

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and Education Committee

Cyllid wedi'i dargedu i wella canlyniadau addysgol | Targeted Funding to Improve Educational Outcomes

TF 20

Ymateb gan: Ein Rhanbarth ar Waith

Response from: Education through Regional Working (ERW)

ERW covers 12,000km² with almost 500 schools. In September 2017 474 schools in ERW had pupils who were eFSM (table 1). There has been a minor decrease in the number of eFSM pupils across the region since 2016 from 20,019 to 19,999. The majority of eFSM learners attend schools which fall into FSM benchmarking groups 1 and 2 (table 2).

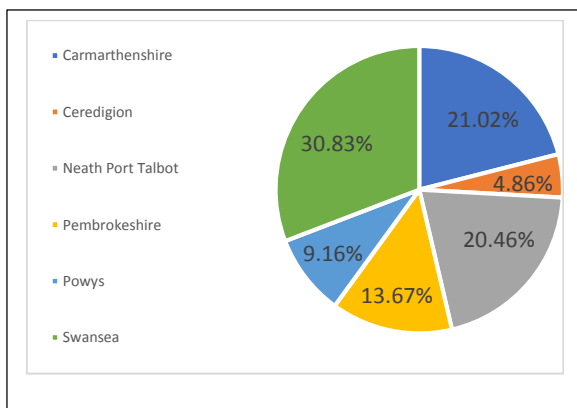


Table 1 Distribution of pupils eFSM in ERW Groups

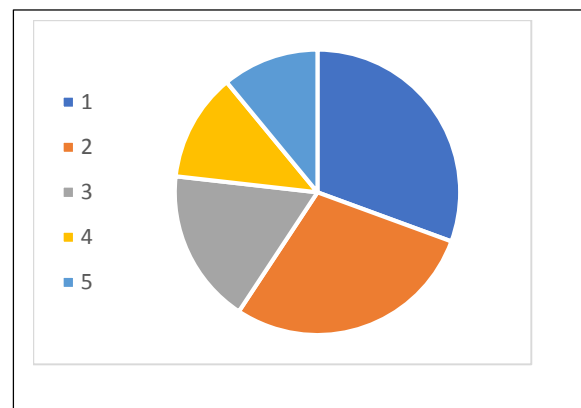


Table 2 FSM Benchmarking Groups

Schools use of PDG

All Challenge Advisers make a judgment about PDG spend which is submitted as part of the CV1 report to Rhwyd. During CV1 Challenge Advisers discuss the issues outlined below:

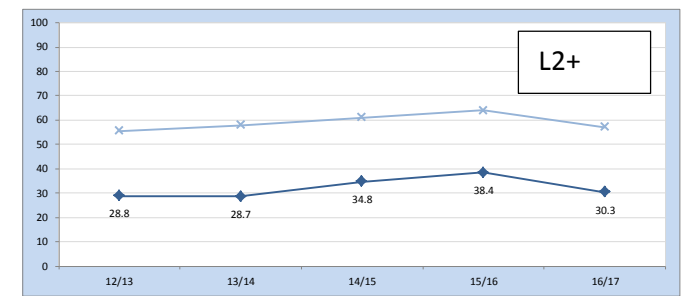
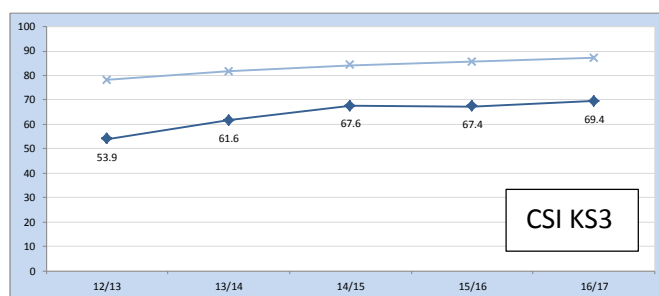
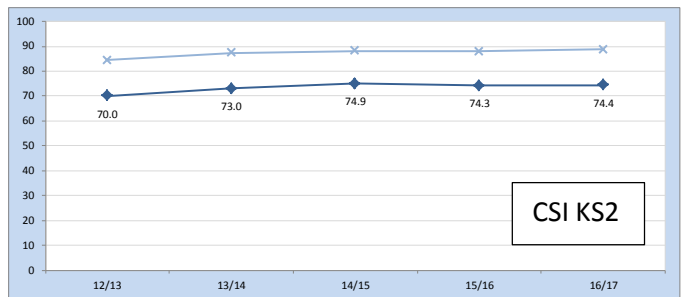
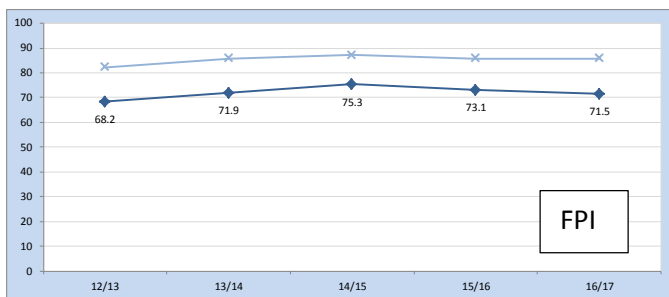
- A focus on curriculum content in particular literacy and numeracy.
- Effective learner tracking systems for attainment and wellbeing.
- Attendance, analysis of attendance data and understanding of its specific attendance issues, interventions in place to improve attendance and their impact.
- Effective use of EIG and PDG and its effect on standards.

Most schools in the region use their PDG effectively to plan for and secure improvement for vulnerable pupils. This term nearly all of the Primary CVS1 reports recorded that the school made good use of the PDG and all Secondary and Special school CVS1 reports recorded that the school made good use of the PDG. There are a number of interventions in places across the region ranging from those targeted to individuals to those that are whole school approaches.

Targeted interventions nearly always focus on literacy and numeracy catch up whereas whole school approaches focus more on pupil well-being. There is variation between Local Authorities on the specific approaches and interventions that are used in schools to support eFSM pupils.

Impact of PDG on attainment

Support visits monitor the quality of leadership, teaching and learning in conjunction with pupil standards. Challenge Advisers review spend during support visits and a detailed evaluation of the impact of the grant is provided. Evaluations are scrutinised during the support visit and reported on Rhwyd. Data on FPI, CSI and L2+ show that trends in performance of eFSM pupils are in line with trends in performance of non eFSM pupils across the region.



Regional Consortia's use of the PDG for Looked After Children

The LAC element of PDG has been managed by regional consortia since September 2015. In that time the regional strategy has been to address the underachievement and attainment of current and previously looked after children through increasing the knowledge and understanding of those working with them about the impact of trauma and stress. A consistent and thorough package of training has been delivered in partnership with Kate Cairns Associates to primary, secondary and special settings on Attachment and Trauma Informed Practice as part of the regional LAC/PDG strategy to. This training has universal benefits for all learners and staff in schools. All training funded through the LAC element of the PDG has significant benefits for all learners and not just those who are part of the grant count.

The percentage of LAC pupils achieving FPI, CSI (KS2 and KS3) and L2+ and L1 in 2016/7 is higher than it was in 2012. The percentage of pupils achieving L2 is lower. One must be cautious when attempting to draw conclusions from LAC data as the cohorts are very small. **Schools Challenge Cymru programme**

In 2014 Welsh Government identified 40 schools to be part of Schools Challenge Cymru (SCC) and be supported by external Challenge Advisers. Many schools in ERW did not qualify for the resources in the SCC programme as they did not meet the selection criteria set by Welsh Government based largely on data focussing on the performance of pupils who were eFSM. Despite best efforts ERW were unable to increase the number of schools so selected 4 additional schools which had similar characteristics to nearly all SCC schools and specifically had comparable factors to the four ERW SCC Schools. They were all causing concern to both LA and region; all were in an Estyn category; all had weak leadership; all needed improvements in teaching and all were performing below modelled expectations.

The strategies planned for these schools were similar to those in SCC Schools. Accelerated Improvement Boards were established following an established model in ERW. Additional resources were provided for identified areas for improvement in literacy, numeracy and within school core subject variation. Additional resources were also provided for capacity building.



Conclusions at January 2016 suggested that similar strategies used in ERW yielded improvements at a greater pace than the four ERW SCC Schools and the 40 national SCC Schools. This can be attributed to a number of contributory factors. Firstly, there were clear lines of accountability throughout the project. Secondly, there were strong lines of effective communication between Schools, Challenge Advisers, Local Authority and ERW. Finally, an in depth knowledge and understanding of the schools involved meant that appropriate levels of challenge and support were offered.

