

Report for Scrutiny
KS4 (PROVISIONAL AND DRAFT)

2018-19

Blaenau-Gwent

Purpose of this Report: To inform members of Welsh Government policy changes in relation to KS4 interim performance measures.

Introduction and Context

The Welsh Government has been developing new evaluation and improvement arrangements to replace parts of the current accountability system. These arrangements have been co-constructed with colleagues in schools, Estyn, local government, regional consortia, and taken international research into consideration. They have been carefully developed to ensure that they align with and help support the realisation of the new curriculum and associated reforms.

The new arrangements will support the aim of raising standards, reducing the attainment gap, and delivering an education system that is a source of national pride and public confidence.

The arrangements are based on the following four key principles. They will be:

- fair – they will promote equity, inclusion, choice, individual pathways to learning and never losing sight of the learner;
- coherent – allowing each part of the system to work together without overlapping, with clear roles and responsibilities;
- proportionate – ensuring that the implementation of the new arrangements and process is manageable and makes a difference;
- transparent – recognising the breadth of learning experience across schools and the value added by teacher in class

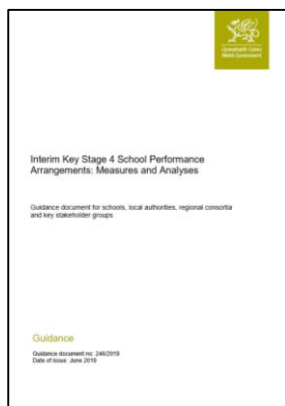
Over the next three years, there will be an evolving programme of future developments, making the transition between the current system and the future plans. The process of developing the new Evaluation and Improvement arrangements by 2022 will evolve in a planned way to support schools and others to build a self – improving system and plan for sustained improvements.

In May 2018, the Minister for Education announced the introduction of a suite of interim Key Stage 4 performance measures that were developed through collaboration with head teachers and key stakeholders. The new measures, based on points scores, were designed to remove the historic emphasis on the Level 2 threshold measure and the narrow focus on borderline C/D grade learners that past use of threshold measures has cultivated. Instead, they reflect a school average of all individual learners' points' scores, rather than a percentage attaining a minimum threshold level.

The measures have been designed to help broaden learner choice, valuing individual learner needs and achievement. This will help better capture the progress of every learner. Whilst the interim measures are broader in order to achieve this

goal, existing curriculum requirements and expectations of provision remain. There will continue to be headline measures on literacy, numeracy and science.

Interim Key Stage 4 School Performance Arrangements



In June 2019, the guidance document for schools, local authorities, regional consortia and key stakeholder groups was issued, on the Interim Key Stage 4 School Performance Arrangements: Measures and Analyses.

Guidance document no: 246/2019 Date of issue: June 2019

Reporting against the interim performance measures will commence in September 2019.

It is understood that the interim measures will not significantly change the systemwide behaviours. However, schools should not be placed under disproportionate scrutiny on the basis of one or two measures in isolation, as we move to a system that values a much wider range of factors in assessing a school's effectiveness in best providing for individual learners' needs.

There is an expectation that local authorities and regional consortia support schools to make appropriate decisions about their curriculum to avoid narrowing choice for learners.

As a minimum, there is an expectation that most learners will study:

- both a Welsh/English language and literature qualification;
- both mathematics and mathematics - numeracy GCSEs;
- and either three separate science GCSEs or a double award GCSE.

The best interest of the learner must always be the main factor in any decision about the qualifications chosen and learners' choices must not be dictated by changes to performance measures.

Over the next six months, Welsh Government will commission an independent research project to review the performance measurement system. Decisions on future indicators, and the associated systems that will supersede the interim arrangements, will be informed by this research, in conjunction with the responses received in response to a full consultation with schools and key stakeholders.

Interim Performance Measures: Basic principles

Cohort being measured

The cohort measured will remain as Year 11 learners. All Year 11 learners on the school's roll will be included in Key Stage 4 (KS4) results data with the exception of those identified as:

- NEWBES (New to the English or Welsh based Education System within the last two academic years); or
- FEWBES (From an English or Welsh based Education System but with qualifications that are not counted in Wales KS4 performance data).

Whilst such learners can be excluded from the figures, this will mean they will be excluded from all the KS4 performance data measures at a school level.

Qualifications that can be included in KS4 performance data

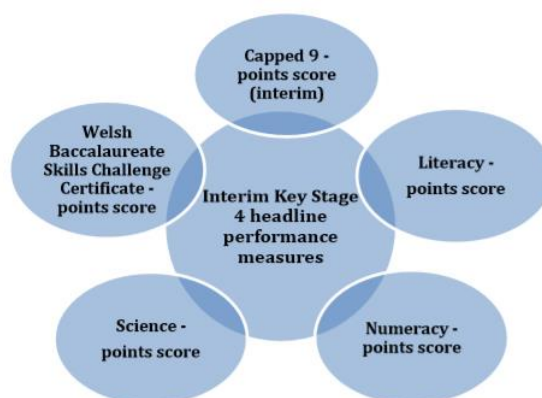
All qualifications approved or designated for delivery in Wales continue to count towards KS4 performance measures, other than where particular subject requirements are specified.

Only the first complete awarding of a qualification can be included in the measures, irrespective of whether a better grade is subsequently achieved for the same qualification by a learner. This change encourages schools to enter learners when schools are confident, they are ready to gain their best possible result. It does not prevent a learner resitting should a school or learner wish to attempt to improve their results, but the resit result would not count towards school performance measures, even if the outcome is higher.

Overview of headline measures

The interim performance measures are made up of five headline measures, all based on points scores:

1. Capped 9 measure (interim)
2. Literacy measure
3. Numeracy measure
4. Science measure
5. Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate measure



Capped 9 Measure

No*	Slot	Requirement	
1	Literacy slot	Subject specific requirements** (GCSEs only)	Best result of first awarding of: Welsh first language or English language or Welsh literature or English literature
2	Numeracy slot		Best result of first awarding of: mathematics – numeracy or mathematics
3	Science slot		Best result of first awarding of (currently limited to awards in the WJEC suite of science GCSE qualifications available to learners): biology, chemistry, physics, science (double award) applied science (double award) and applied science (single award)
4	'Other six' (GCSEs or equivalent volume of qualifications)	Best six remaining qualification awards***	All qualifications approved/designated for pre-16 delivery in Wales can count, subject to usual discounting rules and excluding Essential Skills Wales qualifications. The Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate qualification can count towards one of these slots where it features in a learner's best remaining awards.
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			

*Each slot is the equivalent of one GCSE in size.

The literacy, numeracy and science slots are also standalone performance measures.

**Where multiple awards can count, the best grade achieved by a learner is taken. Only the result for the first complete awarding of that qualification is considered when identifying the best grade.

*** There is no cap on total volume of non-GCSEs contributing to the 'Other six' slots.

Use of Data

In order to support robust and rigorous self-evaluation WG are making changes to the information they provide to schools in the All Wales Core Data Sets (AWCDS) to reflect the interim KS4 performance measures. The information should not be considered in isolation and is by no means an exhaustive list of what schools should be looking at. It should be considered alongside schools' own data (including, for example, learner participation, learner characteristics, prior attainment, socioeconomic background etc.), to enable a thorough evaluation of performance. Data is only a small part of what should be considered in evaluating how effective a school is.

The data pack will only tells part of the story; it is for each school, supported by their local authority and regional consortia, to consider it alongside other evidence and local knowledge in order to inform school self-evaluation, target setting and planning.

National benchmarking data was previously provided to allow a comparison with other schools in similar socio-economic circumstances to encourage collaboration. However, the way in which benchmarking has been used has instead driven

competition between schools and local authorities rather than collaboration. It will, therefore, no longer be provided.

In its place, Welsh Government will be providing a range of new analyses to enable schools to look at data from a range of angles and taking into account the performance of all learners. These will be released during the autumn term 2019, with the first release scheduled for mid-October 2019.

In line with the move away from threshold measures, WG will no longer be providing analyses on the percentage of learners achieving: individual subjects, including the Welsh Baccalaureate at Foundation or National, or threshold performance measures, namely the Core Subject Indicator (CSI) or Level 2 threshold.

The exceptions to this are the Level 2 inclusive (L2+) and Level 1 threshold measures – the requirement for schools to set targets for KS4 learners against these measures has remained in legislation for the 2018/19 academic year. Therefore, in order to assist individual schools with monitoring progress against targets, WG will provide schools with their Level 2 inclusive and Level 1 attainment data, in addition to the new interim measures. Two versions of the Level 2 inclusive measure will be provided: one with and one without Welsh or English literature qualifications being able to contribute towards the literacy component.

Some examples of the type of questions schools should be asking when looking at the data provided include:

- What are our stronger and weaker subjects / performance indicators?
- What are the trends for subjects / performance indicators?
- Is our performance higher, the same as, or lower than, expected?
- How different were actual outcomes from those expected (a little, a lot)? If there is a notable difference – what might have caused this?
- Are there any contextual factors that have affected performance for this indicator / subject?
- How does the performance of boys compare to that of boys in similar schools?
- How does the performance of girls compare to that of girls in similar schools?
- How does the performance of FSM learners compare to that of their counterparts in similar schools?
- Are there trends over time indicated for boys' / girls' performance?
- How does our school performance compare with our statistical family, the local authority and Wales? What are the similarities? What are the differences?
- Are some family schools more consistent in having higher outcomes?
- What might account for these e.g. have any specific strategies or curricular arrangements been implemented in the school?
- Are there trends over time to grade distributions?
- How do the grade distributions compare across subjects within the school, and with other schools in the family?
- Are there trends in the performance of the lower, middle or upper third?
- How do the average points scores for each third compare with the modelled points scores?
- What proportion of the school's cohort is included within each national third?
- How does that pattern compare across the family and with the local authority?

- How does the proportion of the school's Capped 9 Points Score (interim) ('other six' slots only) that is made up of non-GCSEs compare to that of similar schools?
- What could be the reasons for this?

Welsh Government, Estyn and WLGA Letter on Evaluation and Improvement Arrangements, 16 July 2019

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

This joint communication from Welsh Government, the WLGA and Estyn to Chairs of Scrutiny, Cabinet Members, Directors of Education, Chief Executive Officers, Managing Directors of Regional Education Consortia, stated that:

“It is counter-productive for schools to be placed under disproportionate pressure on the basis of individual measures. It is not in the interest of school improvement and risks undermining the ongoing change in culture that we are working together to achieve. We expect local authorities and regional consortia to support schools to make appropriate decisions about their curriculum to avoid narrowing choice for learners.

Collectively, we have agreed that this is the right approach to take and strongly advise you to **use a broad range of un-aggregated data and information** to enable you to discharge your duties when reporting on school performance. Evaluating the performance of individual schools rather than generating aggregated data at local authority level will be more helpful to supporting and challenging individual schools with their improvement.”

The content of this scrutiny report is therefore intended to be used within the context of a wider range of information and a range of regional processes that the local authority will use to evaluate individual school performance, and therefore support and challenge more appropriately to secure improvement.

For example, for 2018-2019, the region is implementing a protocol for reviewing School Development Plans. The school development plan (SDP) is the school's strategic plan for improvement. It should set out the actions a school will take to improve learner outcomes based on whole school self-evaluation, using a range of performance information. This regional review and evaluation process will support schools to ensure that the processes for school improvement planning are effective. It will support national reform and target setting arrangements.

Data Validity, Accuracy and Risk

Please note that the following data summary is compiled using provisional data provided by schools on exam results' day. This data is subject to a validation process throughout the autumn, which will result in changes to overall outcomes.

Final confirmed data is not likely to be available until December 2019. A further analysis will be provided on the final validated data set.

Sharing individual school data from results day more widely at this stage has inherent reputational risks, given that this data is provisional and yet to be finalised.

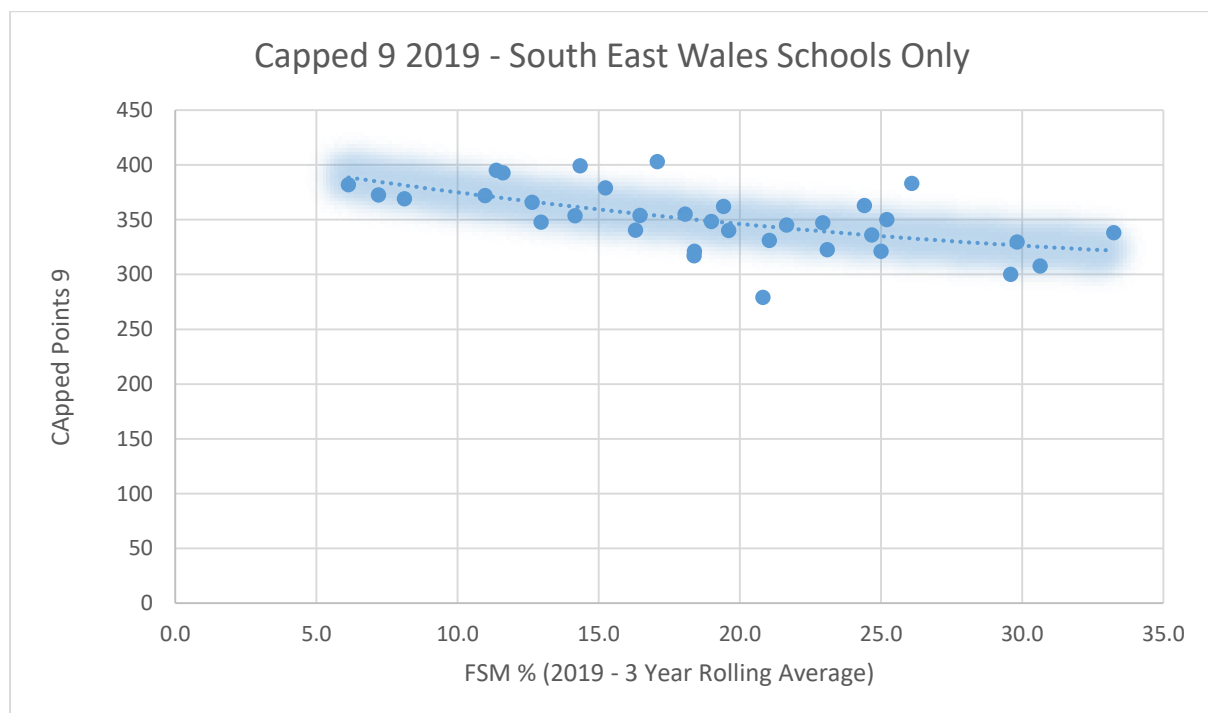
Capped 9 Performance Overview

The charts below provide an overview of performance across all schools in the regions (anonymised and non-aggregated).

Each blue dot on a chart represents a single school within the region. Each chart is organised by the FSM % of each school (PLASC 2019), so that the schools serving our least disadvantaged communities are on the left, and those serving our most disadvantaged are on the right.

The single line through each chart is the 'line of best fit' across the region. If schools are on or around the line, then they are performing in line with expectation (for the region). Schools that are well above the line are performing well above expectation for that particular year. Schools that are well below the line, are performing well below expectation.

Lines of best fit for key indicators for Wales as a whole are usually published at the same time as final All Wales Core Data sets (December).



The table below provides a regional overview of performance for the new interim measures. This enables members to familiarise themselves with school level regional performance. (NR = No return on results day)

The table is sorted from highest performing Capped 9 to lowest performing. Each row represents a single school. Please note though that the school's FSM % is provided to provide some context.

School	LA	FSM - 3 year RA	Capped Point 9	Average points for best of Literature or first Language Welsh or English GCSE	Average points for best of Mathematics or Mathematics - Numeracy GCSE	Average points for best Science GCSE	Average points for Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate
			403	42	43	42	38
			399	43	44	44	40
			395	44	47	44	43
			393	44	40	43	36
			383	41	40	39	43
			382	42	44	44	39
			379	38	38	39	40
			373	42	41	41	38
			372	41	38	40	43
			369	41	41	41	42
			366	41	42	38	45
			363	37	38	37	39
School 1	B		362	39	36	36	37
			355	42	36	40	44
			354	38	38	35	42
			354	42	39	39	37
			350	34	35	37	33
			348	37	36	35	36
			348	42	39	38	38
			347	38	38	37	33
School 2	B		345	38	36	36	42
			340	38	36	33	33
School 3	B		340	37	30	31	NR
			338	35	35	34	30
School 4	B		336	35	33	27	37
			331	36	34	29	36
			330	34	32	34	37
			323	36	35	36	33
			321	36	36	37	34
			321	37	34	31	32
			317	37	34	33	39
			308	32	31	28	37
			300	35	31	31	39
			279	35	32	29	36
Highest			403	44	47	44	45
Median			349	38	36	37	38
Lowest			279	32	30	27	30

The table below provides a regional overview of performance for the Capped 9 only, split by FSM / non FSM. The table remains sorted from highest performing Capped 9 overall to lowest performing. Each row represents a single school.

School	LA	FSM - 3 year RA	Cohort nonFSM	Cohort FSM	Capped Point 9			
					All Pupils	nonFSM	FSM	+/-
					403	417	322	-95
					399	403	373	-31
					395	404	293	-111
					393	397	357	-40
					383	395	349	-46
					382	388	271	-117
					379	390	312	-78
					373	382	208	-174
					372	382	238	-144
					369	377	293	-84
					366	378	291	-87
					363	371	325	-46
School 1	B				362	374	326	-48
					355	368	283	-85
					354	364	309	-55
					354	362	307	-55
					350	361	309	-52
					348	357	305	-52
					348	357	267	-91
					347	355	284	-71
School 2	B				345	361	273	-88
					340	351	283	-68
School 3	B				340	345	310	-35
					338	366	287	-79
School 4	B				336	350	293	-56
					331	347	264	-83
					330	340	303	-37
					323	352	226	-126
					321	340	262	-79
					321	334	268	-66
					317	324	280	-44
					308	325	245	-80
					300	308	274	-34
					279	307	184	-123
Highest					403	417	373	-31
Median					349	361	289	-71
Lowest					279	307	184	-123

Meaningful evaluation of the outcomes at individual school level will take place across the autumn term in dialogue between Local Authorities, EAS and school leaders. Support for individual schools will continue to be provided in line with the National Categorisation system.