**WRITTEN STATEMENT**

**BY**

**THE WELSH GOVERNMENT**

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| **TITLE**  | **Publication of National School Categorisation System Outcomes** |
| **DATE**  | **31 January 2020** |
| **BY**  | **Kirsty Williams, Minister for Education** |

The National School Categorisation System provides a clear picture of the levels of support needed by schools to improve. Today the support categories for primary, secondary and special schools have been published for a sixth year.

The categorisation process allows for a broad range of evidence and information, appropriate to the context of the school, to be taken into account when determining the level of support a school needs.

The system offers schools a support category using the following steps:

* evaluation and analysis of a broad range of data, evidence and information, which is the starting point of discussions with the regional consortium challenge advisor about their performance and areas for improvement;
* an assessment of the school’s self-evaluation and their capacity to improve by the regional consortium challenge advisor;
* a draft support category is agreed through discussion with the school and governing body. The category is moderated by the local authority and regional education consortium, verified nationally and leads to a colour-coded support category for the school which triggers a tailored programme of support and intervention.

I’m encouraged that the percentage of primary and secondary schools in the green category has gone from 41.6 per cent last year to 46.9 per cent this year. This tells a story of improvement and increased capacity in the system that should be recognised. These schools will have a key role to play in supporting others, sharing their expertise, skills and good practice.

I remain committed to building a collaborative, self-improving school system throughout Wales. The outcome of this year’s categorisation process is a strong indicator that, through the work of regional consortia, we are building capacity and ensuring schools are given the right support at the right time to enable them to raise standards for all.

Despite the improvements, I remain concerned about those schools, particularly the proportion in the secondary sector, which continue to require the highest levels of support. The figures published today show that 13.5 percent of our schools are in the amber and red support categories.

The issues behind these schools are often complex and these cases are likely to require strong partnerships across the middle tier. We are therefore trialling a multi-agency approach with a small number of secondary schools. This approach will mean that once local authorities and regions have identified those schools that need the most support, they are able to draw on the considerable expertise and resources that exist across our middle tier, with everyone aligned and working towards the same goal.

In assessing the effectiveness of these new arrangements, we will also consider the future of categorisation.

<https://beta.gov.wales/national-school-categorisation-system-support-categories>