

# Words Talk - Numbers Count

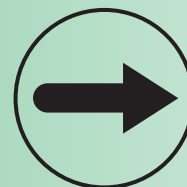
The Welsh Assembly Government's Strategy to Improve Basic Literacy and Numeracy in Wales

National Assembly for Wales Circular No: 15/2005

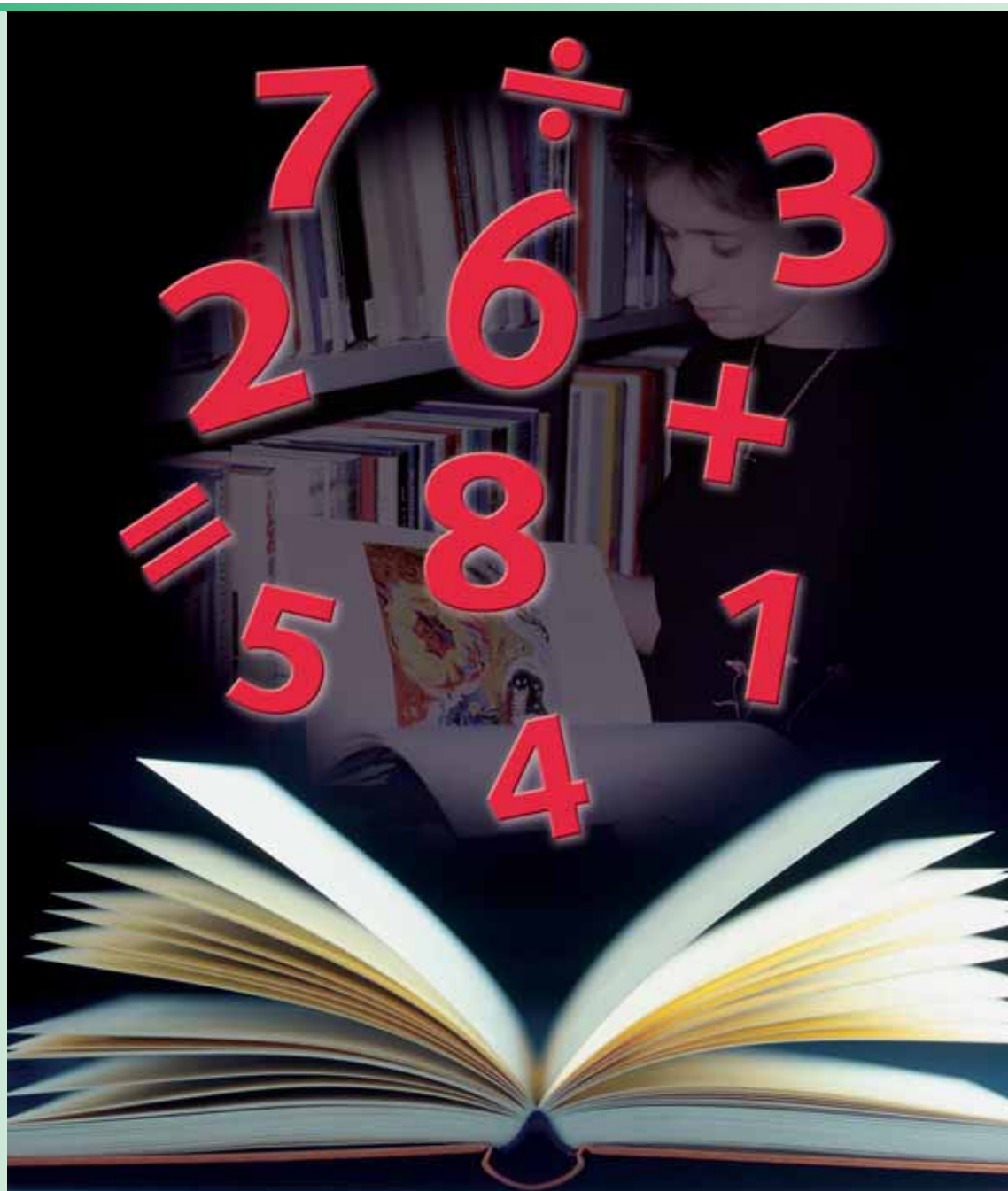
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Replaces: The National Basic Skills Strategy for Wales

Delivery



Basic Skills  
Development



[www.dysgu.cymru.gov.uk](http://www.dysgu.cymru.gov.uk)  
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Adran Hyfforddiant ac Addysg  
Department for Training and Education



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

**Title of document:** **Words Talk - Numbers Count**  
The Welsh Assembly Government's Strategy to Improve Basic Literacy and Numeracy in Wales.

**Audience:** All bodies concerned with education and training in Wales, employer organisations and forums, Trades Unions, Sector Skills Councils, Jobcentre Plus, Careers Wales, Voluntary and Community organisations, Prison and Probation Services and Youth Offending Teams.

**Overview:** This document sets out the Welsh Assembly Government's revised strategy for raising standards of literacy and numeracy in Wales.

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**Related Documents:** Wales: A Better Country  
  
The Learning Country  
  
A Winning Wales  
  
Skills and Employment Action Plan 2005  
  
Future Skills Wales Generic Skills Survey 2003

## Ministerial Foreword



When we published our first National Basic Skills Strategy in 2001, we knew that we were looking at a problem that would not be solved quickly. We set ourselves the challenge of making Wales “a country where no-one lacks the literacy and numeracy skills most of us take for granted” and we knew then that this would require sustained effort, not just by the education and training sectors, but by the whole of the public sector, by industry, voluntary and community organisations and, of course, by individuals.

We have invested almost £40m since 2001 and we are now reaping the rewards of that investment with the widespread commitment to improving basic skills that I see on my visits all over Wales to schools and colleges, nurseries and parent and toddler groups, employers and trades unions, and to voluntary and community organisations. There is universal recognition of the importance of the basic skills that underpin all other education and training, and how they contribute not only to personal development and supporting healthy, independent lives, but to social justice, and to community and business development.

We must now move forward together to really make a difference. For our part, we have committed a further £40m over the next three years to support this Strategy and will continue to work closely with our partner organisations to make sure that activities funded under the Strategy enhance and support their efforts. We will also make sure that the Strategy supports our Skills and Employment Action Plan and fits with the policies of other departments within the Welsh Assembly Government including *A Winning Wales*, *Communities First* and *Health Challenge Wales*.

This document sets out our general approach for the next five years. It is not set in stone but will need to evolve over time and adapt to changing circumstances so we will supplement it with annual reports on progress. We will also publish research findings and evaluation reports and identify and disseminate best practice.

Together with the Basic Skills Agency and our other partners, we are committed to making our Strategy a real success and, over the next five years, making substantial further progress in eliminating our basic skills deficit.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Davidson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Jane Davidson AM**  
**Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning**



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**WORDS TALK - NUMBERS COUNT**  
*The Welsh Assembly Government's Strategy  
to Improve Basic Literacy and Numeracy in Wales*



## SUMMARY

This is the Assembly Government's second Basic Skills Strategy. It takes forward the agenda set in *The Learning Country* and has the same fundamental aims as the first Strategy. These are that:

- all young children should be prepared for learning when they begin school;
- the number of children leaving primary school struggling over reading, writing and the use of number should be further reduced;
- fewer young people should leave compulsory education still struggling with basic skills; and
- the number of adults with poor basic skills should be diminished significantly.

Good progress has been made over the past four years towards meeting these aims. Innovative and exciting programmes have been started, and a wealth of essential capacity-building and support work undertaken. We shall build on this work under this new Strategy, which will apply until April 2010. In particular we shall:

- ensure that the Strategy remains relevant and fresh;
- overcome the key barriers that are holding back progress; and
- embed successful developments into relevant mainstream programmes.

The purpose of the Strategy is to raise awareness, develop new ideas and strengthen capacity to tackle basic skills deficits. It will add new dimensions to mainstream learning provision but will not replace it.

A further period of sustained effort is needed to deal with the serious basic skills problems in Wales. These hold back too many people, and that in turn holds back our economic, social and cultural development. We aim to take action on a number of fronts - applying a comprehensive, all-age approach, fit for the long haul.

The Strategy is structured into horizontal themes and vertical priority groups. The horizontal themes address issues and barriers that face all those with a basic skills need - such as the quality of learning provision, and the sufficiency of help and support. At the same time we must focus attention on those whose needs are greatest. We have therefore identified ten priority groups, which will receive specific and targeted support. Details are provided in the section on the Delivery Plan. This Plan will be developed and adapted over the next five years in conjunction with our strategic delivery partner, the Basic Skills Agency.

We shall take a rigorous approach to measuring the effectiveness of this Strategy. We shall publish research and evaluation reports, as well as supporting a major programme to identify and disseminate best practice. We shall also publish an annual progress report.

### **What's New**

This second Basic Skills Strategy includes a number of important new features.

- An all-age approach that concentrates on ten horizontal themes and ten priority groups.
- An expanded Language and Play programme, together with an innovative Number and Play programme, targeting Communities First areas.
- Recognition of basic skills as a core part of the 14-19 agenda under *Learning Country: Learning Pathways*.
- A requirement that all learning providers assess the basic skills needs of all learners and take follow-up action to support their needs.
- An expanded Employer Pledge scheme, plus more support for employers.
- A fit-for-purpose suite of qualifications and associated assessment tools.
- New learning programmes developed to be flexible and attractive to learners across all settings.
- An integrated programme of basic skills support for offenders.
- Enhanced support for ESOL learners.
- A new best practice programme plus dissemination support - notably through the Strategy website.
- A range of new targets. By 2010, 80% of working-age adults to have at least Level 1 literacy skills, and 55% to have at least Level 1 numeracy skills. All schools to maintain the Basic Skills Quality Mark standards, and all post-16 learning providers to hold the Quality Mark by 2006. 50% of employees working for employers that have signed the Employer Pledge by 2010.
- An integrated programme of practitioner development.
- An extensive research programme into what works, to assist mainstreaming of good practice.



## INTRODUCTION

### Why Basic Skills are so Important



1. Literacy and numeracy underpin virtually all the other skills we need in our daily lives – be that at work, in the family or in leisure and other activities. Without reading skills, people cannot make much use of books, newspapers, the internet or other new technology - which makes it very difficult to acquire new knowledge and skills. Without good speaking skills people cannot participate fully as part of a team at work. Difficulties over writing or spelling make it tough to complete a good job application form. Problems over the use of number mean it's a struggle to manage home finances, let alone to contribute in the workplace.
2. Most people with poor basic skills will cope to a degree, in their own way. They will often avoid situations that require these skills and therefore miss out on so much. The worry and stress of it can diminish their quality of life as well as their physical and mental health. Poor basic skills can affect people's health in other ways, too, for example by reducing their ability to take on board information about how to look after their health and to follow treatment regimes. The Strategy therefore has an important contribution to make to Health Challenge Wales as well as to the fundamentals of lifelong learning across the board.
3. Society as a whole suffers from basic skills deficits too. Productivity at work and business competitiveness are lower than they should be. Our cultural life is affected. The children of parents with poor basic skills are more likely to struggle at school. There is also an association with crime and unemployment – over half the prison population has poor basic skills as do many of the unemployed and economically inactive.
4. Unless we continue to tackle our chronic basic skills problems innovatively and energetically then the Assembly Government's overall vision for social, cultural and economic development in Wales is unlikely to be achieved.

### What we mean by “Basic Skills”

5. We define basic skills as the ability to read, write and speak in English or Welsh, and to use mathematics, at a level necessary to function and progress both in work and in society.
6. In terms of qualifications, we define basic skills as Level 1 in the National Qualification Framework. The focus of the Strategy is, therefore, to improve literacy and numeracy at levels up to and including Level 1. This is not a high level. Level 1 qualifications aim to recognise basic knowledge and skills and the ability to apply learning with guidance or supervision. Most people will require more advanced skills. But we think the main priority for this Strategy should be to raise the skills of those adults who are not currently at this level, and to help children that are under-attaining for their age and at risk of not achieving it. Further details of the Adult National Standards Framework for literacy and numeracy, and of the National Qualifications Framework, are at Annexes 1 and 2.



## ICT Skills

7. We have carefully considered whether “information, communication and technology” skills (ie being able to use personal computers and to manipulate electronic information) should be included in our definition of basic skills. There is no doubt that these skills are becoming ever more important in everyday life, and this was confirmed by Future Skills Wales 2003<sup>1</sup>. They form a key part of many jobs and other activities such as personal banking and the purchasing of goods and services. They are also an increasingly important part of the learning process.

8. Nevertheless, we do not include them in our definition for the purposes of this Strategy. ICT skills are not so fundamental as reading, writing, speaking and basic mathematics. Indeed, these are essential in order to develop ICT skills themselves. The same is not true the other way around. Furthermore, there continues to be a strong demand for ICT learning, which is not always true for basic literacy and numeracy.

9. Certainly, using new technology can be an excellent way of learning basic skills, and many basic skills learners are motivated by a wish to improve their ICT skills. We shall further exploit this potential through the Strategy. But we do not establish, as part of the Strategy, specific objectives for the achievement of ICT skills. To do so would divert attention away from helping everyone gain proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and use of number.

## The Story So Far

10. The first National Basic Skills Strategy for Wales was published in April 2001. It was delivered in close partnership with the Basic Skills Agency. A key feature of the Strategy was to address the needs of all age groups. Expenditure on the Strategy over its four years was about £40m and many important programmes and initiatives were introduced.

11. We made good progress in driving up the quality of provision. Most of our primary and secondary schools, FE colleges and other learning providers have achieved the Basic Skills Quality Marks. We have developed training modules for teachers. We introduced the Language and Play programme for young children. All babies received free book bags. We provided grants to schools to improve the help they give to pupils with basic skills needs. We introduced the Employer Pledge programme to help those in employment and strengthened provision by post-16 providers, including basic skills screening for all post-16 learners. We have piloted a new basic skills learning programme - the Tripartite Course. A thorough, external evaluation was undertaken which supported the Strategy’s overall approach. (Available at [www.learning.wales.gov.uk](http://www.learning.wales.gov.uk))

12. Good progress has certainly been made - but this is a long-term problem. It is clear that there is still a very long way to go. This second Strategy aims to continue the work of the first, and take it further. As developments are shown to be successful we shall embed them in mainstream provision.

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<sup>1</sup>Future Skills Wales 2003 Generic Skills Survey, Summary Report

## Analysis of our Basic Skills Problems

**13.** We have recently completed a thorough baseline survey of basic skills in the adult population of Wales. The results are published separately on the Strategy web-site at [www.basic-skills-wales.org](http://www.basic-skills-wales.org) but a summary is provided in the following table.

	LITERACY	NUMERACY
Entry Level 1	4%	7%
Entry Level 2	3%	20%
Entry Level 3	18%	26%
Level 1	37%	25%
Level 2 and above	38%	22%

**14.** Overall, about 440,000 adults (25% of total aged 16-65) do not have Level 1 literacy skills and 990,000 (53%) do not have Level 1 numeracy skills. These results need to be interpreted carefully – for example, it is known that numeracy skills decline with age particularly if not used. Nevertheless, they do show a worrying picture even at Level 1 and particularly for numeracy. For literacy, there are relatively few people with very low skills (and a significant proportion of those probably have a learning disability) but 18% have entry level 3 skills. This group, in particular, should be able, with help, to reach Level 1. This is therefore a prime target group.

**15.** In comparison with England, where a similar survey was completed in 2003, these results show that the position in Wales is worse, by several percentage points, for both literacy and numeracy. At the international level, Britain does not compare well either. The International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) conducted in 12 countries in the mid 1990's (using definitions that do not exactly correspond with the above data) showed, for example, that Britain had proportionately 3 times as many people with low literacy and numeracy skills as Sweden, and was also significantly worse than Germany and the Netherlands.

**16.** At school level in Wales, standards have been improving and Key Stage 1 and 2 assessments were higher in 2004 than in 2003. But there are still damaging levels of under-attainment. Even at age 11, a significant minority are falling below the level expected of them at that age (23% are behind in English, 23% in Welsh and 22% in maths). This picture deteriorates further at age 14. As far as GCSEs are concerned, not all pupils take these but, of those who are entered, results for 2003/04 show that 98% of candidates obtained an A\*-G pass in English (56% grade C and above) 100% in Welsh first language (72% grade C and above) and 96% in Maths (50% grade C and above). The figures indicate that we still have a long way to go to stem the inflow of young people with poor basic skills.

**17.** At the pre-school level, a survey of teachers in Wales undertaken by the Basic Skills Agency in 2002 showed that the majority considered that more children were starting school without good speaking and listening skills, in

particular being able to speak audibly and be understood, recite rhymes and songs, and to listen and respond to instructions.

**18.** We also need to address the quality of learning provision for basic skills. The two most recent annual reports of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (2002-03 and 2003-04) note that, compared with five years ago, there has been a big improvement in the standards that pupils are achieving in primary and secondary schools. However, language skills are still very low and pupils are not making full use of these skills to enhance learning across the curriculum, with the effect that this is holding them back in other subjects. At Key Stage 4, too many pupils of average and below-average ability do not do as well as they could. Estyn also expresses concern about the quality of some post-16 basic skills provision, particularly the support given to trainees on vocational programmes.

**19.** A survey by the Basic Skills Agency in Wales showed that many adult basic skills tutors had relatively low levels of qualifications. This, allied to a generally poor career structure in this area, is a significant constraint on improving the quality of programmes.

**20.** Furthermore, relatively few adults enrol on basic skills courses and, of those, many do not obtain a qualification. We do not know enough about what types of learning work best for adults. There are also shortages of provision in some areas.

**21.** Although we acknowledge that there are local and regional variations, this all adds up to a serious problem for Wales. In particular we face continuing challenges to:

- accelerate progress in preparing children for school;
- ensure all children are competent in basic literacy and numeracy;
- reduce the number of adults with low literacy and numeracy; and
- overcome gaps, and raise quality, in post-16 provision.

## OUR APPROACH

### Principles



**22.** This second Strategy will build on the foundations of the first. To make sure it really counts, we shall focus on priorities and the main barriers to progress. However, we shall not exclude anybody from the scope of the Strategy.

Basic skills needs exist in many groups across the country and providers and organisations should consider all their clients with this in mind. Still, in order to make the best use of its resources, the Strategy focuses on building capacity in key areas and overcoming the main barriers to progress.

**23.** The **purpose** of the Strategy is to get the maximum number of people up to Level 1 literacy and numeracy. For young children, therefore, the Strategy is relevant to the whole cohort, but in later years it focuses on those who are falling behind.

**24.** The **aims** of the Strategy are that:

- all young children should be prepared for learning when they begin school;
- the number of children leaving primary school struggling over reading, writing and using numbers should be further reduced;
- fewer young people should leave compulsory education still struggling with basic skills; and
- the number of adults with poor basic skills should be diminished significantly.

**25.** We are well aware that we need to monitor continuously the extent to which these aims are being achieved. We shall keep score in qualitative and quantitative terms. For example we are setting the following overall targets:

- 80% of working-age adults to have at least Level 1 literacy skills, and 55% to have at least Level 1 numeracy skills by 2010;
- all schools to maintain the Basic Skills Quality Mark standards, and all post-16 learning providers to hold the Basic Skills Quality Mark by 2006;
- 50% of employees working for employers that have signed the Employer Pledge by 2010;

Further details of performance indicators and monitoring arrangements are set out in the Implementation section.

**26.** The direction of travel is, therefore, similar to that taken over the past four years, but in addition the Strategy will do a number of other things.

- a. It will be more inclusive of our partner organisations who have significant expertise and involvement in basic skills. These include Local Education Authorities, ELWa, Jobcentre Plus, Careers Wales, Youth Offending Teams and the Probation and Prison Services, Sector Skills Councils, employer organisations, trades unions, and the voluntary sector. We will make the Strategy more relevant to their needs.
- b. It will aim to integrate strategic developments into all relevant programmes so that basic skills issues are addressed routinely and are sustainable in the longer term. We shall also use opportunities to make good links with other Assembly Government strategies, such as those for health, community and economic development. We have subjected this Strategy to a Rapid Health Impact Assessment which identified the close connection between basic skills and health and well-being issues as well as the need to co-ordinate interventions particularly at the community level.
- c. It will introduce better systems to research and monitor progress and examine ways in which good practice can be encouraged and rewarded.

### **Those in Greatest Need**

**27.** We must remember that around half of the population achieve good basic skills. Given the improvements made to education in recent years, we expect this proportion to steadily increase. We need to focus attention on those whose basic skills are relatively poor.

**28.** As far as young children are concerned, there is mounting evidence that effective early intervention can have lasting effects on lifelong learning and employment. So we shall continue to direct resources to early years and the foundation stage. In order to maximise impact, we shall give particular attention to Communities First areas.

**29.** Every child must have teaching and support to achieve competence in literacy and numeracy. If, by the time they leave primary school, children do not achieve the standard set by Level 4 of the National Curriculum then they must have individualised support and attention to help them improve.

**30.** When young people reach the age of 14 we would expect them to achieve at least National Curriculum Level 5 in English or Welsh and Maths. Those who do not achieve this level should receive tuition and support to help them to catch up. This needs to be tailored to suit their individual interests, abilities and learning styles. Our 14-19 agenda supports this by making the development of good basic skills a specific focus for all learning pathways.

**31.** We cannot hope to bring all adults up to Level 1 – some will not recognise that they have a problem and others, who may know their skills are poor, will not, for various reasons, want to do anything about it. But we can do a lot through raising awareness and by improving the quality and availability of provision. In addition, many adults with low skills will come into contact with government agencies or will seek to take up further education, training or employment. It

makes sense, therefore, to target our efforts where we can identify those who need support and allocate resources effectively to meet their needs.

### **Horizontal Themes**

**32.** There are some issues that need to be addressed for all the groups that have a basic skills need. The strategy will address these in a unified way. We have identified ten of these horizontal themes.

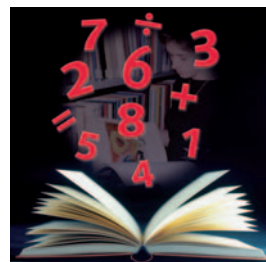
- Raising awareness.
- Better identification of learning needs and tracking progress.
- Providing a better range of attractive learning.
- Improving the quality of provision.
- Developing the teacher workforce.
- Fit-for-purpose qualifications and assessment.
- Better help and support for learners.
- Welsh language.
- Working together to maximise impact.
- Better evidence of what works.

These address the main barriers that are still holding back progress. As it develops, the Strategy will put in place a range of actions to help overcome them.

**33.** The Delivery Plan section which follows develops these priorities and themes in more detail. The Implementation section draws them together and proposes an Action Planning Grid which will be used to map specific actions and to monitor progress.

## DELIVERY PLAN

### PART A: PRIORITY GROUPS



#### Early Years and the Foundation Stage

**34.** Early Years programmes encourage parents and carers to become involved in children's development and help to break the cycle of underachievement that exists in some families. There is a strong association between deprivation and being ready for school in terms of good speaking and listening skills. Socio-economically related differences at the start of a child's life mean that disadvantage is likely to be entrenched by the time she or he starts primary school. We shall therefore continue to put considerable effort into this age group, targeting Communities First areas but also recognising that pockets of deprivation exist in other localities. Local Education Authorities are well placed to identify areas that would benefit most from early interventions and we shall work closely with them to implement and evaluate the effectiveness of this approach.

**35.** We shall continue the programme of distributing **Bookbags** to the parents of all babies at their 8-9 month health check, and a further book of stories, songs and rhymes to 18-month-old children. These books support a strong family start in language development and help foster an interest in books. We will integrate this programme more closely with other interventions to help young children and families, for example by working with health professionals to provide additional resources to meet the needs of parents and carers with low literacy levels in English or Welsh.

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**36.** The foundations for literacy and numeracy are set at an early age through play with parents and carers. The **Language and Play (LAP)** programme was

designed to support early language development and is currently reaching about 6,000 parents or carers per year. A **Number and Play (NAP)** programme is in development along similar lines to LAP. We propose to expand these programmes, targeting Communities First areas and aiming to include them in the menu of activities that is available through Sure Start. We also propose to integrate LAP and NAP into the new Foundation Phase, and will support training for Early Years workers to deliver the programme.

**37.** We recognise that Basic Skills programmes must work closely with Children's Partnerships in each local authority, to ensure that Cymorth and other local activities such as Sure Start complement Basic Skills programmes wherever possible. The Strategy will also work with CyMAL (Museums, Archives and



Libraries Wales) to ensure that the programmes foster a strong and lasting interest in using libraries.

### **Pupils under-attaining in schools**

**38.** We must continue the drive to reduce the number of young people leaving school without good literacy and numeracy skills, so that they are able to make the most of the opportunities that are available in education, training and employment. Early identification of and extra support for those who are not attaining the expected levels is vital if they are not to fall further behind their peers.

**39.** The **Basic Skills Quality Mark** will help to achieve this. We shall aim for all schools to achieve and retain the Quality Mark Award. It provides a framework for schools to develop effective teaching practices so that all pupils develop good literacy and numeracy skills. Those who are falling behind are identified early and helped to improve. It sets minimum standards and many schools have found the Award a useful audit and self-evaluation tool. Awareness and understanding of basic skills has improved within schools as a result of this programme and the requirements for achieving the Quality Mark have become embedded in practice. The model offers an holistic and flexible approach to planning, organisation and management and should ideally be used as a tool for continuous improvement. Some schools, however, see the Quality Mark as a standard to reach, and do not see the value in seeking to renew the Award after its 3-year lifespan. We shall, therefore, examine possible improvements to the Quality Mark programme and consider whether there should be a higher level of Award to recognise continuing excellence.

**40.** The first Strategy supported a programme of **Strategic Intervention Grants** which gave Local Education Authorities (LEAs) the flexibility to respond to identified local need by offering funding for a menu of activities. The most popular of these have been catch-up programmes for children who are falling behind their peers at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3. The grants have also supported activities aimed at disengaged young people, provision of out-of-school-hours programmes and modelling excellence programmes to share good practice. Some excellent work has been undertaken that has made a real difference to the quantity and quality of basic skills provision in schools. Nevertheless, there is a danger that schools will see these grants as a permanent source of funding and won't make the

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necessary adjustments to ensure that basic skills receive the priority they deserve within mainstream provision. We shall therefore review this grant programme and concentrate resources both on innovative projects and on helping schools to integrate into the mainstream curriculum those activities that have been shown to be effective. Where LEAs do not already do this, we shall encourage them to embed action on basic skills in their planning arrangements. We shall also collect information about what has worked well and make this widely available for the benefit of all schools and LEAs in Wales.

**41.** The role undertaken by **Learning Support Assistants** (LSAs) has developed considerably in recent years and some schools and LEAs have invested in training LSAs to deliver extra basic skills support to those pupils who need it. To improve the effectiveness of LSAs in this area, we need to strengthen the dissemination of good practice, and signpost LEAs and schools to suitable training programmes for literacy and numeracy. We propose to supplement this by producing guidelines for LEAs and schools to advise on how LSA support can be used to best effect.

### **Families**

**42.** Children whose parents have poor basic skills are themselves more likely to struggle with them. Nevertheless, many of these parents are highly motivated to improve their skills with the objective of supporting their children's education. The purpose of **Family Learning** programmes is to support these parents and raise standards of literacy and numeracy for both them and their children. It is also to extend parents' skills in supporting their children's education. This helps break the cycle of low achievement where it occurs in families and can lead to improved educational outcomes for both children and adults, some of whom go on to further learning. In some areas, however, there is limited success in recruiting parents from the target group (i.e. those with low skills). We need to focus more attention on reaching the parents who would benefit most. We shall therefore review family learning programmes to examine different funding models and innovative ways of engaging our target group, without losing the focus on basic skills. The Community-Focused Schools initiative can help to support this activity.

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## Young People

**43.** Young people with low literacy and/or numeracy skills, particularly those who are disengaged from learning, will not be attracted back into learning by offering them more of the same. The frustration and sense of failure that some of them feel as a result of poor educational experiences can yield higher rates of truancy, drug use and criminal behaviour. Flexible, tailored provision that will motivate and engage young people can help raise attainment and reduce these social problems. This is being taken forward through the 14-19 agenda and basic skills are a key part of this. We shall ensure that they are addressed in all Learning Pathways. ELWa's work on projects supporting young people not in employment, training or education (NEETs) will also play a significant part. We will continue to develop attractive learning provision for basic skills, building on the work undertaken so far on the Tripartite course. We shall also investigate additional, innovative ways of engaging this target group.

**44.** The Youth Gateway delivered by Careers Wales offers young people facing problems in making a transition from school to adult working life an in-depth period of assessment plus motivational and personal support. Many, though by no means all, of these young people will have problems with their basic skills. We shall work with Careers Wales to identify best practice in the assessment process and to help develop better-tailored progression opportunities with appropriate personal support structures.

**45.** Cymorth – the Children and Youth Support Fund has “training, mentoring and information” as a key theme for activity, which aims to reach out to maintain the engagement of children and young people and re-engage with those who have dropped out of training, education or employment, or are at risk of doing so. Cymorth is delivered through Children and Young People's Framework Partnerships within each Local Authority and we shall ensure that our work with young people links up with Cymorth-funded projects wherever appropriate.

## Adult learners

**46.** The main needs here are to:

- help people with low basic skills to identify their needs and to tackle them; and
- make sure that effective learning provision is in place and that learners receive sufficient support over both participation and completion.

**47.** We have already introduced two vital measures to help identify and address the basic skills needs of adults. From September 2004 all post-16 learners who enter publicly-funded learning programmes are being screened to identify those with low literacy and /or numeracy skills. Where a need is identified, learners should be given the opportunity to improve their skills. From September 2005 adult learners who enrol on basic skills courses will have their tuition provided free of charge. It is equally important, however, that those doing other courses, but who have basic skills needs, are helped to address those needs too. Otherwise, they are at risk not only of permanently having poor basic skills but

also of failing to obtain the other qualifications they are working towards. We therefore need to work with providers to improve the “embedded” basic skills support for these learners. The Strategy will develop new approaches and support mechanisms for this.

**48.** There is, however, currently an inadequate supply of good quality provision to meet the demand that is being created by these developments. We shall explore with ELWa how the new National Planning and Funding System for post-16 learning can be used to prioritise and increase the amount of provision that is available to meet the varied needs of learners. In particular, ELWa’s planning function will ensure increased delivery of basic skills provision by the provider network through use of provider planning and Regional Statements of Needs and Priorities. The weighting given to funding for basic skills will be evaluated as part of ELWA’s review of funding weightings. In addition, providers will be expected to attain the Basic Skills Quality Mark as a minimum standard and basic skills criteria will be incorporated in provider Self Assessment and Provider Performance Reviews.

**49.** To improve the co-ordination of post-16 basic skills activity and the planning for and quality of provision, we need effective action at local, regional and national levels. Community Consortia for Education and Training (CCETs) are ideally placed to develop these strategies in local areas and there have been some notable successes. However, not all CCETs have incorporated action on basic skills into their delivery plans. For the future we shall encourage them to develop a more co-ordinated approach to planning and delivery.

**50.** At the regional level, ELWa’s North Wales Region is already developing an integrated approach to basic skills activity, working with the Basic Skills Agency, Jobcentre Plus, the Probation Service (North Wales Area) and local providers. The object is to address the priority given to basic and key skills in the Regional Statement of Needs and Priorities. ELWa will introduce four regional partnership groups to initiate strategic and effective planning of provision and the establishment of collaborative network delivery by October 2005. We shall work closely with the Council in the run-up to its merger with the Welsh Assembly Government to ensure continuity of support for this development.

### **Low-Skilled people in the workforce**

**51.** Poor basic skills in the workplace hold back business development and affect productivity and quality of service. The Skills Concordat signed by the Welsh Assembly Government, ELWa, CBI Wales and TUC Wales in October 2003 placed particular emphasis

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on supporting people who lack the numeracy and literacy skills needed to progress at work. The Employer Pledge scheme is in place to encourage employers to help their employees raise their skills, to support employers while they develop their Action Plans, and to provide links between employers and local providers. We shall expand the scheme; provide more support for employers; link the scheme more closely to ELWa's workplace learning programmes; encourage all public-sector organisations to sign the Pledge; and ask Sector Skills Councils to embed it in Sector Skills Agreements. These actions will be augmented by training practitioners to deliver provision that is relevant to different groups of learners and by piloting a programme of intensive learning support for employees of small and medium-sized businesses that sign the Pledge.

**52.** Trades unions have an important role to play in identifying and supporting workers who need to improve their skills. Employees may feel more comfortable about approaching their Union Learning Representative rather than their employer to ask for literacy or numeracy training. We propose to offer training to Union Learning Representatives to support them in their role as basic skills champions and learning mentors and coaches. The Wales Union Learning Fund (WULF) supports a wide range of skills provision, including basic skills. As part of the future development of WULF we shall ensure that it takes a strategic approach to strengthening basic skills in the workplace.

### **Jobseekers**

**53.** Poor basic skills often prevent individuals from moving out of economic inactivity or unemployment. The Future Skills Wales Generic Skills Survey 2003 found that well over a third of those out of work in Wales wanted paid employment. Jobcentre Plus Wales is supporting our commitment to improve the basic skills of working age adults by screening all new benefits claimants and arranging for an assessment to be completed for those who have been identified as having a potential basic skills need. Claimants are then supported through basic skills provision and encouraged, sometimes with financial incentives, to achieve basic skills qualifications. However, training is not mandatory and even when learners do enrol on courses, attrition rates are relatively high. We propose to work with Jobcentre Plus, offering training to frontline staff to raise awareness of the importance of good basic skills to employability. We shall also work together to develop effective and flexible training programmes that are attractive to this client group, taking into account the recommendations of ELWa's Review of Learning in and for the Workplace.

**54.** This approach will also be taken to support the joint Assembly Government/Jobcentre Plus Want2Work pilots which are testing a range of measures to help existing benefit claimants who want to work find, and keep, a job. We will ask ELWa to work with Jobcentre Plus to pilot flexible approaches to address the basic skills needs of claimants, and to evaluate their effectiveness.

### **Offenders and ex-offenders**

**55.** Research studies have suggested that one of the most effective means of combating crime is through the provision of employment and training for offenders subject to statutory orders and those leaving prison. However, offenders are more than twice as likely as the general population to have low

literacy and numeracy skills. So, as well as having the problem of rehabilitation into society at the end of their sentences, many are further disadvantaged in the jobs market. The Prison Service, Probation Service and Youth Offending Teams have their own strategies and targets for improving the basic skills of offenders under statutory supervision, but they are working closely with the Assembly Government on integrating these with our policies and programmes. We will continue to support a co-ordinated, multi-agency approach, and through the Strategy we shall put in place specific support to assist all our partners to draw-up action plans and commission good-quality provision. As part of this we will work with the agencies and providers to facilitate access to suitable training opportunities so that staff are fully equipped to recognise, assess and respond to the basic skills needs of offenders.

### **Other groups at risk of social exclusion**

**56.** Within the target groups identified above, there will be many who are at risk of social exclusion, such as jobseekers and ex-offenders. But there are other groups, for example those living in deprived areas of Wales, who are less likely to get involved in community activities because they lack the skills and confidence to take part. Community organisations play a vital role in reaching these people and engaging their interest in learning. The same is true of voluntary organisations who support ethnic minorities, homeless people and travellers, and those recovering from drug or alcohol abuse. Our evaluation has shown that the foundations for basic skills are relatively weak in this area. We shall therefore continue to support the work of voluntary and community organisations by offering training for staff to identify and support those with basic skills needs, and to make sure they know where they can refer learners to quality provision. We shall provide them with opportunities for sharing good practice and for networking with similar organisations. We will also test out new approaches to attract people to basic skills training – for example, through family and financial literacy programmes.

**57.** We recognise that within our target groups, and more widely, there are individuals with learning difficulties and disabilities. This is a diverse group with a wide range of abilities and many will be served by mainstream provision. Providers are required to ensure that in accessing learning, people who are disabled are not disadvantaged. We have supported training for practitioners to deliver the new curriculum that has been introduced for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities and will continue to ensure that all providers have access to quality training for their staff and appropriate materials for delivery.

### **Speakers of Other Languages**

**58.** Our Strategy has supported the delivery of early years and family programmes for parents and carers whose first language is neither English nor Welsh. We have also developed training programmes for young people who arrive in Wales towards the end of statutory schooling (age 14-19), and supported teacher training to deliver the new ESOL curriculum for adults, based on the national literacy standards. New materials have been developed to support all these activities and the Basic Skills Agency has been working with ESOL providers in Wales to help them achieve the Quality Mark Award. We shall enhance support, including requirements for citizenship, for ESOL learners and for practitioners in this field, to ensure that no-one is prevented from playing a full part in society by a lack of basic English or Welsh language skills.



## PART B: HORIZONTAL THEMES

**59.** This analysis of priority groups shows that there are several common themes. We shall tackle them coherently. In that way we can help ensure that improvements are made across the board so that learners see the benefits throughout their learning journey.



### **Raising awareness**

**60.** Lack of awareness remains a significant obstacle to progress. Many people do not realise that their basic skills are not up to scratch, or do not appreciate the importance of raising their own skills or those of their children. And amongst practitioners there is not always sufficient awareness of good practice, or of what works best. Therefore, we shall continue to promote the importance of good basic skills and disseminate information about the Strategy through a combination of high profile media campaigns, exhibitions, conferences, and newsletters and by posting information on the Wales Strategy web-site. These activities have been an important part of the Strategy to date and evaluation has shown they have been effective in raising awareness of the importance of good basic skills. They have also increased motivation among parents to read with their children. Schools have noted the importance of the national campaign in reinforcing the messages that they are promoting in their own work on basic skills too.

### **Better identification of learning needs and tracking progress**

**61.** We have already introduced basic skills screening for all post-16 learners entering ELWa - funded provision. ELWa will also ensure that post-screening tracking and measurement of learner progress informs the quality system and funding allocations. Other agencies such as Jobcentre Plus and the Probation and Prison Services are also assessing the basic skills needs of their client groups. We shall agree with them a more joined-up approach to identifying need and monitoring progress, and ensure that learners are not assessed repeatedly.

**62.** Assessment of literacy and numeracy skills works effectively in the early years of primary education. Teacher assessment takes place in reading, writing, speaking and listening and in mathematics. It is relatively easy to recognise the skills that are being assessed. As children progress, however, assessment in English, Welsh and Mathematics is a less reliable proxy for literacy and numeracy.

**63.** Following consideration of advice from both ACCAC and the Daugherty Assessment Review Group, the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning has remitted ACCAC to develop, pilot and implement a new style of diagnostic tests for pupils in the penultimate year of primary school (Year 5) which will focus on skills. Daugherty suggested that these skills tests should cover literacy, numeracy and problem solving. The prospective timetable envisages that the new skills tests will be implemented fully in 2007-08.

**64.** ACCAC is drawing up detailed proposals for a revised learner-centred, skills-focused school curriculum for implementation from September 2008. We shall work with ACCAC to consider the scope for developing a suitable assessment for 14-year-olds so that learners' basic skills needs are identified and



they get the support they need to reach an acceptable standard of literacy and numeracy. This assessment would also inform the development of individuals' 14-19 Learning Pathways, ensuring that young people have access to all the support they need to prepare them for further learning, employment and personal fulfilment.

### **Providing a better range of attractive learning**

**65.** Although there is a wide range of basic skills learning provision available shortages are reported in some areas from time to time. Just as importantly, suitable provision to meet the needs of individuals is not always available. This applies across the whole range of provision, including specific basic skills courses for adults and “embedded” basic skills provision that young people and adults with poor basic skills need in order to achieve their other learning aims. For many people, traditional adult basic skills classes are not attractive. They may appear intimidating and too much like going back to school. We shall therefore develop a range of attractive alternative provision, including building on the work already undertaken with the Tripartite Course. Also, we shall look at the scope for widening the range of settings in which learning can take place, and its timing, working particularly with the voluntary sector. This will include examining the existing range of distance learning provision, including e-learning, to see whether this could play a bigger role in future. Embedded support is often made available by colleges and other providers, but evidence suggests that take-up is often low and outcomes poor. We shall therefore work with providers to identify ways in which the use made of this provision can be significantly increased.

### **Improving the quality of provision**

**66.** Outcomes from basic skills learning are often not as high as we would wish. The evidence is that although there is much good provision and improvement taking place, the situation is patchy. Too many learners fail to complete their courses and obtain qualifications, and too many do not obtain the amount or type of help they need. There can be several reasons for this, but quality is often a significant factor – of the teaching in some cases, or of the learning materials, or of the learning environment. We intend to tackle this on a number of fronts. First, we shall bring together all available evidence on what works well, and publish a comprehensive guide to good practice. We shall push ahead with the Quality Mark programme, aiming for all providers to achieve it. For post-16 providers the Strategy will work closely with the quality improvement programme being taken forward by ELWa. We shall also ensure that Estyn's advice is fully used and that recommendations in their reports are rigorously followed up.

### **Developing the Practitioner Workforce**

**67.** Practitioners are at the heart of good basic skills provision, and we will introduce an integrated package of practitioner development. While literacy and numeracy are common elements of the work of all teachers in primary schools, secondary school teachers have tended to see the development of literacy and numeracy skills as the work of their colleagues in the English or Welsh and Mathematics departments. This needs to change if the pupils in our target group are to be supported effectively. Pupils who are struggling with basic skills in

secondary school will only spend a few hours a week in English or Welsh and Maths lessons. They need support through subject teaching across the curriculum. Teachers can apply to the General Teaching Council for Wales for funding under its individually-focused Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme which is being administered by the Council on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government. The programme aims to provide opportunities for teachers to identify their own professional development needs within the context of performance management, and to organise CPD activities which meet those needs. This can include training in supporting pupils with basic skills needs.

**68.** For existing secondary teachers, training modules have been developed by the Basic Skills Agency to support basic skills across the curriculum. They are being considered for accreditation in order to achieve recognised standards across Wales. The aim is for subject teachers to tackle pupils' literacy and numeracy needs by adopting appropriate teaching strategies and embedding them in schemes of work. We shall strengthen the delivery of basic skills support in secondary schools by working with LEAs and schools to plan and deliver training for teachers and to encourage them to take up the training that is available.

**69.** We also propose to support improvements in basic skills for the longer term by developing an objective set of standards for teaching in literacy and numeracy. If this can be done we shall consider whether they would be appropriate for inclusion in the requirements for Qualified Teacher Status, and thus covered in initial teacher training courses. We will also consult with LEAs and the profession on the inclusion of literacy and numeracy skills in future revisions to the Induction Standard. This would provide that newly-qualified teachers would be required to meet a defined standard by the end of their first year in teaching and, if needed, would be provided with support to help them meet it.

**70.** In the post-16 sector, there is a shortage of qualified basic skills teachers. Many work part-time, sometimes for very few hours a week, and the most experienced are often in non-teaching co-ordinating roles. We need to attract more people into this area and retain them by improving their career and pay prospects and by establishing a clear qualifications framework to which is attached high-quality, accessible training.

**71.** Level 2 training programmes have been developed for basic skills supporters and modular Level 3 programmes for vocational staff in FE and training organisations so that they can support learners who lack the basic skills to cope with their vocational training. To support this development, and to mirror our approach for schoolteachers, we will consider, in consultation with the sector, strengthening Initial Teacher Training programmes for all those who wish to teach in the Further Education sector by including a minimum core of language, literacy and numeracy.

**72.** For specialist teachers of adult literacy, adult numeracy and ESOL we propose to work with other relevant bodies to put in place standards and qualifications that all new teachers would be required to meet. Working with ELWa and HEFCW, we shall also provide support for existing practitioners to work towards these qualifications.

## **Fit-for-purpose qualifications**

**73.** People need to know whether their basic skills are up to scratch. They need to be able to demonstrate that they are to others - especially to employers. As things stand this is not straightforward. GCSEs in English, Welsh and Maths, although often used as a proxy for literacy and numeracy, are not currently a wholly reliable indicator of basic skills proficiency, in part because of the “compensatory” assessment by which weaknesses in one area can be balanced with strengths in another. However, GCSEs are set to be revised in the light of wider 14-19 developments in Wales and in other parts of the UK. This will include a greater focus on “functional skills” in Maths, English and Welsh which will be valuable in ensuring basic skills proficiency. The adult literacy and numeracy qualifications are assessed through a multiple-choice test which does not, for example, cover writing, listening or speaking skills. There is also significant overlap between these qualifications and the Key Skills qualifications of Communication and Application of Number. The Strategy will take forward a programme of work to address these issues, with the objective of putting in place a clear qualifications and assessment framework for basic skills that is fit for purpose, well understood by learners and employers, and which encourages take-up and completion.

**74.** The first Strategy supported the development of a teaching course to support learners in achieving literacy and numeracy qualifications at Level 1 and an appropriate Level 1 IT qualification. This Tripartite course combines these elements with an overarching assignment to demonstrate competence in those three skills. The course has been piloted with post-16 learners in a variety of settings and is currently being piloted with pre-16 learners as an alternative curriculum. These pilots will be evaluated, and an assessment made of the demand for such a course, which could form a part of the proposed basic skills qualifications framework.

## **Better help and support for learners**

**75.** Basic skills learners of all ages, particularly those who are struggling or falling behind, often need additional help to overcome the barriers they face. Parents who themselves have poor basic skills may not be able to provide sufficient help for their children, and this is being addressed through Family Programmes and other interventions such as Sure Start. In school, children who fall behind their peers may need special catch-up classes or other support. The Learning Coach component of our 14-19 Learning Country: Learning Pathways agenda is one way that this is being tackled. Many young people and adults lead complex, or even chaotic, lives and are understandably reluctant to make time available for something about which they are not confident of success. Refugees and asylum seekers face a range of cultural and other barriers. In the workplace, many will be reluctant to own-up to basic skills deficiencies. Our support for Union Learning Representatives is one way that this is being addressed. We shall take action under the Strategy to pull all these strands together, assess their adequacy, and ensure that those charged with providing help and support for learners have good quality training and resources, including good practice guidance.

## **Welsh Language**

**76.** All Strategy initiatives, programmes and literature are available in both English and Welsh. Before the Strategy there was little to support the delivery of Welsh literacy skills to adults. In the past few years Welsh literacy standards have been developed and published and numeracy standards in Welsh have also been published. Literacy and numeracy curricula and qualifications have been launched and assessment tools are now being piloted. However, there is a shortage of good quality materials for supporting the delivery of basic skills through the medium of Welsh, particularly for the post-16 sector. We shall work with the Welsh Books Council and others to encourage publishers to meet the needs of this client group.

## **Working together to maximise impact**

**77.** There are very many organisations and individuals engaged in the whole field of basic skills. Families in a deprived area may, for example, be receiving help through Communities First, Sure Start, Basic Skills Family Programmes, voluntary sector organisations, Jobcentre Plus, and their children may be getting additional support in schools or from Careers Wales through Youth Gateway. Local authority policy agreements have a role, too. In the public sector generally, tackling basic skills needs is very relevant to the Making the Connections strategy for improving public services. At the very least we must apply all this effort to the best effect and exchange information among the organisations involved. Throughout its work, the Strategy will therefore seek to identify ways in which our collective efforts can work together in a streamlined way, to maximise impact and release resources that can be used for additional basic skills support.

## **Better evidence of what works.**

**78.** This second Basic Skills Strategy will, over the next five years, aim to identify and embed best practice, so it is vital that we obtain the very best evidence of what works. We shall introduce a new best practice programme and disseminate information widely, including through the Strategy website. We shall also support our Strategy with a programme of research to fill in the gaps in our knowledge and to inform the development of future policy. We expect that this will include longitudinal research, following individuals through their learning journey and beyond. Research findings will be disseminated to ensure that the information gained from the research programme is used to influence strategic activities by partners across Wales.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### Partnership Arrangements

**79.** This is not the Assembly Government's strategy alone. To be successful, it needs to be supported actively by other partners, including those who cover non-devolved subjects. We shall establish an all-Wales Strategy Implementation Group, chaired by the Assembly Government and with senior membership from local government, the Basic Skills Agency, teachers and other practitioners, ELWa, further education, training providers, the voluntary sector, employers, Trades Unions, the Skills for Business network, Jobcentre Plus, the National Offender Management Service, ACCAC, Estyn and Careers Wales. This will be responsible for driving forward the Strategy and monitoring its progress. We shall also establish four regional partnership groups, chaired by ELWa, to improve the quantity and quality of post-16 provision in the regions. At the local level we will look to CCETs and LEAs to ensure that basic skills are fully integrated into planning and delivery.



### Monitoring Implementation

**80.** This is a complex strategy with a five-year time horizon. We need to keep a careful eye on delivery. One of the tools we will use to do that will be an Action Planning Grid made up of the ten horizontal themes and the ten priority groups. Within each cell we will identify and monitor specific action points, as in the purely illustrative example below.

Theme Group	Early years	Pupils under-attaining	Families
<b>Raising Awareness</b>	Training for childcare workers	Information in Careers Wales online	Posters in GP surgeries
<b>Identification and tracking</b>	Work with Surestart	Adjustments to PLASC	Liaison with Jobcentre Plus
<b>Better provision</b>	Number and Play programme	Catch-up programme	Review Family Programmes

### Measuring Outcomes

**81.** By improving the literacy and numeracy skills of the population we will contribute to a wide range of policy objectives including combating social exclusion, widening participation in learning, helping people into jobs and developing safe and strong communities. These are not always measurable or, even where they are, it is impossible to attribute cause and effect. We therefore propose to place emphasis on measuring improvements qualitatively as well as quantitatively. In addition to continuous monitoring of Strategy programmes we shall measure outputs and outcomes against key performance indicators so that we have the information we need to improve where necessary. A Data Group will be established to agree detailed monitoring arrangements. We propose to use the following structure to help us establish where the Strategy is having an impact and where we might need to place more focus in the future.

Objective	Performance Indicator	How monitored
1. Raise the percentage of young children prepared for school	Teacher assessments of children's skills on entering learning	Survey of teachers
2. Reduce the number of pre-16s falling behind in basic skills	Pupil attainment at Key Stages  Quality of provision	Teacher assessments within or at the end of Key Stages  Quality Mark data, Estyn reports
3. Reduce number of 16-year-olds without basic skills at Level 1	Relevant qualifications obtained  Numbers identified in post-16 screening	PLASC <sup>1</sup>  LLWR <sup>1</sup> PLASC
4. Raise the levels of basic skills in the adult population	Percentage of working-age adults with literacy and numeracy skills at Level 1 and above  Number of employees covered by Employer Pledge	Repeat scale of need survey in 2008-09 and benchmark progress  Employer Pledge data
5. Improve the effectiveness of post-16 dedicated basic skills learning provision	Numbers starting courses in: Literacy Numeracy ESOL  Qualification outcomes  Non-qualification outcomes  Quality of Provision	LLWR PLASC  LLWR PLASC  Post-learning assessment LLWR PLASC  Quality Mark data, Estyn reports, ELWa assessment

<sup>1</sup>PLASC and LLWR are the new databases of pre-and post-16 individual learner information.

Objective	Performance Indicator	How monitored
6. Improve the effectiveness of embedded basic skills support for post-16 learners	<p>Numbers receiving support</p> <p>Of which numbers successfully completing their main qualification aim</p> <p>Quality of provision</p>	<p>LLWR<sup>2</sup> PLASC<sup>2</sup></p> <p>LLWR PLASC</p> <p>Quality Mark data, Estyn reports, ELWa assessment.</p>
7. Identify good practice and disseminate it effectively	<p>Research and evaluation studies posted to Strategy web-site.</p> <p>Dissemination events</p>	<p>Number of reports published.</p> <p>Number of dissemination events. Feedback from partners, practitioners and learners</p>
<p>8. Strengthen links with health:</p> <p>a. raise awareness amongst health professionals;</p> <p>b. pilot referral mechanisms.</p>	<p>a. series of professional development seminars: numbers attending;</p> <p>b. number of pilot projects.</p>	<p>a. Returns from organisers.</p> <p>b. Monitored against project plan</p>

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<sup>2</sup>not available until 2006/07



### THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK

The national standards for adult literacy and numeracy are specified at three levels:

Entry level,  
Level 1, and  
Level 2.

Entry level is further divided into three sub-levels: Entry 1, Entry 2 and Entry 3. Entry level has been set out in this way to describe in detail the small steps required for adults to make progress. This sub-division also signals a clear alignment to the skill levels with levels 1, 2 and 3 of the National Curriculum.

Levels 1 and 2 are aligned to the key skills of communication and application of number.

## THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK

The three levels of the national standards for adult literacy and numeracy correspond to the qualifications in the national qualifications framework as illustrated below.

		Key skills Level 5	National qualification framework Level 3
		Key skills Level 4	National qualification framework Level 3
		Key skills Level 3	National qualification framework Level 3
	Literacy/Numeracy Level 2	Key skills Level 2	National qualification framework Level 2
National Curriculum Level 5	Literacy/Numeracy Level 1	Key skills Level 1	National qualification framework Level 1
National Curriculum Level 4			
Literacy/Numeracy Level 3	Literacy/Numeracy Entry 3		Entry Level
Literacy/Numeracy Level 2	Literacy/Numeracy Entry 2		
National Curriculum Level 1	Literacy/Numeracy Entry 1		

## The Adult National Standards Framework for literacy and numeracy

The national standards framework for literacy and numeracy defines skills at Entry level (divided into three sub-levels), Level 1 and Level 2 or above. Levels 1 and 2 are broadly comparable to GCSE English and Mathematics.

General descriptions of each level within the National Standards are given below.

<b>Level</b>	<b>Literacy (reading)</b>	<b>Numeracy</b>
Entry level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands short texts with repeated language patterns on familiar topics</li> <li>Can obtain information from common signs and symbols</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands information given by numbers and symbols in simple graphical, numerical and written material</li> </ul>
Entry level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands short straightforward texts on familiar topics</li> <li>Can obtain information from short documents, familiar sources and signs and symbols</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands information given by numbers, symbols, simple diagrams and charts graphical, numerical and written material</li> </ul>
Entry level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands short straightforward texts on familiar topics accurately and independently</li> <li>Can obtain information from everyday sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands information given by numbers, symbols, diagrams and charts used for different purposes and in different ways in graphical, numerical and written material</li> </ul>
Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands short straightforward texts of varying length on a variety of topics accurately and independently</li> <li>Can obtain information from different sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands straightforward mathematical information used for different purposes and can independently select relevant information from given graphical, numerical and written material</li> </ul>
Level 2 or above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands a range of texts of varying complexity accurately and independently</li> <li>Can obtain information of varying length and detail from different sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands mathematical information used for different purposes and can independently select and compare relevant information from a variety of graphical, numerical and written material</li> </ul>