

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

18TH JANUARY 2017

KEY STAGE 4 AND KEY STAGE 5 EXAMINATION RESULTS AND PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL CATEGORISATION FOR 2017

REPORT OF THE TEMPORARY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLION HOLDER, COUNCILLOR MRS E HANAGAN

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with the final confirmation of the Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 examination results and the draft Welsh Government Primary and Secondary School Categorisation for 2016-17.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the information contained within this report.
- 2.2 Note the action taken to date and the action planned to be taken by the Temporary Director of Education and Lifelong Learning in partnership with the Central South Consortium to support those primary and secondary schools in Categories Amber and Red.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The progress made by schools in improving standards and outcomes for children and young people in Rhondda Cynon Taf is a priority for the Council.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The outcomes for young people at the end of Key Stage 4 is externally verified via GCSE examinations and at the end of Key Stage 5 via GCE Advanced Level examinations.
- 4.2 Schools have individual subject results to enable senior leaders to challenge underperforming departments.

- 4.3 The Local Authority can analyse the performance of each school compared to the other secondary schools in the County Borough and across secondary schools in the Central South Consortium. When the data is finalised the results of each Local Authority is benchmarked to indicate the comparative performance across Wales.
- 4.4 In reviewing the comparative position of the Council it is important for Members to recognise that social deprivation has a significant impact on educational performance. Rhondda Cynon Taf is the second most deprived local authority yet the performance of our pupils exceeds the expected level. Deprivation is not an excuse for underperformance but a well researched reason.

5. PERFORMANCE AT KEY STAGE 4 2015-2016

- 5.1 The table below sets out the final Rhondda Cynon Taf's Key Stage 4 (GCSE) results over the five years to 2016 in respect of the key indicators upon which schools and the Local Authority are assessed by Estyn.

Key Stage 4	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	% point change 2012 to 2016
Level 1 threshold (A*-G at GCSE or equivalent)						
RCT	89%	93.0%	93.2%	95.7%	96.7%	7.7%
Bridgend	92%	93.3%	93.4%	95.2%	95.4%	3.4%
Merthyr Tydfil	87%	92.7%	95.4%	96.8%	95.4%	8.4%
Cardiff	91%	91.7%	93.2%	92.1%	94.4%	3.4%
Vale of Glamorgan	94%	94.5%	94.0%	95.8%	95.4%	1.4%
Wales	92%	93.2%	94.0%	94.4%	95.3%	3.3%
Level 2 threshold (5 A*-C at GCSE or equivalent)						
RCT	69%	77.9%	84.6%	87.1%	90.3%	21.7%
Bridgend	66.4%	72.3%	79.6%	83.7%	88.0%	21.6%
Merthyr Tydfil	64.3%	72.9%	82.0%	85.4%	84.5%	20.2%
Cardiff	68.3%	73.0%	76.0%	81.6%	84.3%	16.0%
Vale of Glamorgan	79.6%	82.6%	87.0%	89.4%	87.8%	8.2%
Wales	73%	77.8%	82.3%	84.1%	84.0%	11.0%
Level 2 threshold (5 A*-C at GCSE or equivalent) including English/Welsh and Mathematics						
RCT	44%	46.3%	50.5%	54.6%	56.6%	12.6%
Bridgend	50.7%	52.3%	55.8%	59.7%	61.7%	11.0%
Merthyr Tydfil	32.5%	38.7%	48.9%	51.9%	53.9%	21.4%
Cardiff	49.3%	49.9%	54.0%	59.3%	62.5%	13.2%
Vale of Glamorgan	55.3%	55.4%	62.2%	64.9%	67.1%	11.8%

Key Stage 4	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	% point change 2012 to 2016
Wales	51%	52.7%	55.4%	57.9%	60.2%	9.8%
Core Subject Indicator (A*-C at GCSE or equivalent in English/Welsh, Mathematics and Science)						
RCT	43.0%	45.3%	48.7%	53.3%	55.1%	12.1%
Bridgend	49.9%	50.6%	54.5%	58.6%	60.0%	10.1%
Merthyr Tydfil	31.7%	36.3%	46.7%	48.9%	52.3%	20.6%
Cardiff	47.9%	46.7%	51.2%	56.5%	60.1%	12.2%
Vale of Glamorgan	53.9%	50.2%	60.1%	63.9%	66.3%	12.4%
Wales	49%	49.2%	52.6%	54.8%	57.6%	8.6%
Average Capped Wider Points Score Per Pupil						Points Increase
RCT	305.1	323.8	336.5	345.6	351.2	46.1
Bridgend	312.7	321.5	334.1	343.5	351.6	38.9
Merthyr Tydfil	300.8	322.0	339.7	343.8	345.7	44.9
Cardiff	316.9	322.0	331.3	336.9	343.7	26.8
Vale of Glamorgan	341.0	346.8	349.8	357.9	353.1	12.1
Wales	323.5	333.1	340.8	343.5	344.2	20.7

- 5.2 Good progress continues to be made by schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf against the key performance indicators, increasing at a faster rate than the Welsh average over a number of years.
- 5.3 The data on these key performance indicators for each of the secondary schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf over the past 5 years is set out in Appendix A. This table shows that for the 2015/2016 academic year, the majority of our schools made good progress against a range of the performance measures. This analysis of the school by school performance illustrates that the majority of Rhondda Cynon Taf schools have improved the Level 1 and 2 threshold indicators, the Level 2 threshold for English and/or Welsh and Maths and the core subject indicator.
- 5.4 The Level 2 including English, Welsh 1st Language and mathematics indicator has increased by 2.0 percentage points to 56.6%. This shows a good, steady upward trend for this measure over a five-year period. However, five schools had a dip in Level 2 inclusive: Aberdare, Mountain Ash, Treorchy, Rhydywaun and Cardinal Newman.
- 5.5 The comparative performance of the Council against the other local authorities in Wales, before taking into account socio-economic factors such as free school meals, is as follows:

Level 1 threshold (5 A*-G or equivalent)	3 rd (13 th in 2015)
Level 2 threshold (5 A*-C or equivalent)	2 nd (9 th in 2015)
Level 2 threshold (5 A*-C at GCSE or equivalent) including English/Welsh and Mathematics	16 th (15 th in 2015)
Core Subject Indicator (A*-C at GCSE or equivalent in English/Welsh, Mathematics and Science)	15 th (14 th in 2015)
Average Capped Wider Points Score	3 rd (10 th in 2015)

Schools in Each Quartile												
Year/ PI	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	16	15	14	16	15	14	16	15	14	16		1
Level 1	10	(7)	(6)	3	(4)	(5)	3	(5)	(3)	1	(1)	(5)
Level 2	10	(8)	(7)	3	(5)	(6)	3	(2)	(2)	1	(2)	(4)
Level 2+	6	(4)	(7)	4	(7)	(1)	4	(6)	(6)	3	(0)	(5)
CSI												(4)
Capped Points	8											(4)

5.6 In the past too many schools, when compared with similar schools based on free school meals, were in the third and fourth quartiles. This has improved again this year and I am pleased to report that the majority of secondary schools are in the top two quartiles.

5.7 The following table sets out pupils' performance in the four key subject areas of English, Welsh, Mathematics and Science, over the past five years.

Key Stage 4 A*-C	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	%age point improvement 2012 to 2016
English	56.0%	56.8%	61.0%	66.0%	69.0%	9.5%
Welsh	70.0%	69.9%	70.0%	70.0%	74.3%	0.7%
Science	76.6%	82.0%	86.0%	86.0%	85.7%	26.4%
Mathematics	51.0%	53.0%	57.0%	57.0%	61.6%	12.3%

5.8 While gaps between the achievement of learners eligible for free school meals compared to those learners not eligible for free school meals has reduced, it is important to note that there are still nine schools in the LA, this year, who are still performing below the three-year rolling average target set by the Welsh Government of 32% for the Level 2 threshold including English/Welsh and mathematics. This will mean that these schools will, at best, be placed in standards group 3 from step 1 of the categorisation process. Of these nine schools, all but two have improved the performance of those learners eligible for free school meals.

% achieving the level 2 threshold including English/Welsh and mathematics	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Eligible for free school meals	21.5%	21.7%	26.3%	27.2%	33.5%
Not eligible for free school meals	49.9%	53.4%	57.7%	60.1%	64.2%
Difference in performance	28.4%	31.7%	31.4%	32.9%	30.7%

5.9 It was the extent of the increase in Level 2 inclusive performance in the remaining schools that led to the improvement in the LA Level 2 including English and mathematics performance. However, despite some schools dipping in their performance individually, the 2016 Key Stage 4 performance is the best the secondary schools in RCT have ever achieved. The other four LAs in CSC have also made good progress in 2016. However, as in 2015, this improvement is not representative across the rest of Wales.

5.10 The table below shows the gender variation of performance in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The boys have slightly narrowed the gap in English and Welsh but have dipped slightly behind the girls in Mathematics after being on par last year. A wide gap still exists with girls outperforming boys by some distance in Welsh and English.

Key Stage 4 A*-C	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
English - boys	46.0%	50.0%	50.0%	56.0%	60.1%
English – girls	66.0%	66.0%	74.0%	76.0%	78.3%
Welsh – boys	61.0%	60.0%	59.0%	57.0%	66.0%
Welsh – girls	79.0%	78.0%	82.0%	83.0%	81.8%
Science – boys	71.0%	75.0%	81.0%	84.0%	82.9%
Science – girls	79.0%	82.0%	91.0%	90.0%	88.6%
Mathematics – boys	50.0%	53.0%	54.0%	60.0%	60.8%
Mathematics - girls	52.0%	51.0%	59.0%	60.0%	62.4%

5.11 To address the underperformance of the boys when compared to the girls' the focus has to continue to be on improving literacy standards in primary schools and at Key Stage 3.

6. PROGRESS AT KEY STAGE 5

A Level	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016 Difference			
	A*-E	A*-E	A*-C	A*-C	A*-A	A*-A	Entry	Entry	A*-E	A*-C	A*-A	Entry
RCT	96.3%	96.5%	66.8%	67.9%	15.4%	13.6%	2041	2078	-0.2%	-1.2%	1.8%	-37
CSC	97.9%	97.8%	75.2%	74.9%	22.1%	21.3%	7951	7726	0.1%	0.3%	0.8%	225

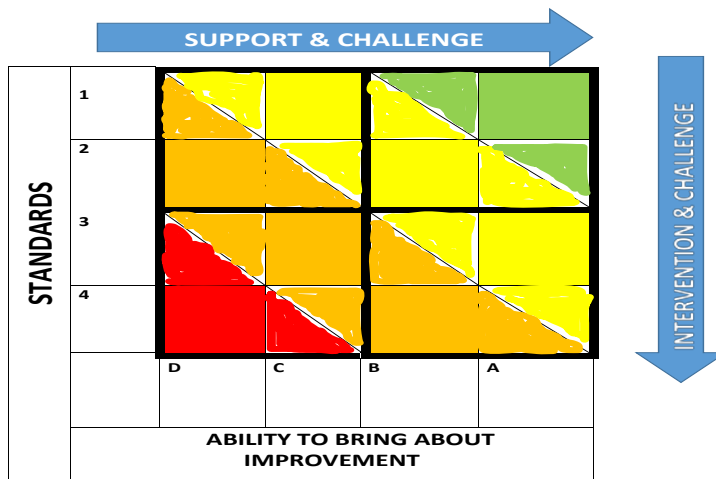
AS Level	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016 Difference			
	A*-E	A*-E	A*-C	A*-C	A*-A	A*-A	Entry	Entry	A*-E	A*-C	A*-A	Entry
RCT	85.8%	86.3%	53.2%	52.6%	11.0%	11.1%	3035	3160	-0.6%	0.6%	-0.1%	-125
CSC	88.2%	89.1%	58.6%	59.9%	17.1%	16.6%	11674	11512	-1.0%	-1.4%	1.1%	162

- 6.1 At A level, performance for the LA at A*-E and A*-C grades have declined slightly, by less than a percentage point in each case, when compared to 2015 performance. However, there was a good improvement in the number of students achieving the top grades.
- 6.2 At AS level, performance has improved by 0.6 percentage points at A*-C grades, but declined in the other two categories. However, it should be noted that both are by less than a percentage point.
- 6.3 Individual school performance at AS level is difficult to compare, as it consists of the data only for those pupils that 'cash in' the qualification. Schools currently have different practices with regard to cashing in. Clearly, this is not statistically valid.
- 6.4 The performance is below that for the consortium for all categories. Post 16 performance should become a focus for development across the LA, including looking at the entry strategies used in schools.
- 6.5 This year has seen the introduction of the Advanced Level Performance System (ALPS) across the whole authority. This is a performance indicator that calculates the value added at A level based upon the GCSE performance and compares the result across England and Wales. This will prove to be a very useful tool in improving the performance at Key Stage 5.
- 6.6 Whilst this year will provide the baseline for future performance, ALPS has already indicated that seven of our schools are performing within the top 30% in the country but we have four in the bottom 30% of performers. It has also indicated that there is outstanding practice (top 10%) in Further Mathematics and good practice (top 30%) in Applied ICT, Applied Science, Fine Art, Health and Social Care, History and the Welsh Baccalaureate.

7. PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL CATEGORISATION

Introduction

- 7.1 The current school categorisation model has been used since 2014. There are three steps:
- 7.2 **Step One:** consists of data in relation to standards and performance. The first step in the process identifies how well the school is performing. There is an agreed set of data measures which are generated by Welsh Government and used as part of the process to categorise schools. A judgement of 1-4 will be generated in relation to standards.
- 7.3 **Step Two:** The second judgment is based on the school's ability and capacity to self-improve. The process of coming to a judgement on its ability to bring about improvement will begin with the school's own self-evaluation. The judgement on capacity to improve is to do with the school's ability to drive its own improvement for the future and will focus on leadership, learning and teaching.
- 7.4 Following consideration of the self-evaluation report and relevant evidence relating to the performance of all learners and groups of learners and the quality of teaching and learning within the school the governing body, together with the challenge advisor, will agree the judgement for the school's capacity to improve. A judgement of A-D will be generated.
- 7.5 **Step Three:** the combination of the two judgements will lead to a colour categorisation of the school which will trigger a bespoke programme of support, challenge and intervention.
- 7.6 The matrix used is shown below:



7.7 The category of support are:

- **Green - these are our best schools who:**
 - know themselves well and identify and implement their own priorities for improvement;
 - are rewarded by greater autonomy with limited, if any, interaction with challenge advisors; and
 - have the capacity to lead others effectively (school to school support).

- **Yellow – these are our good schools who:**
 - will know and understand most of the areas in need of improvement;
 - have many aspects of the schools performance which are self-improving; and
 - will receive limited challenge and support meetings deployed according to need.

- **Amber – these are our schools in need of improvement who:**
 - do not know and understand all the areas in need of improvement;
 - have many aspects of the schools performance which are not improving quickly enough; and
 - will receive time limited, focused challenge and intervention to support improvement; and
 - be subject to termly progress meetings with senior challenge advisor.

- **Red – these are our schools in need of greatest improvement who:**
 - will receive critical intervention;
 - receive an automatic warning letter from LA and subsequent use of statutory powers where necessary;
 - trigger intensive and effective collaboration between LA and consortium;
 - will receive time limited, focused challenge and intervention to support improvement; and
 - be subject to half-termly progress meetings with the senior challenge advisor.

7.8 Following the verification of data with Step One of the model, the categorisation of all schools will be published in January of each year.

7.9 What are the results of the School Categorisation in Rhondda Cynon Taf?

A summary of the provisional categorisation of the Council's schools subject to National Moderation is shown below:

Category	Primary Schools						Secondary Schools					
	No of schools			%			No of schools			%		
	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016
Green	7	19	22	6.7	18.1	21.6	3	1	5	17.6	5.9	29.4
Yellow	61	66	66	58.1	62.9	64.7	2	9	7	11.8	53.0	41.2
Amber	33	16	13	31.4	15.2	12.8	11	6	5	64.7	35.2	29.4
Red	4	4	1	3.8	3.8	0.9	1	1	0	5.9	5.9	0

7.10 The Central South Consortium's Framework for Challenge and Support sets out the response from the School Improvement Service to schools in each of the four categories, with the greatest support and challenge targeted at the amber and red schools.

7.11 For the amber and red schools, the diagnosis of need for improvement undertaken by the challenge advisor with the school will drive the work within the school. The challenge advisor will provide the core allocation of contact according to the school's category and will broker the required additional support through the commissioning function of the school improvement service working closely with the strategic advisors as necessary.

7.12 The nature and amount of support will be determined by the identified need and may be derived from a number of sources, which could include one or a combination of:

- Support from other schools in the region;
- Support from other school improvement organisations and/or individuals from across the UK;
- Specific leadership and/or teaching development.

7.13 For schools requiring amber or red support the challenge advisor will need to keep the school's progress and the appropriateness and impact of the support under review so as to make changes where required in good time. The focus will be on the impact of the work to secure improvement rather than the number of days delivered.

7.14 To date, sufficient progress is being made by the vast majority of amber and red schools. Over the next few years, the Council and the schools will work together to strive to ensure all our schools are good schools and no school is in the Red category.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

The Council has duties under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (amended) under Section 13A 'to promote high standards in primary and secondary education'.

11. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/SIP

This has a clear link to the priorities set out in the in the Rhondda Cynon Taf Single Integrated Plan. In order to prosper people must have the education and essential skills to secure employment.

12. CONCLUSION

12.1 Education performance in Rhondda Cynon Taf at Key Stage 4 has made a further step forward in 2016 with a number of schools making significant progress. This rate of progress must be sustained if we are to ensure that all our secondary schools compare favourably to similar schools across Wales.

12.2 An improvement in educational performance in Rhondda Cynon Taf is occurring because:

- Standards of teaching continue to improve;
- Individual pupil's performance is rigorously tracked and appropriate timely interventions and support provided to the pupils; and
- Headteachers are prepared to tackle staff underperformance at all levels in their school, at senior and middle leadership levels as well as main-scale teachers. Currently, some schools are more rigorous in their approach to school improvement and that is reflected in the school's performance.

12.3 Schools and the Council have a responsibility to all pupils to reduce the school by school and in school variation in education performance. Each secondary school Headteacher has had a copy of the Key Stage 4 results of all the secondary schools and the categorisation information across Wales. It is evident from the information as to which schools are the high achievers and from whom schools need to learn best practice.

- 12.4 The Council and the schools have made a concerted effort in the past year to improve standards of teaching and learning in schools, through a variety of approaches. The next step is for headteachers and their senior management teams to consistently share and implement successful approaches to leadership and management; and teaching and learning, with the support of the Council and the Consortium.
- 12.5 As a group, the secondary schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf have again made good progress in 2016 and the Governing Bodies, Headteachers, staff and pupils should be congratulated for the improvement in performance. School improvement is not a smooth process but it does require significant focus, rigour and commitment if it is to be achieved. Clearly, if this focus, rigour and commitment continues, the pupils of Rhondda Cynon Taf will go on to achieve even better educational outcomes in 2017 and onwards.

Appendix A

School	Free School Meal Band	KS4 Level 1 Threshold					KS4 Level 2 Threshold					Level 2 inc English/Welsh First Language & Maths					CSI				
		11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16
Aberdare Community	>30%				94%	100%				76%	91%				45%	41%				43%	38%
Bryncelynnog	>15% but >20%	93%	97%	93%	97%	98%	72%	73%	76%	75%	81%	52%	43%	53%	62%	65%	52%	43%	53%	62%	66%
Cardinal Newman	>15% but >20%	92%	100%	100%	98%	99%	71%	86%	84%	88%	88%	60%	57%	72%	71%	69%	53%	57%	69%	71%	69%
Ferndale	>30%	87%	96%	99%	100%	100%	46%	84%	97%	97%	100%	25%	38%	47%	50%	55%	24%	37%	46%	50%	53%
Hawthorn High	>20% but < 30%	82%	94%	95%	97%	100%	55%	83%	93%	94%	97%	41%	34%	40%	49%	62%	41%	31%	37%	41%	56%
Mountain Ash	>30%	90%	93%	90%	93%	99%	75%	86%	84%	87%	87%	31%	43%	36%	52%	42%	31%	41%	36%	52%	41%
Pontypridd High	>20% but < 30%	90%	94%	90%	98%	100%	60%	60%	79%	93%	98%	36%	46%	52%	53%	62%	35%	44%	48%	50%	61%
Porth County	>20% but < 30%	88%	90%	91%	99%	100%	66%	63%	63%	96%	100%	37%	43%	47%	48%	52%	37%	42%	48%	48%	51%
St John Baptist	>10% but <15%	96%	99%	99%	100%	99%	82%	81%	94%	77%	86%	66%	73%	75%	61%	62%	66%	72%	70%	61%	63%
Tonypanydy	>20% but < 30%	91%	92%	96%	98%	95%	86%	80%	90%	85%	82%	28%	29%	31%	49%	52%	28%	29%	30%	47%	43%
Tonyrefail	>20% but < 30%	85%	91%	99%	98%	100%	67%	77%	87%	87%	99%	40%	35%	52%	47%	61%	39%	35%	52%	47%	60%
Treorchy	>20% but < 30%	97%	97%	97%	100%	100%	93%	95%	94%	96%	93%	43%	58%	47%	56%	50%	42%	58%	47%	52%	49%
Y Pant	>10% but <15%	97%	99%	98%	98%	100%	82%	92%	93%	91%	97%	71%	68%	75%	66%	79%	71%	68%	70%	66%	78%
YG Cymer	>15% but >20%	90%	100%	99%	100%	100%	60%	99%	99%	100%	100%	40%	48%	54%	63%	69%	40%	41%	53%	63%	69%
YG Garth Olwg	>10% but <15%	92%	98%	95%	98%	100%	75%	71%	80%	93%	99%	56%	44%	54%	63%	68%	56%	42%	48%	62%	67%
Ysgol Llanhari	>10% but <15%	96%	97%	99%	100%	100%	74%	71%	97%	100%	100%	58%	53%	65%	65%	80%	61%	53%	64%	65%	79%
YG Rhydywaun	>10% but <15%	93%	97%	98%	100%	98%	61%	82%	98%	99%	94%	42%	56%	60%	65%	58%	43%	56%	60%	65%	58%
RCT		89%	93%	93%	96%	97%	69%	78%	85%	87%	90%	44%	46%	50%	55%	57%	43%	45%	49%	53%	55%
Wales		92%	93%	94%	94%	95%	73%	78%	82%	84%	84%	51%	53%	55%	58%	60%	49%	49%	53%	55%	58%