

# CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

September 2023

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Portfolio Holder for a Learning Powys

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**Report Title:** Progression and Learning

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**Report For:** Information

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## 1. Purpose

1.1 This report provides an update on progression and learning in Powys schools during the academic year 2022-23. The report includes analysis of Estyn inspections of primary and secondary schools and an evaluation of examination data for GCSE qualifications.

## 2. Estyn Inspections 2022-2023

2.1 Nine Powys schools received a core Estyn inspection during the 2022/23 academic year. Eight of these schools were primary schools, with the other inspection taking place in a secondary school.

2.2 Of the nine inspections, five primary schools had successful inspections and are in no form of follow up; three schools (two primary and one secondary) are in Estyn Review; one primary school is in need of Significant Improvement.

2.3 Analysis of the recommendations from the inspections in the nine schools shows that there is a focus on improving teaching. Nearly half of the recommendations from the nine schools focus on teaching (13/27), with the need to challenge pupils appropriately identified in 5 of the 13 recommendations. All three recommendations in Inspection Area 4 (IA4) relate to Health & Safety and safeguarding issues in those schools.

Inspection Areas	Reformations across Powys schools inspected in 2022-23
IA 1 – Standards	6
IA2 – Wellbeing	0
IA3 – Teaching	13
IA 4 – Care, Support & Guidance	3
IA 5 – Leadership	5

Recommendation areas highlighted in more than one Powys inspection:

Appropriate challenge for pupils	5
Health & Safety / Safeguarding	3
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	3
Developing Independence	2
Response to feedback	2

- 2.4 Three Powys schools received an Estyn monitoring visit. Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School were both judged to have made insufficient progress in addressing their recommendations and have been placed in Special Measures. Llandinam Primary School has been judged to have made strong progress and has been removed from Estyn Review.
- 2.5 At the start of the 2023-2024 academic year, Powys currently has three schools in formal Estyn follow up categories, two secondary schools in Special Measures and one primary school in need of Significant Improvement.

**3. Qualifications**

- 3.1 In the 2020 – 2022 period there has been a suspension of performance measures due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2020, and in 2021 pupils were awarded grades through a centre determined or centre assessed grade model.
- 3.2 In order to take into account, the disruption experienced by pupils during the pandemic, and to take into account the different grading approach used in 2020 and 2021, Qualifications Wales have used a graduated journey back to pre-pandemic assessment arrangements.
- 3.3 There was a return to written examinations in 2022, and there were adaptations to the examination content to compensate for the loss of learning during the pandemic. In addition, it was agreed that results would reflect broadly a midway point between 2021 and 2019.
- 3.4 Examinations went ahead as normal in 2023, there were no adaptations to content this year, however pupils were provided with advance information to support with their revision and learning. A decision by Qualifications Wales in September 2022 has meant that overall results in 2023 are broadly midway between 2019 and 2022. There will be a return to pre-pandemic grading in 2024.
- 3.5 Due to the information above it is not possible to directly compare data from year to year over the last five years. Additionally, the suspension of performance measures means that the local authority do not have access to the same levels of comparative data as they did pre-pandemic. The data that the local authority does hold is detailed below.
- 3.6 GCSE grades are allocated a score as detailed in the table shown. The data available includes the Capped 9 score, the Literacy score, the Numeracy score and scores for pupils eligible for free school meals.

Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Score	58	52	46	40	34	28	22	16

- 3.7 The Capped 9 score is a performance measure calculating the average of the score for each individual learner in the cohort, capped at a specified volume of GCSEs or equivalent qualifications. There are three subject-specific slots for each learner’s best results in: English or Welsh language or literature GCSE, mathematics or mathematics-numeracy GCSE, and Science GCSE. The six remaining slots capture each learner’s best remaining qualifications to make a total of nine GCSEs or equivalent volume of qualifications.

- 3.8 The literacy and numeracy points scores are the average scores of all individual learners in the cohort, taking for literacy the best grade from any of English language, Welsh (1<sup>st</sup>) language, English literature and Welsh literature and for numeracy the best grade from mathematics, or mathematics – numeracy.
- 3.9 Schools are also provided information about the average performance of a ‘family’ of schools to use as a benchmarking tool. Each school is placed into a ‘family’ of similar schools, whose performance you would expect to be broadly in line. This allows schools to compare themselves with other schools in similar contexts.
- 3.10 Data analysis

	Capped 9 score	Literacy points score	Numeracy points score
Local Authority average	369.5	41	38
All Wales Average	358.1	39.7	37.1
Local Authority eFSM	303.0	35.8	31
All Wales eFSM	293.8	32.7	28.9

- 3.11 The figures shown in the table indicate that on average Powys schools performed slightly above the All Wales average in the Capped 9 measure, the literacy measure and the numeracy measure.
- 3.12 Pupils eligible for free school meals in Powys schools also performed above the All Wales average.
- 3.13 In general however, Powys schools performed slightly below similar schools nationally. In the Capped 9 score, Powys schools were on average 3.9 points behind similar schools, the equivalent of around half a grade. In the literacy measure schools were 1.1 points behind and in the numeracy measure 1.4 points behind.

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