

PRIMARY SCHOOLS RE-ORGANISATION

Outcome of discussion held between Federation of Gwynedd Primary School Headteachers representatives and the Head of Education Summer 2010

1. The general consensus is that schools re-organisation is required.
2. A school which has fewer than a specific number of children and whose projected pupil numbers are low, is unsustainable. When noting this, the context of the school within its area needs to be taken into account, and such considerations should also include whether children are within convenient proximity of another school, number of unfilled places and staff numbers.

It was agreed that a school with fewer than twenty pupils falls into this category.
3. When implementing re-organisation within the catchment-areas, the work should be done to such an extent that there is appropriate stability and resources. Children deserve that. It should be ensured that it can be confidently predicted that appropriate schools that are able to face the challenges of the 21stC are established.
4. When a catchment-area review is held, the aim should be to address those matters that are deemed as a strategy objective but that should not be achieved at the expense of weakening other schools' current budgets.
5. There should be a focus on funding schools to such an extent that they better reflect pupils and schools requirements in their various communities, but again not at the expense of weakening other schools budgets.
6. The current re-organisation process is considered to be slow, burdensome and repetitive. It is not deemed to be a sustainable process and should be reviewed. In light of the experience of the past year, it is noted that there are heavy demands on schools and their communities to fully contribute to the process, and within a tight time-table.
7. The Headteacher's role at a school and the guidance provided is crucial. Regular deterioration in conditions of service occur due to financial cut-backs and the regular additional demands.
8. At present, it is not felt that a Headteacher's work of providing **school leadership** receives either the due attention or the priority that it merits. Achieving developmental work is becoming increasingly more difficult.
9. **School Management** is time consuming. Consequently, fulfilling the daily tasks, when trying to prioritise learning and teaching is difficult and it is felt that what actually occurs is **making arrangements work**.
10. It is felt that the budget provided to employ administrative support for schools as well as the central support, need to be scrutinized.
11. The objective should be to achieve more non-contact time for each headteacher. The desired outcome would be for 0.5 of the working week to be earmarked for this.
12. There is concern that schools of all sizes, but especially the medium-sized schools, are being squeezed financially and consequently impose demanding requirements on headteachers and staff.
13. The headteachers feel that they are caught between a rock and a hard place with the LEA on the one hand and the Governors and the parents on the other, during discussions on school organisation.
14. There is concern that capital funding will not be available to realise future re-organisation plans.
15. If a Headteacher cannot be appointed to a school, it is felt that that school's situation should be scrutinized outside the strategy remit.
16. It is felt that the County Panel members should attend every Panel meeting, and fully contribute to the discussions.
17. Due to all the diversity in school sizes and communities served, headteachers opinions differ, but through a full discussion in the catchment-areas, through the Federation, there is unanimous agreement regarding the above mentioned points.

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