



EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 25TH SEPTEMBER 2012

**SUBJECT: ADDRESSING THE LINK BETWEEN SOCIO-ECONOMIC
DISADVANTAGE AND ATTAINMENT – A NATIONAL CONTEXT**

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR – EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The report is to inform members of the relationship between socio-economic disadvantage and pupils' attainment.

2. LINKS TO STRATEGY

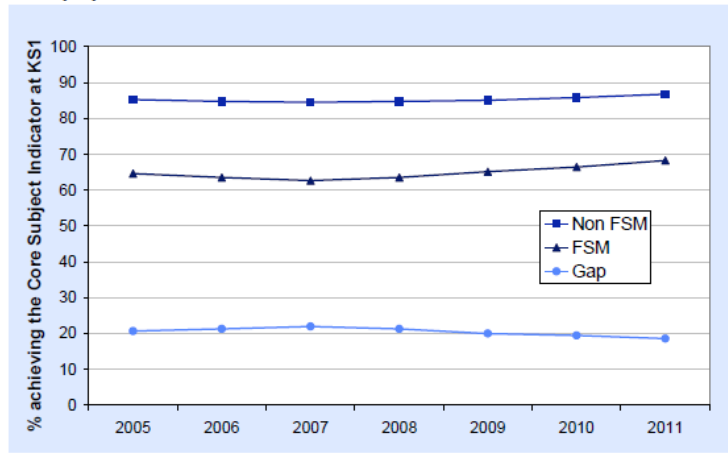
- 2.1 This report links to the local authority's duty to monitor and improve standards of education. The strategies for achieving this are described in the Children and Young People's Plan 2011-14, the Education, Lifelong Learning and Leisure Directorate Plan 2012-13 and also the Learning, Education and Inclusion Service Improvement Plan.

3. THE REPORT

DEPRIVATION AND ATTAINMENT – NATIONAL CONTEXT

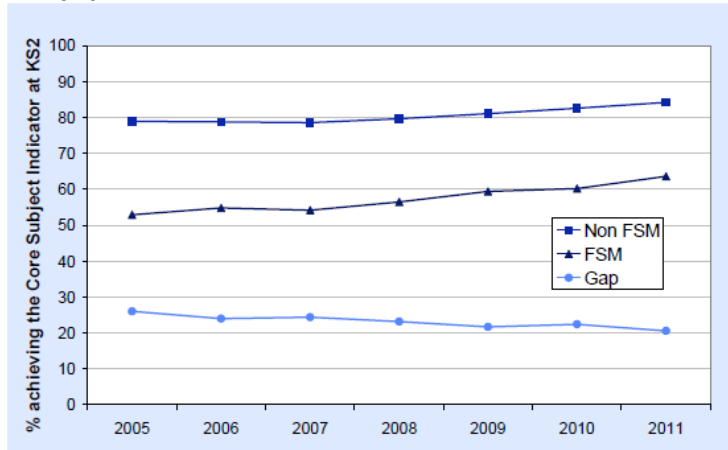
- 3.1 Both national and global research shows that there is a significant link between socio-economic background and educational performance. The Welsh Government's statistical bulletin, "Achievement and Entitlement to Free School Meals in Wales", published every March, shows that the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM), which is a measure of socio economic deprivation, is lower than for their non eligible counterparts at all key stages.
- 3.2 Research shows that the gap in performance between those pupils entitled to FSM and those who are not, widens the older a child becomes. This could be due to a range of factors both within school and those external to school.
- 3.3 Chart 1 overleaf shows the performance differential across Wales over time at key stage 1. The indicator used is the percentage of pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator (CSI), a language, mathematics and science in combination. It can be seen that in the last 5 years some progress has been made in decreasing the gap (pale blue line at the bottom), as the performance of pupils entitled to FSM has improved (darker blue line in the middle)

Chart 1: Difference between CSI performance of FSM and non-FSM pupils at KS1, 2005-2011



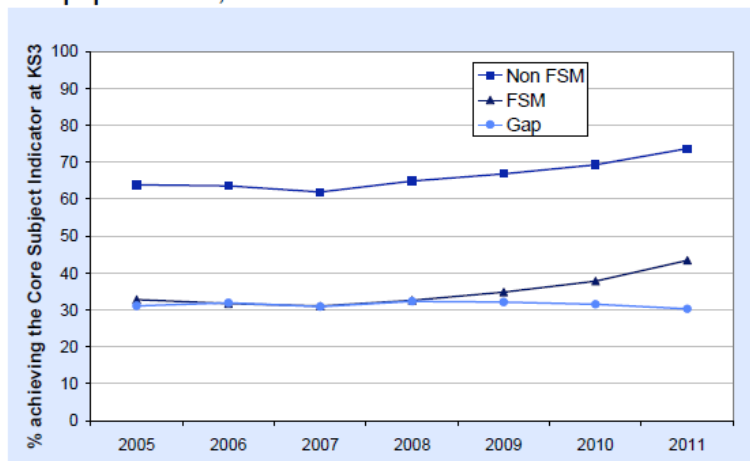
3.4 Chart 2 shows the differences at the end of key stage 2. Here the gap has decreased even more than at key stage 1. This is again due to improvements in the performance of socio-economically disadvantaged learners.

Chart 2: Difference between CSI performance of FSM and non-FSM pupils at KS2, 2005-2011



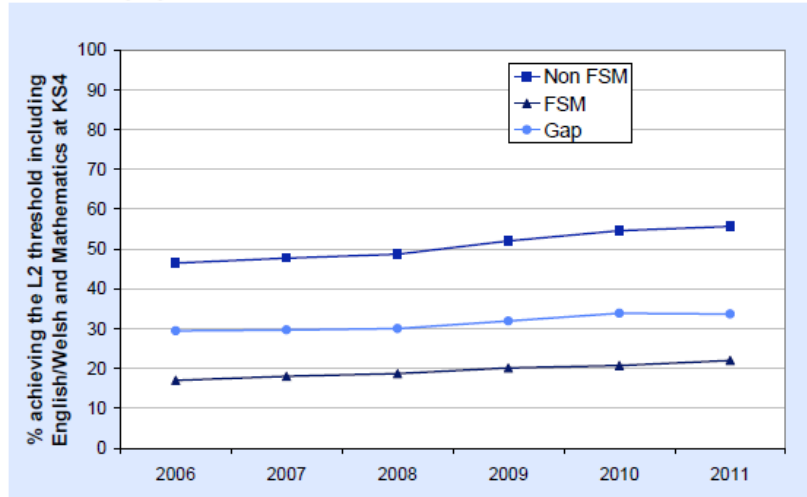
3.5 Chart 3 below shows the difference at the end of key stage 3 for the same indicator, CSI. Here the gap has not reduced as much at the end of key stage 2. This is because whilst the performance of pupils entitled to FSM has improved, the performance of those not entitled to FSM, has improved at very similar rate.

Chart 3: Difference between CSI performance of FSM and non-FSM pupils at KS3, 2005-2011



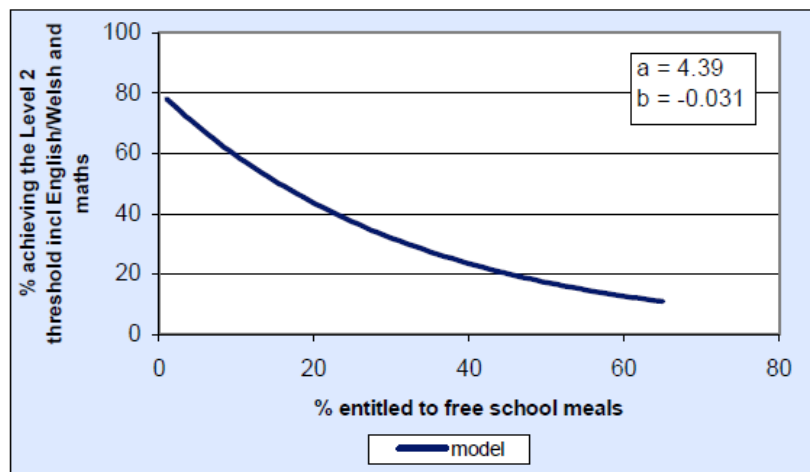
3.6 Chart 4 below shows the relationship at the end of key stage 4, but uses a slightly different measure, the percentage of pupils achieving the Level 2 Threshold including a GCSE A*-C in English / Welsh and mathematics. Here it can be seen that the gap has actually increased, reversing the progress made in the previous 3 key stages. The performance of both sets of pupils has improved but those not entitled to FSM have improved at a faster rate, therefore the gap has increased. This shows that at the final stage of education socio-economic deprivation has the largest effect.

Chart 4: Difference between performance in the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE A*-C in English / Welsh and Maths of FSM and non-FSM pupils at KS4, 2006-2011



3.7 Chart 5 still represents performance at the end of key stage 4, but is used to demonstrate the strength of the link. This chart represents the performance in each secondary school in Wales in 2011. Individual school performance may be above or below the line, but the line is the best fit between all of them. It shows that as the percentage of pupils entitled to FSM grows, performance falls.

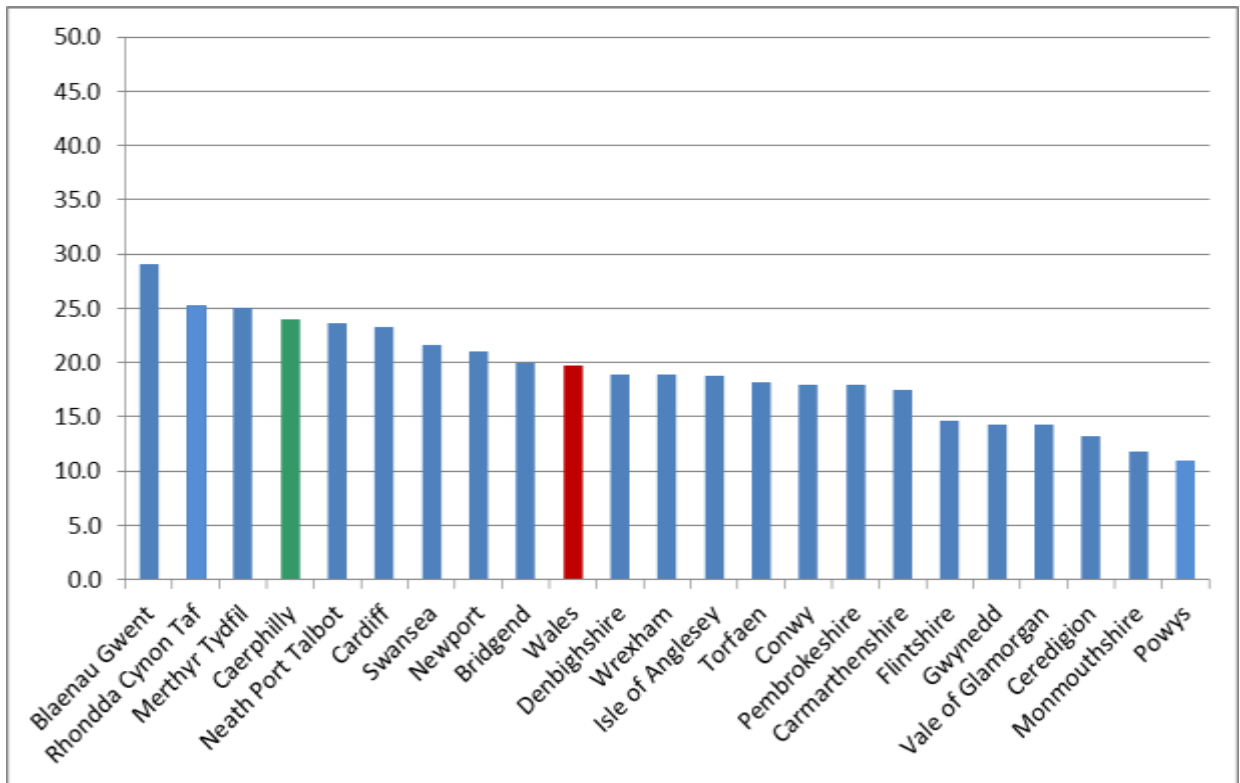
Chart 5: Achievement of the Level 2 threshold including English/Welsh and mathematics, by free school meal entitlement,



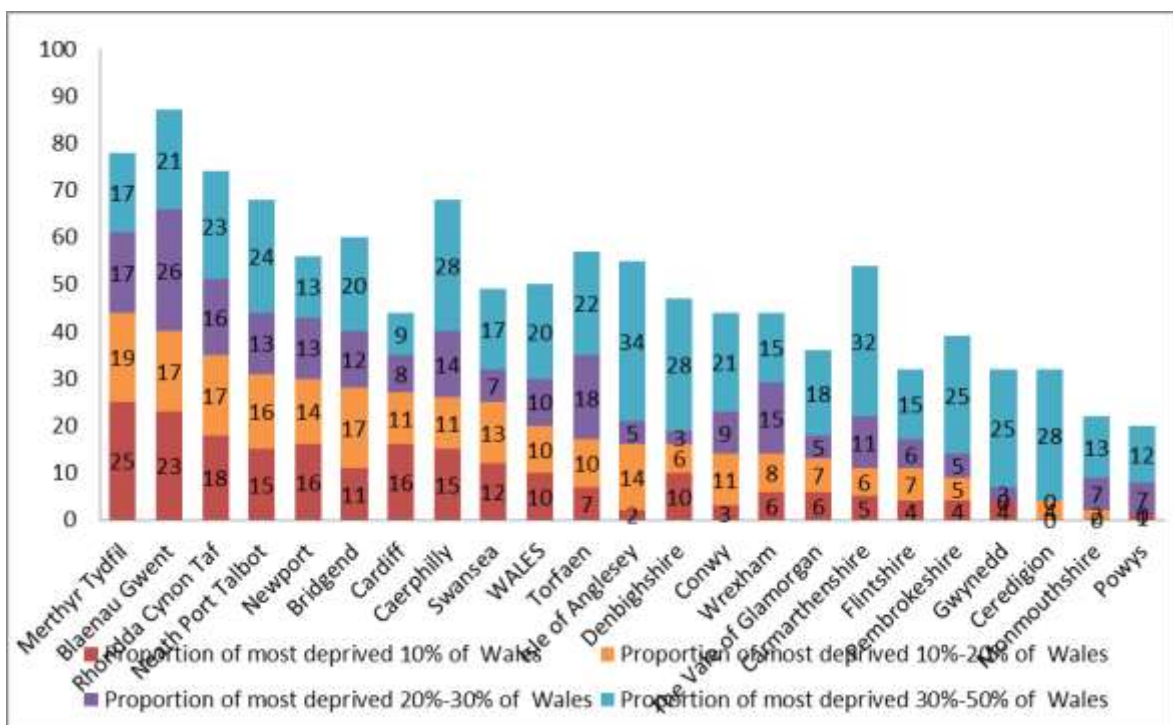
3.8 This means that for a secondary school with less than 5% of pupils entitled to FSM, approximately 75% should achieve the Level 2 threshold including English/Welsh and mathematics. For a school with 25% FSM, approximately 37% of pupils would be expected to attain the same level, half the proportion as the school serving a less socio-economically deprived community.

CAERPHILLY POSITION – Free School Meals and Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation

- 3.9 According to the latest available figures for the percentage of pupils eligible for FSM, Caerphilly is the 4th most socioeconomically disadvantaged LA in Wales.

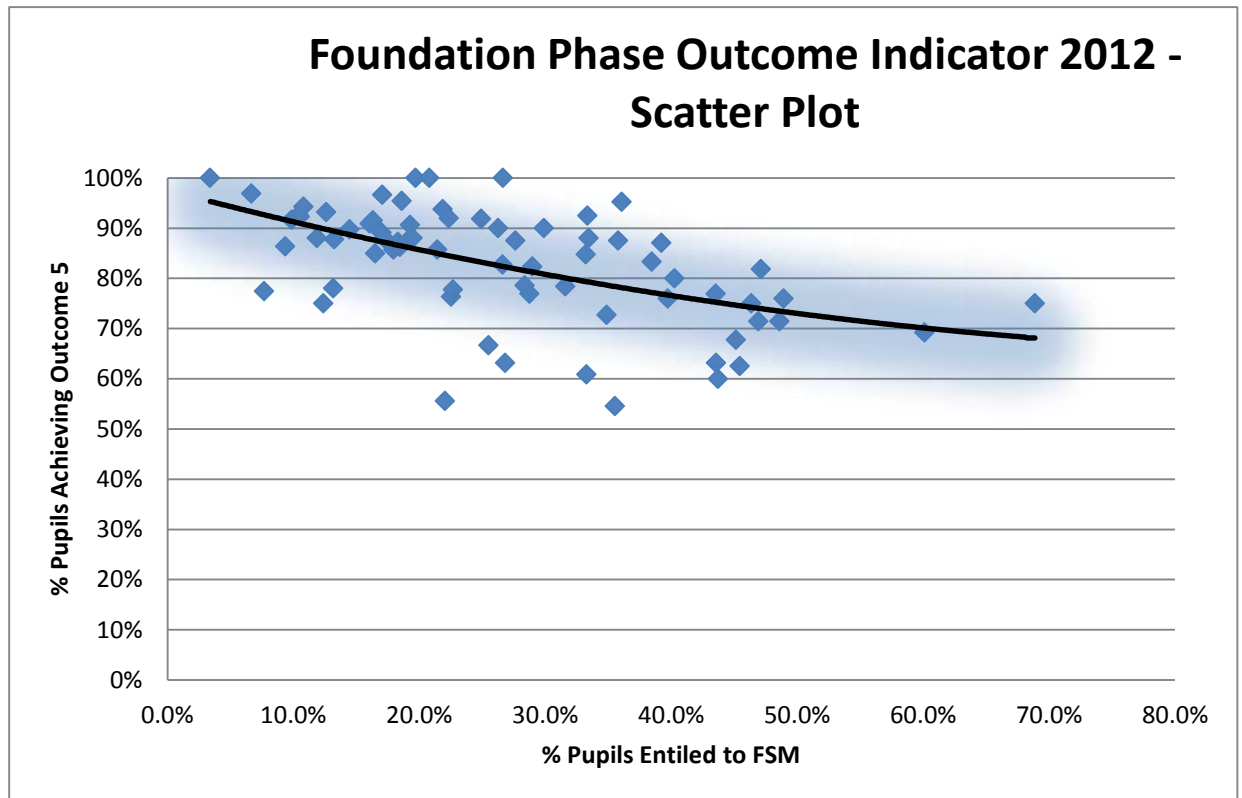


- 3.10 There is an alternative measure for socio-economic deprivation which has been available since 2005, the Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD). Various detailed council reports are available which show the differing deprivation in various parts of the borough. The chart below shows the proportion of wards in each LA at each level of deprivation.

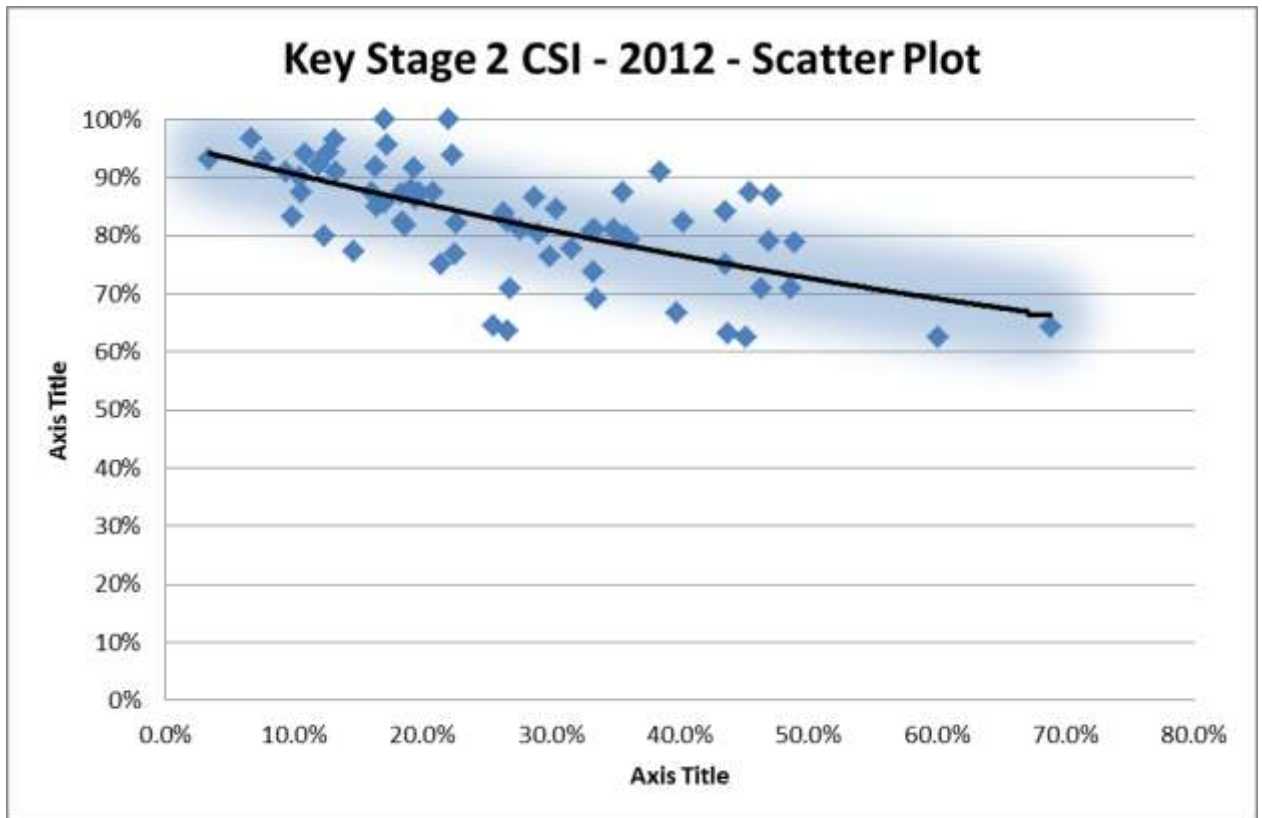


INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL PERFORMANCE RELATIVE TO DEPRIVATION

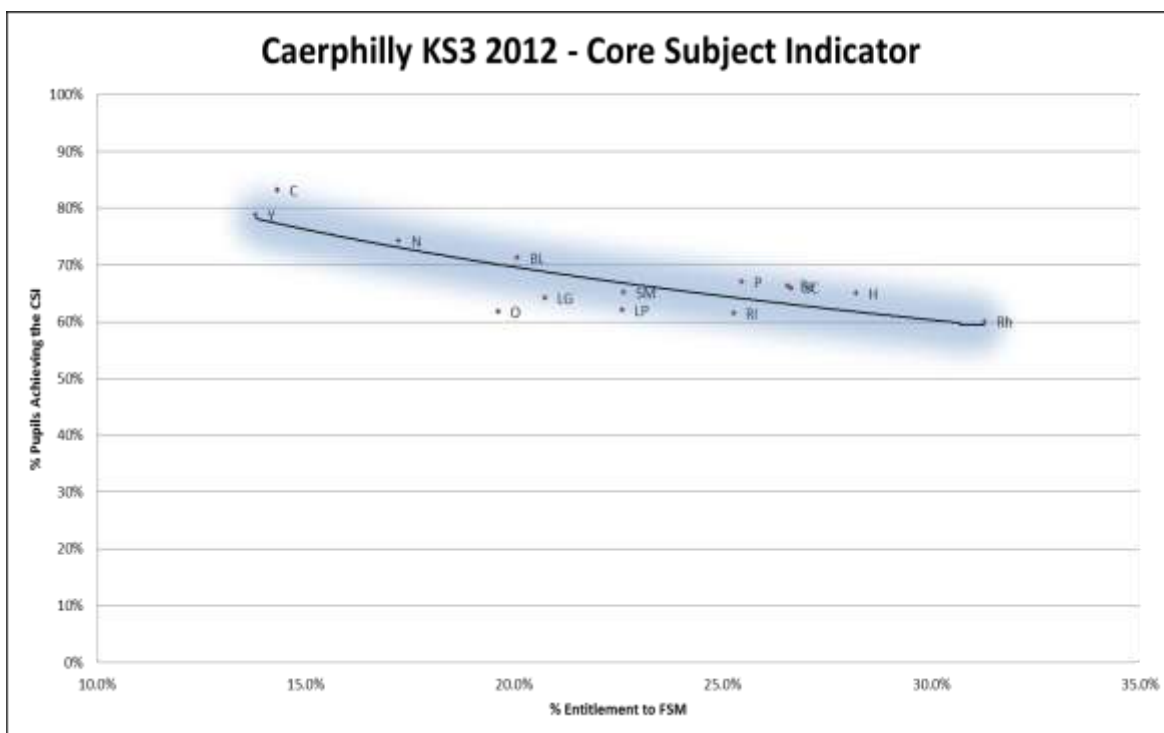
- 3.12 The chart below shows the performance of each Caerphilly school on the Foundation Phase Indicator in 2012. Each blue dot represents a school. The black curve through the points is the line of best fit, through all the schools.



- 3.13 As can be seen above, as deprivation increases, performance generally falls. The majority of Caerphilly's schools fall in the 'blue' shaded zone within +/- 10% of the 'expected' outcome. A number of schools however perform well above expectation, overcoming to varying degrees socio-economic expectation. There are however a number of school performing below expectation. For some schools this can be due to a special needs resource base or a particular cohort. However performance if patterns emerge over time then underperformance can be identified.
- 3.14 The chart overleaf shows the performance of each Caerphilly school at Key Stage 2 on the Core Subject indicator. Each blue dot represents a school. The black curve through the points is the line of best fit, through all the schools.



- 3.15 As with the foundation phase, as deprivation increases performance generally falls. Again, the majority of Caerphilly's schools fall in the 'blue' shaded zone within +/- 10% of the 'expected' outcome. A number of schools however perform well above expectation, overcoming to varying degrees socio-economic expectation. There are however a number of school performing below expectation.
- 3.16 At both the foundation phase and key stage 2 the two most deprived schools in Caerphilly perform approximately in line with expectation. They are represented by the 2 right most dots and have approximately 60% and 70% of their pupils entitled to FSM respectively. The task now is to ensure that these schools continue to raise levels of attainment so that their performance is above expectation.
- 3.17 Appendixes 1 and 2 shows the same data, but represented by a bar chart. This makes it possible to provide the names of individual schools more easily. The blue bars represent schools performing within the expected range, the red bars those performing below expectation and the green bars those performing above expectation. Note that these charts are just for one indicator and charts for individual subjects will highlight complex patterns of performance.
- 3.18 The chart overleaf shows performance at Key Stage 3. Here, performance within individual schools is more in line with expectation, as schools are much closer to the line of best fit through the points. This is in part due to much larger Year 9 cohorts, which reduces individual school fluctuation.



- 3.19 Individual schools in the chart above are provided with an initial for identification. There is one school that is performing well below expectation relative to socio-economic deprivation. The LA has already discussed this performance with the headteacher and both the LA and the school expected this performance in 2012. It can be attributed to a cohort of pupils that are significantly weaker than the school as a whole. At the end of Key Stage 4 this year for example, the school had its best ever results on a number of indicators and the previous year was a Band 1 school.
- 3.20 Our goal now remains to further improve our position in local authority ranking tables in spite of deprivation levels, overcoming the link between deprivation and poor attainment.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no specific personnel implications

6. EQUALITIES

- 6.1 There are no direct equalities implications to this report therefore no Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken.

7. CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 All comments have been reflected in the report.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

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Consultees: Directorate Senior Management Team
Cabinet Member for Education and Leisure
Corporate Management Team

Appendix 1 – Individual School Charts – Foundation Phase
Appendix 2 – Individual School Charts – Key Stage