A teacher's guide to school self-evaluation

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Foundation Phase pack

F.
All Wales Core Data Sets guidance notes

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Further information

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All Wales Core Data Set

Foundation Phase

Guidance Notes

Overview

School Improvement and Effectiveness in Wales is underpinned by a strong focus on self evaluation, challenge and support.

The 'All Wales Core Data Set' provides a consistent and balanced suite of contextual analyses, supported with guidance and training. It is intended to support school self evaluation and performance improvement, and inform work with Estyn, Local Authority Improvement Officers and consortia.

The 'All Wales Core Data Set' is designed to provide analyses of the Foundation Phase and key stages, and external examination results in fixed formats and to provide performance comparisons using a range of contextual factors. The format of the reports is designed to be accessible to all those involved in the school self evaluation process. The reports also support the School Effectiveness Framework by contributing to the development of a high performance culture and by facilitating the sharing of good practice. They also support Estyn's 2010 inspection framework by contributing to school self evaluation procedures and by providing a consistent data set for both schools and inspection teams.

Families of Schools

The 2008 Estyn report noted that not all schools could easily consider their performance against that of other similar schools and share good practice because, in many local authorities, there was no formal agreement between the local authority and schools to openly share performance data and/or there may not have been suitable comparator schools within the locality.

To facilitate sharing of good practice, the 'All Wales Core Data Set' contains comparative performance data compiled from contextually similar schools. 'Families' of schools have been created by initially grouping them based on size and linguistic delivery and then within each high level grouping, schools are ordered in descending order according to the values of an index of 'challenge', calculated as follows.

- 50% x the proportion of pupils of statutory school age eligible for free school meals, plus
- 30% x the proportion of pupils of statutory school age who live in an area classed as in the 20% most deprived parts of Wales using the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD), plus
- 10% x the proportion of pupils of statutory school age subject to school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs (SEN), plus
- 10% x the proportion of pupils of statutory school age who are either new to the English language (or Welsh where relevant), at an early acquisition stage or developing competence.

In the case of the first three variables, a three-year average of data from PLASC 2008-2010 is used, whilst only PLASC 2010 data are used for the latter (as 2009 data was the first year of collection and these data were not robust).

Deprivation is measured using the overall Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) 2008, so pupils with an English postcode are excluded from both the numerator and denominator of the second variable.

Once the schools are ordered using this index, they are then split into batches of around 11 to form the families. Within each family, the first family member in the group is the most challenged and the last in the group the least challenged.

The criteria used to form the groups ensures that family members are statistically more alike and comparisons between them fairer. By comparing your school's performance with other schools in your family, it should be possible to identify your school's strengths and weaker areas. It should also be possible to identify schools within your family who achieve better outcomes in particular areas. Knowing the names of your family schools will allow you to contact them in order to seek advice and identify good practice. Other family schools may contact you for similar purposes. From 2011, the list of all families and family members has been made available via Ffynnon and LAs in order to help facilitate sharing of best practice.

The families were fixed for 3 years from 2010 in order to allow sufficient time for relationships between schools to develop. The development of school families aligns with the principles within the School Effectiveness Framework and allows schools to more effectively share good practice. It does not preclude local cluster or consortium arrangements. Rather it extends and complements other opportunities to disseminate good practice.

There is no intention to use this information as a means of creating 'league tables'. Consequently, it is important to maintain confidentiality and not allow external bodies to use family school data for any such purpose.

General Principles

Effective self evaluation requires schools to pose 3 main questions:

1. How well are we doing?
2. What needs to be improved?
3. What must we do to improve?

The data pack can help you address these questions in the following ways:

- The performance graphs show your school's current results and performance trends over five years. The graphs also show a range of important comparisons. This will allow you to consider your school's results against local and national performance as well as against the outcomes for schools in your 'family'.
- Comparing your results with similar schools may indicate particular strengths and areas for development i.e. areas that might be improved. The actual (percentage) differences in performance will inevitably vary from year to year. Therefore, it is preferable to focus on trends and relative differences in performance in order to determine strengths and areas of concern.
- Investigating the learning and teaching approaches used within high performing but contextually similar schools may reveal strategies which would help your school to improve.

Data alone is unlikely to provide solutions to identified issues. Instead, it raises questions – the answers to which might provide a solution. Most questions can only be addressed by schools themselves and when considering pupil level performance data and a wide range of contextual information which may affect pupil outcomes. The data sets within the reports are derived from pupil level data already held within centres. This will allow schools to 'drill down' their analyses in specific areas and for individual pupils when seeking underlying issues indicated by the reports.

Using the Data Sets

The data is presented in a pictorial form wherever possible so that trends and patterns are more easily identifiable and the information is accessible to a wide audience. Where graphs are inappropriate, tables of numerical data have been simplified and presented in a consistent format.

The guidance notes that follow are designed to help you interpret the tables and graphs within your school data pack. Examples from each section of the pack are included and commentaries arranged under three headings:

1. **What does the graph show?** – To expand on the title of the graph to aid understanding and interpretation.
2. **Why is this important?** – To indicate the main purpose of the data.
3. **Querying the data? -** To suggest questions to interrogate the data. Typical questions include:
    - What are the trends for Areas of Learning or other performance indicators?
    - In which Areas of Learning or performance indicators do pupils do best?

- In which Areas of Learning or performance indicators do pupils do less well?
- How do we compare against local averages?
- How do we compare against national averages?
- How do we compare with similar schools (i.e. benchmarking)?
- What contextual factors may have impacted on pupil school outcomes?

Remember to look for themes over time, across groups of pupils or Areas of Learning and to consider issues that the graphs might raise in context.

The data pack only tells part of the story; it is for each school, supported by their local authority to consider it alongside other evidence and local knowledge in order to inform school self evaluation, target setting and planning.

We welcome feedback, please contact us at IMS@wales.gsi.gov.uk.

Health Warnings

Considerable care needs to be taken when interpreting data particularly with regard to the following:

Small cohorts

Small numbers in a cohort mean that each pupil carries a high percentage weighting. Individual pupils within these cohorts are likely to vary in gender, age and ability. In addition, there may be no boys, girls or even pupils for some cohorts. The combination of these factors can distort cohort outcomes and school trends. Consequently, it may not be possible to draw conclusions from analysis based on very small groups of pupils e.g. –

Chart 1

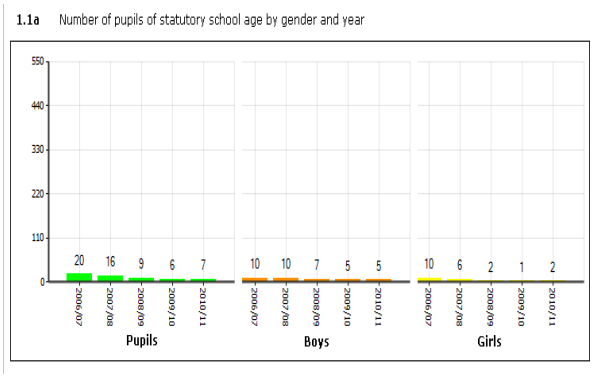


Chart 2

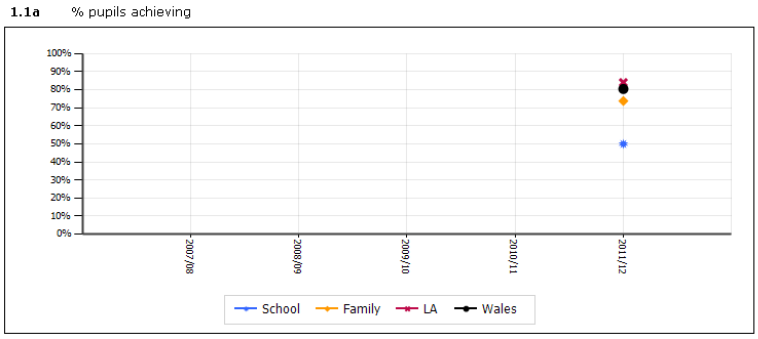


Chart 1 indicates there were only 7 pupils in the cohort for 2011, consisting of 5 boys and 2 girls. Similarly there were only 6 pupils in 2010.

Chart 2 shows FPI performance for another school with a small cohort. The absence of a trend line indicates that 2011/12 is the first year of the end of Foundation Phase teacher assessments. In future years, any big jumps in performance between one year and the next may be due to very small number of pupils in the assessment cohort.

Missing Data

Some data may appear to be omitted for some schools e.g. missing Language, Literacy and Communication Skills in English/Welsh data. In this case, either the school was not required or had no pupils eligible for assessment in one or other language, there were no pupils eligible for assessment in that year in the Foundation Phase, or the school does not have a Foundation Phase.

Missing family schools

Some graphs may not show all family members on the x-axis, or show family members on the x-axis but no data.

a) Some family members missing

This will happen when a family member (school) has less than 5 pupils contributing to the measure. In this case, the data is suppressed to avoid disclosure, which also suppresses the words 'family member' from appearing on the x-axis.

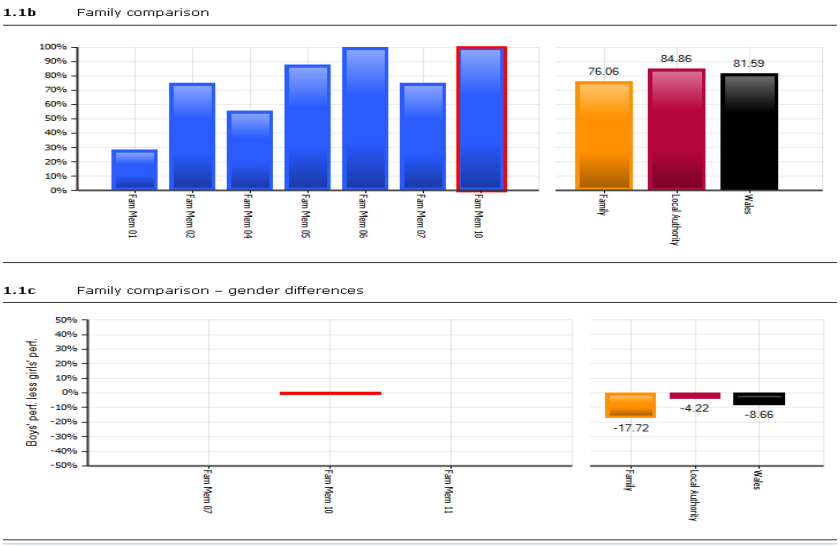
Where there are fewer family members to show on the chart, Ffynnon makes each bar for the remaining family members wider to fill the space available, as in the first graph 1.1b in the example below. This means that there is no obvious gap showing for the family member that has been suppressed.

b) Family members present but no data

This will happen when the data is zero for that family member for the particular chart. This could be because the family has a mix of infant, junior and primary schools so some schools will not have results for the Foundation Phase or key stages. It could also be that there is no data to show for a particular family member for a particular indicator – perhaps because there were no results (no pupils in an assessment cohort) or a zero performance value.

In extreme examples, the combination of very small cohorts can mean that gender difference graphs in particular do not show very much data at all. In the example below (bottom graph 1.1c) none of the family members have a gender difference to show:

- The 'target' school is shown as a red line
- Two other family members have both boys and girls but a zero gender difference. These are shown on the axis but with no data
- The other family members do not appear because they have less than 5 boys or girls, or both, contributing to this measure so have been suppressed.



Schools with Local Authority designated SEN classes / units

Whilst the proportion of pupils subject to school action plus or with a statement of SEN is one of the criteria for establishing the families of schools, the presence of SEN classes is not. You should consider the impact this might have when evaluating your data.

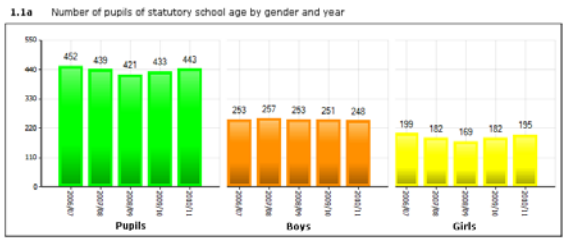
Decimal places on charts

All charts are calculated to 2 decimal places; however, some charts may show some data labels to 1 or 0 decimal places. This is due to the system not displaying a final 0 (zero) after the decimal point. For example 90.00 will be displayed as 90, and 90.10 will be displayed as 90.1.

School Contextual Information

Chart 1.1a

Pupil Numbers - School



What does the graph show?

The graph shows the total numbers of pupils on roll in your school for the last five years, as recorded in January PLASC returns.

Why is this important?

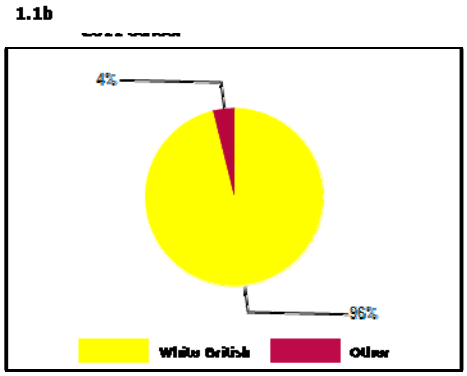
This generally reflects the size of the school and how pupil numbers have changed over the last few years.

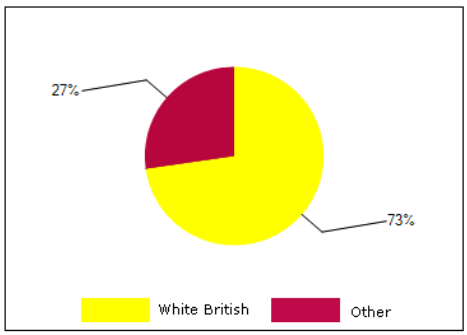
Querying the data

Have pupil numbers changed over time?
Is there an increasing or decreasing trend?
Are the numbers of incoming pupils likely to change?
Is there shared teaching of classes?
Has this impacted on learning or standards?
Are there split classes?
Has this impacted on learning or standards?

Charts 1.1b

Ethnicity





What does the graph show?

The pie chart shows the proportions of White British pupils and other (combined) ethnic backgrounds in your school as recorded in the 2012 January PLASC return. The mean LA figures are shown in the adjacent pie chart.

Why is this important?

Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds may have particular learning difficulties e.g. in literacy. Schools may have to provide additional support and resources to address these. Some ethnic groups may have weaker attainment outcomes than others.

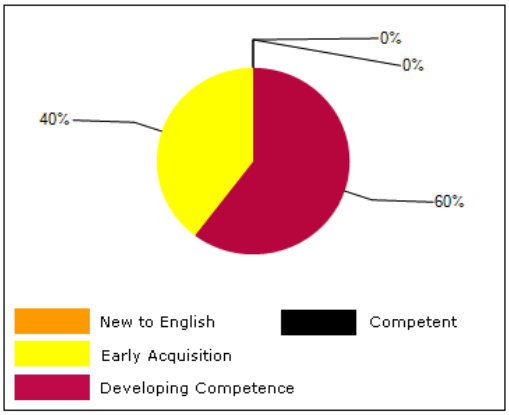
Querying the data

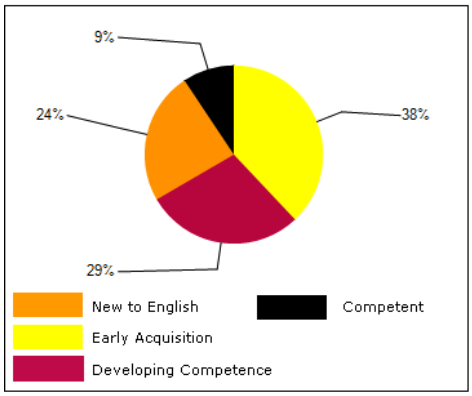
What proportions of pupils have different ethnic backgrounds?
What numbers of pupils have different ethnic backgrounds?
How does this compare with the LA?
How does the attainment of ethnic minority groups compare with other pupils in the school?
Do performance outcomes vary between pupils from different ethnic groups?
Do particular pupils or groups of pupils have additional learning needs?
Have additional support and resources been provided for these? Has this impacted upon teaching and learning in the school?
Has this impacted on overall pupil outcomes?
Has there been any recent change in the number or proportion of pupils from different ethnic groups?
Is there an imminent change in numbers?

Charts 1.1c

Language Acquisition Level

1.1c





What does the graph show?

The pie chart shows the proportions of pupils in your school at different language acquisition levels for those not yet 'fluent' or with 'no issues' in English or Welsh, as recorded in the 2012 January PLASC return. The mean LA figures are shown in the adjacent pie chart.

Note that this chart represents the distribution of 'EAL' pupils only – NOT the language acquisition status of the whole school or cohort.

Why is this important?

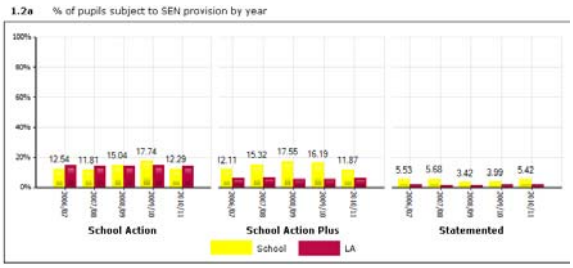
Language acquisition levels indicate how fluent (in English or Welsh) pupils are. This in turn impacts upon their overall literacy skills. Good literacy skills allow pupils to more easily access the school curriculum and gain improved outcomes.

Querying the data

What proportion of pupils is at each language acquisition level?
What number of pupils is at each language acquisition level?
How does this compare with the LA?
How does the attainment of specific language groups compare with other pupils in the school?
Do particular pupils or groups of pupils have specific literacy difficulties?
Have additional support and resources been provided? Has this impacted upon teaching and learning in the school?
Has this impacted on overall pupil outcomes?
Has there been any recent change in the number or proportion of pupils at differing language acquisition levels?
Is there an imminent change in the numbers?

Chart 1.2a

Special Educational Needs



What does the graph show?

The graph shows the proportion of pupils in your school designated as having SEN and on school action, school action plus or with statements for the last five years as recorded in January PLASC returns. The mean figures for the LA are also shown.

Why is this important?

Pupils with SEN may be significantly disadvantaged in their learning progress and attainment. This in turn may impact upon FP outcomes.

Querying the data

What proportion of pupils is at each SEN stage?
What number of pupils is at each SEN stage?
How does the number of pupils with statements compare with the LA?
How does the attainment of SEN groups compare with other pupils in the school?
Are there any obvious trends?
What are the future predictions for SEN numbers?
Have additional support and resources been provided for pupils with SEN?
Has this impacted upon teaching and learning in the

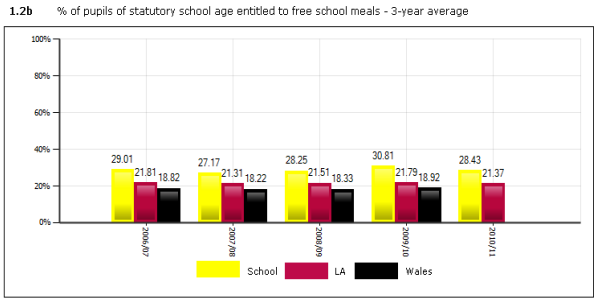
	school? Has this impacted on overall pupil outcomes?
Chart 1.2b **FSM entitlement and benchmarking groups**  FSM benchmarking group - pupils of statutory school age eligible for FSM Title | 2006/07 | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 1) Up to and including 8 % | | | | | | 2) Over 8 % and up to and including 16 % | | | | | | 3) Over 16 % and up to and including 24 % | | | | | | 4) Over 24 % and up to and including 32 % | 29.01 | 27.17 | 28.25 | 30.81 | 28.43 5) Over 32 % | | | | | |	**What do the graph and table show?** There are 5 national benchmarking groups for primary schools based on the proportion of pupils entitled to receive free school meals (FSM). The table shows the 5 benchmarking groups, this years average %FSM figure for your school for the last year and which group(s) your school was in. The graph shows this years average %FSM figure for your school for the last year compared with the means for the LA and Wales. **Why is this important?** FSM benchmarking groups allow performance outcomes to be compared between similar schools. A change in % FSM entitlement might cause a school to move to a different benchmarking group and affect its benchmarking performance. **Querying the data** Has the school benchmarking group changed over time? Has this affected the school's national benchmarking performance? Is the school advantaged or disadvantaged by being at the top or bottom of the FSM range? Is the % FSM figure for the school exceptional e.g. 65% FSM? How has this impacted on pupil outcomes?
Chart 1.3a **Cohort Numbers - Year 2**	**What does the graph show?** Chart 1.3a shows the total number of pupils, boys and girls in Year 2 for the years 2008-12 as recorded in the January PLASC returns. **Why is this important?** Each pupil has a percentage weighting which contributes to results. Pupils in smaller cohorts have a higher percentage weighting. Comparing the performance of small numbers of pupils may be statistically unreliable. The numbers of boys and girls in the cohort is important because girls generally attain better outcomes than boys. A large proportion of boys or girls in a cohort might distort the overall results compared with other years. **Querying the data** What is the percentage weighting for each pupil, boy and girl? What is the proportion of boys and girls in the cohort? Is there a difference in performance between boys and girls? What is the age distribution for boys and girls? (Older pupils generally perform better). Do any pupils have additional learning needs (ALN)? Have any of these factors impacted on outcomes?

Table 1.3b

Foundation Phase Summary Performance

1.3b % of pupils achieving FP Outcome 5 or above in each Area of Learning at FP

	School	LA	Wales
Title	2011/12	2011/12	2011/12
Foundation Phase Indicator	74.07	79.85	80.47
Language, Literacy and Communication Skills in English	75.00	84.99	83.44
Language, Literacy and Communication Skills in Welsh	86.67	80.08	85.93
Mathematical Development	81.48	86.94	86.64
Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity	74.07	91.77	90.84

What does the table show?

The table shows the proportion of pupils attaining Foundation Phase Outcome 5 or above in each Area of Learning in your school for the last year together with last year's means for the LA and Wales.

Why is this important?

The table allows you to compare pupil outcomes at Outcome 5 or above with those locally and nationally.

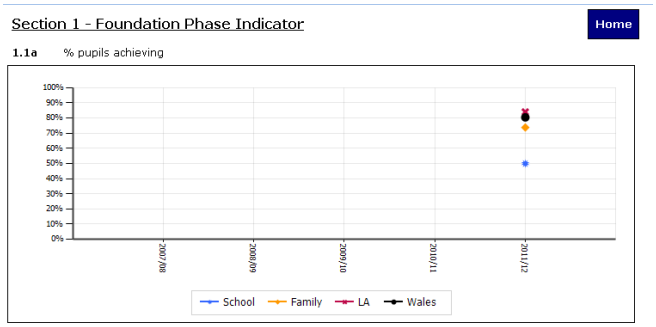
Querying the data

How does the 2012 school performance compare with that for the LA and for Wales?
What might account for these e.g. have any Areas of Learning-based strategies been implemented in the school?
Are there any contextual factors that may have affected performance in this Area of Learning?

School Performance Data

Chart 1.1a

Foundation Phase Performance – FPI



What does the graph show?

The graph shows the proportion of pupils attaining the Foundation Phase Indicator (FPI) in your school for the last year together with the mean for your statistical family, the LA and Wales.

Why is this important?

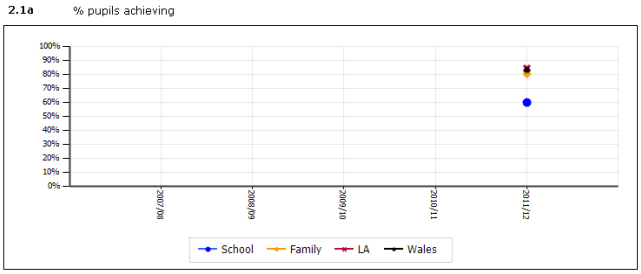
The FPI is a measure of overall attainment. Pupils have to be assessed at the expected Foundation Phase Outcome or better (i.e. Foundation Phase Outcome 5) in Language, Literacy and Communication Skills in Welsh or Language Literacy and Communication Skills in English, Mathematical Development and Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity to attain the FPI. The FPI outcomes for the school will always be limited by the lowest Area of Learning performance. The graph allows you to compare school FPI outcomes with those in contextually similar schools, locally and nationally.

Querying the data

How does the school performance compare with those of the family schools, the LA and Wales? What are the similarities? What are the differences? What might account for these e.g. the weakest performing Area of Learning?
Are there any contextual factors that may have affected FPI performance?

Charts 2.1a, 3.1a, 4.1a and 5.1a

Foundation Phase Performance – Areas of Learning



What do the graphs show?

The graphs show the proportion of pupils attaining Outcome 5+ in the Areas of Learning in your school together with the mean for your statistical family, the LA, and Wales.

Why is this important?

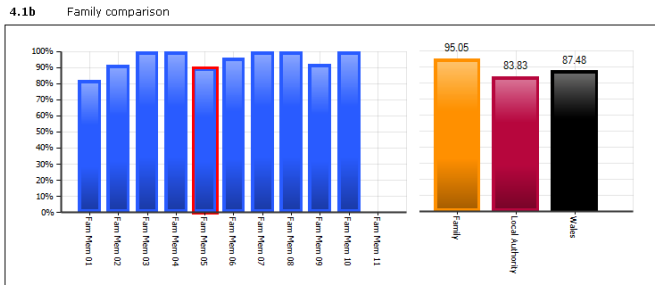
The graph allows you to compare pupil outcomes at Outcome 5+ with those in contextually similar schools, locally and nationally.

Querying the data

How does the school performance compare with the LA and Wales? What are the similarities? What are the differences?
What might account for these e.g. have any Areas of Learning-based strategies been implemented in the school?
Are there any contextual factors that may have affected performance in this Area of Learning?

Chart 1.1b, 2.1b, 3.1b, 4.1b and 5.1b

Family Comparison – FP Areas of Learning



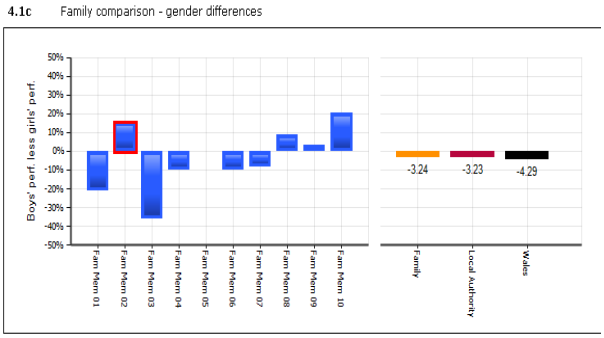
What do the graphs show?
The graphs show the proportion of pupils attaining Outcome 5+ in the FPI and Areas of Learning in your school in 2012 together with the outcomes for members of your statistical family and the means for your statistical family, the LA and Wales.

Why is this important?
Family schools are contextually similar and so performance outcomes might also be expected to be similar. By comparing actual outcomes you can identify those schools which have higher performance levels. This may reflect effective strategies or practices being used in particular Areas of Learning in those schools.

Querying the data
How do we compare with other family schools?
What are our stronger and weaker Areas of Learning?
Is there any pattern evident in the comparisons?
Which family schools have the best outcomes in different Areas of Learning?
Are some family schools more consistent in having higher outcomes? Why might this be?

Chart 1.1c, 2.1c, 3.1c, 4.1c and 5.1c

Family Comparison – Gender Differences

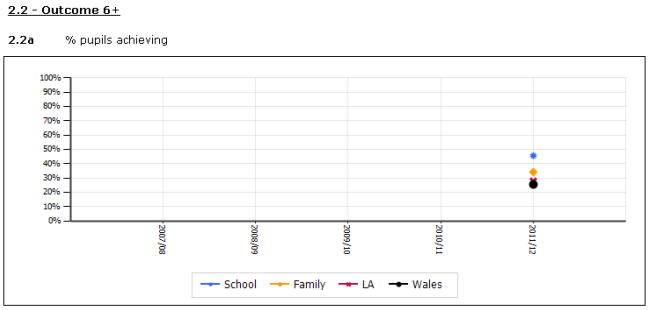
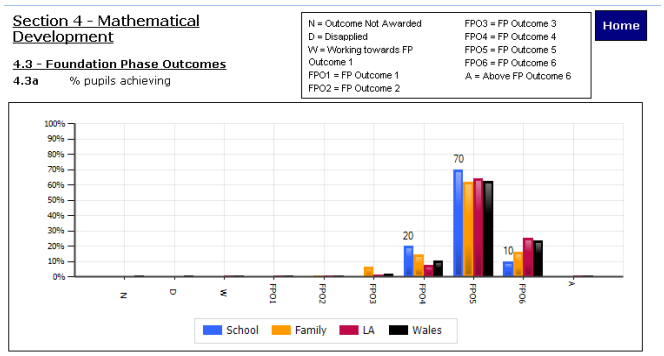


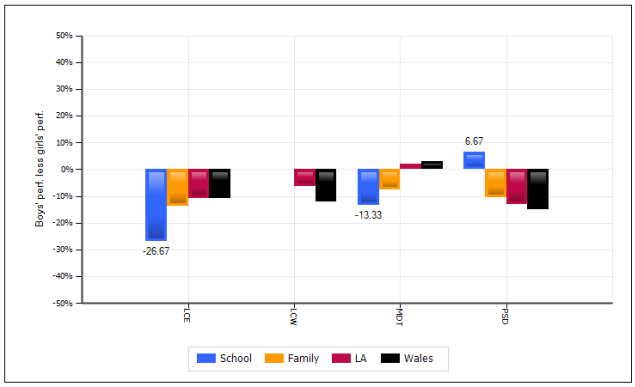
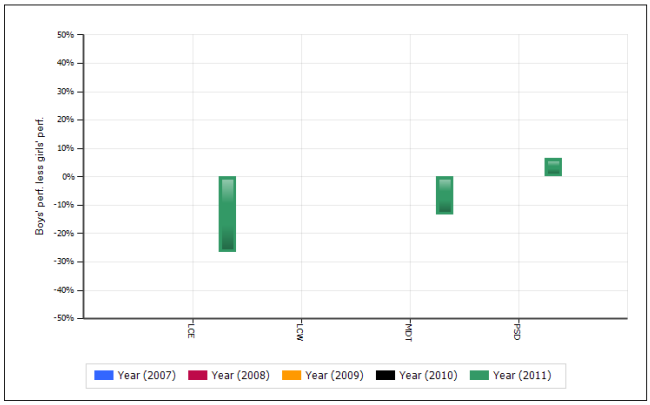
What do the graphs show?
The graphs show the differences in performance (as percentage point differences) at Outcome 5+ between boys and girls for 2012 in the FPI and the Areas of Learning in your school together with those for your statistical family and the means for your statistical family, the LA and Wales. Note that in the graphs:

- a zero value indicates that there is no difference between boys' and girls' performance
- a negative value indicates that boys' performance is below that of girls'
- a positive value indicates that boys' performance is above that of girls'
- a missing family member indicates that the data has been suppressed due to fewer than 5 boys or girls or both.

Why is this important?
Girls generally attain better FP outcomes than boys. It is important to develop and implement strategies to improve boys' performance. Family schools are contextually similar and so gender differences might also be expected to be similar. By comparing actual outcomes you can identify those schools which have smaller gender differences. This may reflect effective strategies or practices being used in those schools.

Querying the data
How do we compare with other family schools?
What Area(s) of Learning has the greatest or least gender difference?
Is there any pattern evident in the comparisons?
Which family schools have the smallest gender differences in different Areas of Learning?

	Are some family schools more consistent in having smaller gender differences? Why might this be? Has the school or have other family schools implemented any strategies to address gender differences? Have these impacted on gender differences?
Charts 2.2a, 3.2a, 4.2a and 5.2a **Performance Outcomes at FP Outcome 6+**  	**What do the graphs show?** The graphs show the proportion of pupils attaining Outcome 6+ in an Area of Learning in your school for the last year together with the mean for your statistical family, the LA and Wales. **Why is this important?** The number of pupils attaining higher FP outcomes is generally increasing. Schools need to have high expectations of pupils and to monitor their outcomes at higher FP outcomes. The graph allows you to compare pupil outcomes at Outcome 6+ with those in contextually similar schools, locally and nationally. **Querying the data** How does the school performance compare with those of the family of schools, the LA and Wales? What are the similarities? What are the differences? What might account for these e.g. do some schools have effective strategies to address the needs of more able and talented pupils? Are there any contextual factors that may have affected performance in this Area of Learning?
Other FP Outcome 6+ Graphs **Charts 2.2b, 3.2b, 4.2b and 5.2b** **Charts 2.2c, 3.2c, 4.2c and 5.2c**	**Commentaries as for Outcome 5+ graphs**
Charts 2.3a-c, 3.3a-c, 4.3a-c and 5.3a-c **FP Outcome Distribution – Areas of Learning**  	**What do the graphs show?** The graphs show the proportion of all pupils, boys and girls at each FP Outcome in the school in 2012 together with the mean distribution for your statistical family, the LA and Wales. **Why is this important?** The majority of children are expected to reach an indicated FP Outcome for the Foundation Phase. Some pupils will have reached lower or higher FP Outcomes. The graph allows you to consider the school's outcomes against those in contextually similar schools, locally and nationally. **Querying the data** What is the proportion of pupils at the expected level? Is there a significant proportion of pupils at lower or higher FP Outcomes?

	Was a significant proportion of pupils not assessed or disapplied? What were the reasons for this? How do school outcomes compare with the family of schools, the LA and Wales? What are the main differences (if any)? What might have caused these differences e.g. contributing contextual factors?
Chart 6.1a and 6.1b **Comparing Gender Differences by Area of Learning and organisation** 6.1a % pupils achieving outcome 6+  	**What do the graphs show?** The graphs show the differences in performance (as percentage point differences) at Outcome 5+ and Outcome 6+ between boys and girls for 2012 in the FPI and Areas of Learning for your school and the means of your statistical family, the LA and Wales. **Why is this important?** It is important to compare school gender differences with those in contextually similar schools, locally and nationally in order to determine if there are significant differences generally or for particular Areas of Learning. **Querying the data** How do the school gender differences compare to those for your statistical family, the LA and Wales? Which Area(s) of Learning has the greatest or least gender difference? Are the family school figures notably different from the others? Why might this be?
Chart 6.2a and 6.2b **Comparing Gender Differences by Area of Learning and year** 6.2a % pupils achieving outcome 6+  	**What do the graphs show?** The graphs show the differences in performance (as percentage point differences) at Outcome 5+ and Outcome 6+ between boys and girls for the FPI and Areas of Learning. Note that in the graphs: • a zero value indicates that there is no difference between boys' and girls' performance • a negative value indicates that boys' performance is below that of girls' • a positive value indicate that boys' performance is above that of girls' **Why is this important?** Girls generally attain better FP outcomes than boys. It is important to develop and implement strategies to improve boys' performance. **Querying the data** What Area(s) of Learning has the greatest or least gender difference? How has this impacted on the FPI? Has the school implemented any strategies to

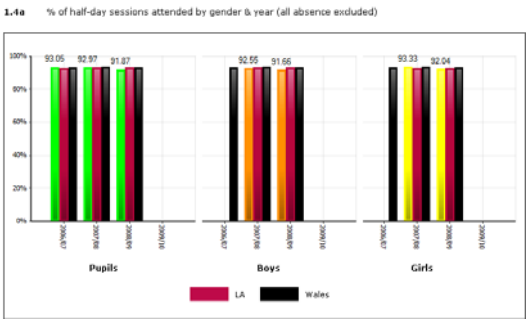
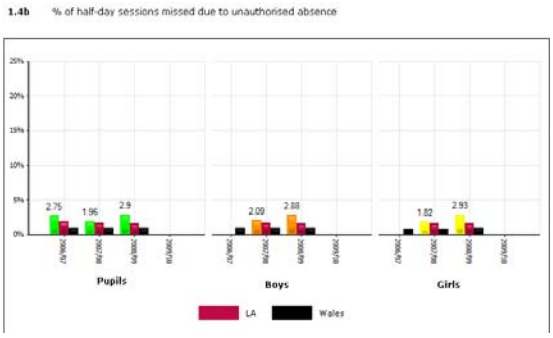
	address gender differences? Have these impacted on gender differences?
Charts 7.1a and 7.1b **School Attendance**   	**What do the graphs show?** The graphs show the % of half-day sessions attended, and the % missed due to unauthorised absences for all pupils, boys and girls for the years 2008-12. The mean figures for the LA and Wales are also indicated. **Why is this important?** Pupils need to be in school in order to learn. Schools need to employ a range of strategies to minimise absenteeism and promote learning for all pupils. Estyn recognise this when analysing and reporting on absenteeism in inspection reports. **Querying the data** What are the attendance levels? How do these compare with the LA and national figures? Are there any trends for all pupils, boys or girls? Are absence levels attributable to specific pupils in the school? What strategies have been employed to address absenteeism for specific pupils? What strategies have been employed to address absenteeism generally? Have these strategies impacted on attendance?
Chart 7.2a **Family Comparison**	Commentary as for previous family comparison graphs
Chart 7.2b **Family Comparison – Gender Differences**	Commentary as for previous gender difference graphs
Chart 7.3 **Attendance and absence table** 8.3 Attendance and absence - % of half day sessions Attendance & Absence Source: Pupil Attendance Record	**What does the table show?** The table shows the percentage of half day sessions which were attended, and authorised and unauthorised absence for your school for the last five years.

Chart 8.1a

Benchmarking Performance

FSM Benchmarking Groups

FSM benchmarking group - pupils of statutory school age eligible for FSM

Title	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
1) Up to and including 8%				
2) Over 8% and up to and including 16%	13.82	12.34	12.62	12.53
3) Over 16% and up to and including 24%				
4) Over 24% and up to and including 32%				
5) Over 32%				

What does the table show?

National data consistently shows a link between the % of pupils eligible for FSM within schools and performance outcomes. In general, attainment falls with increasing FSM eligibility. It would be unfair to compare schools which have very low FSM figures with those with very high figures.

To overcome this, schools have been placed in 5 benchmarking groups based on %FSM eligibility (Table 8.1a). The FSM figures and benchmarking groups for your school over the last five years are show alongside the FSM benchmarking groups.

Charts 8.1b-c and 8.2a-e

Benchmarking Performance

FPI and Areas of Learning

Benchmark Area of Learning summary

Benchmark summary: % achieving outcome 5+ in each Area of Learning by FSM benchmark group

Summary of positions within the group

Title	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Foundation Phase Indicator					2
Language, Literacy and Communication Skills in English					3
Language, Literacy and Communication Skills in Welsh					
Mathematical Development					2
Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity					1

National Benchmarking Performance – FPI and Areas of Learning

8.2a Outcome 5+ Foundation Phase Indicator

Title	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Highest quarter					
Higher middle quarter					75.00
Lower middle quarter					
Lowest quarter					

What do the tables and graphs show?

The performance of each benchmarking group is analysed in order to determine 4 performance bands. 25% of schools fall into each performance band – referred to as 'quarters'. Quarter 1 represents the highest performing 25% of schools and quarter 4 the lowest performing 25%. Schools would generally target being in the highest or higher middle quarters.

If the %FSM for your school has fallen, it may have moved into the next lowest FSM benchmarking group. Your performance will now be compared with schools generally having higher FP outcomes.

If the %FSM for your school has risen, it may have moved into the next highest FSM benchmarking group. Your performance will now be compared with schools generally having lower FP outcomes.

Such changes may affect your benchmarking performance even if pupil outcomes remain the same or improve.

A school may have the same performance over a number of years but its benchmarking performance might change because the quartile boundaries move.

Why is this important?

National benchmarking data allows you to compare your school's performance with other schools having similar socio-economic circumstances (using %FSM as a proxy indicator of deprivation).

Querying the data

What are the FP benchmarking outcomes? Which Areas of Learning have the best benchmarking outcomes? Which Areas of Learning are weaker?

Is the school advantaged / disadvantaged by being at the extremes of the FSM range within their group?

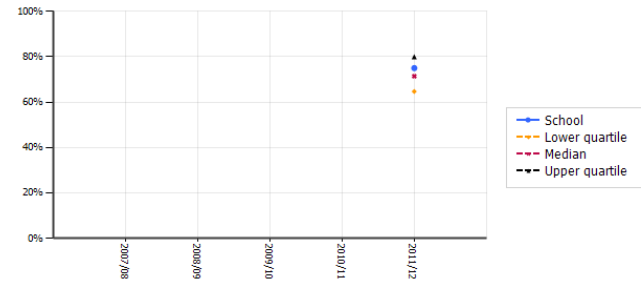


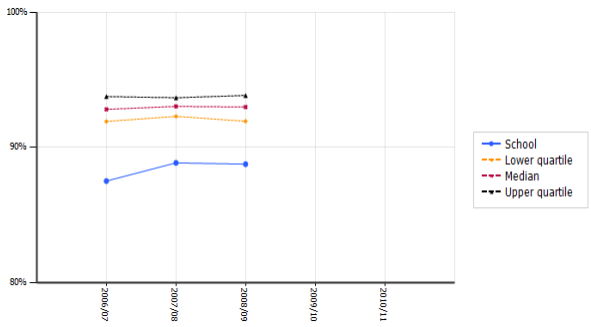
Chart 8.3a

Benchmarking Performance

Attendance

8.3a % of half-day sessions attended by position within the relevant FSM benchmarking group (n.b. the x-axis in this chart runs from 80% - 100%)

Title	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Highest quarter					
Higher middle quarter					
Lower middle quarter		88.85	88.75		
Lowest quarter	87.50				



What do the tables and graph show?

National data consistently shows a link between the % of pupils eligible for FSM and school attendance. In general, attendance reduces with increasing FSM eligibility. It would be unfair to compare schools which have very low FSM figures with those with very high figures. To overcome this, schools have been placed in 5 benchmarking groups based on %FSM eligibility (**see table 8.1a**). The FSM figures and benchmarking groups for your school over the last five years are show alongside the national FSM benchmarking groups.

The attendance levels of each benchmarking group are analysed in order to determine 4 attendance bands. 25% of schools fall into each attendance band – referred to as 'quarters' (**see Table 8.3a**). Quarter 1 represents the 25% of schools with the highest attendance and quarter 4 the 25% of schools with the lowest attendance. Schools would generally target being in the highest or higher middle quarters.

If the %FSM for your school has fallen, it may have moved into the next lowest FSM benchmarking group. Your attendance will now be compared with schools generally having higher attendance.

If the %FSM for your school has risen, it may have moved into the next highest FSM benchmarking group. Your performance will now be compared with schools generally having lower attendance.

Such changes may affect your benchmarking performance even if pupil attendance in your schools remains the same or rises.

The benchmarking graph 8.3 illustrates such changes more clearly. The school line shows how absences have changed over the last five years. The other three lines represent the quartile boundaries between the 25% bands. A school may have the same performance over a number of years but its benchmarking performance might change because the quartile boundaries move.

Why is this important?

National benchmarking data allows you to

	compare your school's attendance with other schools having similar socio-economic circumstances (using %FSM as a proxy indicator of deprivation). **Querying the data** What are the benchmarking outcomes? Is there any trend(s) in benchmarking performance? Has the school's benchmarking group changed? Has the school's attendance changed? Is the school advantaged / disadvantaged by being at the extremes of the FSM range within their group? Are there any trends for boys, girls or all pupils? Are attendance levels attributable to specific pupils? What strategies have been employed to address absenteeism for specific pupils? What strategies have been employed to address absenteeism generally? Have these strategies impacted on attendance?