this and, during the autumn term, an audit and evaluation of current practice

was undertaken before formulating a regional offer of GwE services/training. GwE have considered the priorities noted by the NLDB and will, therefore, firstly offer an effective development programme across the region for middle leaders from January/February 2015 onwards focusing on developing the key skills required to be an effective middle leader in the respective sector. It is intended to utilise existing GwE staff to deliver the development training, in partnership with external individuals/organisations and successful regional practitioners. The GwE Middle Leadership Development Programme, delivered over 6 days [and will include taught days; link visits to schools to identify excellent practice; job shadowing; the support of an identified 'mentor' to support/challenge the candidate; action led research in school] is intended to be a broader and more enriching experience than just a training session. Participants will be supported to develop personal skills against the Leadership standards and the Leadership Development Pathway priorities eg mentoring/coaching. Reflective practice and action research will be a key feature of the programme and alongside personal development, participants must be able to display impact and outcomes in relation to their work back at their school. ie: improved standards in learner achievement or improved behaviour/attendance and action research will form an essential part of the programme.

The intention is to progress to offer effective developmental packages for senior leader development from September 2015 onwards. GwE currently provides a variety of effective support and guidance for Headteachers, with the existing support for new Headteachers progressing effectively. GwE has also given attention to the development of the Executive Head role, aligning with the key priorities noted by the NLDB. A jointly arranged *Executive Head Conference* between the NLDB, GwE and ERW will be held in January 2015 in order to showcase and share effective practice across the regions. An initial Phase 1 Prospectus/brochure of middle leadership development training offered across the region by GwE will be published in January 2015, with Phase 2 and 3 included when appropriate. This will also focus on senior leadership development training [Deputy Headteacher, Headteacher, Executive Headteacher]. Since September 2014 GwE is the Strategic Project Manager of the North Wales NPQH programme. Effective NPQH selection, support and assessment processes are operational with GwE utilising current recognised effective leaders within the education sector in North Wales as part of the GwE NPQH team.

GwE also has a central and pivotal role to play in Head teachers' Performance Management procedures and all Challenge Advisers have been trained to act as a member of the relevant Governing Body panel. Effective use is made of the Autumn Term Monitoring Visit to collate evidence for determining possible objectives and progress is monitored in subsequent meetings. GwE regards that governors are central to developing and challenging schools and **there is a need to further strengthen their role as a 'critical friend' in schools**. Work has been undertaken in some areas, in collaboration with the authorities, to upskill Governors and Elected Members with priority given to improving their understanding of data and of the requirements of challenging Head teachers. As above, there is a need to ensure that the guidance is consistent across the region and that there is a high level of commitment.

School>School Collaboration:

When developing a collaborative school>school model, GwE has taken, as its building blocks, the content of the recent report by Robert Hill Consulting, *The National Model for Regional Working* and the priorities outlined by the NLDB. GwE is fully committed to developing what is recognised globally as a *self-improving school system* and we fully acknowledge that to establish such a system requires all partners and education stakeholders in North Wales to fully undertake an active role. All 6 Authorities and GwE recognise that effective leadership has to come from within schools and that schools must take shared responsibility for their own improvement. Thus, our adopted approach to promoting effective collaboration, does not enforce a single method or model on schools, but rather, builds on effective local practice which was already operational. GwE also accepts that there has to be a multi-dimensional and multi-layered approach, because not all schools are starting from the same solid base of effective partnership working and not all schools have the capacity and understanding to effectively challenge peer performance. For most of our schools, our input is one of promoting, facilitating, monitoring, evaluating and ensuring that lessons from best practice are actively cascaded and that all partners are placed in a *win-win* situation. For a minority of our targeted schools, GwE takes a more proactive and, at times, prescriptive approach. When facilitating and promoting collaboration for such schools, we are always mindful of the *ladders-of-learning* principle.

GwE Challenge Advisors monitor and evaluate progress on a termly basis to ensure accountability and effective progress across the region and school>school collaboration is now included as a line of inquiry in all termly monitoring visits.

During the 2014 Autumn Term, GwE used a significant percentage of its previous underspend to promote school>school collaboration. Based on an agreed formula all schools received a financial contribution to support developments [with specific agreed engagement conditions]. Primary schools were also given an opportunity to apply for further funding to support cross-border [LA and/or region] collaboration. Developments and progress will be monitored during the 2015 Spring Term and evaluated in the 2015 Summer Term.

As part of the wider strategy, and the multi-layered approach, GwE and the Local Authorities, in partnership with Headteachers, have identified [and kit-marked] best practice relating to leadership and teaching and learning. Schools/departments and individuals, supported by GwE funding, will operate as lead practitioners to support peers. The established model will ensure that we will have ease of access to a wider support package for schools and that the support is rooted in best regional practice. The model also allows for capacity building at our best performing schools. Plans are currently in place to arrange a regional showcase conference in June / July 2015. Also, during the 2014-15 educational year, we will develop an online compendium [to be accessed via GwE website] which will allow practitioners across the region to see where scheduled opportunities for accessing best practice are available. The model also builds on the approach taken by GwE to ensure regional support for GCSE 2015/Pisa developments. National grant funding and GwE core funding, has been used effectively to establish a central team of 7 lead personnel [including 2 members from SLT] which is further supported by 6 lead regional schools [Ysgol yr Alun for Science; Ysgol Eirias for Mathematics; Ysgol Bryn Elian for English and Ysgolion Tryfan/Dyffryn Ogwen/Botwnnog for Welsh. The Welsh dimension for Science is further enriched by the lead from the 5 secondary schools on Ynys Mon, whilst Ysgol Glan Clwyd supports the delivery in Mathematics]. Schools have warmly welcome the opportunity to take this lead role and the project has allowed us to work with our best practitioners in undertaking action research.

The NTEN Teacher Development Programme and the HeadSprouts Reading Initiative Programme are two examples of effective collaboration facilitated by GwE. As part of our school improvement programme, the Teacher Development Trust (TDT) agreed to work with GwE to deliver a regional equivalent of their successful National Teacher Enquiry Network (NTEN). This would enable schools to develop more effective CPD provision through a greater focus on evidence-based professional development and sustainable peer-to-peer support systems. As well as offering schools an initial CPD audit and access to a library of education research journals, a key principle of the GwE model is the use of the lesson study approach characterized by a teacher-led, collaborative approach to lesson observations building on feedback and advice from colleagues using evidence-based strategies. The main focus of the GwE NTEN project is to help schools improve the quality of learning in a specific – and measurable – aspect of provision. In this regard the model has been shown to be both supportive and very effective. Our NTEN project is supported by the use of IRIS Connect video technology to record evidence as part of lesson study. We have 12 schools on our pilot NTEN project for 2014-15. Within each school, nominated teachers undertake an initial CPD audit of provision in their school; assist in the audit of CPD provision in a partner school; identify an aspect of learning that the school wishes to improve (measurable and standards-linked); identify possible evidence-based solutions for the identified area of improvement; commence the Lesson Study/action research as identified and evaluate the outcomes of the project and share with schools. In September 2014 an introductory event was held, delivered by CUREE (Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education) coupled with an introduction to NTEN lesson study, delivered by Teacher Development Trust (TDT). The introductory workshops helped teachers identify workable, practical aims and ‘research questions’ to take forward through the lesson study process; understand the idea of collecting pupil evidence at classroom level (and to give them some diagnostic examples and activities to practice on); recognize the features of lesson study in the classroom related to key aspects of teaching and learning; and plan for their own aims and foci, and to refine them for lesson study (in the sense of testing the scope and practicality and identifying the evidence they might collect and use). They also underpinned the project’s clear focus on improving the quality of teaching through the evaluative use of performance data. A full evaluation of impact will be undertaken at the end of the period.

HeadSprout Reading Intervention Project : GwE has formed a partnership with Bangor University to provide training and support for schools who wish to use the HeadSprout evidence-based reading intervention. HeadSprout is an online reading intervention that provides pupils with individualized teaching that can be delivered either by teachers or teaching assistants. HeadSprout Early Reading comprises 80 lessons and is designed to take beginning readers to the equivalent of Year 3 reading standard in around 30 hours of instruction. The programme has undergone extensive research analysis that has demonstrated

its effectiveness from Year 2 to Year 7 (including mainstream pupils and those with intellectual disabilities and autism). HeadSprout has been successfully trialled across a number of schools (both mainstream and special) in Conwy and Gwynedd over recent years. In June 2014 GwE and Bangor University offered a range of implementation and support packages for additional schools who wish to use the programme and a further nine schools joined the 2014-15 project. The current HeadSprout schools have used the intervention on pupils deemed to be at risk of not making appropriate progress in the standard of their reading and/or comprehension skills. GwE, Bangor and Warwick University have a proposal for a new regional study that would be focused on evaluating the wider impact of the HeadSprout programmes on the attainment of disadvantaged pupils across North Wales. All participating schools have received initial setup training and support with administering placement tests for each pupil and have commenced HeadSprout interventions from November 2014. A full evaluation will be undertaken at the end of the year.

GwE has also facilitated and supported several collaborative cross region and LA based projects. Best examples include supporting the development of KS2 science in Conwy schools : a GwE facilitated science workshop was arranged for 11 targeted primary schools - chosen on the basis of either static or declining trends in Level 4 and/or Level 5 attainment over the past 3 years, or where there was a significantly low percentage of Level 5 attainment over recent years. The aim of the workshop was to help teachers improve provision for Level 4 and Level 5 skills, and assessment and to make accurate and robust end-of-key stage moderated judgements. The session focused on establishing an accurate understanding of higher order science enquiry skills at Level 4 and Level 5 (standardization); improving the quality of curriculum planning and associated provision; applying this knowledge to a range of learners' work from your school (moderation); reviewing the standard of LNF skills (and also the provision for these skills) in pupils' science work; and providing teachers with the opportunity to network with other schools to share good practice/strategies. Each teacher who attended the first session was allocated an additional day to improve identified areas of provision. 10 out of 11 schools engaged fully with the support on offer; 4 out of the 10 schools achieved significant increases in either Level 4 and/or Level 5 data in summer 2014 (from +10 to +25% improvement); 4 out of the 11 schools achieved an improved benchmark position by +1 quartile place for either Level 4 and/or Level 5; 2 of the schools benefitted from the successful 2013-14 moderation programme.

Other examples include : Welsh Second Language + Literacy support via Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy for 6 other secondary schools; PLC established to look at action research, use of effect size, secondary groups to share good practice; GwE leading 3 training days for schools leaders in the Caernarfon catchment area [based on categorisation needs]; partnerships developed with the Teacher Development Network and 10 schools in Conwy looking at developing cross sector pedagogy [*Iris Connect* is involved in this scheme]; cross sector leadership and middle manager development network for 20 middle leaders from Conwy/Denbighshire [16 primary head teachers and secondary deputies looking at developing personal skills and self-perception]; funding a Mentoring Scheme in Flintshire where effective Headteachers are supporting less effective Heads. GwE have also facilitated the iNet Lead Practitioner project in Flintshire and we undertaken a key role within the steering group and the provision for the North Wales Strategic Heads Group for bilingual/Welsh medium schools.

Literacy and Numeracy:

A regional Literacy and Numeracy Strategy is being developed during the autumn term 2014, in collaboration with key partners including representatives from schools, LA teams, who are still delivering support on specific aspects of this agenda (e.g. Welsh Advisory Teams, Foundation Phase) and the National Support Programme. In December 2014 the strategy will be shared for consultation with stakeholders before being finalised and published in January 2015. This will ensure wider ownership of the agenda and guarantee that individual LA and schools' priorities have been fully incorporated and that there is no unnecessary duplication, either locally, between GwE and LAs, or nationally between GwE and the NSP. Once the strategy has been finalised a Regional Literacy and Numeracy Strategic group will be convened who will have overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the strategy. This group will include a range of stakeholders from schools, GwE, the LA and the NSP. Currently GwE does not have a sufficiently comprehensive overview of the provision for literacy and numeracy across the whole region and this is an area that needs further development. The L/N SSL reports to the user group on a regular basis who then report back to headteachers' federations in each of the LAs through their representatives. She also currently meets separately with representatives from the LAs to align priorities and work programmes, although it is anticipated that the Regional Strategic Group meetings will be sufficient in the future. Generally, in the 2014 National Tests GwE's performance was above the Wales average on the

SS>85 indicator in all except the Welsh Reading test. Performance was strongest in the Numerical Reasoning test. A common area for development in 3 of the 4 tests is the % of GwE learners achieving the higher score indicator of >115. During the coming year the analysis of the National Tests will be used to support the targeting of specific schools and LAs e.g. Welsh Reading in Mon, English Reading in Denbighshire, Numeracy (both Procedural and Reasoning) in Wrexham, with a particular focus on reducing the % of learners scoring SS>85. During the financial year 2013/14 GwE were given £350,000 of the regional SEG to fund a small team of 6.6 FTE literacy and numeracy Associate Partners. These individuals were identified as outstanding classroom practitioners and are seconded to GwE from schools within the region. During the academic year 2013/14 their support was allocated in response to requests from System Leaders and NSP Partners, and was focussed on individual teachers with regards to planning and delivery of the LNF. During the year the team made 509 support visits to 123 primary schools. Around half those visits were single visits to reassure schools that they were implementing the LNF appropriately and that their planning was in line with expectations. However, in the case of around 25 schools, the visits were sustained for a longer period of time, supporting schools in Estyn follow-up, or schools that did not have the leadership capacity to implement the LNF without additional help. This worked well and evidence is available from heads' questionnaire and CA visit reports, as well as 2014 performance data in a few schools where there has been more intense support, and in Estyn reports where schools have been removed from monitoring. In the schools where the support was most effective, the APs input, as part of a wider team including the Challenge Advisor, led to an improvement in the quality of teaching, as noted by Estyn or GwE reviews. Where the support was less effective it has led to competency procedures subsequently being initiated with the teachers who received the support. GwE has increased capacity and broadened the remit of this team from September 2014 until August 2015, as a few LAs have used an increased percentage of their retained SEG to commission additional literacy and numeracy support for their schools. Four additional full time secondments have been made, including a secondary practitioner. The total capacity now is 10.6 FTE. The secondary Associate Partner visits secondary schools literacy and numeracy co-ordinators, support where necessary, establish networks of practitioners and facilitate the sharing of good practice. She does not have the capacity to deliver this support through the medium of Welsh, but has developed contacts with lead practitioners in Welsh medium schools to ensure equal access to provision. Primary colleagues have also extended their brief, under the leadership and direction of the Head of Brokerage and Support, and are now able to offer training, with follow-up support being targeted according to need. Training on Numerical Reasoning for Numeracy Co-ordinators, offered to the region's primary schools in November 2014, was over-subscribed. 270 places were available on 9 sessions in venues across the region. A further training event on Extended Writing is being offered in Flintshire LA only, in response to a request from the LA, in November. This will be rolled out to other LAs as required in the Spring and Summer terms. All training will be followed-up by practical class-based support in targeted schools. This supports individual teachers' and teaching assistants' Performance Management and aligns with the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy which will have been shared and agreed by stakeholders. More comprehensive and cohesive training and support for secondary schools is at an early stage of development. Schools started on Phase 3 of the NSP in September 2014 which means that they have therefore spent over a year on Stage 1 and 2 [i.e. completing the audit to determine their priorities]. This has caused frustration for many schools at both ends of the scale – the better ones being held back and not able to forge ahead, and the ones who needed more support not receiving it soon enough. In October 2014 GwE and the NSP came to an agreement about support for the region's schools as part of the rollout of the NSP into Phase 3 of their programme. It was agreed that NSP Partners would offer support to schools on strategic, whole school issues relating to the implementation of the LNF, whilst GwE's Associate Partners would offer support on teaching and learning. This approach was shared with, and approved by WG officials. This was communicated to schools in October, as previously there was a high level of confusion amongst teachers about the roles and responsibilities of the various partners. The L/N SSL meets on a fortnightly basis with the NSP's Senior Partner in the north and as a result, communication between GwE and the NSP has improved this year. Schools' requests for support from the NSP, as part of their progress trackers, have been shared with GwE and this supports the targeting of support, along with information from Challenge Advisers. There is a need to further improve collaboration and communication between the NSP and GwE at a national level. GwE have secured a regional agreement with Catch Up, which is supported by the 6 Directors. As the L/N SSL, 2 other SLs and 1 associate partner have been trained to deliver this training, schools are able to access the training at a reduced cost. The intervention is one recommended by WG to support struggling learners. Between April 2013 and December 2014 GwE will have facilitated 15 Catch Up/Dyfal Donc literacy and numeracy training sessions. 5 Welsh medium literacy sessions and 2 English medium have been organised and delivered, and 5 Welsh medium and 3 English medium numeracy sessions. In total 387 teachers and teaching assistants have been trained to deliver this intervention to learners. At present, pupil level data is not collated centrally [as used to happen with individual LAs in past] but, as a regional tracking system is developed, this should become possible. The monitoring and evaluation of the impact of these programmes on learner achievement are part of schools' plans and, as such, are monitored and challenged by Challenge Advisors during their termly focus

visits. NQT support and training already takes place at a regional level under the leadership of a specific member of part-time staff. However, the Associate Partners have developed a support package for NQTs on literacy and numeracy, and discussions are ongoing about how best to deliver this across the region.

Standardisation/Moderation/Assessment:

GwE acknowledges that there is inconsistency in the standardisation and moderation of learners' work across the LAs of North Wales and that there is a need for a regional steer to allow for a more systematic approach to quality assure and to facilitate the sharing and dissemination of best practice. During 2012-2013, best practice involved internal standardisation being monitored by Challenge Advisor as part of termly monitoring visits; moderation by the SMT/Heads of Department leading to follow-up training and support for those requiring further development and secondary teachers meeting with primary counterparts to moderate samples. GwE was actively involved in a number of cases, including the moderation of KS3 work in Denbighshire where each school was asked to submit a portfolio of level 5, 6 and 7 literacy work which was scrutinised and moderated by a panel of literacy expert practitioners and a GwE Challenge Advisor lead. A report was written for each school which was shared with the Headteacher and LA. Other cases of best practice involves GwE facilitated and supported projects at Ysgol Emrys ap Iwan, Ysgol Uwchradd Dinbych and Ysgol Uwchradd Rhyl [cross hub working to improve aspects of assessment]; cross region [Conwy, Denbigh and Gwynedd] Science MAT research group looking at teaching and learning of science with a view to increase the numbers of learners gaining level 5 and 6; Denbighshire secondary schools PLC for moderation of English at KS3 which led to increased consistency and reliability of TA at KS3 in portfolios and learner profiles; cross region collaborative working where Ysgol Cerrigydrudion, Ysbyty Ifan (Conwy), Prion (Denbigh) and Brithdir (Gwynedd) moderated core subject teacher assessment as a family group. The pilot work undertaken last year has allowed for a more focused approach from 2014 onwards and is acknowledged as one of our main priorities within the Business Plan. GwE has SMT representation on the National Steering Group for TA Standardisation and Moderation under the leadership of David Heath and have contributed extensively to national discussions and direction for moving the agenda forward. As a result of those discussions, we have established a strategy for roll out during 2014-15 where a *GwE Teacher Assessment Working Group* has been established [incorporating secondary and primary specialist for each of the core subjects]. These practitioners are developing a set of guidelines on best practice and expected cluster actions with regard to standardisation and moderation of teacher assessment. They will also develop a levelled portfolio with commentary to support the professional dialogue and to serve as exemplars in cluster meetings. Guidelines and portfolios are to be distributed and discussed at the relevant SMT strategic forums across the region and will outline the expectations re: moderation practice for each cluster. A quality assurance process will be agreed where Challenge Advisors will be required to participate in around 20% of cluster moderation meetings and will include a cross section of core subjects and LAs. At the end of the year, a report will be written by the GwE SMT regarding the region's practices. During 2015-16, following an evaluation of this year's processes, a plan for a training package for all schools will be developed which will be rolled out in Autumn 2015.

Schools Challenge Cymru :

Five schools within the Consortium are part of the Schools Challenge Cymru programme (Ysgol Caergybi, Anglesey; Ysgol Bryn Alyn, Wrexham; Ysgol Clywedog, Wrexham; Ysgol Rhosnesni, Wrexham and Holywell High School, Flint) and all five have worked effectively with their SCC Advisers to produce their '*Single School Development Plan*' to the SCC team at Welsh Government by the July deadline. During the period of their compilation, SCC Advisers kept GwE SMT updated on progress and advice was provided where appropriate to ensure consistency across the region. The '*Single School Development Plan*' for each of the five schools have been approved by Welsh Government, and funding identified to support the priorities within the plans. All five schools have been allocated revenue and capital funding.

GwE management of the SCC project : in September 2015 a seconded Headteacher was appointed as SCC Consortium Link Officer to co-ordinate and over-see the work of the SCC Advisers and to take responsibility of the Consortium SCC grant. He also advises GwE SMT on developmental work and ensures appropriate administrative support. He meets regularly with the SCC Advisers, and liaises with SCC SMT's, the partner schools and SCC Business Managers, leading to the establishment of common protocols for the management of the SCC funding. The core purpose is to maximise the impact of the SCC project by providing high quality support for schools through both the deployment and maximisation of funding. Although in its initial phase, it is already evident that the school to school support being brokered by SCC schools aligns well with GwE's objective of building regional capacity. Between SCC and the PISA project there is already clear evidence of the engagement of significant numbers of our secondary schools with this important agenda.

The GwE central capacity-building funding had previously been approved and therefore all plans presented to the SCC team contained links to that central GwE funding where clearly identified elements of GwE capacity-building funding would be accessed. Grant funding includes an allocation of £513,000 to support capacity building within the five schools. Within this allocation are two themes, ‘*Leadership and Management*’ and ‘*Teaching and Learning*’ and the allocation is being used to develop school-to-school collaboration opportunities which were identified during the production of the ‘Single School Development Plan’. Leadership and Management funding is being used to release members of SMT of other identified schools to work with the Schools Challenge Cymru schools - to share expertise in leadership, support improvement strategies, offer specialist support with assessment/tracking/learner outcomes in specific departments and promoting promoting cross sector collaboration. This work will build leadership capacity within SCC schools. Teaching and Learning funding is being used to release experienced and effective teachers (including Heads of Department) to work with SCC schools to share plans, to observe teaching and learning and to mentor staff – the priority being to develop internal capacity building in core subjects.

All SCC schools have established their AIBs and the first meetings have taken place. Leadership and management support by partner schools is developing at whole-school and departmental level. Although still in its early stages, each SCC school has a plan that initially includes at least one lead partner school and other management support will be sourced as identified in their capacity-building bids to GwE. Cross-phase working is developing within clusters during this term. Taken together, this work will build leadership capacity both within SCC schools and more widely across the region. Teaching and learning support has been tailored to the needs of each school. In some cases the priority has been internal capacity building in core subjects, whilst in others an integrated approach to the involvement of the lead school has meant that sharing of expertise has begun. The impact upon SCC schools will be more immediately evident, but the longer-term legacy of the development of coaching and leadership skills in subject leaders across the region is in line with one of GwE’s wider objectives.

Promoting and developing the Welsh Language :

A full evaluation of regional standards in Welsh is included as part of the commentary and evidence section for the first aspect [see above – *Impact on primary and secondary schools’ standards of achievement*]. 2014 Welsh First Language assessment data for key indicators across all phases and against cohort and candidates are summarised below :

2014: Welsh First Language Outcomes – GwE region				
KS	Cohort	% of cohort assessed Welsh 1 st language	% of cohort achieved expected level	% of candidates achieved expected level
FP	7537	34.5%	30.5% (LCW5+)	88.4% (LCW5+)
KS2	6880	33.4%	29.1% (L4+)	87.2% (L4+)
KS3	7137	29.4%	26.4% (L5+)	89.7% (L5+)
KS4	7408	29.6%	21.2% (GCSE A*-C)	71.6% (GCSE A*-C)

The numbers of learners sitting GCSE Welsh First Language have risen over the last three years and statistics from individual LA’s, such as Wrexham, also show an increase in KS2>KS3 numbers as a result of the success of their immersion course. A *Welsh-Medium and Capacity Building Sub-Group* has been established, and is chaired by a representative from ADEW. The group aims to promote greater collaboration and sharing of expertise in Welsh-medium education and to improve the equality of provision. Their work has focused on joint-scrutiny of national and LA policies, strategic plans and practices to ensure better understanding and collaboration across the region [specifically in relation to the document *One Language for All*, the *WESP* and the effective use of the *WEG*. It has also promoted and supported the *Welsh Language Sabbatical Scheme* across the region and has recently commissioned GwE to undertake an audit and evaluation of provision and ethos for the development of Welsh across the region. Effective collaboration between GwE and the respective LA’s has also led to joint-evaluative exercises being conducted in targeted schools and a full time two-term secondment has been advertised for a SMT member to lead on further regional developments. There are currently many strengths across the region in relation to the promotion, the development and the standards in Welsh First Language with excellent practice identified in Gwynedd [and corroborated in recent Estyn Thematic Inspection] and Ynys Mon eg Language Charter.

Developing 14-19 provision :

An effective regional infrastructure has been operational for a number of years and an experienced steering group, under the lead of a regional co-ordinator, oversees all developments related to the phase. As a result, the region has ensured that all maintained secondary schools and FE colleges within North Wales have met their statutory local curriculum requirements at pre and post 16. Numerous aspects of their work has led to national recognition and specifically in relation to collaboration between FE Colleges and schools to enhance the vocational curriculum; the training, development and deployment of Learning Coaching; and the role of the Welsh Medium Education Forum.

Developing the Foundation Phase :

A full evaluation of regional standards for the Foundation Phase is included as part of the commentary for the first aspect [see above – *Impact on primary and secondary schools' standards of achievement*]. LA's Foundation Phase Officers meet regularly at a regional level to standardise practices across the region, and on a termly basis with Challenge Advisers as part of LA/GwE meetings in order to share information. The Challenge Advisers have collaborated with the LA's to effectively deploy the Foundation Phase officers in target schools as required. GwE and Foundation Phase Officers have also conducted end of phase moderation sessions with target schools.

KEY STRENGTHS :

- impact on performance and outcomes
- impact on performance and quality of leadership in the majority of targeted schools
- effective literacy and numeracy targeted support via GwE Associate Partners
- effective cross-region and cross-phase collaboration to develop 14-19 provision
- effective facilitation and promotion of school-to-school collaboration in specific clusters

KEY AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- further enable the school improvement service to more effectively meet priorities agreed with the individual authorities by developing the regional data collation/analysis service
- further develop our school-to-school model so that all schools are actively and effectively engaged in collaborative working
- establish robust programmes for developing leadership across the region
- increase level of challenge and support for good '*coasting*' good schools so that they become great schools
- further strengthen the role of the Governing Body as a '*critical friend*' in schools
- further improve the quality of support to improve self-evaluation and improvement planning in schools
- further develop work done by Gwynedd and Ynys Mon re: use of Language Charter to promote the development of the Welsh language across the region

MEETING	GwE Joint Committee
DATE	17 December 2014
TITLE	Appointment of Members to the GwE Consultative Board
PURPOSE	To recommend specialist members to the GwE Consultative Board
RECOMMENDATION	That the Joint Committee appoints in accordance with the recommendation.
AUTHOR	John Davies – Chief Education Officer, Wrexham County Borough Council

1. At its meeting on the 6th of November 2014 the Joint Committee resolved to adopt a management structure which included a Consultative Board to contribute towards the management of GwE. A further report was requested with recommendations and information about candidates who met the requirements for appointment.
2. Following consultation with the Chief Executives of the North Wales Councils the Chief Education Officers have identified 4 appropriate and willing candidates and members have been provided with details of the 4.

Recommendation

That the Joint Committee appoints the candidates to serve on the Consultative Committee for an initial period of two years.