

Section 2:
Sector summaries:

Outcomes: Primary schools

In the majority of schools, there are still important shortcomings in standards of ICT. Most pupils routinely use tablets and computers to find and present information and they demonstrate sound awareness of e-safety. Yet many pupils do not have a strong enough grasp of the full range of ICT skills appropriate for their age, such as creating spreadsheets or managing and interpreting data. In the very few schools where ICT standards are strong, key stage 2 pupils use formulae in spreadsheets, for example when comparing the exchange rates of different currencies.

Standards of Welsh in English-medium schools are still too variable. Around a third of English-medium schools have recommendations relating to pupils not using their Welsh oracy skills well enough outside of formal lessons. Although many pupils in English-medium schools are enthusiastic about learning Welsh and know useful phrases, they do not often use them correctly or with confidence.

Taking every opportunity to increase literacy

Twenty-seven languages are spoken at **Kitchener Primary School**, with English spoken as an additional language by 86% of pupils. The school employs a broad range of strategies and teaching methods to ensure that all pupils have the best opportunities to develop their literacy skills. As a result, standards in literacy across the school have risen each year for the past three years.

For more information, please read our **case study**.



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Standards of Welsh second language in many English-medium schools are improving, with the numbers achieving qualifications in Welsh at the end of key stage 4 increasing. However, it is only in a very few of these schools that most pupils follow the full course in Welsh second language. Although many pupils in English-medium schools use basic phrases confidently during registration periods and assemblies, the use of Welsh outside of Welsh lessons is rare. In most English-medium schools, most pupils lack confidence when speaking Welsh. Many pupils in Welsh-medium schools and in Welsh streams in bilingual schools speak and write well in Welsh and use their language skills confidently across the curriculum, although a minority make a few grammatical mistakes.

Wellbeing

Wellbeing is good or better in three-quarters of secondary schools. This is an improvement on last year, brought about largely by the continuing improvement in attendance, particularly for pupils eligible for free school meals.

In the few schools where wellbeing is excellent, the extent of pupil involvement within and beyond school life is a significant strength. Many pupils participate in evaluations of teaching and learning and of policy development and this is having a positive impact on their wellbeing and performance. Attendance of all groups of pupils in these schools is consistently high and better than in similar schools.

In many schools, pupils understand how to eat healthily and appreciate the positive value of exercise. Many pupils participate enthusiastically in extra-curricular activities and take an active part in community activities and fundraising for charities.

Nearly all pupils feel safe in school and feel supported if there are any instances of bullying. Many pupils behave well, are punctual and have positive attitudes to their learning. A few pupils have a poor attitude towards school and disrupt the learning of others.

In many schools, attendance is improving and rates of persistent absence continue to fall, with most pupils attending well and understanding the importance of regular attendance. Overall, the variation in attendance between

Accelerating pupil learning in Welsh

Pupils at **Treorchy Comprehensive School** develop their Welsh language skills particularly well. Continuity and consistency between key stages 2 and 3 are ensured by the school working with its feeder primary schools to deliver lessons to Year 6 pupils and to prepare resources and schemes of work. The whole-school approach to bilingualism and to the Welsh dimension links Welsh language to heritage and culture to enrich and accelerate pupils' learning.

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schools has decreased and many schools have responded well to the challenge to improve attendance rates. In a few schools, the rate of persistent absence remains high and the attendance of pupils eligible for free schools meals is significantly worse than in similar schools.

Figure 2.13:
Percentages of judgements awarded for Quality Indicator 1.2: Standards of wellbeing



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Provision: Secondary schools

Provision is good or better in many secondary schools inspected this year. This is an improvement on last year, largely due to improvements in care, support and guidance. However, shortcomings remain in the provision for developing skills and in the quality of teaching and assessment.

Learning experiences

In a few schools, pupils benefit from a wide range of learning experiences that contribute particularly well to their development and progress. In these schools, there are well-considered and consistent approaches that develop pupils' skills across the curriculum. These schools provide enrichment activities and learning opportunities that enhance pupils' social skills and build their confidence and resilience, including opportunities to become peer mentors, sports leaders, or pupil ambassadors for the United Nations Charter for the Rights of the Child.

Many schools plan a range of useful opportunities to develop pupils' skills across the curriculum, particularly their literacy skills, with a majority of pupils becoming more effective readers and more able

to write confidently. In around a third of schools, there are significant shortcomings in skills development, often because the contexts for developing the skills are inappropriate, for example when pupils complete extended writing tasks with too little or too much support to enable them to work independently, or when low-level numeracy work in subjects does not stretch pupils to develop these skills. The provision for developing ICT skills remains weak in many schools. Only a very few schools ensure that there are enough relevant and progressive opportunities to develop pupils' ICT skills across subjects other than in ICT lessons.

In many English-medium schools, pupils have suitable opportunities to learn about the culture and history of Wales. However, in the majority, provision for Welsh language development is a weakness. These schools do not have a clear strategy to promote pupils' use of the Welsh language outside of Welsh lessons. Nearly all Welsh-medium schools plan effectively to develop pupils' knowledge and command of the language.

Many schools work well with partners, such as local businesses, further and higher education institutions and charities, to provide enrichment experiences and extend the

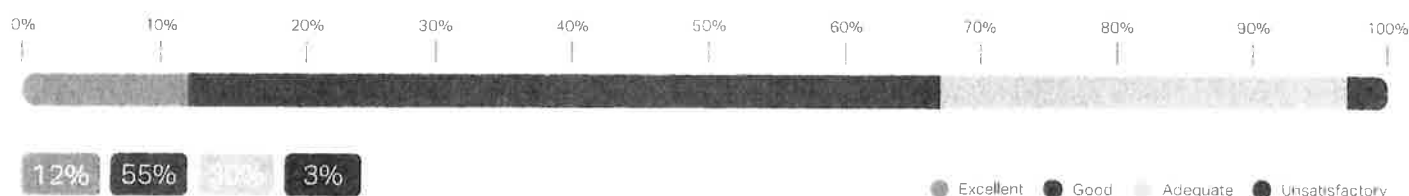
learning opportunities for pupils. Most schools develop pupils' understanding of sustainability and global citizenship well.

Teaching

Teaching is good or better in only a minority of schools. Where teaching is effective it is planned and structured so that pupils make good progress over time. In these schools, teachers have high expectations of all pupils, monitor their learning carefully and provide useful feedback.

In the very few schools where teaching is excellent, teachers' planning strikes a skilful balance between arousing curiosity, developing subject knowledge, and improving and extending pupils' skills. A particularly strong feature in these schools is the quality of questioning. Teachers use a full range of questioning techniques to probe pupils' understanding and encourage them to develop their ideas. In these schools, teachers provide creative opportunities for more able pupils to develop their own interests and undertake challenging tasks. This happens seamlessly so that it complements and extends what is already happening in the classroom. Consistency in the quality of marking and assessment is also a strong feature in these schools. They have an effective whole-school approach, based

Figure 2.14:
Percentages of judgements awarded for Key Question 2: How good is provision?



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Other inspection activity involving local authorities

This year, we responded to 51 school reorganisation proposals from 20 local authorities. Of the 51 proposals, we concluded that two were likely to improve outcomes and provision for learners and that another 45 were likely to at least maintain the current outcomes and provision for learners. These 47 proposals were supported by strong evidence and firm plans. Two proposals did not provide us with enough information to come to a view. We concluded that two other proposals were unlikely to improve the outcomes and provision for learners. Weaker proposals lack detail and contain assertions that are not supported by firm plans, which lead us to conclude that they are unlikely to improve outcomes and provision for the pupils affected.

Estyn link inspectors have regular meetings with senior leaders and managers of each local authority and challenge the authority about the performance of its education services and how well it plans for improvement. Link inspectors liaise with other inspectorates and regulators to share information relevant to the wider leadership and governance of local authorities.

Estyn's thematic survey work considers the work of local authorities in specific areas. These surveys reports inform national policy and support improvement in education services. Once reports are published, link inspectors challenge local authorities to ensure that the main findings are considered and to check that authorities are addressing the recommendations. For example,

link inspectors are currently challenging local authorities about the main messages in Estyn's reports on EOTAS (Education other than at school; Estyn, 2016d) and WESPs (Welsh in Education Strategic Plans; Estyn 2016i). In particular, link inspectors will challenge authorities about how well they monitor the quality of all alternative provision provided or commissioned for pupils in their local authority. They will also check that authorities evaluate their Welsh-medium additional learning needs provision to identify any gaps.

Estyn is developing plans for a new cycle of inspections of local authorities from autumn 2018, with pilot inspections starting in late 2017. We will consult with our key stakeholders during 2017 to inform these plans and take account of any reform of local government that the Welsh Government may introduce. As part of the development work, Estyn is piloting the use of 'improvement conferences' during 2016–2017. An improvement conference, facilitated by Estyn, will bring together senior leaders and managers from a local authority to consider any concerns about current performance in education services and to strengthen plans to address these concerns. We will evaluate the effectiveness of this approach at the end of the pilots. We will then consider whether to build on this pilot work when designing our support for any local authorities that are identified as a cause for concern in the new inspection cycle.

A charter for Welsh language

Gwynedd County Council's

'Welsh Language Charter' is a framework that is used to promote the use of Welsh by pupils in social contexts. The Charter emphasises the importance of involving the whole school community, including parents and governors, in identifying, agreeing and mapping out the development steps and the strategies to increase the use of Welsh by the pupils in different contexts.

The framework was initially developed about three years ago and has since been implemented in Welsh-medium primary schools across all the local authorities in North Wales. This year, the framework is being introduced in local authorities across Wales through regional consortia.

The initial process involves Year 3–6 pupils completing an on-line questionnaire giving details about their use of Welsh within the classroom, on the playground and out of school. The questionnaire also seeks pupils' views about their attitudes towards the Welsh language. The data provides a baseline that enables schools to identify the aspects they need to focus on, which are then developed into priorities for their action plans. Pupils repeat the questionnaire about a year later, enabling the school to evaluate progress.

Nearly all schools involved in using the Charter are successful in increasing pupils' use of Welsh in a range of social contexts. This year, 35 primary school inspection reports recognised that the process is contributing to improving the standards achieved by pupils in their oral skills.

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