

National Deaf Children Society Cymru note on Welsh Government figures on educational attainment data in 2017 (Wales)

Introduction

This note is based on figures obtained by the Welsh Government through PLASC (Pupil Level Annual School Census). It shows the attainment of deaf pupils in Wales between 2015 and 2018. It covers from Foundation Phase through to Key Stage 4.

The National Deaf Children's Society Cymru is pleased that the figures for 2017 demonstrate a narrowing of the attainment gap at every Key Stage. While this achievement is to be celebrated, it should be noted that due to the low numbers of deaf children, these statistics can be prone to fluctuations and anomalies. Indeed, the movement seen within three-year averages is much less dramatic.

These figures demonstrate that there remains an attainment gap for deaf learners, most notably at GCSE level (in 2017, deaf pupils were 26.2% less likely to attain an A*-C grade in English/Welsh language, Mathematics and Science in combination). It is disappointing that so many deaf learners are not reaching their full potential at this key educational milestone. Deafness is not a learning difficulty and, with appropriate support, deaf learners should achieve on a par with their hearing peers.

Background

Figures for deaf children include those where hearing impairment is the **only** type of special educational need (SEN). These figures are compared to the attainment levels of learners who have **no** registered SEN.

The absolute gap refers to the simple difference between results for deaf children and hearing children. The relative gap shows how much less likely it is that deaf children will achieve the same attainment level as their hearing peers.

The attainment gaps are calculated from data provided by the Welsh Government Statistics Branch on the National Deaf Children's Society Cymru's request. It is not comparable to the data published in the Welsh Government statistical release, [Academic Achievement by Pupil Characteristics](#), which covers all deaf pupils (including those with multiple SEN.)

These statistics are not directly comparable with attainment data published by the National Deaf Children's Society for England, which covers a different cohort of learners.

Key Stage 4

- The attainment gap at GCSE level narrowed very slightly in 2017, but there remains an unacceptable attainment gap.
- In 2017, deaf learners were 26.2% less likely to achieve A*-C grades in the core subjects of English/Welsh language, Maths and Science than their hearing peers.
- The three-year average has remained much the same, showing a very slight increase from 2014-6, when the relative gap stood at 22.0% for the CSI and 19.2% for the Level 2 including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and Mathematics.

	Deaf Children					No SEN Children					Absolute Gap in CSI	Relative Gap in CSI	Absolute Gap in Level 2 inc	Relative Gap in Level 2 inc
	Number of pupils	% achieving Core Subject Indicator	Number of deaf children attaining CSI	% achieving Level 2 inc	Number of deaf children attaining Level 2 inc	Number of pupils	% achieving Core Subject Indicator	Number of no SEN children attaining CSI	% achieving Level 2 inc	Number of no SEN children attaining Level 2 inc	Percentage Points	%	Percentage Points	%
2017	115	47.8	55	51.3	59	23,518	64.8	15,248	66.6	15,671	17.0	26.2	15.3	23.0
2016	101	48.5	49	54.5	55	24,170	69.5	16,809	72.6	17,559	21.0	30.2	18.2	25.0
2015	103	59.2	61	63.1	65	25,110	66.4	16,664	69.5	17,461	7.1	10.8	6.4	9.2
Three year average											15.2	22.7	13.5	19.4

The Core Subject Indicator (CSI) represents the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level or above in English or Welsh (first language), Mathematics and Science in combination. In 2017, the Key Stage 4 CSI changed so that only the new specifications for GCSE English Language, GCSE Welsh Language and GCSE Mathematics/ Mathematics-Numeracy counted towards the literacy and maths elements of the Core Subject Indicator (CSI) measure.

The other indicator used is the “Level 2 including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh First Language and Mathematics.” This represents qualifications equivalent to 5 GCSEs at grade A*-C, including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and Mathematics.

Key Stage 3

- The attainment gap at Key Stage 3 has been narrowing over the past three years and has narrowed considerably since 2015.
- Last year, the attainment gap closed by 4.1 percentage points.
- The three year average for the relative attainment gap has also decreased considerably. In 2014-6, the three year average was 11.2%, compared to 7% in 2015-7.

	Deaf Children			No SEN Children			Absolute Gap	Relative Gap
	Number of pupils	% achieving Core Subject Indicator	Number of deaf children attaining CSI	Number of pupils	% achieving Core Subject Indicator	Number of no SEN children attaining CSI	Percentage Points	%
2017	125	94.4	118	23,087	96.8	22,337	2.4	2.4
2016	106	89.6	95	22,431	96.1	21,560	6.5	6.8
2015	111	82.9	92	23,099	94.7	21,882	11.8	12.5
Three year average							6.7	7.0

The Core Subject Indicator (CSI) represents the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level or above in English or Welsh (First Language), Mathematics and Science in combination. The expected level of the majority of pupils is level 5 at Key Stage 3.

Key Stage 2

- Last year, the attainment gap at Key Stage 2 narrowed by 7.7 percentage points.
- While we are pleased to see the gap narrow, we note that there was a similar narrowing of the gap in 2014, when the absolute gap stood at 6.2% and the relative gap at 6.4%. As such, it should be noted that the three year average has remained unchanged from 2014-6.

	Deaf Children			No SEN Children			Absolute Gap	Relative Gap
	Number of pupils	% achieving Core Subject Indicator	Number of deaf children attaining CSI	Number of pupils	% achieving Core Subject Indicator	Number of no SEN children attaining CSI	Percentage Points	%
2017	132	91.7	121	24,438	98.6	24,092	6.9	7.0
2016	136	83.8	114	24,138	98.5	23,764	14.6	14.9
2015	140	83.6	117	23,234	98.0	22,780	14.5	14.8
Three year average							12.1	12.3

The Core Subject Indicator (CSI) represents the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level or above in English or Welsh (first language), Mathematics and Science in combination. The expected level of the majority of pupils is level 4 at Key Stage 2.

Foundation Phase

- 86.8% of deaf children are achieving the Foundation Phase Indicator compared with 96.7% of children with no identified Special Educational Need.
- The attainment gap at Foundation Phase has narrowed slightly by 1.7 percentage points.
- However, the three year average has seen a slight increase from 8.9% (absolute gap) and 9.2 (relative gap) in 2014-6.

	Deaf Children			No SEN Children			Absolute Gap	Relative Gap
	Number of pupils	% achieving Foundation Phase Indicator	Number of deaf children attaining FPI	Number of pupils	% achieving Foundation Phase Indicator	Number of no SEN children attaining FPI	Percentage Points	%
2017	129	86.8	112	26,850	96.7	25,977	9.9	10.3
2016	155	85.2	132	26,316	96.8	25,465	11.6	12.0
2015	118	85.6	101	26,888	96.4	25,908	10.8	11.2
Three year average							10.8	11.2

The Foundation Phase Indicator (FPI) represents the percentage of pupils achieving the expected outcome or above in Language, literacy and communication skills” (in English (LCE) or Welsh (LCW)), “Personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity” (PSD) and “Mathematical development” (MDT) in combination. The expected outcome of the majority of pupils is outcome 5 at the end of the Foundation Phase.