

Final exam results do not yet show full picture, says Education Secretary

Responding to the publication of today's [final examination results for 2016/17](#), Kirsty Williams said:

“It is our national mission that every child, no matter their background, has the opportunity to succeed. Our Pupil Development Grant, which provides extra support for children from disadvantaged backgrounds, is a vital part of our plans and we’re already seeing the benefits.

“It’s important to have data which you can compare like-for-like, year-on-year, to see where performance issues need to be addressed. But today’s final exam results do not yet provide us with that kind of comparison.

“We have introduced a number of changes to the examination system in Wales over the past year. There have been two new Maths GCSEs, new linear English and Welsh Language GCSEs, and schools are moving away from science BTEC which was failing to properly equip our young people.

“All these changes are linked to raising standards and all were necessary but they mean we’re now essentially dealing with two different sets of data.

“Evidence shows that the Pupil Development Grant is making a difference in breaking the link between poverty and attainment that has dogged our education system. That’s why, earlier this year, I announced plans to extend the grant and why I will continue to do everything within my power to make sure we’re reaching the learners that need this invaluable support.”