



## Examination results in schools in Wales, 2018/19 (provisional) - Revised

8 October 2019  
SFR 93/2019(R)

### Revisions to 2018/19 Key Stage 4 indicators

Statistics for 2018/19 were first published on 3 October 2019. Following publication, an issue was identified where some of the figures were based on the number of pupils age 15 rather than those in Year 11. This issue does not effect on the Free School Meal figures or figures for pupils age 17. See [Notes](#) (page 9) for further information.

### Changes to the production of these statistics

#### Performance measures for Year 11

New performance measures have been introduced for 2018/19. These measures are now based on point scores and converts each grade achieved into a point score (see Definitions). The measures are:

- Capped 9 score (Interim measure version, see below)
- Literacy measure: the best qualification a pupil has achieved in (first Language Welsh or English) Language or Literacy GCSE
- Numeracy measure: the best qualification from Mathematics or Mathematics - Numeracy GCSEs.
- Science measure: takes the best single qualification in a Science GCSE (where a double GCSE is taken the higher grade will be counted).
- Skills Challenge Certificate: part of the Welsh Baccalaureate that can be taken at Foundation or National Level

We are developing new performance measures that will be introduced following agreement of new evaluation and improvement arrangements – these are linked to the change in the curriculum in 2020. For further information regarding the introduction of these new measures please see the [Interim Key Stage 4 School Performance Arrangements: Measures and Analyses Guidance](#).

#### Multiple entry changes

Prior to 2018/19, the best result for each pupil in each subject was used for performance measures. From 2018/19, the first entry in each subject is used instead, regardless of whether any resits have resulted in a higher grade. This will affect comparability of the data with previous years. Please see page 8 which gives an indication of the impact of this change.

### About this release

This Statistical Release provides an analysis of external examinations taken by pupils in Year 11 (KS4; aged 15) or pupils in sixth form (KS5; aged 17 at the start of the academic year) in schools in Wales in 2018/19 and previous years. For more data and detailed analysis, see the [supplementary tables](#).

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## **Capped 9 score (interim measure version)**

The Capped 9 measure has been changed since last year by reducing the number of subject specific requirements. The measure still includes the best nine GCSEs or equivalent volume of qualifications, but now only three of the nine slots cover specific core subjects, down from five in previous years. These specific subjects are English or Welsh First Language or Literature, Mathematics or Numeracy and a Science GCSE.

The Capped 9 Score is one of the Well-being of Future Generations (WFG) Headline Indicators. Due to these changes to the Capped 9 points score (interim measure version) comparisons to previous Capped 9 scores should be avoided. A breakdown of this Capped 9 score (interim measure version) and an explanation of the method used to calculate this measure is available in this [guidance document](#).

The Key Stage 5 headline performance measures have not changed from last year.

## **1. Key results for 2018/19**

### **Year 11 (Key Stage 4)**

- The average Literacy point score is 39.0, the average Numeracy point score is 37.1 and the average Science point score is 36.8.
- The average Skills Challenge Certificate point score is 36.4.
- The average Capped 9 score (interim measure version) is 353.3.
- Girls outperformed boys in each of these five indicators, and pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals had a lower average score than those who were not eligible.
- 53.8 per cent of pupils achieved 5 GCSEs (or equivalent) at grade A\*-C including English/Welsh and Maths (Level 2 inclusive threshold).

### **Pupils aged 17 at the start of the school year (Key Stage 5)**

9,130 (89.7 per cent of) pupils aged 17 entered a volume of qualifications equivalent to 2 A levels. Of those:

- 97.8 per cent achieved 2 A\*-E grades at A level (Level 3 threshold).
- 57.6 per cent achieved 3 A\*-C grades at A level.
- 13.1 per cent achieved 3 A\*-A grades at A level.

## **2. Year 11 pupils (Key Stage 4)**

### **Comparisons with previous years**

New performance measures have been introduced for 2018/19. Some of these indicators are provided from 2016/17 onwards, but comparisons between these indicators and similar indicators from previous publications should not be made.

Changes have been made to performance measures and qualifications across the last few years, which can have a further impact on comparability. The average Capped 9 score (interim measure

version) is defined differently to the capped 9 points score from previous years and is not comparable. A new Skills Challenge Certificate (SCC) was introduced in 2016/17, so comparisons for the SCC should only be made this far back. Similarly, a new suite of Science qualifications were first examined in 2017/18 and comparisons for earlier years should be avoided. The Literacy and Numeracy measures can be compared over a longer time period.

From 2018/19, only the results of the first awarding of a complete qualification (including vocational qualifications) will count towards performance measures. This change encourages schools to enter learners when schools are confident they are ready to gain their best possible result. It does not prevent a learner resitting should a school or learner wish to attempt to improve their results, but the resit result would not count towards KS4 performance measures, even if the outcome is higher.

The table below shows the effect of this change on the performance measures, with the exception of the Capped 9 score which will be covered in the final publication.

<u>Measure</u>	<u>Points score with first entry</u>	<u>Points score with best entry</u>	<u>Difference (points score)</u>
Literacy	39.0	39.1	-0.1
Numeracy	37.1	37.5	-0.4
Science	36.8	36.8	0.0
Skills Challenge Certificate	36.4	36.4	0.0

It is not possible to quantify the impact of the changes in policy to pupil and school choices around curriculum options and entry. Therefore, comparisons with previous years should be avoided.

### **Capped 9 score (interim measure version)**

The original Capped 9 point score was introduced in 2016/17 and focuses on Year 11 pupils' best nine results from the qualifications available in Wales, including subject specific requirements. The Capped 9 score (interim measure version) introduced in 2018/19 must include English or Welsh First Language or Literature, Mathematics or Numeracy, and a Science GCSE.



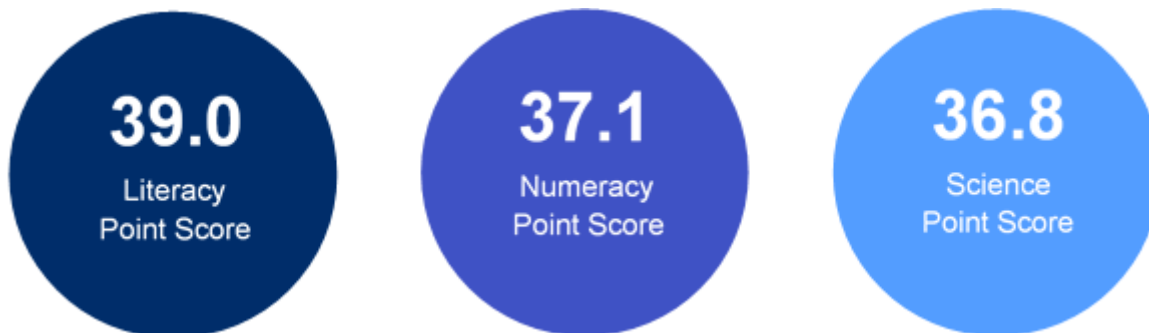
As a guide, an A\* grade at GCSE is worth 58 points, an A grade is worth 52 points, a C grade is worth 40 points and so on. The average Capped 9 Score (Interim Measure Version) this year is just below the equivalent of 9 C grades (360 points). See Definitions for a full breakdown of points by grade.

### **Skills challenge certificate measure**

The Skills Challenge Certificate (SCC) is a key part of Welsh Baccalaureate, available to learners at Foundation Level 1 or National Level 2. National Level 2 is graded A-C and is converted into the same point scores as the subject measures, with an A as 52 and C as 40. The Foundation Level 1 is graded as Pass\* and Pass, converted into a point score of 34 and 22. This means caution should be taken when comparing this measure to the three subject performance measures.

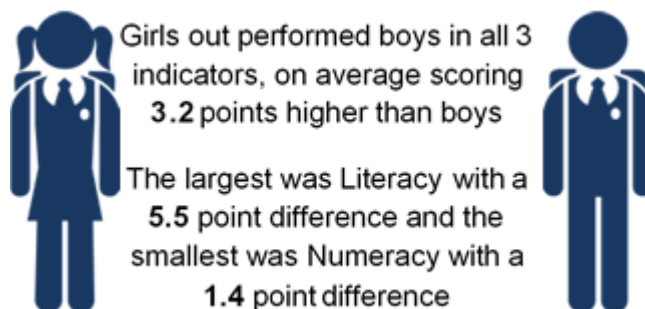


## Subject performance measures (average point scores)



Pupils achieved a higher point score in Literacy and Numeracy than they do in Science.

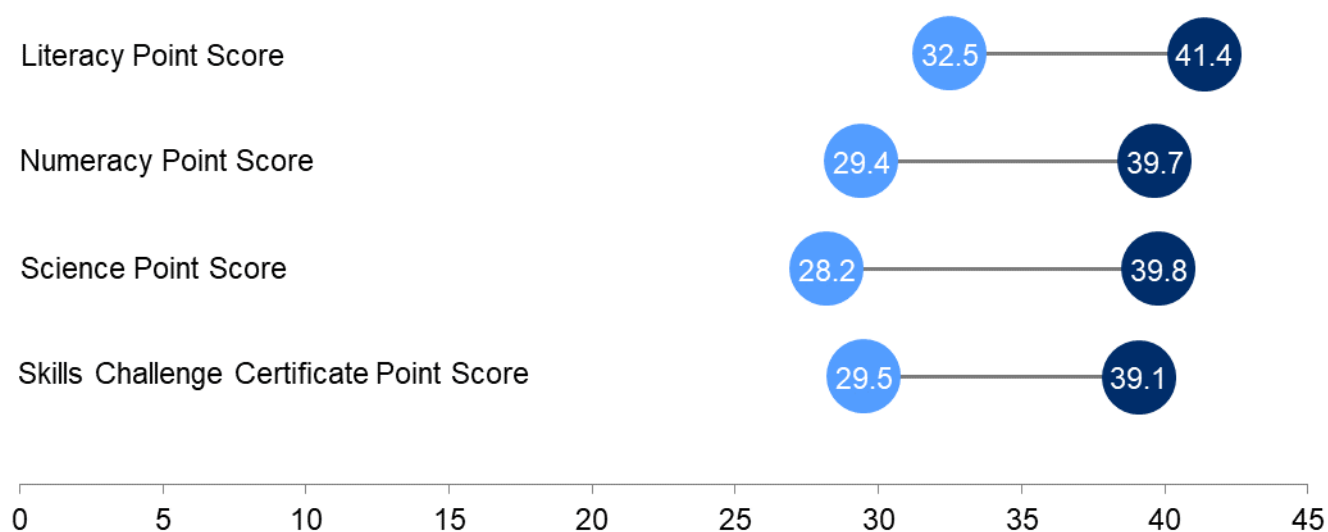
The headline measures show the average score of all included pupils across Wales. For the Literacy, Numeracy and Science measures, the highest average points score possible is 58 points should every pupil achieve an A\* grade. The lowest average points score is 16 points should every pupil achieve a G grade. Each of the three measures would be roughly equivalent to just below a C grade (40 points). Note that these figures are average scores of all pupils across Wales, and some pupils will be performing above this level and some will be performing below this level.



## Free School Meals (FSM)

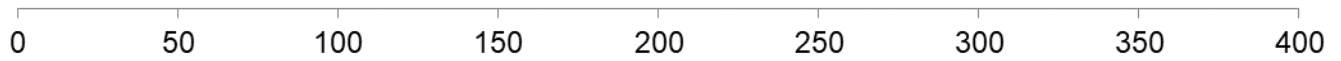
Pupils are [eligible for free school meals](#) if their families are in receipt of certain benefits/support payments or are on universal credit. Chart 5 illustrates the magnitude of the gap between those eligible for FSM and those who are not.

**Chart 1a: Subject specific average point scores by FSM status, 2018/19 eligible for FSM and not eligible for FSM**



**Chart 1b: Capped 9 score (interim measure version) by FSM status, 2018/19 eligible for FSM and not eligible for FSM**

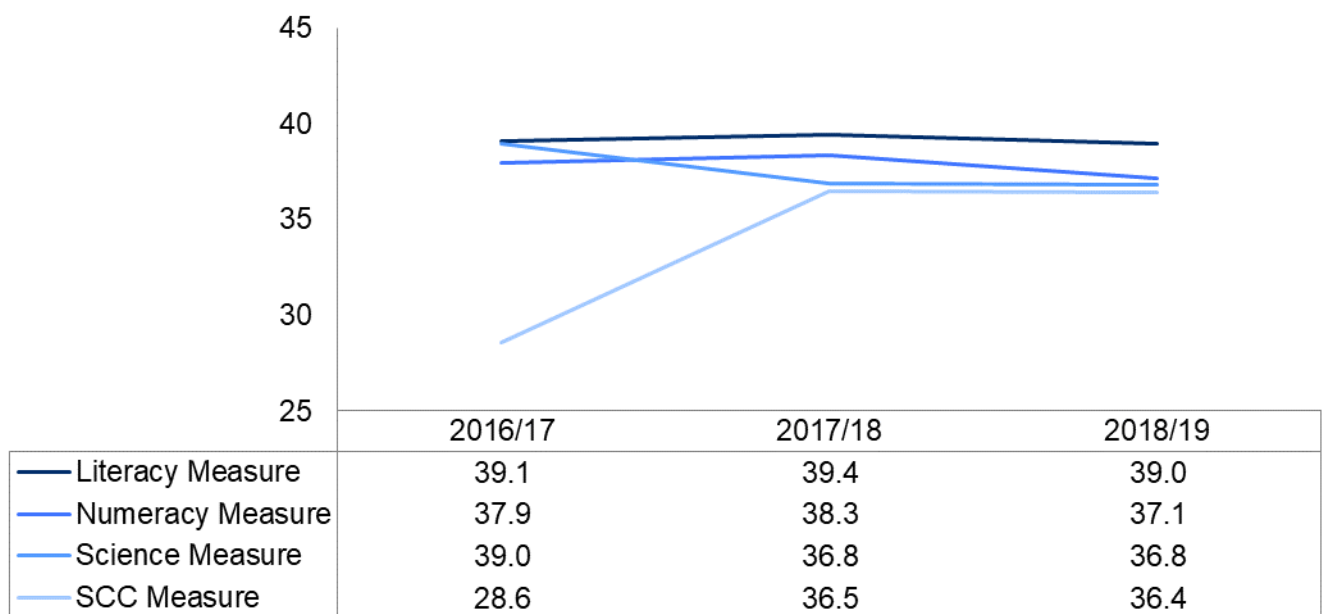
Capped 9 Point Score (interim measure version)



Pupils who are not eligible for FSM consistently achieve higher results than their FSM-eligible counterparts. The gap between pupils eligible for FSM and those who are not was widest in Science and narrowest in Literacy.

For more detailed information on performance measures for pupils who are eligible for FSM, please see the supplementary tables.

**Chart 2: Subject specific point scores**

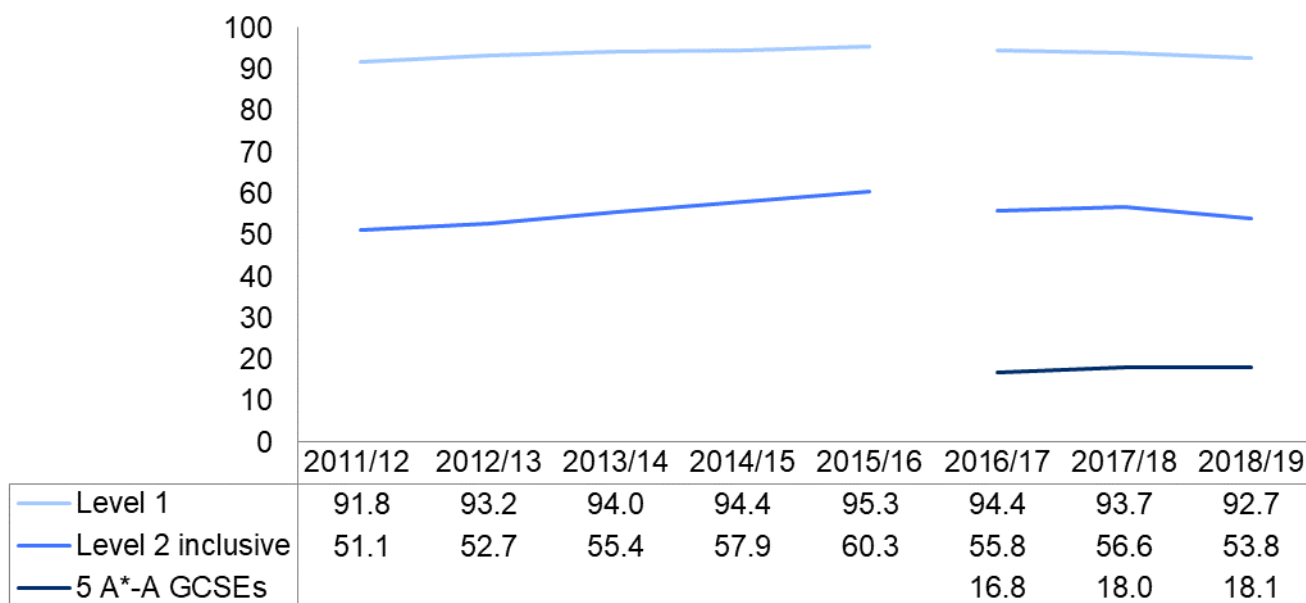


Pupils performed worse in the Science, Literacy and Numeracy measures, falling by 0.1, 0.4 and 1.2 points respectively. The Skills Challenge Certificate (SCC) measure increased by 7.9 points between 2016/17 and 2017/18, but fell slightly in 2018/19 to 36.4 points.

## Other indicators

Making comparisons to performance prior to 2016/17 is difficult due to significant changes in how the indicators are calculated. See the definitions (page 7) for more information

**Chart 3: Percentage of Year 11 pupils achieving different thresholds**



**59.0%** of girls achieved 5 GCSEs at grade A\*-C (including Maths & English/Welsh) compared to **48.9%** of boys



The percentage of pupils achieving the level 2 inclusive threshold (5 GCSEs at grade A\*-C including Maths & English/Welsh, see Notes for further details) decreased 2.9 percentage points from the previous year, to 53.8 per cent.

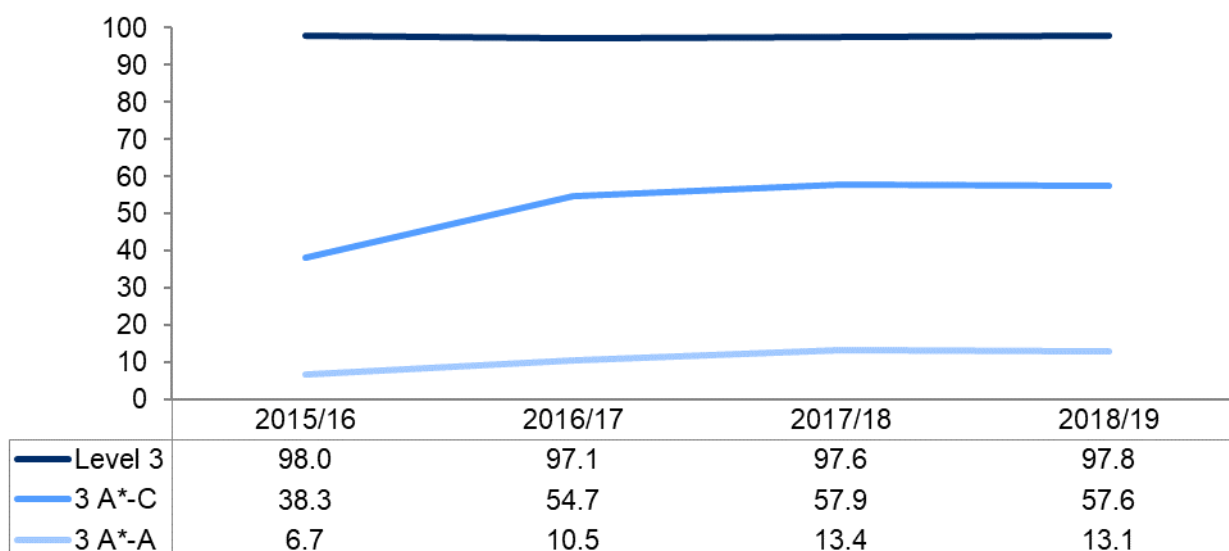
Girls continued to perform better than boys at KS4; the Level 2 inclusive gender gap was 10.1

percentage points, which widened from 9.5 percentage points in 2017/18.

## 3. Pupils aged 17 at the start of the school year in schools (Key Stage 5)

### Headline indicators

**Chart 4: Percentage of pupils aged 17 achieving different A Level grade thresholds**





**63.5%** of girls achieved 3 A levels at grade A\*-C compared to **50.1%** of boys

**14.4%** of girls achieved 3 A levels at grade A\*-A compared to **11.4%** of boys



The percentage of pupils in school achieving 3 A\*-C grades in A level (or equivalent) has decreased by 0.4% from 2017/18. The percentage of pupils achieving 3 A\*-A grades has also decreased by 0.3% from 2017/18.

Girls out-performed boys at KS5; however this gap is smaller for high achievers (those achieving

3 A\*-A grades).

Of the pupils that took two or more A Levels, the percentage achieving 2 A\*-E grades (Level 3 threshold, see Notes for further details) in 2017/18 has increased by 0.2 percentage points from last year.

The figures do not include learners pursuing A Levels or equivalent qualifications at Further Education Institutions.

## 4. Definitions

### Multiple entry changes

From 2018/19, where a pupil is entered into a qualification more than once, only the result of the first entry (chronologically) will be counted in our KS4 performance indicators. This is irrespective of whether a later entry results in a higher grade. Prior to 2018/19, the best result for each pupil in each subject was used for performance measures.

This change does not apply to KS5.

### Year 11 pupils (Key Stage 4)

#### The capped 9 score (interim measure version)

This point score focuses on Year 11 pupils' best nine results from the qualifications available in Wales, including subject specific requirements. For 2018/19 this includes one of English or Welsh (Language or Literature), Mathematics or Mathematics Numeracy and one Science GCSE. [A breakdown of this Capped 9 score and an explanation of the method used to calculate this measure is available.](#)

#### Point score to grade equivalent

The following table presents the point score for an achieved grade of a volume 1 GCSE, used to calculate the Subject Specific Point Scores and the Capped 9 point score.

Grade	Point Score	Grade	Point Score
A*	58	D	34
A	52	E	28
B	46	F	22
C	40	G	16

## **Literacy measure**

The best single GCSE grade from English Language, English Literature, Welsh First Language and Welsh Literature.

## **Numeracy measure**

The best single GCSE grade from Mathematics and Mathematics – Numeracy.

## **Science measure**

The best single GCSE grade from Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Applied Science (Single Award), Applied Science (Double Award) and Science (Double Award). Where a double award is made, each pupil is awarded two GCSE grades. For this measure we will take the best single grade of the two.

### **Level 1**

5 GCSEs (or equivalent) at grade A\*-G.

### **Level 2 inclusive**

5 GCSEs (or equivalent) at grade A\*-C including at least one of English Language, English Literature, Welsh First Language or Welsh Literature, and Mathematics or Numeracy. The literature qualifications have been retroactively added to the measure for 2016/17 and 2017/18.

### **5 A\*-A**

5 GCSEs (or equivalent) at grade A\*-A.

## **Pupils aged 17 (Key Stage 5)**

### **Level 3**

2 A levels (or equivalent) at grade A\*-E as a percentage of those entering 2 or more A levels.

### **3 A\*-C**

3 A\*-C grades at A level (or equivalent) having entered at least 2 A levels (or equivalent).

### **3 A\*-A**

3 A\*-A grades at A level (or equivalent) having entered at least 2 A levels (or equivalent).

## **Changes and comparisons**

The introduction of the Key Stage 4 performance measures mark a move away from threshold based measures. The information provided by Welsh Government to schools and local authorities for self-evaluation will no longer include analyses on the percentage of learners achieving: individual subjects, including the Welsh Baccalaureate at Foundation or National, or threshold performance measures (namely the Core Subject Indicator or Level 2 threshold). The exceptions to this are the Level 2 inclusive and Level 1 threshold measures, as the requirement for schools to set targets for Key Stage 4 learners against these measures has remained in legislation for the 2018/19 academic year. In order to assist schools with monitoring progress against such targets, Level 2 inclusive and Level 1 attainment data are still being provided, in addition to the new measures data. Welsh Government does not expect schools to be placed under disproportionate



scrutiny on the basis of a small number of performance measures, in isolation. Local authorities and regional consortia are encouraged to use a wide range of information, including performance measures, other data and contextual information, in order to support schools.

From 2017/18, following recommendations from independent reviews, vocational Science qualifications no longer count towards the core Science element of performance measures. This applies to the capped 9 points score (interim measure version) and the science measure.

From 2016/17, there is a 40% cap on the contribution vocational qualifications can make towards the L1 and L2 inclusive measures. This cap does not apply to any of the new 5 performance measures. This, in addition to the removal of literature qualifications from the English and Welsh First Language indicators, mean that comparisons between 2016/17 or later should not be made to figures from 2015/16 or earlier.

From 2015/16, the Key Stage 4 cohort is based on pupils in Year 11. Up to 2014/15, the cohort was based on pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year. There is also a maximum of two GCSE equivalence value applied to any individual non-GCSE qualification. This applies to all performance measures in this release.

## **5. Notes**

### **Revisions to 2018/19 Key Stage 4 headline indicators**

Some of the Key Stage 4 provisional results published on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019 used the number of pupils aged 15, which has been corrected to the number of pupils in Year 11 in this revised publication.

Following this change, the majority of the Key Stage 4 indicators increased by 0.1 or 0.2 percentage points. The Capped 9 point score (interim measure version) increased by 1.0 points. See the [supplementary tables](#) for full details of the changes.

This revision did not affect the previously published figures for the Key Stage 4 indicators by Free School Meal entitlement or the headline indicators for pupils aged 17.

### **National statistics status**

The [United Kingdom Statistics Authority](#) has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is Welsh Government's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics

status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

The continued designation of these statistics as National Statistics was confirmed in 2019 following a [compliance check by the Office for Statistics Regulation](#). These statistics last underwent a [full assessment against the Code of Practice in 2019](#).

Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- Introduced a summary of the key measures to the start of the publication, including a detailed explanation of the new key measures and placed them into context in terms of grade equivalents.
- A breakdown of the new measures by gender and Free School Meal eligibility has been included in the release and accompanying tables.

## **Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)**

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly.

The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016 and this release includes 1 of the national indicators namely the average capped points score per pupil, including the gap between those who are eligible or are not eligible for free school meals.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the well-being goals and associated technical information is available in the [Well-being of Wales report](#).

As a national indicator under the Act they must be referred to in the analyses of local well-being produced by public services boards when they are analysing the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in their areas.

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

## **Further details**

The document and supplementary tables are available at:

<https://gov.wales/examination-results-september-2018-august-2019-provisional>

Further technical information can be found in the notes document also on the examination results webpage.

## **Next update**

December 2019

## **We want your feedback**

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to

[school.stats@gov.wales](mailto:school.stats@gov.wales).

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