

Appendices

Charts showing Percentage Increase of students with School Action Plans (taken from Welsh Government website: mylocalschool.gov.wales)

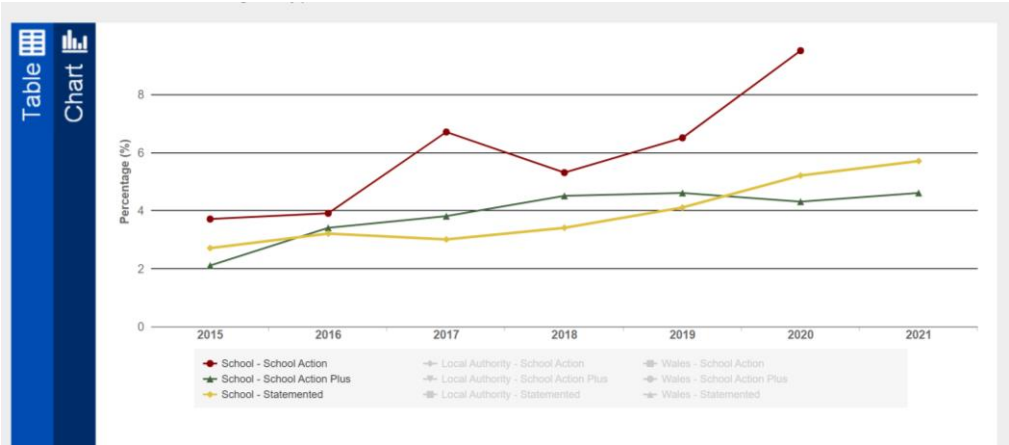


Fig 1. Showing increase of 5.8% of School Action Plans at School 'X' between 2015-2021

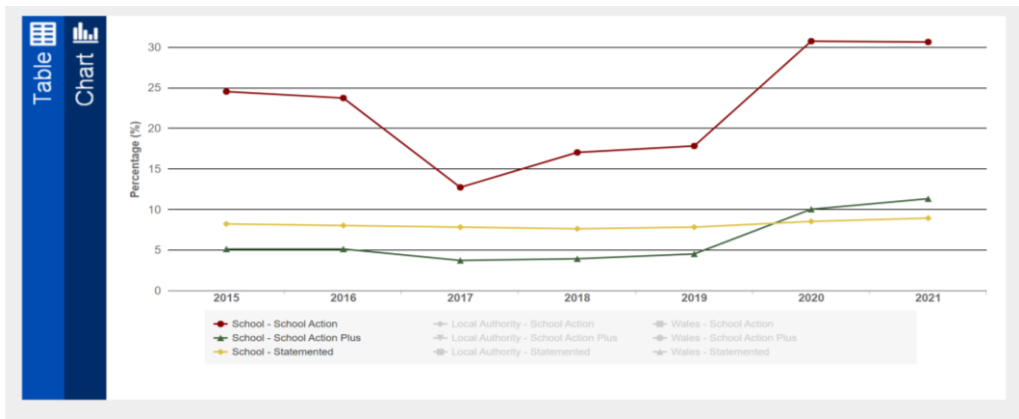


Fig 2. Neighbouring school (i) showing 7% increase in School Action plan between 2015-2021

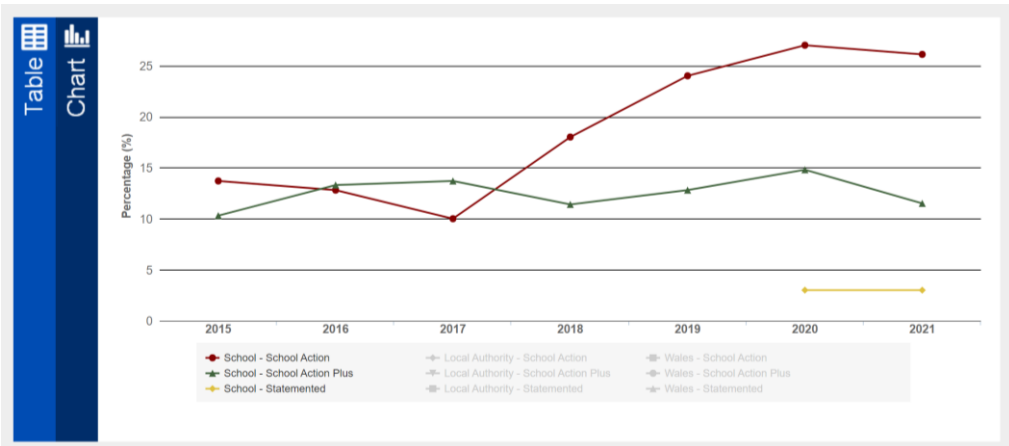


Fig 3. Neighbouring school (ii) showing 12.4% increase in School Action plan between 2015-2021

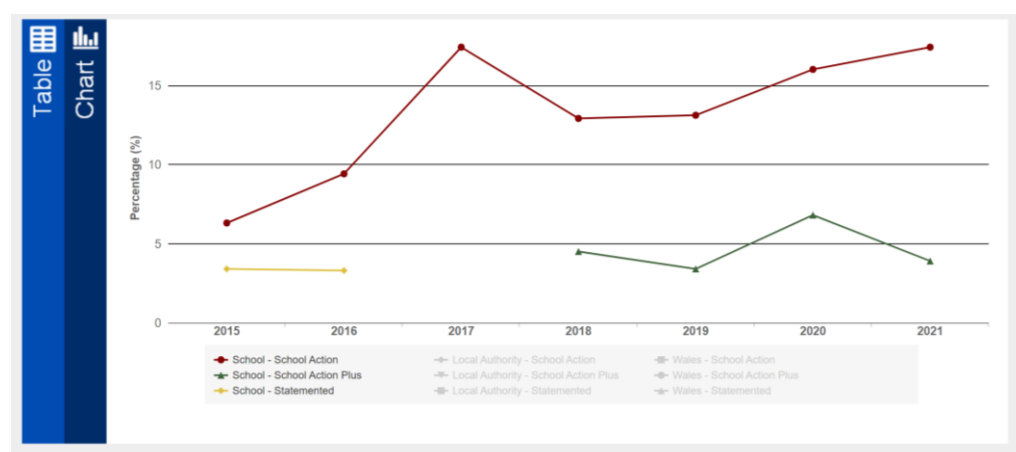


Fig 4. Neighbouring school (iii) showing 10.9% increase in School Action plans between 2015-2021

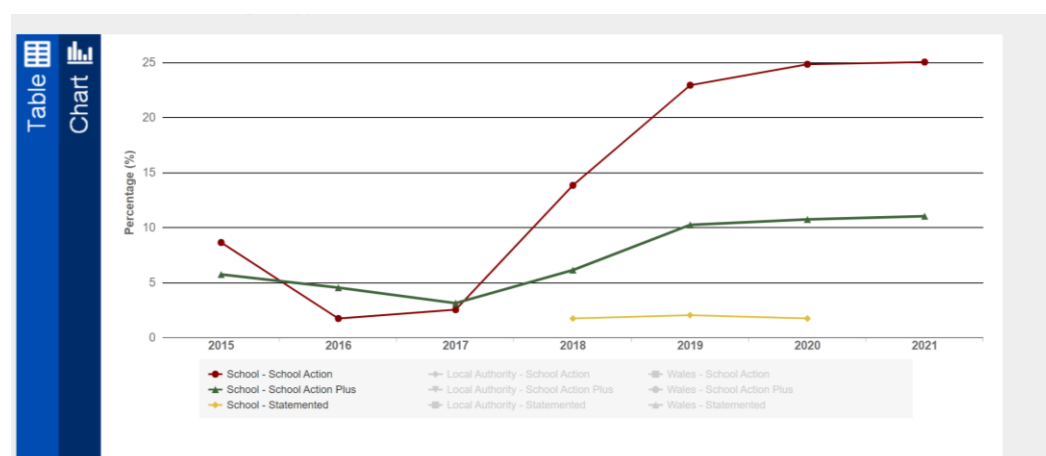


Fig 5. Neighbouring school (iv) showing 16.4% increase in School Action plans between 2015-2021

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

Incidents

Record 1

Date and time, year group:

Day 1 of observation: 26/09/2022 , Year 5 midday

Where and When:

Primary (Year 5 classroom) shortly before lunchtime. Students have returned from a guest speaker's presentation which has taken up the majority of the morning.

What happened:

Student A speaks to class teacher and leaves the classroom. When the student returns, she has a fidget toy. The other student at her desk, Student B admires the toy and Student A is notably pleased with her toy. The students are shortly thereafter dismissed for lunch.

When classes resume after lunch, both Student A and Student B are seen to have fidget toys. Two other students at the back of the classroom are playing with pieces of Student A's fidget toy (which are stretchy, elasticated, 'tentacles' that have clearly either broken off or been ripped off). Students are expected at this point to be completing a numeracy task and the teacher is trying to give the explanation of the expectations, but there is confusion among students at the back who are playing with their toys.

Teacher comments on the toys and tries to re-engage students. Student A is using toy responsibly, Students B, C and D are not.

Areas of possible exploration:

Research into the effectiveness (proven and researched-based evidence) of the use of fidget toys to improve students' attention, particularly for those with diagnosed (or suspected) sensory processing challenges.

Links between sensory integration for regulation and positive learning outcomes – specifically sustaining attention. ADHD/ASD/SPD perspectives. Are classrooms under stimulating environments for many learners? Are they overstimulating to some?

Controversial perspective – are they over-used in mainstream settings and actually causing more disruption to the students' learning (particularly those for whom there is *no diagnosed* sensory processing disorder)?

Balanced argument – Time monitoring (is there a "sweet spot" for the amount of time a student needs to achieve sensory regulation? If so, should the use of fidget toys be limited to specific time intervals? Additionally, are there specific times throughout the day (i.e. first thing on a morning before setting to academic tasks, when the need for that sensory input is greatest? If so, are schools adequately meeting that need and in an appropriate way?)

Notes:

Students have been seated for a long period of time while a guest speaker has given a lengthy presentation throughout the morning session. This is an unusual change in routine for the students and therefore the flow of morning activities is "off", resulting in a task being given without adequate time to complete it.

Students are notably restless. The environment is busy, (settling back into their desks/groups after being seated in another room for the guest's presentation) but the teacher has clearly stated and frequently reinforces the expectations for it to be quiet and students are, for the most part, able to remain seated and keep chatter to a minimum.

Record 2

Date and time, year group:

Day 1 of observation: 26/09/2022 , Year 5 First thing in the morning (registration)

Where and When:

Registration in the morning prior to the moving of students to a different classroom for the presentation of a guest visitor that day.

What happened:

The students are busy packing away reading books (independent reading was the "Registration Task" to be done quietly and without fuss). The teacher would like to have everyone's attention before moving onto the next task of the day.

Teacher: "What is Active Listening?"

Some students respond non-verbally by turning to face the teacher.

Teacher: "Can I see Active Listening?" "What do you do with your hands?"

Students start to react by looking at the teacher, folding arms in front of them.

Some students continue to pack away/fuss over stationery on the desk.

Teacher: "No fiddling"

Students are, at this point, all looking at the teacher, almost all with arms folded.

Two students continue to fiddle and are glared at by their peers encouragingly.

Teacher goes over the expectations of active listening. The environment is quiet and orderly. The discussion continues as follows:

"Can anyone predict the challenges we might face when we move through and into the other class?"

The teacher is priming the students to predict ways in which they may struggle if not prepared for the expectations placed on them i.e. to be quiet and orderly as they move through classrooms, enter and sit down in preparation for the presentation.

Areas of possible exploration:

Classroom Behaviour Management strategies: Importance of clear, concise, repeated and consistently reinforced behavioural expectations. The 'dos and donts' of the classroom. The conditioning of the children to respond to such a specific questioning: What is Active Listening?

How adequate preparation for unusual events (transitioning) can set children up for success. The need to really prime students and allow them to predict and prepare for inevitable challenges and therefore prevent failure.

Another area to explore: Teacher made comment to observer that this particular Year 5 cohort had been challenging in previous years, in relation to behaviour management, and that it was necessary to be firm with them. Throughout the observation period, the students displayed impressive compliance, respect for authority and overall good, responsive behaviour. I might research the effectiveness of different teacher approaches to student outcomes (i.e. this class teacher as a more senior member of staff seems to have an extraordinarily firm (successful) handle on student behaviour, which sets a high standard for building a learning environment conducive to calm, orderly learning). This observation was not common across all year levels/with other teachers, as observed by other student teachers during the same two day period.

Notes:

Teacher (and other Year 5 teachers) have a discussion together about the change in plans for the day and comment on the fact that they themselves are not sure about the details and arrangements for the guest speaker.

Record 3

Date and time, year group: 27/09/2022 10:00 Year 5

Where and When:

Maths Middle Attainment Group

Students are grouped by attainment levels and move around between the three Year 5 classrooms to their correct group.

What happened:

At the end of the numeracy lesson, which happens to be an end of unit test, students are asked to complete a reflection sheet where they state how they feel about their level of understanding of the topic. These are done according to the "Growth Mindset Learning Zones": Comfort Zone, Stretch Zone and Danger Zone.

There is a poster on the wall for students to refer to as they reflect. There is a sheet with a guided sentence for them to complete "Dear Sir, I am in the _____ zone for mastery because..."

Some students engage well with the task, but because it is handed out right before break time, others just scribble down a word and hand it in. Some students are found copying others' sentences.

Areas of possible exploration:

There is a desire on the school/teacher's behalf to include learners' voice in adjusting the teaching and learning. How are the students feeling about their level of understanding? The answers to these reflection sheets should provide formative feedback which can guide changes to next steps.

However, if students' reflections are done without careful thought and answered truthfully, then these reflections are not purposeful.

I would research the role of self-reflection from students' perspectives – what is the research around students analysing their own level of mastery, versus the traditional way of end of unit testing to see what students actually know from what they think they know.

Is there any evidence that these student-centred self-analyses provide feedback

of any value?

Do teachers actively engage with that feedback and adjust accordingly, or are they more of an after-thought activity to be completed just to box-tick?

Notes:

Before lunch therefore students are eager to get outside the classroom and will simply write whatever they can think of in order to pack away quickly and be dismissed and soon as possible.