



Ein Rhanbarth ar Waith  
Education through Regional Working

# Gweithdrefnau ar gyfer ysgolion sydd yn derbyn cefnogaeth ychwanegol

## Arrangements for schools receiving additional support 19.3.20

Cynghrai o 6 awdurdod lleol yw ERW a reolir gan gyd-bwyllgor cyfansoddiadol cyfreithiol. Y nod yw gweithredu strategaeth a chynllun busnes rhanbarthol cytunedig a chefnogi gwelliant ysgolion.

ERW is an alliance of 6 local authorities governed by a legally constituted joint committee. Its aim is to implement the agreed regional strategy and business plan to support school improvement.



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**Purpose of the report:** The report provides Joint Committee members with an overview of ERW support strategies and our current work in support of schools identified in need of additional support.

### **Section 1: ERW Support strategies:**

#### **i) School Performance Team Meetings:**

'School Performance Team Meetings' are undertaken on a half-termly basis. The meetings provide the opportunity for each Senior Challenge Adviser to meet and discuss local current needs with ERW central officers (Interim MD, Assistant MD, Head of Secondary and Lead for Key Stage 4 Curriculum and Examinations). The meetings also facilitate an evaluation of previous elements of support provision. A strong emphasis is placed on ensuring the appropriateness, nature and impact of ERW's provision.

#### **ii) Secondary Support Group (SSG):**

Our ERW Secondary Support Group continues to provide bespoke support for identified schools across the region. The Group's activity is always brokered in a detailed manner via discussions between the school, ERW officers, senior LA officers, Senior Challenge Adviser and any additional, appropriate officers. Current work is focused on some fifteen schools across the region.

#### **iii) Key Stage 4 Subject Specialists:**

Support for schools from our team of Key Stage 4 Subject Specialists continues to provide for schools across our region. Their work is not restricted to schools specifically noted as 'causing concern.' Well timed provision from this team can often result in the necessary level of expertise required to progress an individual element of provision swiftly. In addition, their integral involvement in our Secondary Subject Networks provides effective guidance and reinforcement of some central priorities for all our schools, namely 'high expectations for all learners' and 'whole school responsibility for raising standards and ensuring progress for each learner.'

**iv) National Evaluation and Improvement Resource (WG/Consortia Schools Causing Concern and Self-evaluation Pilot):**

We continue to collaborate with Welsh Government on the two key aspects of this national pilot study. This work is coordinated on behalf of ERW by Tracy Senchal, our Head of Secondary Sector.

'Aspect 1' which focuses on supporting schools to develop effective self-evaluation involves six schools (nominated by our Senior Challenge Advisers) from across the region.

1. Crickhowell High School, Powys
2. Bishopston Comprehensive, Swansea
3. Bryngwyn & Glanymor Federation, Carmarthenshire
4. Coedffranc Primary, Neath Port Talbot
5. Plascrug Primary, Ceredigion
6. Lamphey Primary, Pembrokeshire

The work is evolving very well with much interest and enthusiasm from all partners. To date, all school leaders have met with Tracy and are developing their self-evaluation practice. The sharing of effective practice and richness of peer-to-peer discussion and evaluation is proving very successful.

'Aspect 2' involves one Powys secondary school and one Pembrokeshire secondary school. This Spring Term will witness the imminent commencement of a multi-agency approach to school improvement via an individual School Improvement Board. The Board contains a wide range of officers from different agencies e.g. Welsh Government, local authority, school, Estyn, ERW to ensure a consistent and aligned approach in support of each school.

## Section 2: Overview of current support activity:

### Secondary Support Group (SSG):

During the Spring Term, 2020 our activity has continued to focus on schools within Powys, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion. The Secondary Support Group is continuing its work with 15 schools in support of agreed elements of bespoke provision such as:

- building leadership capacity e.g. support for newly appointed Head teachers, senior leadership teams, etc.)
- enhancing teaching and learning
- developing schools as learning organisation

This work is driven forward through a close partnership between Secondary Support Group team members and our locally based Challenge Advisers and individual school leaders. Current discussions note an encouraging profile for the next academic year with fewer schools requiring support. Based on the rate of progress and improvement\*, an early prediction would suggest decreasing the number of schools from fifteen to eight.

\*current National Categorisation Support is as follows:

Green	Yellow	Amber	Red
1 school	3 schools	7 schools	4 schools

### Key Stage 4 Subject Specialist Team:

The KS4 Subject Specialist Team is currently supporting some 47 schools across our region, focusing their work in the main on the key areas of:

- Cymraeg
- English
- Maths
- Science

We have 11 schools involved in Powys, 6 in Ceredigion, 6 in Pembrokeshire, 9 in Carmarthenshire, 11 in Swansea and 5 in Neath Port Talbot. Their involvement ranges from specialist support in one area e.g. Humanities to support in four areas e.g. Cymraeg, English, Maths and Science.

The Team works very closely with the locally based Challenge Advisers and implements a clear strategy for support, following well established guidelines and protocols e.g.

- Support Form documents are in place for all priority departments with clear strategies for improvement and success criteria (this includes support for middle leaders, lesson studies and specific focus on pedagogy).
- Support Forms are regularly reviewed with the school to ensure that all elements are on track. The Support Form includes 'ERW will...' and 'The School will...' section to ensure that capacity is developed and that Secondary Subject Specialists are working with departments to ensure progress for learners.

**Summary comment:**

It is important to emphasise that the aim of both of the Secondary Support Group and Key Stage 4 Subject Specialist Team is to provide provision at pace from an early stage, thus avoiding any significant 'causes for concern.'

The close partnership working between our Senior Challenge Advisers, senior LA officers and ERW staff ensures an ongoing and supportive dialogue which is targeted directly towards early support and intervention. We have clear and encouraging evidence of this approach succeeding and supporting our school communities well.

### Section 3: National Categorisation Report (ERW region) January 2019:

The National Categorisation report (January 2019) provides an overview of the processes and outcomes for the 2019-20 academic year. In particular, the report outlines the current levels of 'support categories' employed across the region and over time.

Date of report	January 2019
Focus	National Categorisation
Activity and Evaluation	<p><b>Training</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Categorisation guidance was issued to all Challenge Advisers (CA) during September 2019 and, when requested, this was reinforced during bespoke training delivered by the Assistant MD and the Lead for Digital Learning and Systems at local authority level during the autumn term, 2019. The guidance document was used as the basis for the training.</li> <li>• Ensuring consistency of approach was also emphasised in the Senior Challenge Adviser (SCA) strategy meeting early in the autumn term 2019. Senior Challenge Advisers (SCA) were clear about expectations regarding addendum, etc. SCAs were advised to share expectation with all CAs within their respective LAs.</li> <li>• Main messages regarding Categorisation were included in the 'ERW Support for Schools Handbook 2019' issued to all CAs and schools across the region during September 2019. The guidance was also posted on the CA landing page of ERW's SharePoint and communicated regularly with SCAs.</li> <li>• Remote support was also provided by telephone, email and support visits on request from SCAs. This was provided by the Assistant MD and the Lead for Digital Learning and Systems.</li> </ul> <p><b>Implementation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Categorisation of schools is an ongoing process and not an event. In the ERW region, support visits to schools by CAs is an ongoing process. Most schools receive three support visits during the academic year, ensuring that first hand evidence is collected throughout the year. Areas for development agreed with school leaders in the Categorisation visit are evaluated during each subsequent school visit during the academic year. As a result, the autumn term Categorisation visit is informed by regular monitoring of progress against agreed areas for development.</li> <li>• Schools causing concern were prioritised for Categorisation visits in order to ensure early support.</li> <li>• SCAs carried out visits to a sample of schools within their own LAs. The Assistant Managing Director also shadowed CAs in each local authority and provided QA feedback on reports sampled during the term to SCAs.</li> <li>• The deadline for final submission of Categorisation on Rhwyd was agreed as 29/11/19.</li> </ul>

**Quality Assurance**

- Good quality, detailed guidance is provided regionally in early September. There is an agreed expectation that all reports submitted on to the ERW Rhwyd platform are quality assured for accuracy and quality by SCAs prior to the publishing and release of the Categorisation report to schools within 10 working days of the CA visit. SCAs provide feedback and challenge to CA during the Categorisation window. Support for SCAs was provided by the AMD on request.
- The AMD quality assured an onsite Categorisation visit in local authorities. These visits evidenced that CAs were well prepared for Categorisation visits and the guidance was adhered to well for Categorisation.
- In a minority of reports submitted to regional moderation, (40 reports) there were some inconsistencies in the quality of the documentation. All of these reports were referred back to the SCAs and CAs for further quality assurance.
- Accurately identifying the necessary support for schools is an on-going process and support is discussed and reviewed regularly with schools in subsequent visits throughout the year.
- The very small number of initial disagreements with the category were resolved through further discussions at a school level.
- One F1 was received in the region. In line with the guidance, the SCA visited the school to review the evidence. This report was discussed at the Regional Moderation Board and National Verification Board and the original judgement made by the CA was upheld.

**Regional Moderation Board**

- The AMD was nominated as Regional Lead Moderator (RLM) for the Regional Moderation Board (RMB).
- The Regional Moderation Board comprised of the RLM, 3 ERW Central Team representatives, 6 SCAs from the 6 LAs, 1 LA Head of Education Service representing a Director and 4 headteachers from a range of sectors (primary English medium, primary Welsh medium, secondary English medium, all-age secondary Welsh medium). All members of the board had the appropriate skills and knowledge and were suitably prepared and familiar with national guidance. A presentation outlining the moderation process was made by the AMD at the beginning of the moderation meeting.
- The RLM from GWE attended the ERW regional moderation meeting.
- Forty school reports were selected for Regional Moderation in 2019 (8%). The national requirement is a 5% or a minimum of 30 schools (whichever is greater) from across the Consortium.
- The sample represented each of the four capacity to improve judgments (A, B, C, D) as well as the four support categories (Green, Yellow, Amber, Red)
- One F1 was submitted for Regional Moderation with additional evidence provided by the school and the SCA.
- No changes were made to schools' Categorisations during Regional Moderation.

- The quality of report submitted for Regional Moderation were good overall, with minor issues and inconsistencies shared with SCAs.

### Breakdown of schools

	Powys	Ceredigion	NPT	Swansea	Carms	Pembs	Totals	
Primary	5	4	4	4	4	3	24	
Secondary	3	2	1	3	2	2	13	
Special	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	
All-age	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>40</b>	
Primary English Medium	Primary Welsh Medium	Secondary English Medium	Secondary Welsh-Medium	Faith Primary	All-age	Bilingual secondary	Special	Bilingual Primary
<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
								<b>40</b>

Step 2	Step 3	
A	Green	<b>12</b>
A	Yellow	<b>1</b>
B	Yellow	<b>10</b>
B	Green	<b>2</b>
B	Amber	<b>1</b>
C	Amber	<b>9</b>
D	Red	<b>5</b>
		<b>40</b>

### Step 2 and Step 3 Alignment.

- In most cases there is good alignment between step 2 and 3. In a few cases, the Challenge Adviser and the school have agreed on the most appropriate support category for the school. In nearly all instances there is clear rationale for these decisions, for example where a school is making appropriate progress, but is in need of additional support to

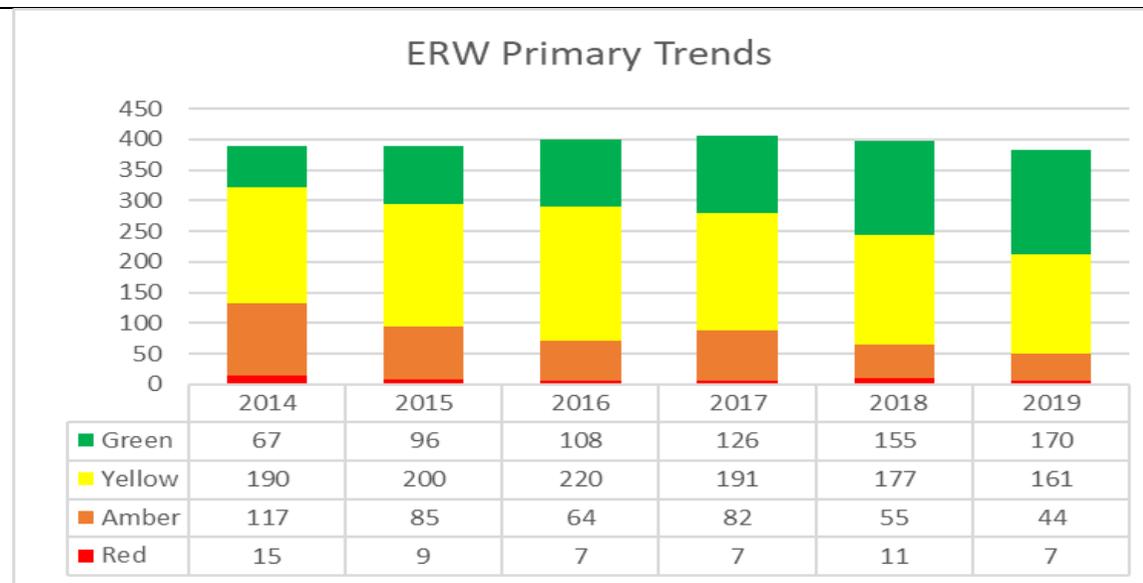
maintain the momentum of improvement, or where a 'new' leadership team is making good progress, but is need of support and guidance.

	RED	AMBER	YELLOW	GREEN
ERW	11	52	161	179
	D	C	B	A
ERW	7	42	170	172

**Categorisation Data**

**ERW – Primary Sector:**

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Red</b>	15	9	7	7	11	7
<b>Amber</b>	117	85	64	82	55	44
<b>Yellow</b>	190	200	220	191	177	161
<b>Green</b>	67	96	108	126	155	170

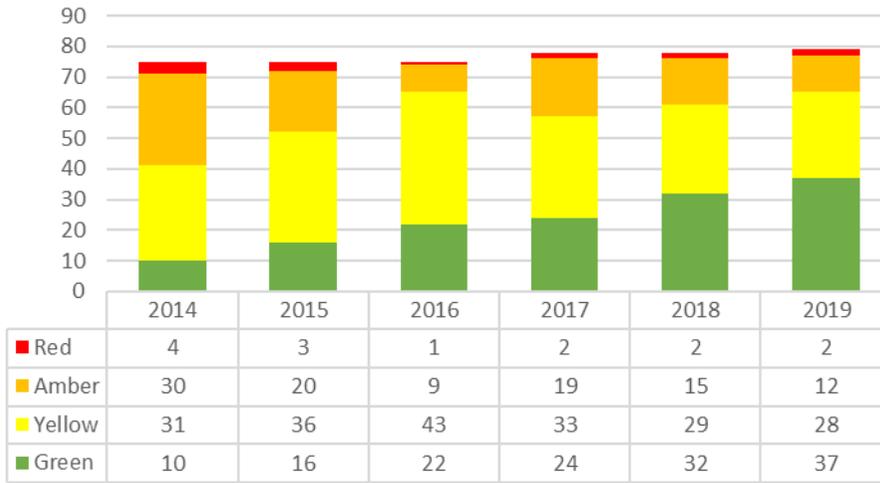


- There is a clear 5-year increase in the number of primary schools in green category and therefore requiring minimal support.
- The number of red schools has remained fairly static over a five year period. In 2018 there was an increase in the number of primary schools receiving intensive support. In 2019, the number of red schools has reduced by four. Two of the schools are in need of Special Measures.
- The number of primary schools requiring more intensive support (red and amber) has reduced from 89 in 2017-2018 to 66 in 2018-2019, to 51 in 2019-2020.

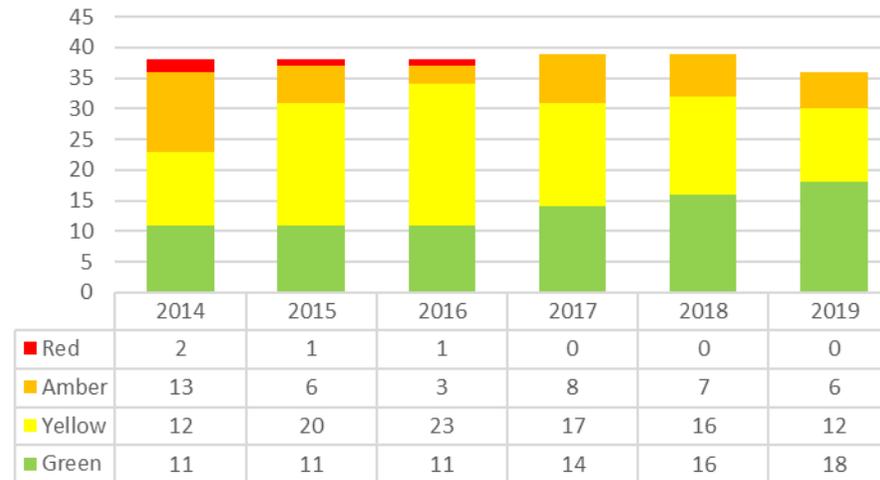
**Primary Sector key messages:**

- All six of ERW's LAs demonstrate a continuous increase in the number of schools receiving minimal support (green.)
- Three local authorities record that no primary schools have been categorised as being in need of intensive support (red).
- One LA saw a very small increase in the number of schools requiring intensive support (red).

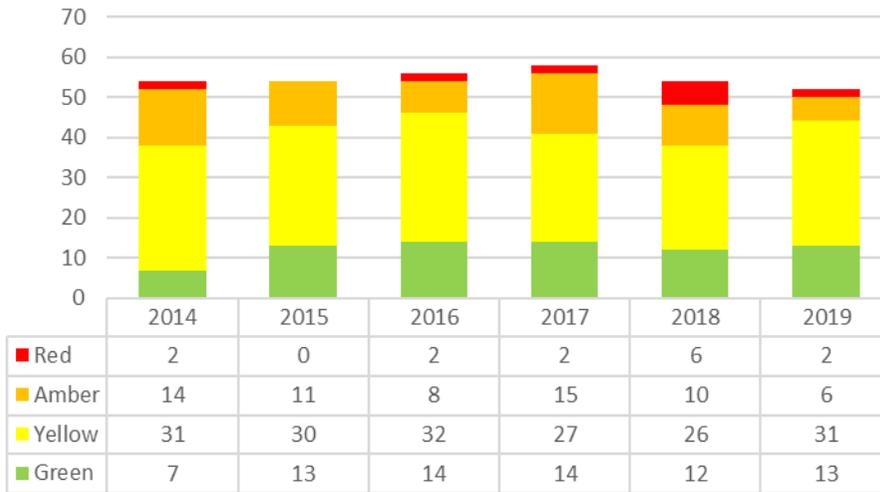
### Powys Primary Support Trends



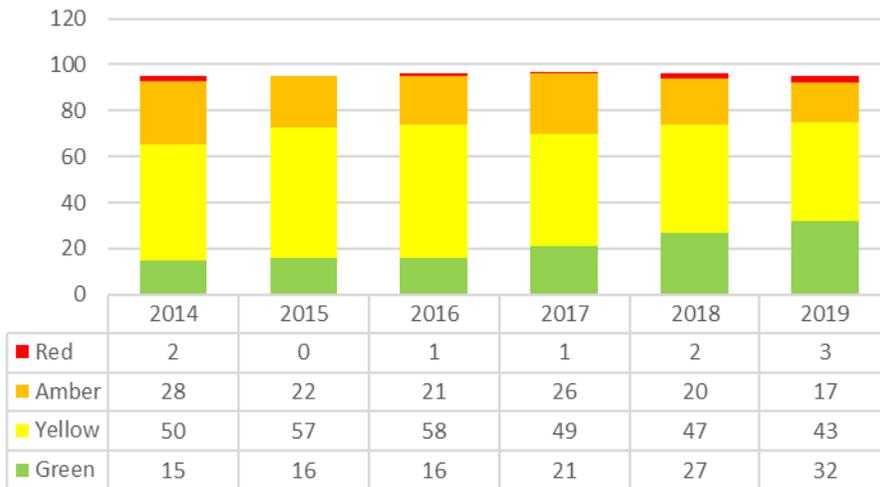
### Ceredigion Primary Support Trends



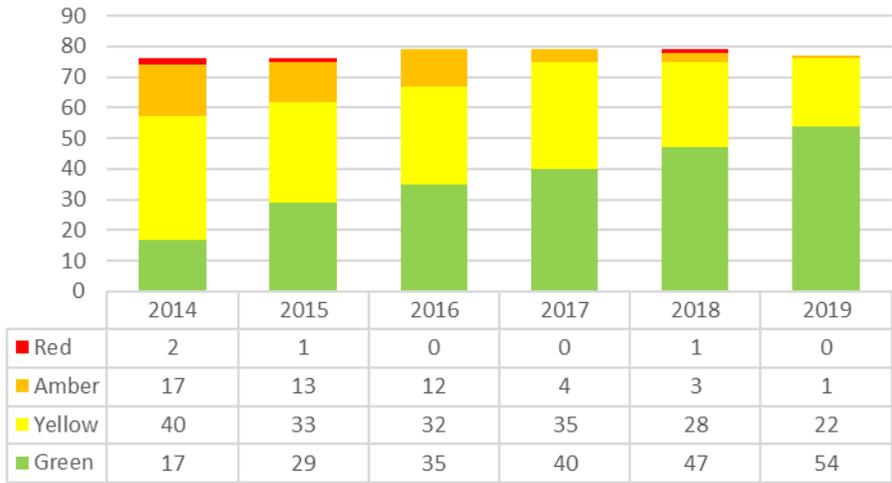
### Pembrokeshire Primary Support Trends



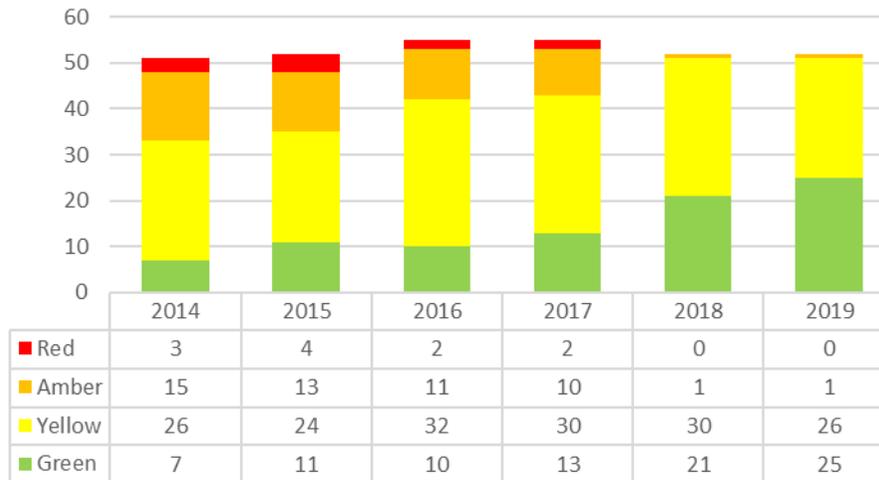
### Carmarthenshire Primary Support Trends



Swansea Primary Support Trends

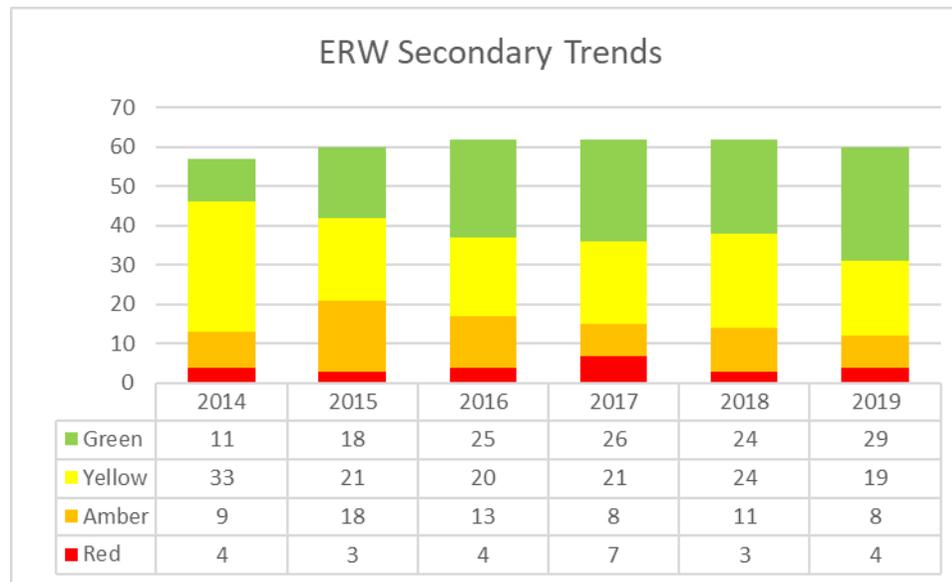


NPT Primary Support Trends



**ERW Secondary Sector:**

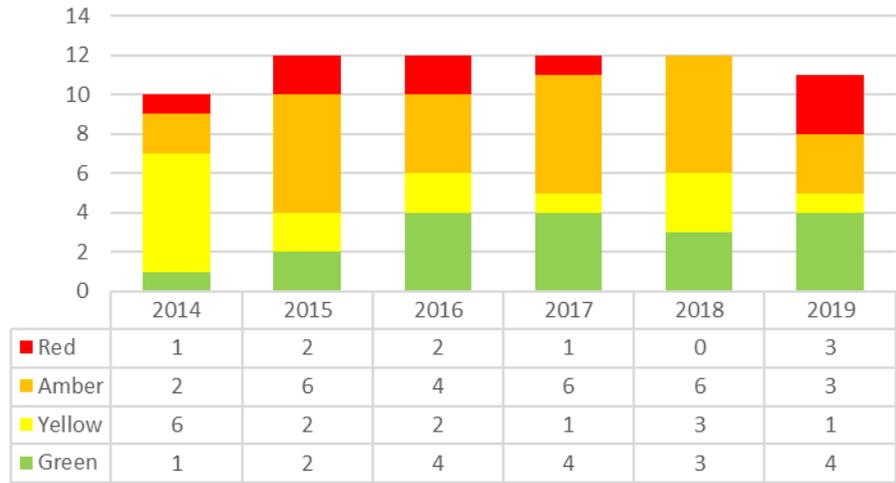
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Red	4	3	4	7	3	4
Amber	9	18	13	8	11	8
Yellow	33	21	20	21	24	19
Green	11	18	25	26	24	29



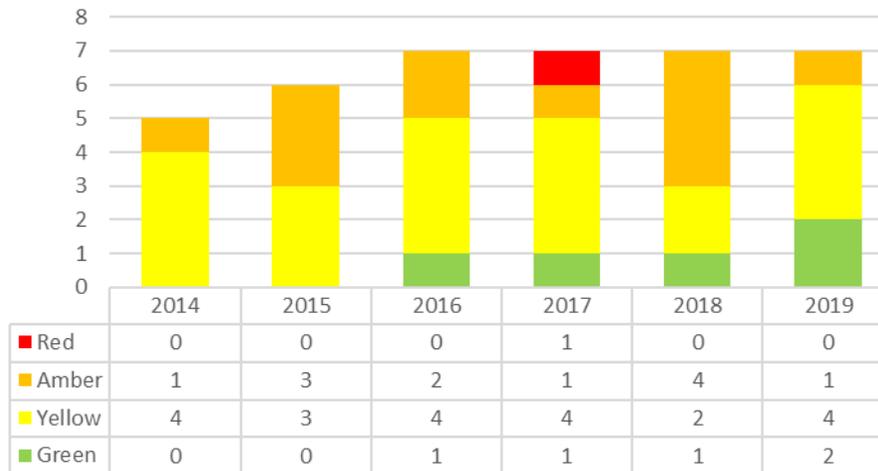
**Secondary Sector key messages:**

- Around a half of secondary schools across ERW now require minimal support (green). This number has increased this year and is the highest number over a six year period.
- Around a fifth of secondary schools across ERW require intensive support (red and amber). This proportion has seen a gradual reduction over the last three years.

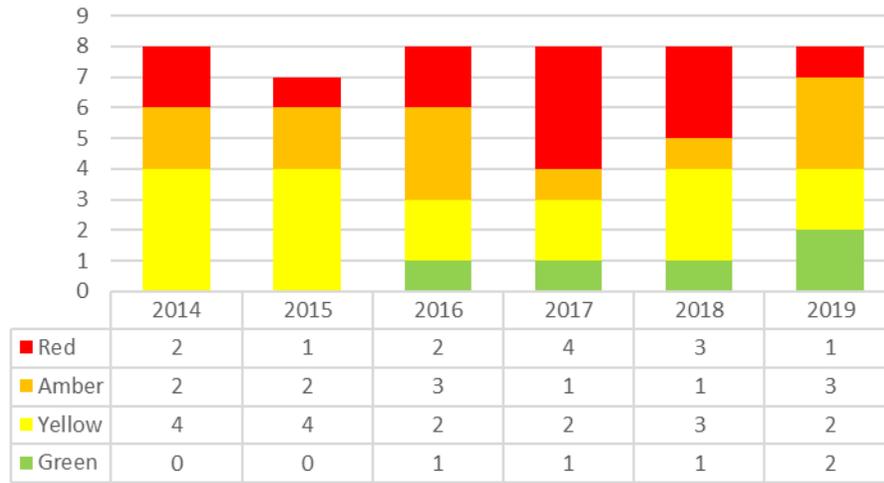
Powys Secondary Support Trends



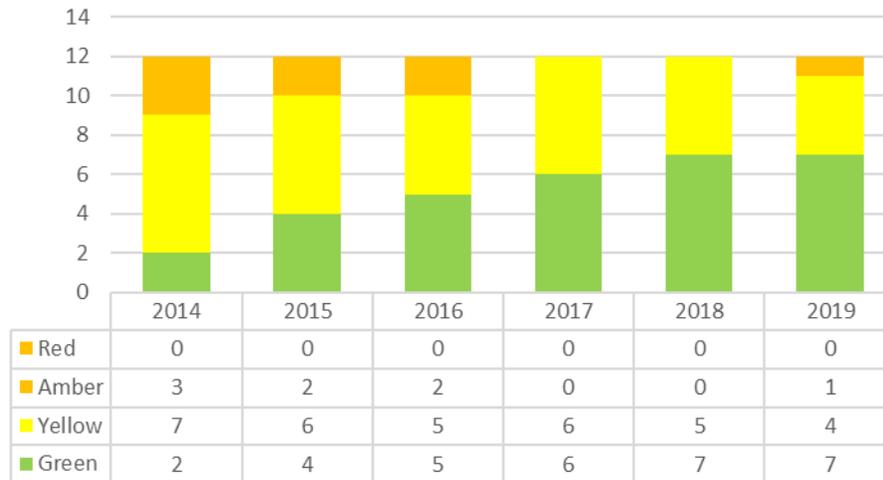
Ceredigion Secondary Support Trends



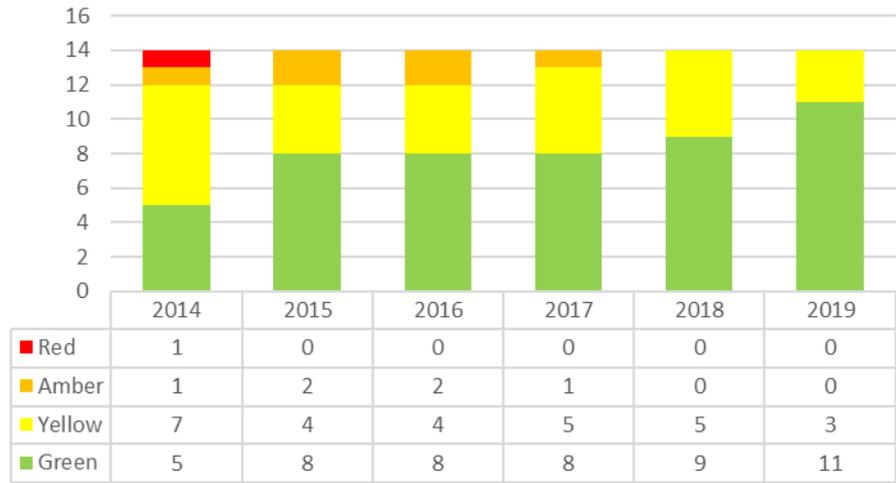
Pembrokeshire Secondary Support Trends



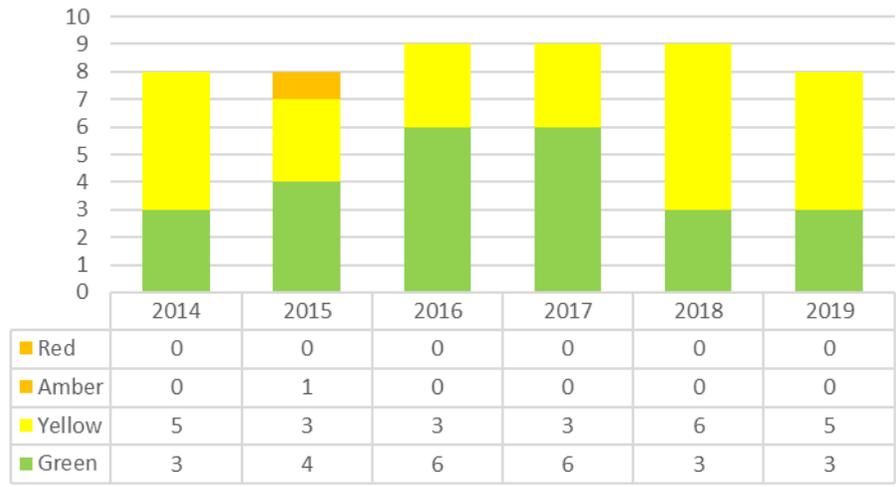
Carms Secondary Support Trends



### Swansea Secondary Support Trends

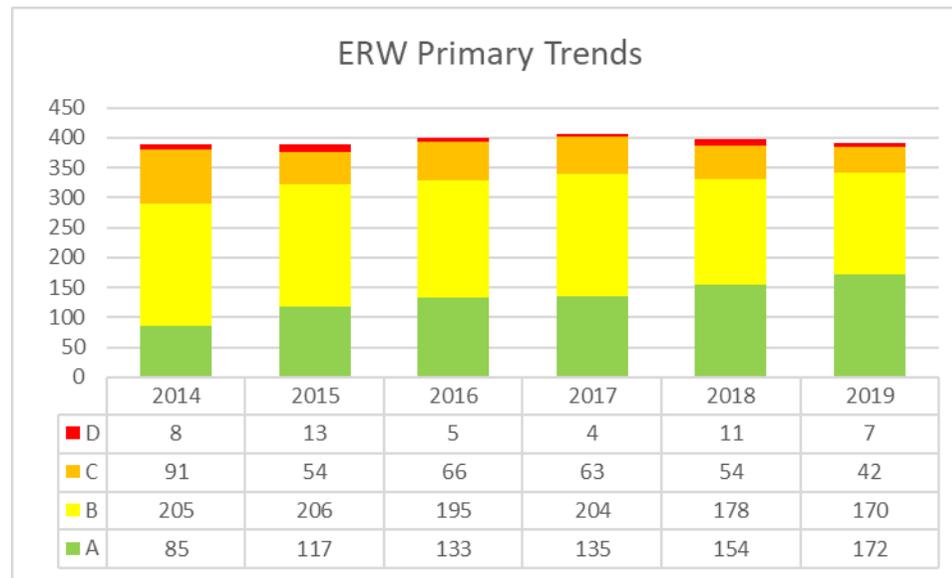


### NPT Secondary Support Trends



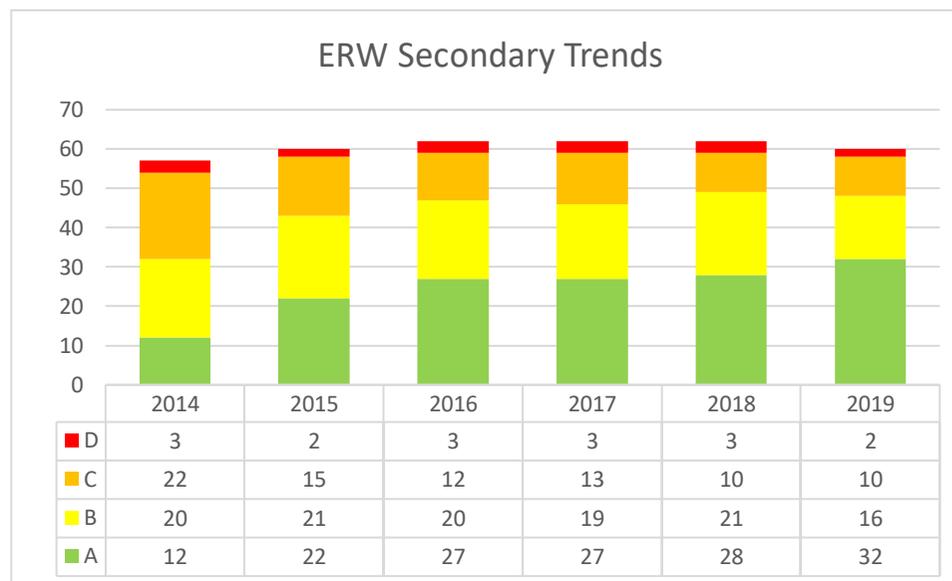
- 20 secondary schools across the region have been categorised as green for three years or more and are therefore considered to be self-improving schools requiring minimal support.
- In 2019-2020, 4/6 of the LAs have no schools requiring the most intensive support (red.)
- All secondary schools categorised as requiring the most intensive support (red) are located in Pembrokeshire (1) and Powys (3). All of these schools are either in Special Measures, in need of Significant Improvement, or face significant challenges in school leadership.

**Capacity to improve – Primary:**



- 110 primary schools have been recorded as being 'A' for their capacity to improve for the last three years or more (69 in 2018-2019).
- 7 schools have been recorded with a 'D' judgement for their capacity to improve in 2019-2020 and will therefore receive maximum support and intervention. This is a reduction from the previous year.
- Three schools have been recorded with a 'D' judgement for more than one year. These schools are already receiving very intensive support.

### Capacity to improve – Secondary:



- 22 secondary schools have been recorded as being 'A' for their capacity to improve for the last three years or more (16 in 2018-2019).
- Two schools have been recorded with a 'D' judgement for their capacity to improve for 2019-20 and will therefore receive maximum support and intervention. One is in SM and the other faces significant instability in leadership.
- 1 school has been recorded with a 'D' judgement for more than one year. This school is in SM. All schools in need of intensive support are engaging well with support from ERW.

#### Special Schools (10)

- Five schools have been categorised as needing minimal support (green). There were four schools in this category in 2018-2019. Three have been categorised as green for a three year period.
- Three schools have been categorised as yellow, the same as last year.
- One school has been categorised as Amber and one as Red.

**Schools in Estyn Statutory Category**

- There has been additional challenge built in to the moderation process with clear rationale expected where a school was judged higher than a D or a Red. Rationale for reducing the level of support required is based on the progress that a schools is making against Estyn recommendations. All schools in statutory categories categorised higher than a D Red were inspected more than 6 months before categorisation visit. These reports were verified at the National Verification meeting.

SI					
DFES	School	Categorisation Step2	Categorisation Step3 Colour	LA	Phase
6684063	Milford Haven	C	Amber	668	Sec
6684038	Harri Tudur	C	Amber	668	Sec
6664022	Brecon HS	C	Red	666	Sec
6692135	Ffwrnes	C	Amber	669	Pri

SM					
DFES	School	CategorisationStep2	CategorisationStep3Colour	LA	Phase
6684035	Greenhill	D	Red	668	Sec
6664011	Newtown HS	C	Red	666	Sec
6693321	Pentip	D	Red	669	Pri
6692120	Bryn	C	Amber	669	Pri
6692192	Y Castell	D	Red	669	Pri

**Summary comments**

Strengths

1. Consistent approach through the use of Rhwyd online platform
2. Overall, a good correlation between categorisation and Estyn inspection outcomes
3. Most schools felt that the 2018-019 categorisation visit and subsequent support package were effective in supporting school improvement

Areas for Development

1. Continue to work closely with the Quality and Standards Group
2. Address the variation in the quality and quality assurance of reports across the region
3. Increase headteacher participation in the Categorisation process.

**Recommendations made to WG by the National Verification Board in January 2020:**

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Any future model of categorisation needs to be discussed and agreed during the Easter term of 2020 to ensure that it is fit for purpose, and aligns to the national accountability and evaluation context. The current practice of publication on <i>My Local School</i> of any future school support categorisation will also need to be considered carefully.</li><li>2. The matrix of judgements to be revised to better align with national context and priorities. Professional Learning offer, ALN, Curriculum etc need to be incorporated.</li><li>3. The standards evaluation tends to be over reliant on performance data and needs to capture progress and standards based on first hand evidence. Exemplar reports would be helpful for Challenge Advisor training.</li><li>4. A correlation between the budgetary situation of amber/red schools would be useful to ascertain whether schools are soundly placed financially to make the improvements necessary</li><li>5. All schools in SI and SM should always be moderated regionally as well as nationally</li><li>6. Guidance on the category of schools in SI and SM to be strengthened</li><li>7. Translation facilities should be made available during the process and to ensure that translated Welsh medium reports are available for all to scrutinise during the process, and that the discussion during the meeting can be bilingual.</li></ol>
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