

Gender (1601574)

Overview

In this class it could be suggested that the girls are currently slightly academically outperforming the boys. Throughout the data, there is a slight trend where there is a minutiae gender gap in the children's baseline data. However, the children have recently been assessed at the end of foundation phase and it is this data the practitioner has utilised to base conclusions upon. The Foundation Phase Indicator (FPI) is a combined measure of performance of pupils at the end of the Foundation Phase (Welsh Government, 2018). In this class, five out of fifteen boys did not achieve their foundation phase indicator, equating to 33%. Whereas three out of eleven girls did not achieve equating to 27%. Wales Online (2016) suggest that nationally for the first time since the statistics were introduced, the difference between boys and girls in the key Foundation Phase Indicator has widened. When the data from the three assessed areas is triangulated and mean attainment average is worked out it results in Outcome 4.86 for the boys and Outcome 5.08 for the girls (Figure 2.1). This results in .22% gap which is arguably quite startling. Hence there is a need to address and find suitable strategies or interventions to remedy.

As a rights' respecting school, we ensure that our children are free from discrimination whatever their gender (UNICEF, unknown date). To elaborate, as a school we aim to ensure that we avert from gender stereotypes and ensure pupils' progress regardless of their gender and help them to achieve their full potential. A number of articles and documents were analysed in order to find potential strategies and ideas to close the gender attainment gap. Estyn (2008) highlighted that many schools continue to use too limited a range of strategies to cater for the differences between girls and boys in terms of their overall maturity and capability as individual learners. Therefore, when assessing and concluding what strategies to use we placed the pupils at the centre and endeavoured to make sure all strategies respected the pupils' as individuals.

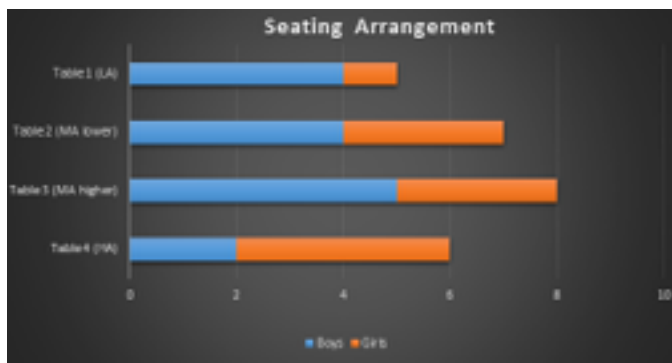
Figure 1

Strategies to close 'gender attainment gap'

Strategy: Mixed gender seating plan.

Focus: Ensure children are sat in a mixed gender seating plan and in a boy-girl pattern where possible. However, ensure children are sat with ability groups for differentiation purposes.

Rationale: Skelton, Francis and Valkanova (2007, cited in Department for Children, Schools and Families, unknown date) suggest that the peer group can be of central importance in reinforcing gender stereotypes. Given the choice, pupils usually sit in same-gender groups and this could result in children being influenced by the gendered behaviour of their peers (Department for Children, Schools and Families, unknown date). Hence it could be beneficial to, where appropriate, sit children in mixed gendered tables.



Strategy: Ensure extra-curricular clubs are non-gender restricted.

Focus: Incorporate pupil voice by asking children what extra-curricular clubs children they would like to participate in.

Rationale: As suggested by Department for Children, Schools and Families (unknown date) by adhering to gender stereotypes and creating an idea that only some activities and behaviours are gender appropriate may limit rather than enhance pupils' engagement with the curriculum. One of the recommendations by Estyn (2008) suggest that school's should challenge gender stereotyping. We ensure that children have access to majority of our clubs by running them during lunchtime and after school.

Strategy: Deliver a broad, well-rounded curriculum that engages all our learners and prioritises pupil voice and appeals to pupils' individualised learning styles.

Focus: Understand pupils individualised learning preferences and interests.

Rationale: Estyn (2008) suggest that Donaldson (2015) envisages a curriculum ...

Reasoning

Estyn (2008) highlighted a case study that demonstrated how a school modified it's overall ethos rather than implementing any one strategy to improve gender attainment and suggest that this has contributed to the school's success. Teaching that has been effective has identified particular learning styles, utilised a well-managed assessment system to understand where pupils are in relation to progress toward targets and the consistent implementation of discipline, and positive behaviour policies throughout the school (Estyn, 2008). Therefore, as a school, we concluded to trial combination of these suggestion and non-gendered restricted curriculum clubs in order to further close the marginal attainment gap.

Monitoring and Assessment

Further close marginal 'gender attainment gap' by implementing aforementioned strategies. As a school we will monitor and track progress using Incerts. We shall endeavour to ensure the marginal attainment gap does not widen and if it does we shall intervene at the earliest possible point, reassessing chosen strategies.

Future Progression

If the strategies implemented are successful, we endeavour to share good practice with our staff if they discover there is a marginal attainment gap in their classes. Our school might possibly be entitled to Raise Attainment and Individual Standards in Education (RAISE) Funding (Welsh Government, 2012). The strategy provides schools with additional funding to target disadvantaged pupils and raise their level of performance. The one ... schools have to have is a free school meal percentage higher than twenty percent, our school has approximately thirty four percent free school meals. So we concluded that we would look into this additional funding in future if our school needed to implement specific interventions or purchase resources that would help to close the marginal gender attainment gap. Some schools are using RAISE funding specifically to support boys.

- Assessment Foundation (unknown date) *Incerts*. Available at: <http://www.assessmentfoundation.org/about-incerts.html> [Accessed on: 22nd February 2019]
- Department for Children, Schools and Families (unknown date) *Gender issues in school – What works to improve achievement for boys and girls*. Available at: <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/9094/1/00601-2009BKT-EN.pdf> [Accessed on: 22nd February 2019]
- Donaldson, G. (2015) *Successful Futures*. Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government.
- Estyn (2008) *Closing the gap between boys' and girls' attainment in schools*. Cardiff: Crown Copyright.
- UNICEF (unknown date) *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Available at: https://downloads.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/UNCRC_united_nations_convention_on_the_rights_of_the_child.pdf?_ga=2.73137811.1295377229.1541588333-330392546.1515010700 [Accessed on: 30th October 2018]
- WalesOnline (2016) *Girls outperform boys across the board in 'frightening' schools gender gap*. Available at: <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/education/girls-outperform-boys-across-board-11733184> [Accessed on: 26th February 2019]

- *Welsh Government (2012) Evaluation of the first three years of RAISE: Final Report. Available at: <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/14459/1/1204019raisereporten.pdf>. [Accessed on: 26th February 2019]*

Welsh Government (2018) *National Data Collection (NDC) 2018 Question and answer*. Available at: <https://beta.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/national-data-collection-question-and-answer-version-1.pdf> [Accessed on: 27th February 2019]