

Complete Agenda



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Meeting

GWE JOINT COMMITTEE

Date and Time

1.30 pm, WEDNESDAY, 22ND SEPTEMBER, 2021

Location

Zoom

please contact for public access

Contact Point

Natalie Lloyd Jones

NatalieLloydJones@Gwynedd.Llyw.Cymru

(DISTRIBUTED 14/09/21)

GWE JOINT COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE

Voting Members

Councillors

Councillor Julie Fallon	Conwy County Borough Council
Councillor Meirion Jones	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts	Denbighshire County Council
Councillor Ian Roberts	Flintshire County Council
Councillor Phil Wynn	Wrexham County Borough Council
Councillor Cemlyn Rees Williams	Gwynedd Council

Co-opted Non-voting Members

Rosalind Williams	Church in Wales
Claire Armitstead	Secondary School Representative
Richard Collet	Primary Schools Representative
Jonathan Morgan	Special Schools Representative
Alison Fisher	Governor Representative

Non-voting Officers

Dr Lowri Brown	Conwy County Borough Council
Claire Homard	Flintshire County Council
Garem Jackson	Gwynedd Council
Rhys Howard Hughes	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Karen Evans	Wrexham County Borough Council
Geraint Davies	Denbighshire County Council

Officers in Attendance

Dafydd L. Edwards	Host Authority
Sion Huws	Host Authority
Annwen Morgan	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Arwyn Thomas	GwE Managing Director
Alwyn Jones	GwE Assistant Director
Gareth Williams	GwE Advisory Board Chairman

Observer

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

5 - 9

(copy enclosed)

5. GWE BUDGET 2021-2022 - 1ST QUARTER REVIEW

10 - 14

To update Joint Committee members on the latest financial review of GwE's budget for the 2021/22 financial year.

6. GWE REGIONAL BUSINESS PLAN 2021-2022 - QUARTER 1 MONITORING REPORT

15 - 48

To present the Quarter 1 Monitoring Report - GwE Regional Business Plan 2021-2022 to the Joint Committee.

7. SCHOOL EVALUATION REPORTS

49 - 67

Present the report to members of the Joint Committee.

8. EVOLVING REGIONAL STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES TO SUPPORT SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN

68 - 76

To share information with members of the Joint Committee about evolved regional structures and processes to support schools causing concern.

9. REGIONAL STRATEGY - RENEW AND REFORM: SUPPORTING LEARNERS' WELLBEING AND PROGRESSION

77 - 92

To present information, and for Joint Committee members to approve our 'Regional strategy - Renew and reform: supporting learners' wellbeing and progression'.

10. Y GYMRAEG - CLUSTER PLANS AND 'EIN LLAIS NI' ORACY

93 - 98

PROJECT

To share information about the arrangements and plans for two main work streams in the business plan for Welsh this year - arrangements for the Cluster Plans and 'Ein Llais Ni' Oracy Project.

11. DIGITAL LEARNING 99 - 103

Share information with members of the Joint Committee in relation to 'Digital Learning'.

12. GWE CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE 104 - 110

To accept and approve GwE's Concerns and Complaints Handling Procedure.

GWE JOINT COMMITTEE - 14/07/2021

Present:

Councillors: Phil Wynn (Chair - Wrexham County Borough Council), Julie Fallon (Conwy County Borough Council), Meirion Jones (Anglesey County Council), Huw Hilditch-Roberts (Denbighshire County Council), Cemlyn Williams (Gwynedd Council).

Co-opted non-voting Members: Jonathan Morgan (Special Schools' Representative), Richard Collet (Primary Schools' Representative), Claire Armitstead (Secondary Schools' Representative)

Officers present: Dafydd Edwards (Head of Finance, Gwynedd Council, Host Authority), Sion Huws (Senior Lawyer - Corporate, Gwynedd Council, Host Authority), Lowri Brown (Conwy County Borough Council), Garem Jackson (Gwynedd Council), Arwyn Thomas (GwE Managing Director), Karen Evans (Denbighshire County Council), Susan Owen Jones (Business Manager, GwE), Alwyn Jones (Assistant Director, GwE), Claire Homard (Flintshire County Council), Hywyn Jones (Group Accountant, Gwynedd Council, Host Authority), Gwion Jones (Senior Accountant, Gwynedd Council - Host Authority), Bethan Roberts (Performance Management Manager, GwE), Sioned Mai Jones and Natalie Lloyd Jones (Democracy Team Officers, Gwynedd Council, Host Authority).

Others who were invited: Gareth Williams (Chair of GwE Advisory Board)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from the following: Annwen Morgan (Chief Executive, Anglesey County Council), Rhys Howard Hughes (Anglesey County Council), Ian Roberts (Flintshire County Council).

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declaration of personal interest was received.

3. URGENT MATTERS

There were no urgent matters.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was confirmed that the record presented appropriately reflected the meeting held on 26 May, 2021.

5. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2020/21

DECISION:

To accept and note the GwE Statement of Accounts (subject to audit) for 2020/21.

DISCUSSION:

The Statement of Accounts was presented, in 'statutory' form and endorsed by the Statutory Finance Officer, for the information of the Joint Committee.

Reference was made to the figures reported in the previous meeting regarding underspend and the totals in each column.

GwE's financial situation was explained, noting there is £811,000 evident in the fund.

It was added that these accounts are just for information and that a post-audit version will be presented in the autumn to be accepted and adopted by the Joint Committee.

Comments arising from the discussion:

- Thanks were expressed for the team's professionalism in presenting the accounts in a timely manner.
- Members were asked whether they had any concerns regarding the accounts.
- The GwE Managing Director thanked the Head of Finance and the Accountants for their technical support. Thanks were extended to the Business Manager and the Business Team, who have ensured that the service corrects the budget from one year to the next.

In response, the Head of Finance noted:

- There are no concerns, and that there is evidence of robust management with any underspend or overspend within reasonable limits.

6. GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

DECISION:

To accept and approve the 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement.

DISCUSSION:

Joint Committee members were led through the report, which includes information regarding principles and vision. It was explained that the statement is an overview of service behaviour and the next steps over the coming year.

Thanks were expressed to Dewi Morgan (Gwynedd Council) for his advice regarding governance when drawing up the Governance Statement.

Comments arising from the discussion:

- It was noted it is a useful document for reference, offering a high level of assurance to Joint Committee members.
- Thanks were expressed for the report.

7. ANNUAL REPORT 2021/21

DECISION:

To accept and approve the Annual Report for 2020/21 subject to the addition of a priority pertaining to a response to the impacts of post-Covid in relation to the service.

DISCUSSION:

GwE Assistant Director presented the report, and it was outlined how GwE has re-purposed during the pandemic. It was added that Joint Committee members have been updated on this work during the year and that this report is a summary of this.

It was highlighted that the report outlines how schools are supported to implement the reform journey and prepare for the new curriculum, and the strategic and regional priorities for 2021-2022 agreed upon in the previous meeting.

Comments arising from the discussion:

- Thanks were expressed to GwE Assistant Director and the team for their work during the past year.
- Reference was made to Point 8 - priorities for 21/22 and a gap was noted, that there is no reference to how GwE will respond to the impacts of post-Covid on Education.

In response, GwE Assistant Director noted:

- There will be an overview of plans that consider the impacts of post-Covid in the autumn term monitoring report.
- It was added that the impacts of Covid may be added as a part of the report, or added as priority 7.

8. STRATEGY TO SUPPORT PARENTS / CARERS

DECISION:

To note and accept the report and reinforce the strategy and support available to schools in relation to parent/carers engagement in north Wales.

DISCUSSION:

GwE Assistant Director presented the report, noting that one of the priorities in the business plan is to assist parents/carers to help their children to learn.

He added that a regional group has already been established, which has met twice to set a strategic direction to the work. Reference was made to a resource pack to help children aged 5-12 years old to learn, which has been shared with primary schools. It was noted there is a link in the on-line version should Joint Committee members wish to see the resources.

It was explained that Headteachers have already received a presentation on the resource, and that the regional group has identified a need for such resources for learners aged 13-16 years old. It was added that secondary Headteachers are supportive and keen to receive the resources, as well as resources for pupils with additional learning needs.

Comments arising from the discussion:

- One member noted there is a real need for this, and that the resource is appreciated.
- One member asked whether the resource is relevant for parents who do not speak Welsh and who have children in Welsh-medium schools.

In response:

- GwE Assistant Director noted that GwE needs to show their contribution to LA WESPs.
- He added that the issue of assisting parents who do not speak Welsh is an all Wales issue, and there is a need for discussions in the Management Board on how to fill the gap.

9. TEDXGWE INITIATIVE

DECISION:

To approve the report and the north Wales TEDxGwE Initiative, and look forward to an update in the autumn.

DISCUSSION:

An overview was given of the new initiative, adding that it will be ongoing work here in north Wales for years to come.

It was explained that GwE has registered and received a licence for TEDxGwE, where children will contribute to the discussion on how to address the climate change crisis and offer solutions. It was added that the views and the voice of children in north Wales may be taken to COP26 in Glasgow this year, and that schools have received information regarding this.

Comments arising from the discussion:

- It was asked whether there is a timetable for coming back to the Joint Committee with a further report on this initiative.
- It was agreed the initiative is very timely for the purposes of the new curriculum, and that schools could adopt the initiative every year.
- GwE was thanked for striving to secure this initiative, the only regional consortia to have done so.

In response, GwE Managing Director noted:

- His thanks, on behalf of the Joint Committee, to Gavin Cass for ensuring that the young people of north Wales are leading the field with these opportunities.
- It needs to be ensured that this initiative has a clear link to LA priorities.

Matters arising

To conclude, members said goodbye to the GwE Business Manager. Thanks were extended to her for all her work and contribution over the years since the inception of GwE. It was noted the service appreciates her contribution, deep intelligence and advice during her time with GwE.

The meeting started at 10.30am and concluded at 11:23am.

CHAIR

Agenda Item 5

GwE: Joint Committee 22/09/21



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MEETING	GwE Joint Committee
DATE	22 September 2021
TITLE	GwE Budget 2021/22 – 1st Quarter Review
PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To update Joint Committee members on the latest financial review of GwE's budget for the 2021/22 financial year.• The report focuses on the significant financial variances, with Appendix 1 containing the full financial information.
RECCOMENDATION	To accept the report.
AUTHOR	GwE Managing Director and Gwynedd Council Head of Finance.

1. CONCLUSION

- 1.1 Based on first quarter expenditure and income and estimates based on management explanations, this initial review forecasts a net underspend of (£48,805) by the end of the 2021/22 financial year.

- 1.2 The impact of Covid-19 continues to have an effect on individual headings, and the following section of this report explains the reasons behind the main variations predicted.

2. FINANCIAL VARIANCES

2.1 **Building:**

Quarter 1: overspend £24,514.

This budget is dependent on external income and the use of GwE buildings by specific projects as part of it. As a result of the pandemic new ways of working have been adopted, with much more distance working, and virtual meetings.

GwE officers are not back in the office at the moment, but this may change before the end of the financial year. As a starting point for this heading, a lack of income is expected for the first 5 months of the financial year, as no use of GwE rooms has been made from April to August. The lack of income can increase if staff do not make use of the offices during the year.

2.2 **Travel:**

Quarter 1: underspend (£73,319).

Visits to schools have now resumed but not to the same extent as before the Covid-19 crisis. This heading will be subject to a review on new ways of working.

2.3 **Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (RCSIG)**

Quarter 1: neutral.

As a result of the Covid-19 crisis, we were given permission by Welsh Government to carry forward any underspend against the 2020/21 grant, to then be spent by 31/08/2021. £997k of grant was transferred from 2020/21. This has now been spent within the period.

3. UNDERSPEND FUND

3.1 At the beginning of the 2021/22 financial year, the fund totalled £563,530.

3.2 The fund total at the end of 2021/22 is estimated at £612,335 having taken into account the underspend anticipated above.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: GwE Budget 2021/22 – 1st Quarter Review.

OPINION OF STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

Nothing to add from a propriety perspective.

Statutory Finance Officer:

Co-author of report.

GwE JOINT COMMITTEE - NORTH WALES COUNCILS - Budget Review 2021/22 : First Quarter April - June 2021

	Opening Budget £	Adjustments £	Revised Budget £	Estimated Expenditure £	Over / (Under) Spend Net £
<u>Expenditure</u>					
Employees					
Salaries					
- Management, Brokerage, Standards and Administration	924,341		924,341	924,341	0
- Supporting Improvement Advisers	3,860,941		3,860,941	3,860,941	0
- Staff on Secondment	22,108	21,472	43,580	43,580	0
- Transferred against 'Specific Projects'	(1,820,533)		(1,820,533)	(1,820,533)	0
Training, advertising and other employee costs	42,588		42,588	42,588	0
Building					
Rent (includes services)	173,245		173,245	173,245	0
'Specific Projects' usage of offices recharge	(58,833)		(58,833)	(34,319)	24,514
Travel					
Travel Costs	137,264		137,264	63,945	(73,319)
Supplies and Services					
Furniture, equipment, printing, postage, telephone, room hire etc	72,980		72,980	72,980	0
Information Technology (contribution to renewal fund)	16,496		16,496	16,496	0
Audit Fees	11,454		11,454	11,454	0
Brokerage	288,698		288,698	288,698	0
Gwynedd Council Host Authority Support Service Costs					
Legal	5,726		5,726	5,726	0
Human Resources	9,818		9,818	9,818	0
Finance	42,456		42,456	42,456	0
Information Technology	46,957		46,957	46,957	0
National Model Commitments	469,948		469,948	469,948	0
Specific Projects					
Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant	7,828,872	2,423,126	10,251,998	10,251,998	0
Pupil Deprivation Grant - Looked After Children	1,030,400	1,354	1,031,754	1,031,754	0
Pupil Deprivation Grant - Strategic Advisor	100,000	2,787	102,787	102,787	0
Pupil Deprivation Grant - Consortia Led Funding	148,678	6,964	155,642	155,642	0
Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT)	346,769		346,769	346,769	0
ALN Transformation Grant	75,295		75,295	75,295	0
Informal use of Welsh program (ages 3-18)	0	207,720	207,720	207,720	0
Ein Llais Ni – Oracy Scheme	0	210,900	210,900	210,900	0
Total Expenditure	13,775,668	2,874,323	16,649,991	16,601,186	(48,805)

	Opening Budget £	Adjustments £	Revised Budget £	Estimated Expenditure £	Over / (Under) Spend Net £
Income					
Core Service Contributions					
- Anglesey Council (20/21: 10.15% - 21/22: 10.16%)	(429,053)		(429,053)	(429,053)	0
- Gwynedd Council (20/21: 17.63% - 21/22: 17.63%)	(744,676)		(744,676)	(744,676)	0
- Conwy Council (20/21: 15.30% - 21/22: 15.28%)	(645,228)		(645,228)	(645,228)	0
- Denbighshire Council (20/21: 15.30% - 21/22: 15.36%)	(648,731)		(648,731)	(648,731)	0
- Flintshire Council (20/21: 22.68% - 21/22: 22.72%)	(959,441)		(959,441)	(959,441)	0
- Wrexham Council (20/21: 18.94% - 21/22: 18.86%)	(796,417)		(796,417)	(796,417)	0
Specific Projects					
Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant	(7,828,872)	(2,423,126)	(10,251,998)	(10,251,998)	0
Pupil Deprivation Grant - Looked After Children	(1,030,400)	(1,354)	(1,031,754)	(1,031,754)	0
Pupil Deprivation Grant - Strategic Advisor	(100,000)	(2,787)	(102,787)	(102,787)	0
Pupil Deprivation Grant - Consortia Led Funding	(148,678)	(6,964)	(155,642)	(155,642)	0
Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT)	(346,769)		(346,769)	(346,769)	0
ALN Transformation Grant	(75,295)		(75,295)	(75,295)	0
Informal use of Welsh program (ages 3-18)	0	(207,720)	(207,720)	(207,720)	0
Ein Llais Ni – Oracy Scheme	0	(210,900)	(210,900)	(210,900)	0
Income from Secondments	(22,108)	(21,472)	(43,580)	(43,580)	0
Total Income	(13,775,668)	(2,874,323)	(16,649,991)	(16,649,991)	0
Total Income over Expenditure	0	0	0	(48,805)	(48,805)
Memorandum -					
The GwE Surplus Fund					
				Fund balance as at 1 April 2021	(563,530)
				Add/Less - (Under)/Overspend 2021/22	(48,805)
				Less - Use of the Fund	0
				Fund balance as at 31 March 2022	(612,335)



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

22 SEPTEMBER 2021

Report by: Arwyn Thomas, GwE Managing Director

Subject: GwE Regional Business Plan 2021-2022 - Quarter 1 Monitoring Report

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To present the Quarter 1 Monitoring Report - GwE Regional Business Plan 2021-2022 to the Joint Committee.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Business Plan sets out our vision, values and behaviours and the priority areas for improvement across the region.

2.2 Our strategic priorities recognise the present regional and national priorities. The main areas for development were identified through a process of service self-evaluation. The overarching priorities for 2021-2022 were agreed with the Joint Committee on 24 February 2021. This business plan was formally agreed by the Chief Education Officers of each Local Authority, the Joint Committee and the Lead Chief Executive in the Joint Committee meeting on 26 May 2021.

2.3 Progress against the Regional Business Plan is reported on a quarterly basis to the Joint Committee. Attached is the monitoring report for quarter 1.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 The Managing Director and Chair of the Management Board have responsibility for delivering the Regional Plan, as accountable officers. The Joint Committee is ultimately accountable for delivering the plan.

3.2 The GwE Business Planning Framework ensures clarity and strategic harmony in achieving priorities locally, regionally and nationally. Throughout the year, our governance groups inform reports pertaining to our priority streams in the Business Plan.

3.3 Detailed service plans underpin these priorities, which note the support and provision available to all schools in the region. How and when each priority will be achieved is outlined, and expectations set in terms of next steps in realising the reform journey.

3.4 In relation to how GwE will respond to the impacts of post-Covid in the context of Education, detailed service plans address this, along with the Regional Strategy 'Renew and reform: supporting learners' wellbeing and progression'. Through working with partners and key stakeholders and listening to them, we have identified specific themes to support our aim of ensuring that every pupil in north Wales benefits from provision of the highest possible standard. Their mental health and emotional well-being, their relationships and physical health are all essential enablers of good learning. We will support schools to focus on these areas as well as developing the key enabling skills, which include oracy, literacy, numeracy, planning, organising and critical thinking. In addition, the Supporting Improvement Advisers' initial visit to schools at the beginning of the year will focus on the needs of schools, taking into consideration the impact of Covid. Compound information arising from these visits will inform schools' support plans, and we will refine our business plans to reflect this.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 The Joint Committee is asked to approve and accept the monitoring report for quarter 1.

4.2 To decide whether there are any aspects they wish to discuss further in future meetings.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. GwE will operate within current financial resources.

6.0 Equalities Impact

6.1 There are no new equalities implications arising from this report.

7.0 Personnel Implications

7.1 There are no new personnel implications arising from this report.

8.0 Consultation undertaken

8.1 Consultation with GwE Management Board and Joint Committee.

9.0 Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 - Quarter 1 monitoring report

Appendix 2 - Regional Data

OPINION OF STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

Nothing to add from the propriety perspective.

Statutory Finance Officer:

I appreciate the Business Plan, which sets out a clear responsibility for the proper operation of business, risk, and value for money, inter alia. Paragraph 5 of the covering report states that GwE will fund any financial implications arising from the Business Plan within its current budget.



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GwE Business Plan 2021-2022 Quarter 1 Progress Report



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CONTENT

1. GwE Regional Business Plan 2021-2022

- Regional priorities & provision contributing to local authority priorities - Progress report for Quarter 1

2. Appendix: Regional Data

REGIONAL PRIORITIES & PROVISION 2021-2022

Progress report for Quarter 1 (01/04/2021 – 30/06/2021)

OBJECTIVE 1 - CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT

Supporting a national curriculum with equity & excellence at its core that sets high standards for all learners

EDUCATION CONTINUUM 3 TO 16

Ensure support for all schools in responding to the education reform journey, with strong emphasis the four purposes, the 12 pedagogical principles and action research

Extensive high level Reform Journey training for schools leaders has been delivered across the region and will continue next term (refer to Curriculum Realisation). All school leaders have been offered workshops on vision and curriculum planning for Curriculum for Wales (CfW) which has encompassed early thinking on planning for progress and the place of the 12 pedagogical principles in the curriculum.

In secondary schools, teaching and learning leaders in schools have been involved in discussions through forums on what they see as their strengths and development needs for improving pedagogy in their schools, which will feed into the offer from September onwards. On request, some schools have received input on what makes good teaching and learning for progress, with training developed based on the 12 principles. Planning for the Teaching and Learning offer is ongoing.

Ensure good or better use of formative assessment strategies in all schools

GwE and Shirley Clarke Action research project – Tier 3

The Formative Assessment Action Research project (GwE and Shirley Clarke) has been operational in the region since October 2017. The project is developing effectively and is implemented in a pattern of tiers, putting pedagogical principles in action in classrooms on the basis of robust evidence.

A series of 10 virtual review workshops were held during March 2021 to update Tier 3 teachers and to:

- Review the period from March 2020 - aspects of formative assessment that have worked well in distance and blended learning, also any aspects that have proved challenging.
- Gather teachers' views on their future needs regarding support for evolving the project's work in the context of CfW.

Almost all schools noted that the work undertaken on various aspects of the project had impacted positively on the lockdown period. Practices previously established and embedded in schools resulted in a relatively smooth transition to distance and blended learning. E.g., Awareness of Growth Mindset and Learning Powers helped motivate learners and maintain resilience and confidence. Where strategies had not yet been part of teachers' action research and had not embedded yet, it was noted that developing / implementing them in a distance learning situation had been challenging. E.g., Learners found it difficult to motivate themselves, learners not using Learning Intentions and Success Criteria confidently and successfully.

Several schools reported an increase in parents' understanding and awareness of the use of formative assessment strategies over the lockdown period, as they were involved in supporting home learning. E.g., Success Criteria help them to support their child, they gained a better understanding of the school's feedback processes.

It was noted that being able to give continuous verbal feedback on a regular basis, as naturally occurs in the in the classroom floor, has been difficult in a distance learning environment. But, developing distance teaching and use of various digital tools over the year has helped.

In addition to this, Tier 3 teachers have been invited to complete 2 questionnaires to measure the impact of implementing the project on aspects of formal assessment and evidence informed practice. Findings will be available by the end of quarter 2.

Ensure consistency of messages and support for schools regarding the 4 purposes and 12 pedagogical principles across networks, and in training and support provided by GwE

The GwE team have undertaken weekly Reform Journey Professional Learning and collaboration over the past 6 months with Professor Graham Donaldson, and recent coaching training has provided all Supporting Improvement Advisers with a deepened understanding of Curriculum for Wales (CfW) and a strong coaching skill set to be able to support schools in their preparation for CfW from September.

Key features of successful pedagogy during the learning leading up to progression step 1 has been shared with Supporting Improvement Advisers. This has deepened their understanding of how effective learner-centred pedagogy, is key to realising the Curriculum for Wales .

Ensure support for all schools in responding to the education reform journey, with strong emphasis the four purposes, the 12 pedagogical principles and action research

There has been extensive high level Reform Journey training for schools leaders - refer to Curriculum Realisation.

Primary Support - refer to see Objective 2 - Foundation Phase, Literacy, Numeracy, Digital.

Secondary Support - all school leaders have been offered workshops on vision and curriculum planning for CfW which has encompassed early thinking on planning for progress and the place of the 12 pedagogical principles in the curriculum. Teaching and Learning leaders in schools have been involved discussions through forums on what they see as their strengths and development needs for improving pedagogy in their schools, which will feed into the offer from September onwards. On request some schools have received input on what makes good teaching and learning for progress, with training developed based on the 12 principles.

Assessment: Ensure consistency in schools' understanding of the key principles of the new assessment guidance - three purposes of assessment – day to day, identify and capture progress and understand group progress

As part of GwE's weekly workshops for Supporting Improvement Advisers, the key elements of the new Curriculum for Wales Assessment Guidance were introduced to GwE's Supporting Improvement Advisers, giving them the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the key elements of the national guidance. As part of regional presentations for school leaders in the six Local Authorities, the key elements of the new assessment guidelines were introduced in sessions to catchment areas / clusters with possible exemplars of how it could look like within a school.

Transition: Support and co-construct transition procedures for summer 2021 with clusters. Develop cross sector collaboration on transition and the sharing of good practice

Nearly all schools have attended training which has addressed aspects of transition. The GwE team have been upskilled in aspects of transition such as successful strategies for transfer of qualitative information. Initial steps have been taken to address the success criteria, however, these need further attention in autumn term 2021 to ensure impact upon learners, through schools sharing and modelling successful practice and through the AoLE regional work.

CURRICULUM REALISATION (CURRICULUM FOR WALES)

Ensure support for schools in relation to whole-school Curriculum Design and within Areas of Learning and Experience (AOLE)

Supporting schools through the Journey to 2022 providing professional learning for the new curriculum

As part of the support to schools for the new Curriculum for Wales, GwE has worked with the other regional consortia to develop a national professional learning offer that integrates all aspects of the wider reform including Schools as Learning Organisations, Y Gymraeg (towards a million Welsh speakers by 2050) and the Additional Learning Needs Transformational Bill. This cross regional offer is aimed at supporting all school practitioners, and focuses initially on Senior Leaders with the following themes:

- Leading Change
- Leadership for the new curriculum
- Developing a Shared Vision
- Planning for Curriculum Change – to include curriculum design, progression and assessment
- Leading Pedagogy

- Time and Space for Professional Learning

This professional learning offer was originally scheduled to begin in spring term 2020, however was naturally paused due to the priorities of the Covid-19 pandemic. In discussions with Head teachers across GwE, the professional learning resumed virtually in January 2021 with the Leading Change session. These sessions across the region are cluster-based and enable smaller groups of primary schools and their local secondary school to discuss the new Curriculum for Wales across the 3-16 learning continuum. Across the region, 832 Senior Leaders attended these Leading Change sessions. In recognition of the re-opening of schools to all learners in March and April, the Professional Learning sessions were again paused in March 2021. Following discussions with the Directors of Education through the GwE Management Board, a series of consultative workshops were held in April 2021 in each Local Authority to listen to feedback from Head teachers on the professional learning offer and how best to re-engage. Over 300 Head teachers attended the consultations.

To support re-engaging with the Curriculum for Wales work, a further leadership planning session has been developed for each individual cluster across the region to build capacity of clusters to collaborate across the requirements of the reform journey as a whole and form an agreed action plan for each cluster. As part of this, all Supporting Improvement Advisers have facilitated sessions where schools within a cluster have the opportunity to work collaboratively to strategically plan for the implementation of the curriculum. Adopting a flexible and sensitive approach to the timings of these sessions has been a key aspect of the discussions between GwE, the local authority and schools. Activities to support preparations for the new curriculum at school and cluster level have been identified within School Development Plans.

The use of technology to collaboratively develop cluster plans and websites ensure that the dialogue is ongoing and Senior Leaders are able to continue this work, following discussions back at individual school level. In addition to the Professional Learning offer, additional support from GwE is available to schools as they prepare for Curriculum for Wales. This support will be accessed at both cluster and individual school level, including tailored bespoke support where needed.

Further support available to schools also includes a series of 'Think-Pieces' which have been written by the GwE team as part of the weekly reform sessions with Professor Graham Donaldson. These papers, which cover key aspects of the curriculum reform journey including leadership, vision, pedagogy, assessment and curriculum design, have been shared and refined through consultation with wider partners in Local Authorities, Estyn and Bangor University. All senior leaders were invited to attend a webinar in May 2021 to explain and share this work on the Think Pieces.

AREAS OF LEARNING AND EXPERIENCE (AOLE) TEAMS

To deliver a professional learning offer for the 6 AOLES

A key aspect in moving forward will be supporting schools to develop networks across all six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLE). As part of business plan priorities, GwE will invite and facilitate opportunities for school practitioners to engage with peers to consider planning and curriculum design within and across AOLES to meet the needs of all learners to realise the four purposes of the new curriculum.

Individuals will work in partnership with Professor Graham Donaldson, GwE and the six North Wales LAs in developing effective AOLE practice which will help schools on the Reform Journey. The intention is to establish 'local development teams' within each LA who will contribute to regional planning, designing and sharing of curriculum practice. This will be an opportunity for practitioners from all sectors to work collaboratively in their area of interest for up to a maximum of 15 days professional development between now and April 2022 in the first instance.

OBJECTIVE 2- DEVELOPING A HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION PROFESSION

Improving the teaching & learning in our schools

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES (MFL)

To work collaboratively and effectively with various partners to promote languages in both primary and secondary sector across the region.

Promote the teaching and learning of International languages
Provide professional learning opportunities to upskill workforce.

Primary sector:

Lead schools / starter packs - the 9 Lead Primary schools are on track with their completing the video/tutorials to support schools to introduce international languages in their curriculum. These will be posted on the GwE support Centre ready for September 2021.

The teaching and learning of International languages is being promoted through publication of the offer on the GwE Bulletin and the MFL Newsletter and through various presentations in the primary sector. Thus far, 14 schools have registered for the Power Language resources for September 2021. 5 registered and attended the second round of Cerdd Iaith training on 22nd June 2021. This means that together with the training in November / December, 20 teachers across the region have been trained to use the Cerdd Iaith resources.

5 schools have expressed an interest in the OU TELT course for October 2021. 14 teachers are completing the OU TELT course and a follow-up meetings have been arranged to share experiences and plan next steps to develop international languages in their schools and to support other teachers in the region.

Secondary sector:

Continuous support and training has been provided to the 7 MFL NQT in the region through regular meetings. Continuous support has been provided to 4 individual schools following requests from Headteachers. Support is focused on planning, assessment and progression, marking moderation for assessments and CDG. Training was provided to MFL Trainee teachers; focus was on different aspects of MFL teaching and the CfW. Support was provided to individual schools / departments who contacted the GwE team.

Creating Across Languages project (Creative Poetry):

Work and collaboration with Bangor University is advancing well. Video workshops with poets from around the world have been completed and the whole resource will be finalised in July by the team. Schools will trial and develop the resources further and will be working with the team from September 2021.

HLTA - TALP

Maintain the professional development of teaching assistants through implementing the training programme across the region.

Maintain the professional development of experienced teaching assistants through implementing the HLTA programme across the region.

Newly appointed teaching assistants

The effectiveness of the digital 'Induction' programme implemented during 2020-2021 was monitored, revising it in line with feedback and any updates for 2021-22. 103 teaching assistants completed the four modules during 2021-21. As they could access the programme at any time of the academic year it was seen that teaching assistants registered for training at different times of the year. Three registered during the summer term 2021. There has been very positive feedback overall to this training during the year, with the majority noting that training has had a high impact on their practice.

Practising teaching assistants

The training programme for experienced assistants was suspended from March 2020 until the end of the summer 2021, due to the pandemic. Following national discussions, it was decided to adapt the original programme for the digital platform. This programme will be available in September 2021. Facilitators will need training to deliver the programme on a digital platform, dates will need to be agreed for regional training along with contacting clusters that were keen to offer the training to their teaching assistants, to arrange new dates.

Aspiring HLTA

Training was provided for 29 teaching assistants on Cycle 1 of the Aspiring HLTA programme, with 26 (90%) completing the full training programme, that is, 1-day face to face and 8 digital sessions. Prior to starting the digital sessions, 3 teaching assistants decided to transfer to Cycle 2 due to illness and a change of post.

As there was no need to limit numbers when delivering the Aspiring HLTA programme digitally, training was provided for 50 teaching assistants on Cycle 2 of the programme. 49 applications have also been received for Cycle 3, which shows healthy numbers across the region. The last 4 training sessions for HLTA Cycle 2 will be held digitally during October/November 2021.

19 optional individual meetings were held with the HLTA Co-ordinator for Cycle 2 teaching assistants during the term, to make up for the lack of face to face contact. This had a very positive impact, with many teaching assistants improving their reflection on professional learning following these meetings. Comments received by teaching assistants, facilitators and assessors note a much better understanding of Professional Standards and Curriculum for Wales following the training. It was also seen that teaching assistants have valued working with other teaching assistants across the region and nationally, and that their digital skills have improved, with the technical session very helpful in this regard.

HLTA status

Following attending 8 digital sessions for Aspiring HLTAs, 89% of Cycle 1 Aspiring HLTAs applied for the HLTA status assessment. 11% did not achieve the status, either due to not having enough classroom teaching experience or not gaining the level 2 Literacy/Numeracy qualification due to the impact of Covid. These will undergo assessment with Cycle 2 teaching assistants.

21 assessors were recruited and trained across the region for Cycle 1. Each assessment was moderated regionally, and a sample of six moderated nationally. 22/23 were met, with 1/23 'not met yet' due to lack of experience leading whole classes due to Covid.

Y Gymraeg

Cluster Work

Many meetings have been held with the Local Authorities. Consequently, principles have been agreed for the year's work programme. This has led to consistency as regards initial work across the north. In consultation with the Authorities a new dashboard spreadsheet has been created, to collate all the information on planning, costs and reporting on progress that will be presented to schools in September 2021. In addition to the regional group, each Authority has met on a regular basis with the link SIA, and these meetings have been an opportunity to investigate variances, needs and discuss local solutions. These discussions will need to resume early in September to ensure that plans are purposeful and in place to make effective use of the expenditure. It is intended to ensure momentum to the work via a series of follow-up virtual meetings.

Develop informal use of the Welsh language - 'Siarter Iaith' (Language Charter) and 'Cymraeg Campus'

The Siarter Iaith (SI) Co-ordinators have completed progress reports and a composite report is currently being produced and shared with Welsh Government (WG). Funding has been allocated to each cluster to support Siarter Iaith and Cymraeg Campus activities, and the Siarter Iaith Co-ordinators are a part of the discussions with clusters to plan expenditure effectively. Local discussions have also been held on how these activities contribute to the implementation of Authority WESPs (Outcome 3 and 5). A series of meetings have been planned with WG in order to ensure consistency across Wales, and there will be discussions on the roles of SI Co-ordinators across the region. Planning for April 2022 will commence next term.

Develop a Welsh language professional offer, which is a part of the regional Accelerated Learning Strategy

Discussions are ongoing in terms of collaborating with Local Authorities to provide a professional offer for the recovery of the Welsh language, which is a part of the regional Accelerated Learning Strategy (pedagogy and intervention resources to support learners across the ability range). In terms of next steps, we will highlight the provision and the next steps for schools in terms of professional development, ensuring that purposeful attention is given to secondary provision - immersion and using the language in other areas and subjects. It is intended to deliver a series of workshops, which will further deepen the work when embedding the principles of 'Ein Llais Ni' (see below).

Develop the language skills of the workforce

Data has been received by the National Language Centre regarding 'Croeso' on-line training: Practitioners in Education (Part 1 and Part 2, approximately 5 hours each). 94 have registered; 52 have completed Part 1 (units 1-5); and 43 have completed Part 2 (units 6-10).

Sabbaticals Schemes - a Welsh in a year course is being offered in 2 parts in the north this year.

- 12 have been accepted to undertake Part 1 (September-December)
- 9 are going on to Part 2 (January-April) with 8 additional members joining them.
- 5 are on the waiting list for Part 2.

To summarise:

- 12 on the Foundation course (part 1),
- 17 on the Intermediate course (part 2)
- 20 individuals are having access to the courses, with 5 in reserve

Support for GwE staff - 8 have been undertaking the learning Welsh training, completing Unit 5 of the Intermediate course, and are practising for the examination. 4 have committed to the 'Cynllun Siarad' through the National Centre, which are opportunities to chat in Welsh with GwE partners for an hour a week, for approximately 10 sessions. An application has just been submitted, 'Cymraeg Gwaith', for access to further training via the scheme.

Promote the profile of the Welsh language amongst leaders in order to prepare for the Curriculum of Wales and WG's target of a million Welsh speakers:

'Ein Llais Ni' project (ELIN) - a unique scheme to promote learners' oracy skills

This scheme is intended to provide the opportunity to re-ignite and embed listening and speaking skills in curriculum planning for Curriculum for Wales, taking into account international oracy learning and teaching strategies. There is robust collaboration between the University and the Project Team in planning for the research to commence in September 2021. The project will provide an opportunity for schools to collaborate as an action research team in collaboration with Bangor University and GwE with the work funded by the Welsh Government.

A clear path has been developed for the project, providing a very strong foundation for developing the action research. Feedback from schools highlights a real need for this type of support, especially so when considering the impacts of Covid on pupils' oral skills and confidence.

In terms of next steps, we will complete the planning work for launching the work in September and highlight the programme of work for the project across the region.

Leadership Development

Initial mapping of primary literacy network meetings has taken place, with Welsh Networks meeting in the secondary - 27 (a combination of regional and local) (see Welsh and Literacy Business Plan). We will collaborate to plan the workshops that accompany the PL strategy to prepare for CfW, taking into account the content of the leadership programme for developing Welsh language leadership.

Developing Partnerships

Planning meetings have been held with Authorities, which has led to strengthening the collaboration and sharing further resources, highlighting needs across the authorities. In addition, the collaboration has been effective in terms of sharing information and implementation approaches across authorities so as to reduce planning workload.

The national work between the 4 regions in each key stage has continued, which has led to developing commendable resources for the primary and secondary sectors. Meetings enable the development of useful networks, and deepen collaboration based on need in schools.

A LEVEL

Regional deployment of ALPs

The contract for next year has been agreed and some training was undertaken regionally on the use of ALPs in the CDG process (April 2021). ALPs will be available for all schools regionally to input grades and undertake internal evaluation if they wish to.

Developing future leaders: the Post-16 Leadership Course

Following a review of the programme in tandem with the other consortia representatives, the course will be offered again regionally in Autumn 2021.

Developing resilience and independence in learners

Training in the VESPA programme. Further development sessions have been tentatively pencilled in for September / October for heads of 6th form and tutors. Further developments and the shape of these will be dependent on school capacities and needs going ahead.

Networking and sharing of practice across heads of 6th form

This has taken place across all six LAs this term with a sharing of ideas around such topics as UCAS and Sixth Form induction. This will be further developed next year.

E-sgol

Support is continuing for the 6 pilot e-sgol schools and expand their curriculum in year 12. Timetable and new subjects arranged with the 6 schools as well as outside provider mudiad meithrin providing Cam wrth Gam course.

Set up and work with the Regional Strategic board and Regional Operational board to implement actions, which will arise after meeting with LA directors for each for the six authorities to draw out common themes

Meetings have taken place across all 6 authorities. Strategic board has met again. Regional Operational board - this needs key members in each authority. This will be further developed in September.

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

- **Implement collaborative projects in between GwE and Bangor University (CIEREI).**
- **Develop collaborative, large scale close-to-practice research and enquiry across the regional schools.**
- **Promote the use of more evidence-informed strategies across the GwE region.**
- **Expand the involvement in Research and Enquiry of whole school Clusters.**

GwE is working closely with Bangor University on the 'Collaborative Institute for Education Research, Evidence and Impact' (CIEREI) Project to ensure robust evaluation systems for their development programmes and to measure their impact in schools as part of a regional approach. Refer to Re-ignite Learning business plan for further detail on specific projects.

GwE has been working with Welsh Government on the initial phase of the National Strategy for Educational Research and Enquiry (NSERE) in 2021, and this was launched in July 2021. GwE will now be working with Welsh Government to identify six schools in North Wales to form part of the 2021-22 pilot phase of this NSERE initiative. This work continues alongside colleagues from Bangor University in the autumn term.

ITE

Collaborate with the Universities to ensure that initial teacher education and induction is a seamless process.

The 4 consortia and the ITE providers have collaborated this year on a Welsh Government project to improve the mentoring skills of the ITE and the Induction mentor. The 3 day workshops will be co-presented in September, December and May 2022. 4 consortia representatives and ITE colleagues have presented an update on progress to WG in June 2021.

Ensuring strong support for the GwE 2021/22 NQT cohort.

The National NQT 2021-22 database has been developed with many students signing up for the regions. GwE have also supported the introduction of the NQT placement scheme which gives some current STS NQT's and some QTS students an opportunity for whole term placement in one school funded by WG.

Collaborate with Bangor University to develop and train teaching teachers in the primary and secondary sectors.

Recruitment of student teachers is high across the region and has been rising for the past 2 years. The quality of ITE programmes is strong and currently being updated and revised. Links with GwE are effective in providing support and resources to the OU and CaBan Partnerships. This has strong positive impacts upon research, mentoring and provision in lead, associate and partnership schools.

To improve the knowledge and understanding of the positive impact of high quality ITE provision on schools within the region.

Information sharing through forums and sharing best practice sessions has not yet started – planned for Autumn term 2021. The ITE section on the website is regularly updated. GwE staff continue to lecture on ITE programmes

– e.g. continued pedagogy sessions, including involvement of lead schools to ensure sharing of skills and knowledge across the region. With increased awareness in the region of the routes into teaching, schools will be able to identify and support career progression of staff effectively and improve standards of ITE provision in region.

DIGITAL

Digital Resilience

A digital resilience podcast has been recorded to pilot this method of sharing information. Awaiting feedback before developing this further. We have collaborated with Welsh Government to jointly plan a programme of provision for this year, and it will be operational from September 2021.

Developing Digital Leadership

The digital facilitator programme will resume in September 2021. 45 clusters have already selected a facilitator. Welsh Government is in the process of designing a digital learning self-evaluation tool, which will be available to all schools to inform the Digital Professional Learning Journey. No date has been determined yet for the launch of this tool, but it is expected to take place during the autumn term.

Professional Learning Opportunities

Data regarding regional schools' use of the Hwb platform is encouraging, with an average of 98.3% using it on a regular basis. A series of on-line courses on making effective use of Hwb services has been produced, Google for Education, J2E, Flipgrid, Adobe Spark. These courses have been designed on several levels to ensure development for new users and for more experienced users. This training is in the form of a course, available on demand, to ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have access at a convenient time. Thus far, the content has been viewed 4140 times.

Support for the new curriculum

In order to support programming activities and to prepare schools for meeting the computing and programming requirements of the new curriculum, it is intended to start a scheme whereby schools can borrow equipment and a series of supporting resources to support the activities. It is very difficult to start implementing the scheme because of Covid-19 restrictions. We have created a number of supporting resources to support the scheme, and ensured that a set of schools are piloting the equipment and resources.

MATHS AND NUMERACY

Schools causing concern

Primary and Secondary: Bespoke support has continued for regional schools deemed 'at risk' or in ESTYN category. This has resulted in improved planning for the teaching and learning of Mathematics and a greater understanding of how numeracy supports learning across the curriculum. Repeated, regular visits/meetings with schools have involved training staff, collaboratively support them in planning and assessing learner progress, how to track and use this to move learners forward and inform their provision, monitoring the impact of activities to date and identifying and sharing resources pertinent to school/learner needs within the setting.

It has been important to ensure that any improvements being made have been to the benefit of learners during lockdown and its aftermath in school and for the benefit of school as they move towards Curriculum for Wales reform. These three elements have been a consistent message throughout all school support visits/meetings.

Regional support

Primary and Secondary - Personalised Assessments: Literacy and Numeracy SIAs have created a webinar to inform schools fully about the requirements and details of the National Personalised Assessments for reading, numeracy and numerical reasoning. This will be launched on the GwE Support Centre website in September 2021 so that it is ready to inform schools about the newly available Numerical Reasoning Assessment and re-familiarise schools fully with the purpose of these assessments and their relevance for the CfW agenda, for yrs 2-9. Once this resource has been launched, impact data, in the form of views and downloads, will be collated.

Primary and Secondary – 'Pathfinder for Financial Education Professional Learning in Wales' has been delivered in collaboration with Ye/University of Edinburgh and externally funded by MaPS, to support the delivery of financial education across the region (e-learning and face-to-face training). Professional development has provided

practitioners with opportunities to support their learners' knowledge, skills and attitudes in the key areas of financial education, as well as looking at the new Curriculum for Wales and how financial education aligns with this. 'Train the Trainer' training delivered to 10 regional practitioners (including 3 GwE staff), to deliver professional financial education training to other practitioners within their school cluster. Sharing of effective practice/webinars from project schools will be during the Autumn/Spring term.

Primary and Secondary - Precision Teaching and SAFMEDS: see Re-ignite Learning business plan.

Secondary: Bespoke support for schools is delivered on demand. Teaching and learning sessions for newly qualified teachers, led by an experienced teacher on the use of manipulatives have been delivered. Innovation and practice in schools is informed by relevant research with some schools in the region developing their own areas of research / inquiry. These include 'Inquiry approach to teaching', 'Retrieval Practice' and 'Questioning'. Positive impact can be seen on learner progress through use of evidence based pedagogy/ interventions.

Curriculum for Wales

Primary: Network meeting/webinar was conducted to familiarise teachers with the requirements for Literacy and Numeracy within the new framework. Due to the National roll out of the professional offer, all Mathematics and Numeracy AoLE specific training was suspended for this quarter.

Secondary: work is ongoing to ensure:

- Increased teacher confidence in understanding the new curriculum framework.
- Curriculum plans develop the values and dispositions of the four purposes.
- Collaborative planning across phases to ensure progression.
- Improved understanding of the specific disciplines within the Mathematics and Numeracy AOLE.
- Improved knowledge and understanding of the mathematical proficiencies within the Mathematics and Numeracy AOLE.
- Effective and timely delivery of the GwE CfW professional offer.

ENGLISH AND LITERACY

Schools causing concern

Primary and Secondary: Support has continued for schools deemed 'at risk' or in Estyn category. This has resulted in improved planning for the teaching and learning of English and a greater understanding of how literacy supports learning across the curriculum. Repeated, regular visits/meetings with schools have involved training staff, collaboratively support them in planning and assessing learner progress, how to track and use this to move learners forward and inform their provision, monitoring the impact of activities to date and identifying and sharing resources pertinent to school/learner needs within the setting.

Thematic reviews of standards of literacy have been conducted in four secondary schools who are in Special Measures. These reviews have included learning walks and reviewing learner work. An action plan has been drawn up after these reviews and necessary support and training has been provided.

It has been important to ensure that any improvements being made have been to the benefit of learners during lockdown and its aftermath in school and for the benefit of school as they move towards CfW reform. These three elements have been a consistent message throughout all school support visits/meetings.

Regional support

Primary and Secondary: Literacy and Numeracy SIAs have created a webinar to inform schools fully about the requirements and details of the National Personalised Assessments, for reading, numeracy and numerical reasoning. This will be launched on the GwE Support Centre website in September 2021 so that it is ready to inform schools about the newly available Numerical Reasoning Assessment and re-familiarise schools fully with the purpose of these assessments and their relevance for the CfW agenda, for yrs 2-9. Once this resource has been launched, impact data, in the form of views and downloads, will be collated.

Curriculum for Wales

Primary and Secondary: a network meeting/webinar was conducted to familiarise school middle leaders with the requirements for Literacy and Numeracy within the new framework. (Due to the National roll out of the professional offer, all AoLE specific training was suspended for this period.)

THE WELSH LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Sustain and raise standards in teaching Welsh and literacy across the region.

Target support for Welsh departments, and departments in schools causing concern as regards the Languages, Literacy and Communication AoLE.

Network meetings of Heads of Welsh Departments were held during both lockdown periods, mainly to bring departments together and give them an opportunity to discuss and overcome difficulties together. A number of these meetings were arranged collaboratively as a region as well as in smaller networks. All HoDs in the region attended either the collaborative meetings, or the smaller networks. When the time came for centres to determine grades, network meetings were held to offer support with the qualifications assessment framework, and because of the demand for whole school Literacy interventions one meeting was held for every Literacy Co-ordinator and HoD in the region, entitled 'Y Gymraeg ar Garlam'. This proved to be very successful, with co-ordinators and HoDs working together to begin to share resources. It is intended to hold a follow-up meeting in September 2021. The 'Y Gymraeg ar Garlam' meeting brought about the idea of establishing skills working groups across the region during the autumn term 2021, with three working groups meeting to discuss strategies and collate resources for oracy, reading and writing interventions in KS3. These working group meetings will begin early in the autumn term 2021. It is also intended to establish another two working groups that will meet occasionally during the next year - one to target immersion strategies, and the other meeting to discuss primary/secondary transition. Meetings (that developed into workshops) were held with Welsh language NQTs during the year, and it is intended to develop the support for Welsh language NQTs in 2021-22.

Because of the nature of teaching and learning during both lockdowns, an element of training with digital platform tools developed as part of the agenda of network meetings for HoDs. This brought about a series of workshops entitled 'Be' sy'n bosib?' (GwE) to offer specific training on several Google for Education apps. Nearly 150 regional teachers (both primary and secondary) registered to attend these workshops, and on average over 60 teachers attended each individual workshop. A Google Classroom and Microsoft Teams classroom was established to house the workshop resources. Delivering a second series of these workshops during the new year is being considered, with the content of the second series to be decided upon in consultation with teachers. The Welsh Department of two regional schools contributed to a resource shared nationally, a resource on synchronous and asynchronous remote learning.

Regional schools will share resources via a national network on Hwb, 'Y Pair'. Nearly 350 teachers across Wales are now members of this network, and new resources will be added on a regular basis. 'Y Pair' is the home of resources created by the National Working Groups (the four consortia), and this year 9 regional teachers and HoDs joined KS3, KS4 and KS5 working groups, and members also contributed to a live webinar to launch these innovative resources nationally. The work of the National Working Parties, led by the Welsh language officers of the four consortia, will continue next year and new members will be invited to join them. This work will be shared regionally via the GwE Support Centre, and there are plans under way to establish a specific location for Welsh language resources within the GwE Support Centre, entitled 'Y Stordy'. The 'Y Stordy' (GwE) website is in the process of being designed at present. It will, in due course, be an accessible one-stop platform for all the resources and campaigns created and undertaken by the GwE Welsh language team. Hopefully, it will be populated by all schools, clusters and Welsh language networks across the region.

'Y Stordy' will also be a platform for the regional and national oracy project 'Ein Llais Ni'. This is an innovative project promoting speaking and listening skills, funded by Welsh Government. Schools and clusters across the region are invited to join this project, and the first wave of schools will work with Professor Enlli Thomas and Rebecca Ward from Bangor University to research the impact of international strategies to teach oracy in regional schools.

Support the Welsh language in the Curriculum for Wales Reform Journey in the region's schools.

During next term the GwE Welsh language team will offer a programme of specific training for Welsh departments

on their Reform Journey towards the delivery of the Curriculum for Wales. This programme is a combination of recorded webinars and face to face meetings (virtual and live, hopefully) which fit into the work of schools on developing the new curriculum, and are especially for teachers who are teaching Welsh within the Languages, Literacy and Communication AoLE.

SCIENCE

Improve the quality of planning for learning and teaching

Developing the education profession and supporting/improving T & L within schools causing concern and in preparing for the new CfW.

Primary: A primary science webinar was held on 17th May 2021. Around 100 teachers from all over the region attended. GwE worked closely with the Primary Science Teaching Trust (PSTT) to arrange a meeting that included presentations by a local primary science teacher as well as a representative from PSTT and a PSTT science fellow from a school in Cardiff.

The presentations were planned to share the latest information for teachers to deliver and improve the quality of their science teaching as well as sharing real practitioner's ideas and experiments regarding the new CfW AoLE. From the feedback on the evening and many emails and conversations after the event, all the attendees found the webinar very helpful and took away many ideas to try out. Many of the attendees have also used the presentation to plan strategically for science in their school for the short-term next year and by starting to plan for CfW in September 2022. Following the presentation many schools have started experimenting with the CfW ideas shared and at least 3 clusters have contacted the local teacher hoping that she can share her ideas with them next term. The Science Quality Mark was promoted during the evening and this has led to many schools now applying to join this scheme with the aim of improving the quality of their science teaching and learning. With so much positive feedback we will arrange another primary science in the autumn term.

With the PSTT we have continued to offer the termly primary science newsletter. This is mainly prepared by the local PSTT representative with any GwE specific items added. The content of the newsletter again gives schools the latest primary science teaching information, digital resources as well as pointers towards training and science grants.

Secondary: Due to the current situation, we have not been in a position to offer the planned professional learning identified within the business plan. The actions therefore, will be moved into the next academic year.

Bespoke school support around teaching and learning and leadership has been provided by the GwE team to those schools identified by the school SIAs and those that have requested additional support.

School and cluster support has also been provided (when requested) to help the development and direction of the new Curriculum for Wales, and in particularly developing a STEM based curriculum. This has including the development of units of works, supporting enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities and understanding the framework.

A network meeting and professional learning took place in April for early career and NQT teachers of Science. This was well received and they have requested to continue meeting next academic year.

Support teachers and learners across the continuum of learning.

Further development of the TANIO website has continued, and working is ongoing on the platform to include areas for supporting Post 16 and the Curriculum for Wales. The HTML file conversion to increase accessibility of multiple devices is underway. The retrieval roulette resources should be on the website early next term.

FOUNDATION PHASE

To provide bespoke support for schools causing concern, enabling them to drive their own improvement journey

Nearly all schools receiving bespoke support are addressing actions identified by Foundation Phase Supporting Improvement Advisers, impacting positively of provision and outcomes. Most schools have effectively implemented actions to improve the quality of provision and pupil outcomes reducing in-school variance in some schools and greater consistency in the teaching and learning across the region. Support has also ensured a deeper

understanding of the Foundation Phase principles and pedagogy that aligns with the pedagogy within Enabling Pathways guidance and CfW.

To further enhance the provision and pupil progress across all regional schools in preparation for the implementation of Curriculum for Wales.

Ensure good or better use of formative assessment strategies in all schools

Develop cross sector collaboration and the sharing good assessment practice

Develop cross sector collaboration on transition and the sharing of good practice

Cluster support has been delivered across the region focusing on specific aspects of CfW pedagogy and AOLEs. It is too early to measure impact upon provision and outcomes, but impact includes:

- Consistency of messages for schools regarding teaching and learning
- Increase practitioners confidence in their knowledge and understanding of the new curriculum framework.
- Practitioners using a blend of developmentally appropriate pedagogical approaches that responds to learner needs(including emotional and social).

The Foundation Phase Summer term Network meeting focused on the Welsh Government ‘Enabling Pathways’ consultation guidance document i.e. the period of learning leading up to Progression Step 1 (Curriculum for Wales). This has enabled practitioners to develop a better understanding of how it forms part of the CfW framework and provides the firm foundation which all learners need to support development, at their own pace, towards realising the four purposes.

Virtual training sessions have been delivered during this quarter for SMT, Teachers and Teaching Assistants with the focus on developing key and integral skills across AOLEs through effective pedagogy and rich learning experiences. Training sessions very well attended and feedback has been positive. Recording of all training sessions and resources are available on GwEs Support Centre enabling more practitioners to access Professional Learning opportunities.

OBJECTIVE 3 - LEADERSHIP

Supporting inspirational leaders working collaboratively to raise standards. Includes future leadership & professional networks

LEADERSHIP

Continue to offer a wide range of Professional Learning opportunities in relation to leadership developmental programmes in order to develop present and future leaders

All modules of each Leadership Programme to date (with exception to the Experienced Headteacher Programme) have been successfully completed to the timetable set out in the original plan. We are on track to be completing the Middle Leadership Development Programme (MLDP), and Senior Leaders Development Programme (SLDP), by the end of the calendar year. The Aspiring Headteacher Development Programme (NPQH) will hold the Assessment Centre in February 2022 and the New and Acting Headteachers Programme by the end of this educational year.

Informal comments gathered from individuals delivering and running these programmes state that leaders participating in the programmes are showing a general increased confidence and understanding of effective leadership when discussing their leadership roles back in schools.

Informal evaluations/comments from participants state that the use of Intersessional/Intermodular tasks are valued – in particular to do some Independent reading and research prior to the development sessions. Participants feel better prepared for the formal sessions, and this has led to quality group discussions and has placed a further emphasis on individuals reflective practice and ownership of their own professional learning.

Formal feedback from participants on the current SLDP programme has been very positive. Out of 22 interim evaluations to date, 20 have rated the programme so far as being very good or excellent. In general, the participants state that they appreciate the detailed, interesting evidence based presentations, the chance to network and build a community of like-minded professionals, virtual aspects such as breakout group discussions and manageable two hour sessions. They have enjoyed the sessions and value the opportunity to self-reflect, to learn how to lead people and to focus on driving school leadership task. They also have benefited from

the support of Coaches who are effective practicing school leaders and current practitioners who have presented as part of the development modules. Identified areas for further development include more Breakout/networking opportunities. Participants would also like some face to face sessions, though they appreciate this is not currently appropriate due to COVID restrictions.

Constant and consistent evaluation and content refinement of the programmes have ensured the ability to adapt to the relevant needs of current schools leaders, in regards to the National Agenda, CfW in particular. This has also allowed us to be mindful of the needs of school leaders during the global pandemic, ensuring that they develop the tools and resilience to lead during challenging times.

GOVERNORS

In agreement with LAs, offer professional learning opportunities in Education Reform.

As part of the ongoing support for Governors Professional Learning, a number of presentations have been delivered across the region with the aim of introducing Governors to the Curriculum for Wales framework. These sessions have been well attended in all Local Authorities enabling all governors who attend have a better understanding of the aspects delivered, have increased confidence when supporting their schools and are able to contribute more strategically to governing body discussions.

Provide pre inspection training for Governors on Estyn's expectations during inspection.

Pre-inspection training has not been required during this quarter. Additional support has been available for schools in categories. In 2021 – 2022 GwE will work with schools to ensure that Governors are aware of their responsibilities regarding preparation for inspection during the 3 weeks leading into the visit.

Provide targeted support for Governors within schools on aspects which their Self Evaluation have identified as in need of improving.

No targeted support has been requested this quarter. GwE will support governors to have a better understanding of the aspect in need of improvement and the confidence to self improve.

ALLIANCES / NETWORKS / CLUSTERS

Collaborate with school leaders at all levels to further enhance the role and contribution of the primary / secondary clusters, the secondary alliances and the various regional networks in addressing regional and national priorities.

Almost all schools have engaged effectively with local 'alliances' or 'clusters' where they have collaborated with peers to identify, develop and share blended learning resources. The number of school-to-school resources available via the GwE Support Centre now totals over 200 and the number of 'visits' since launch is almost 40,000 with the number of resources downloaded since launch reaching nearly 8,000.

For secondary schools the work has also included supporting alliance partners with processes re: preparation for the awarding of grades in 2021.

All secondary and primary schools are actively involved in CfW Cluster collaboration. During the Spring/Summer term they have engaged in CfW workshops [*Leading change, Developing shared vision and Curriculum change sessions 1, 2, 3*]. Support is now being targeted to ensure that all schools will have a clear plan identifying actions for 2021-22 so that they are in a position to meet new statutory requirements for September 2022. Each plan will identify how schools address specific aspects including professional learning to support all staff; deployment of grants; trialling and evaluating approaches within curriculum design across all 6 AOEs and wider engagement with stakeholders. SIA contact during the first half term of Autumn 2021 will focus on ensuring that each school has a plan in place.

To further support schools with this work, AOE Networks at regional and local levels will be operational from September. All leaders and teachers in all schools were recently given an opportunity to express an interest in collaborating with GwE to develop effective practice across 8 key areas/aspects, namely :

- Whole school Curriculum Design
- Unpacking the potential of one of the AOEs
 - ✓ Language, Literacy and Communication (both Welsh and English)
 - ✓ Mathematics and Numeracy

- ✓ Science & Technology
- ✓ Humanities
- ✓ Health and Wellbeing
- ✓ Expressive Arts
- Assessment

Level of interest has been high with nearly 300 applicants and work is currently being undertaken to establish the teams. During the Autumn and Spring Terms team members will have the opportunity to:

- work collaboratively with a group of peers supporting curriculum design on a local level and support AOLE development on a regional level.
- communicate and cascade learning and successful practice across the schools within the local authority.
- attend regional professional learning and discussion forums under the facilitation of Professor Donaldson
- contribute to developing planning and design models to support schools in trialling, evaluating and preparing the workforce for first teaching

OBJECTIVE 4 - STRONG & INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

Committed to excellence, equity & well-being

PDG LAC

**To further develop & implement the national PDG strategy across the region.
Embed the PDG LAC cluster/alliance model across the region.**

The focus this quarter has been to implement a clear and consistent communication plan for the LAC PDG 2021/22 with all SIAs/Core Leads targeting all LA Head teachers' forums / clusters in regards to the plan/dashboard and mitigating any key concerns.

GwE have continued to contribute and influence the national PDG WG group in regards to PDG support plan.

GwE have continued to support schools who have been referred by SIA/Core Lead in regards to Health and Wellbeing/Supporting Vulnerable Learners/LAC/PDG as required. In addition GwE have been targeting schools/clusters who have high numbers of LAC and is need of further guidance or whom may be of concern.

The GwE Support Centre continues to be a point of referral for all settings and work is continuing to further enhance the resources.

The Professional Learning offer has been finalised following discussion with both LA key officers and some clusters to ensure quality of targeted offer, to avoid duplication and to identify gaps/needs.

GwE's cohort 6 Diploma in Trauma Informed Schools has been fully subscribed (27) with 2 members of GwE team on the course. This is one area where we need to further build capacity.

The regional Early Years PDG non maintained group/network with all 6 LA have meet and terms of reference has been agreed.

Focus has been on working with Wellbeing Leads in each of the LA and Healthy Schools in regards to the whole school approach and the mapping of wellbeing across the region.

The regional LACE/GwE network have also meet, and 6 additional individual meetings have taken place with each LA to discuss local need/concerns.

WORKFORCE WELLBEING (GwE and Schools)

**To support the emotional well-being of the individual in the context of their professional role.
Placing health and wellbeing at the heart of everything we do.**

Our main priority during this time of unprecedented change and disruption has been the safety and well-being of our children and our workforce, doing all we can to support the physical and mental well-being of our children,

young people and workforce throughout this period. There has been a focus on a variety of aspects within the wellbeing agenda e.g. resilience, adapting to a changing environment, personal reflection, action learning etc:

- Providing 'Reflective Spaces' - providing block of sessions with Dr Coral Harper or Mike Armiger. Dr Coral Harper and Mike Armiger have committed to working across the region from September 2021 and have doubled the capacity of Reflective Spaces available to Senior Leaders.
- Group session for TIS practitioners with Coral Harper. 1 session per term. 6 groups throughout the year.

Use a coaching framework in conversations, meetings and everyday leadership to unlock potential and encourage individual growth.

This is ongoing with 12 staff undertaking the ILM Level 7 Executive Coaching and Mentoring course. From the 12 following the ILM course, 4 have started sessions as part of the National 'Reflective Space' pilot supporting colleagues from other Consortia areas with session been offered bilingually.

WHOLE SCHOOL WELLBEING (AOLE)

Promoting 'Ethically Informed Citizens of Wales'

Develop a Whole School Approach to wellbeing.

Co-create Whole School Wellbeing resources with schools from across the region

TEDxGwE Initiative

As a service we linked with the UN Climate Neutral Now scheme two years ago to offset GwEs emissions for travel. We further developed this relationship by supporting the '100 school challenge'. As we move closer to the UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow during November 2021, we decided to take further action by developing the TEDxGWE Initiative.

TEDx is a global initiative to champion and accelerate solutions to the climate crisis, turning ideas into action. There will be a set of community led events hosted around the world; we have registered and have the licence for TEDxGWE.

GwE will hold a TEDxGwE event on 5th November 2021 for children and young people across north Wales. GwE will be the lead but we are currently developing a north Wales partnership and links with, Natural Resources Wales, Wrexham Glyndwr University, Theatre Clwyd, Do Well Ltd, Tales to Inspire and RENEW Wales.

In north Wales we want to use TEDxGWE as a catalyst to open up a conversation with leaders in public, private and third sectors, communities and our children and young people about the collective challenge we all face and turn the ideas from the children and young people in north Wales into action. Our mission is to unite our region to tackle climate change as we see this as a perfect vehicle to develop the Ethically Informed aspect of Curriculum for Wales.

We want to work with children and young people, using their voices to spark a region wide conversation to drive actions by bringing people together to understand the challenge and explore the most effective co created and evidence based solutions, ensuring we all rise to the challenge. The goal of global TEDx events is to answer five key interconnected questions that help inform a plan for a cleaner future:

- Energy - How rapidly can we switch to 100% clean power?
- Transport - How can we upgrade the way we move people and things?
- Materials - How can we re-imagine and re-make the stuff around us?
- Food - How can we spark a worldwide shift to healthier food systems?
- Nature - How do we better protect and re-green the earth?

Schools will be able to register for the event and submit a 60 second video using FlipGrid. The videos will be collated and shared with a wider audience. Schools will receive a resource pack to support participants in developing a TED talk so they can share their stories, issues, thoughts and actions needed to build a better future. RENEW Wales will fund the resource packs and mentors.

STRATEGY TO SUPPORT PARENTS / CARERS

Lead, manage and co-ordinate the field of supporting parents and carers with their child's learning.

Ensure effective implementation of the role out of "Help your child to Learn" to schools and parent's and carers across Wales.

Ensure appropriate cohesiveness and capacity to provide high quality regional resources in this area.

The regional group has been established with representation from GwE and the each LA. They met during the Summer term. Resources were shared and next steps were identified and agreed:

- The resource developer to work alongside GwE in sharing information with school to monitor progress and collate feedback to identify the way forward.
- Explore the possibility of developing resources for pupils with ALN.
- Roll out the resources to Year 7 and 8.
- Explore the viability of developing resources for secondary pupils. The resource developer to attend secondary head teacher forums.
- Developing resources or links to promote well-being as part of the package.
- GwE Senior Leader to discuss availability of codes for home educators with the management board.
- Create a social media pack for schools to promote the resource to their parents.

The materials were introduced to Primary Head Teacher Forums in all 6 Local Authorities. The response has been positive across the board.

SIAs have the codes for their clusters and an explanatory video. This has been shared with 27 of the 54 clusters, the PRUs and special schools to date.

The resource developer has attend 3 of the 6 secondary head teacher forums and the response has been positive. 1 LA now has the codes for year 7 and 8.

The remaining primary clusters will have received the video and codes by the end of the summer term; secondary clusters by half term (Autumn).

The social media pack has been produced bilingually and will be shared with schools via the SIAs by the end of the Summer term. The resource developer has produced a short promotional video following requests from schools, the bilingual version will be ready by September.

RE-IGNITE LEARNING

Implement programmes which aims to mitigate the effects of school closures on pupils' reading and writing attainment in both English and Welsh.

Evidence-based teaching strategy designed to help pupils improve their fluency and progress in mathematics.

Develop online resources suitable for both school staff and parents to enable use of these interventions to assist the reading development of children over the next school year.

Continue to develop and produce a suite of universal support materials for secondary maths and secondary literacy.

Remote Instruction of Language and Literacy (RILL) – PHASE 2 - The RILL research team commenced Phase 2 work at the start of May 2021. They have now completed the adaptations to the original asynchronous/synchronous version of RILL developed in 2020, and these now include an adapted version for in-class use and also for parents and carers. Invitations for schools to attend training in the summer and autumn terms 2021 were circulated in June 2021 GwE SIAs attended regional heads' forum meetings to explain the programme. RILL was received very positively in these meetings, especially the new, bespoke Welsh version. The research team have produced some very high quality materials for schools. Early recruitment numbers are very good, and we envisage them to increase steadily as schools plan for the autumn term.

Precision Teaching and SAFMEDS

Research study attached to this project will not commence until September 2021. This will include:

- Monthly 'drop-in' sessions accessible to all regional schools
- Bespoke training to regional schools and PRU
- Promote SAFMEDS through the Bulletin and GwE Support Centre
- Creation of bilingual resources ready to launch in due course:
 - SAFMEDS online tutorial

- SAFMEDS bespoke online website
- SAFMEDS revised training for hand-held cards
- Introduction to Precision Teaching training
- Additional Phase SAFMEDS hand-held cards to extend breadth of coverage from the Numeracy Framework
- Commissioned creation of new Learning materials – these can be used as targeted and universal provision, targeting regular retrieval practice and fluency development

Drop-in SAFMEDS sessions – 6 session containing multiple teachers.

Viewing figures for SAFMEDS webinar:

- Welsh – 100 (457)
- English – 171 (927)

Improving fluency in Oral Reading (iFOR)

The iFOR research team commenced work at the start of May 2021. They have now completed the adaptations to the original materials developed in 2020, including new graded stories in both languages and also adapted parent and carer materials and guidance. Invitations for schools to attend training in the summer and autumn terms 2021 were circulated in June 2021 and RW and VL attended regional heads' forum meetings to explain the programme. These materials were received very positively in these meetings, especially the new, bespoke Welsh versions. The research have produced some very high quality materials for schools. Early recruitment numbers are very good, and we envisage them to increase steadily as schools plan for the autumn term.

Secondary maths

The Maths.Cymru website has developed to include resources to support interventions at KS4 and KS3. At KS4, there are resources available to support the foundation and intermediate tiers, with the higher tier being available before September 2021. These resources include instructional videos, worksheets and answers suitable for GCSE learning and an example of a GCSE question being completed in a video clip.

At KS3, the resources for number have been developed and will all be available before September 2021. These include a pre and post assessment powerpoint, resources to support learning which include links to instructional video clips, exemplar questions and tasks for learners to complete and self-mark.

Knowledge of the website and the resources for KS4 has been shared with the HOM regionally during 2020 and for KS3 has been shared with the Numeracy Coordinators regionally during 2020/21. Using the established forums has proven effective.

A few schools are working on trialling the use of the Maths.Cymru resources to support learners with their RRRS programmes. Support has been provided as needed and these projects are currently in their initial stages. Review of progress needed in the Autumn term. Two schools who are developing the project – both in Gwynedd.

Secondary literacy

Developments have been made to the Herio website resources to support learners' basic literacy skills. These are being used across the region. 11 schools are implementing the 'Building Reading Power' intervention programme. Five training sessions have been held and all schools have attended these sessions. Support materials have been developed and progress will be reviewed in the Summer term.

OBJECTIVE 5 - SUPPORTING A SELF IMPROVING SYSTEM

Supporting a system in which the education profession have the skills, capacity & agency to continually learn & improve their practice

PEER ENGAGEMENT

Further develop peer review processes within schools to support robust self-evaluation and improvement planning at all levels.

To build leadership capacity across the system.

To embed peer review as a key aspect of school improvement across the region.

To continue to develop the collaborative systems within G6 that facilitate schools peer engagement processes.

A regional set of principles for peer engagement was agreed with Head teachers prior to the COVID pandemic and a peer review model (*School Partnership Programme*) was shared with stakeholders and endorsed by the Management Board and Joint Committee.

Continuous training and support has been provided to all GwE Supporting Improvement Advisers (SIAs) on peer review, facilitation, mentoring and coaching. There are 22 SIAs who have been trained as peer reviewers and improvement facilitators as part of the *School Partnership Programme*. Six SIAs have been fully trained as programme presenters and are able to deliver the *School Partnership Programme* training to schools and clusters. Further capacity to deliver training will need to be built over the coming months to include school based staff.

Twelve clusters (72 schools) have received the *School Partnership Programme* training and have either commenced or are planning to participate in peer review during the summer term/early autumn term 2021. 97 head teachers/senior leaders have been trained as peer reviewers across the region. 92 senior/middle leaders and talented teachers have been trained as '*improvement facilitators*'. This has provided good professional learning for leaders and teachers, and will contribute to enhancing leadership capacity across the region. All participating primary schools and clusters have received update training during the beginning of the summer term 2021. Update training for participating secondary schools/clusters is planned for early autumn 2021. All special schools in the region participated in full training during the summer term 2021.

A schedule is in place to offer *School Partnership Programme* training to a new cohort of schools and clusters. It is planned to train approximately 15 clusters each term during the academic year 2021-22 so that all 407 regional schools and PRUs are participating in the peer review programme by the end of the year. The programme will be aligned to the development of the new curriculum so as to support schools and clusters to evaluate their progress in implementing the reform journey.

COACHING AND MENTORING

Provide Coaching and Mentoring training

The Core Team of 12 GwE staff members have received 8 training sessions for the ILM Level 7 qualification 'Certificate for Executive and Senior Level Coaches and Mentors'. The team members are also undertaking their practical assignment, which is to coach 2 Senior Team members, who are in GwE schools. A training programme for the academic year from September 2021 will be arranged and provided by this core team. Even though peer work has not been undertaken regarding supervision yet, the 12 team members have been supporting each other's development as coaches, and continue to do so.

Support Professional Learning in Coaching and Mentoring

National 'Reflective Space' activities have commenced. Everyone has received the name of a coachee at the start of this half term and made contact via e-mail, and many coaching sessions have taken place.

Applications for the Induction Mentors scheme have been received; 25 of the applicants will go on to attend the national programme (July 2021).

SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN

National SCC Pilot Programme

The region has worked with WG and Estyn to establish a multi-agency panel for the 4 schools which are in Special Measures. Initial meetings will have taken place in all 4 schools by 5 July. From September 2021, each school will benefit from an agreed bespoke 'holistic' support plan through a multi-agency agreement and initial discussions around what should be captured within those plans are currently being undertaken. In two of the schools, GwE have collaborated with Estyn to identify key milestones for the improvement journey and to define what improvement should look like at each milestone. A similar approach will need to be adopted for the other 2 schools.

Strengthening regional structures and processes to support and challenge SCC

In response to the national approach to schools in Special Measures, regional processes for supporting, monitoring and challenging schools which are causing concern have been reviewed by a *Task and Finish* working party

consisting of GwE Advisers and senior officers from each of the 6 LAs. To date, there have been 6 meetings and actions have included:

- identifying how revised structures and processes could improve effective flow of information between the various tiers and ensuring that responsibilities re: decision making are clear to all.
- agreement to establish a Multi agency group for all SCC in each of 6 LAs. Guidelines for terms of reference and membership outlined.
- agreement on high level *Thresholds and Triggers* to identify SCC [*Strand 1 : Standards, T+L, Assessment and Leadership; Strand 2 : Finance, HR, Management Services; Strand 3 : Inclusion, Attendance, Wellbeing and ALN*]
- agreement that all SCC to have a holistic 360 support plan.
- agreement that the local multi agency group would take an overview of monitoring progress for each school and where concerns escalate, would report up to a Local QB chaired by the DoE/HoS. Guidelines for terms of reference and membership to be agreed locally.
- agreement on a common set of values and behaviours which will underpin the work across the region.
- agreement on definition for schools to be identified on a continuum of autonomy towards becoming a self-improving School [thus avoiding the stigma of categorisation and Estyn 'speak'].
- initial planning undertaken for regional workshops for advisers and officers to ensure common approaches and consistency in identification of 'concerns' , in support strategies and in quality of reporting. Workshops to be delivered in autumn term.

Ensure that all SCC are engaging effectively with national and regional programmes of support for CfW and with peer engagement, alliance/cluster and wider networking

All SCC have engaged with the CfW workshops and have been involved in follow-up discussions with their link SIA. Planning for CfW will be included as part of their revised PIAP/SDP from September. All SCC have been involved in local 'alliances' where they have collaborated with peers to identify, develop and share blended learning resources and supported alliance partners with processes re: preparation for the awarding of grades in 2021. AOLE Networks at regional and local levels will be operational from September. We will need to ensure that all SCC are fully engaged with the regional and local AOLE Networks.

SCHOOLS AND SERVICE AS LEARNING ORGANISATIONS (SLO)

Ensure that GwE and its workforce continue to respond to all the requirements and values of Learning Organisations.

Assist those schools across the region that have not addressed SLO to restart the process successfully, therefore supporting their CfW reform journey.

It is intended to arrange professional learning for all service staff during the autumn term 2021 to update them on SLO requirements. SLO portfolio leaders will analyse and identify the main messages arising from the survey for GwE staff, and identify further aspects to develop. The analysis and main messages will be shared with the senior team in the first instance, before disseminating to the rest of the staff. Discussions are to be held with the Management Board regarding collaboration with the local authorities to ensure that engagement in this aspect by the schools improves and also give the authorities the opportunity to complete the survey.

A short bilingual webinar will be offered to all regional schools to raise awareness of SLO and the link with CfW and the reform journey.

SIAs will promote the use of the SLO survey as a starting point for schools to identify their needs in terms of further developing the 7 dimensions and will signpost schools to the survey on Hwb, and work with the school following analysis to identify dimensions to develop further.

Training for governors to raise awareness of the principles of SLOs is available in the provision for Governors in each LA.

A presentation was delivered in the international ICSEI conference in March 2021 with colleagues from New Zealand, British Columbia, England, Germany and Australasia - symposium entitled: Harness schools as learning organisations to realise system change during and beyond Covid-19. Follow-up sessions will contribute and share

practice across GwE in an academic paper looking at SLOs and the 4 transversal themes.

Promote the launch of the NEIR [National Evaluation and Improvement Resource] with all regional schools - 6 schools from the north have been involved in preparing resources for the national tool. A formal launch has now been postponed until November. Estyn and WG need to identify 90 schools from across Wales to pilot further - GwE will collate the names of interested schools.

Due to the pandemic the demands on schools have been crippling as they have coped with the day to day operational issues of running a school. As both lockdowns eased, schools have engaged very well with PL in terms of the Curriculum for Wales Reform Journey.

It may be that schools have not realised this, but their development over the periods of lockdown has been significant - especially so as we consider the 4 transversal themes of Time, Technology, Trust and Thinking Together. Several of the dimensions have also been well addressed, for example promoting team learning, creating ongoing learning opportunities, learning through the external environment.

QUALITY ENHANCEMENT FRAMEWORK

Develop schools use of the Four Purposes as part of the Quality Enhancement Framework to evaluate current practice and priorities.

Creating greater synthesis across the priorities for the Four Purposes.

“Matching Service” to align areas of expertise with areas for development.

Planned actions for completion from the Autumn term onwards:

- All schools to undertake an initial evaluation using the framework by Autumn Half term 2021. This work to be promoted by the SIA. Rollout of the Framework to all schools across the region is planned for the first half term of the Autumn term 2021 through SIA presentation to cluster or individual schools.
- Collate the information from across the region and identify authority specific and regional priorities - Utilising the shared One drive in Office 365 to host the Framework will allow the data unit to analyse the findings by Authority as well as region wide.
- Core Leads to facilitate matching service for schools in their authority - data team to provide Core Leads with authority specific overview so that they can facilitate the matching Service as appropriate.
- Schools using the SPP Alliances and Cluster arrangements to respond to priority areas - work being undertaken in collaboration with EDT to ensure that the SPP framework supports responding to CfW challenges for schools. Use of the framework will be incorporated therefore into SPP peer review and improvement facilitator practice.

OBJECTIVE 6 – BUSINESS

Ensure that GwE has strong governance and effective business and operational support that provides value for money.

Performance Management and Accountability

The clear and robust accountability framework in a key strength in GwE. Detailed business plans on all levels of planning address all aspects of the work of GwE, and clearly note the contribution of the service to the transformation agenda. Plans are fully costed, with clear success criteria and milestones for delivering objectives.

There are detailed self-evaluation arrangements. Plans are reviewed on a quarterly basis, evaluating progress and impact. Staff on all levels fully understand their responsibility for continued improvement and accountability.

Each Local Authority has a detailed business plan agreed upon by the head of service and the core adviser. Progress towards agreed outcomes on a local authority level is monitored on a quarterly basis and discussed regularly in meetings between the lead adviser and Local Authority. Ongoing issues are referred to GwE Senior leaders in a timely manner.

Self-evaluation is a strong feature in GwE and the self-evaluation process is cyclical and ongoing. Great emphasis is placed on accountability and continuous review, and there is consistent emphasis on progress in line with priorities. Consequently, GwE leaders accurately identify areas of good performance and areas for development, or areas where there is an element of risk in terms of improving experiences and educational outcomes for learners.

Value for Money

The consortium has effective financial management processes in place. Communication and consultation on financial arrangements is effective, and GwE staff, the host local authority and Joint Committee all review the core funding and grant expenditure on a regular basis.

A robust financial analysis supports the work of delivering the business plan. A medium term financial plan and workforce plan are both aligned with the business plan. Through increasingly effective use of data to identify key priorities, the link between the business planning process and decisions regarding financial planning is strengthened as the work streams that underpin the business plan clearly note the resources to be used.

A formal framework was produced to assess the wider value for money provided by GwE. The judgement is now consistent across all stakeholders on how to measure the value for money of GwE activities within the structure and objectives of the business plan.

Risk Register

There are rigorous and comprehensive arrangements in place to accurately identify and manage risks on a local, regional and national level. The risk register is a live document, which is updated on a regular basis in order to identify increasing risks or risks which are no longer deemed as high level. It is reviewed every month in a senior leadership meeting and the Management Board and the Joint Committee review the register on a quarterly basis.

Through effective management of risks to the region, GwE is able to support the region's objectives, make effective use of resources and meet the outcomes as intended.

Information sharing systems

The effectiveness of Tableau /Analytics as an analysis tool for G6 shared with SLT. Accounts created initially for SLT members with expected rollout for Core leads planned in the Autumn term 2021. Information from the analysis tool already being used effectively to inform system reports such as ALN transformation engagement and also schools engagement with the CfW professional learning offer. Additional dashboards to analyse GCSE and A-level results to administer and report on the professional learning courses offered regionally are planned.

Effective work has been undertaken by the ALN team and Link SIA's to ensure that schools begin to re engage with G6 post pandemic lockdowns. In particular this has focused on the ALN transformation milestones leading to an increase of schools engaging with and completing the status for their current progress. This has led to a clearer understanding of the requirements for areas needing further support.

Generally the volume of activity by schools on G6 has decreased due to the pandemic but the number of school staff who booked on courses offered by GwE has increased dramatically from 3735 bookings in 2019/20 to 7819 in 2020/21. This is partly due to the availability of on line courses which allows greater flexibility but also reflects the need to support schools with new developments including changes to the curriculum, ALN transformation, managing change and improving digital skills.

A rolling programme of induction and support has been provided to new Head teachers and SLT members across the region both virtually and in face to face visits. In addition an increasing number of schools have now acquired admin rights for their own G6 staff accounts. As a result these schools are now able to manage their own account structures for their organisation.

Lead individuals have collaborated effectively with the digital team to further develop the potential of the GwE Support Centre. Whilst submissions of work to the School to School arena have dwindled as the lockdowns ended regional engagement with the GwE Resource area continues to increase steadily. A new steering group will be formed in September 2021 to plan further developments.

Schools across the region have continued to make effective use of the Grants Dashboard in the shared drive of Office 365. Currently nearly 75% of schools have accessed the shared environment and we will look to increase the coverage as new features are developed and rolled out. A new Dashboard for the forthcoming Financial year will shortly be made available. The Autumn term will see the addition of the Quality Enhancement Framework to the shared drive in Office 365.

2. APPENDIX 1

Regional Data.



GWE

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Appendix 2: Regional data Quarter 1



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2021-2022 BUSINESS PLAN

REGIONAL PRIORITIES & PROVISION 2021-2022

Regional data

OBJECTIVE 1 - CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT

Supporting a national curriculum with equity & excellence at its core that sets high standards for all learners

EDUCATION CONTINUUM 3 TO 16

Regional data:

GwE and Shirley Clarke project – Tier 3

Total schools across the region who have participated in Tiers 1, 2 and 3:

	Schools	Teachers
Tier 1	27	54
Tier 2	193	386
Tier 3	140	261
Total	260	701

- 89% of the region's schools
- 96% Primary
- 80% Secondary
- 70% Special

Assessment Data

A series of training sessions were held across the region as part of Curriculum for Wales planning guidance for school leaders. 243 schools attended from the region - 210 Primary, 28 Secondary and 5 Special.

CURRICULUM REALISATION (CURRICULUM FOR WALES)

Regional data:

Curriculum for Wales Workshops:

- % who've attended 1 session or more - 80.3%
- 54 sessions
- 108 hours of Professional Learning
- 1155 attended the sessions = 2310 hours of Professional Learning for school leaders

AOLE TEAMS

Regional data:

Numbers who have declared an interest in contributing to the ongoing support programme for schools in relation to the Reform Journey:

Whole Schools Curriculum Design	Assessment	Unpacking the AOLES
154	118	204

OBJECTIVE 2- DEVELOPING A HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION PROFESSION

Improving the teaching & learning in our schools

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Regional data:

- Schools trained / Cerdd iaith: 21
- Power Language resources new subscriptions : 14
- Open University 2020-2021: 14 teachers trained
- Continuous Support to secondary schools: 4
- Number of schools / Network meetingy: 26 schools / 31 teachers

HLTA - TALP

Regional data:

- Newly appointed teaching assistants:
 - 2020-21: 110
 - Summer 2021-22 - 3
- Aspiring HLTA Cohort 2: 50
- HLTA Status Cohort 1:: 22
- HLTA assessors: 21
- Google classroom for assistants: 1898 by Summer 2021

Y Gymraeg (PL)

Regional data:

- Sabbatical Scheme, Welsh in a Year Course 2020-21 (completion Summer 2021): 11
- 'Croeso' on line training: Practitioners in Education:
 - Registered: 94
 - Completed part 1: 52
 - Completed part 2: 43

A LEVEL

Regional data:

- Networking and sharing of practice across heads of 6: 20

DIGITAL

Regional data:

- Regional Hwb Engagement Quarter 1: 98.3%

MATHS AND NUMERACY**Regional data:**

- Primary schools causing concern/bespoke support: 7
- Financial Education:
 - Number registered to complete e-learning: 87
 - Number trained 'Face to Face': 56

ENGLISH AND LITERACY**Regional data:**

- Schools causing concern: 5

WELSH AND LITERACY**Regional data:**

- Joint and smaller network meetings: 27
- 'Y Gymraeg ar Garlam' meeting: 27 schools (representatives of the schools are heads of departments and Literacy coordinators)
- 'What's possible?' (GwE) digital workshops: 148 teachers (primary / secondary) in the region registered to attend the series of workshops
- National workshops KS3, KS4 & 5 2020-21: 9
- NQT meeting 'Y Gymraeg' 2020-21: 9

SCIENCE**Regional data:**

- Primary Science Webinar 17th May 2021 - Registered Attendees: 79
These are the number of teachers who registered. The numbers on the webinar at the time was around 100.

FOUNDATION PHASE**Regional data:**

- Bespoke support for schools: 24
- Bespoke support for clusters: 3
- Training and FP network meeting: 1,384

OBJECTIVE 3 - LEADERSHIP

Supporting inspirational leaders working collaboratively to raise standards. Includes future leadership & professional networks

LEADERSHIP**Regional data:**

1. Middle Leadership Development Programme: 98

Appendix 2

2. Senior Leaders Development Programme: 61
3. Aspiring Headteacher Development Programme (preparing for NPQH): 71
4. New and Acting Headteacher Development Programme: 46
5. Experienced Headteacher Development Programme: 17

TOTAL: 294

ALLIANCES / NETWORKS / CLUSTERS

Data Rhanbarthol / Regional data:

- Number of secondary schools participating in alliance collaboration: 53
- Number of primary schools participating in cluster collaboration: 331
- Number of secondary schools participating in CfW cluster collaboration: 54
- Number of primary schools participating in CfW cluster collaboration: 331
- Number of secondary school staff involved in regional CfW team [Curriculum Design, Assessment, AOLESx6]: TBC
- Number of primary school staff involved in regional team [Curriculum Design, Assessment, AOLESx6]: TBC

OBJECTIVE 4 - STRONG & INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

Committed to excellence, equity & well-being

PDG LAC

Regional data:

- Individual School Visits/Support: 20
- Head Teachers forums/Clusters: 7
- LA LACE officers: 12
- LA Officers (ALN/Ed Psych/Wellbeing/Healthy School/Early Years: 15
- Corporate Parents Panel: 3
- LA Governor forum: 1

Professional learnig for individual schools:

- Emotion Coaching Whole School Staff: 20 staff
- Attachment and supporting LAC: 15 staff
- Trauma Informed Practise: 24 staff
- ALN: 17 staff

STRATEGY TO SUPPORT PARENTS / CARERS

Regional data:

Delivered to:

- Primary: 6 Local Authority HT forums
- Secondary: 3 Local Authority HT forums
- Clusters: 29
- Schools: 195

RE-IGNITE LEARNING**Regional data:**

Number of schools participating in different projects :

- Remote Instruction of Language and Literacy (RILL) – PHASE 2: 26
- Precision Teaching and SAFMEDS: 7
- Improving fluency in Oral Reading (iFOR): 42
- Secondary literacy: 10

OBJECTIVE 5 - SUPPORTING A SELF IMPROVING SYSTEM

Supporting a system in which the education profession have the skills, capacity & agency to continually learn & improve their practice

PEER ENGAGEMENT**Regional data:**

- Number of schools/clusters participating: 72/12
- Peer reviewers trained: 97
- Improvement facilitators trained: 92

SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN**Regional data:**

- Number of secondary regional SCC : 11
- Number of primary regional SCC : 2
- Number of secondary schools participating in the national SCC pilot [Special Measures]: 4
- Number of secondary regional SCC involved in SPP programme : 5
- Number of primary regional SCC involved in SPP programme : 0
- Number of secondary regional SCC involved in alliance collaboration : 11
- Number of primary regional SCC involved in cluster collaboration : 2
- Number of secondary regional SCC involved in CfW workshops and follow up discussions: 11
- Number of primary regional SCC involved in CfW workshops and follow up discussions: 2
- Number of secondary regional SCC involved in regional CfW team [Curriculum Design, Assessment, AOLESx6] : TBC
- Number of primary regional SCC involved in regional CfW team [Curriculum Design, Assessment, AOLESx6] : TBC

- Number of officers and advisers participating in the regional Task and Finish Group : 16

OBJECTIVE 6 – BUSINESS

Ensure that GwE has strong governance and effective business and operational support that provides value for money.

Regional data:

Information sharing systems:

- GwE Support Centre (June 2021)
 - Number of site visits - 39,643
 - Number of downloads - 7,807
- % of Schools completing on-line grants dashboard: 74%
- G6 confirmed bookings for PL offered by GwE: 7819 (3735 in 2019/20. 4104 in 2018/19).



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

22 SEPTEMBER 2021

Report by: Alwyn Jones – GwE Assistant Director

Subject: Supporting leaders and staff in schools and PRUs to evaluate their provision in response to COVID-19 and to identify what has worked well and the areas that require further work

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 Present the 'Supporting leaders and staff in schools and PRUs to evaluate their provision in response to COVID-19 and to identify what has worked well and the areas that require further work' report to members of the Joint Committee.

2.0 Background

2.1 This report provides an overview of how schools and PRUs in North Wales have responded to COVID-19 and is based on evidence gathered by GwE Supporting Improvement Advisers as part of their work in supporting schools during the spring and summer terms 2021. The main focus during this period was to work in partnership with school and PRUs to support them to evaluate the quality and impact of their provision during the lockdown periods.

2.2 The template included in Appendix 1 was used as a 'prompt' for discussions with the schools which they could also use to record and collate the information gathered. However, there was no obligation for schools to use this template. It was emphasised that the questions presented were only examples of areas and aspects for consideration and not intended to be interpreted as a comprehensive and exhaustive list. The starting point of all discussions was the school's self-evaluation and their processes for gathering evidence.

3.0 **Considerations**

3.1 For each school and PRU, Supporting Improvement Adviser reported on:

- How the school evaluated its provision and impact during lockdown;
- What the school has identified as the key strengths of its provision for teaching and learning during lockdown;
- How the school is planning to build on its successes to develop the new curriculum;
- What improvements in provision and standards the school has identified as a result of targeting their grant spend;
- School evidence for impact of GwE support/involvement and identification of additional support in going forward;
- Areas that needed further development and support.

3.2 The report provides an overview of discussions with schools, as well as areas for further development and support.

3.3 The evaluation process has identified the following high level regional priorities:

- Establish a clear regional strategy to implement the Welsh Government COVID-19 recovery plan: Renew and reform to support learners' wellbeing and progression (first published 16 June 2021).
- Establish development networks for each Area of Learning and Experience (AOLE) at regional and a local level to enable school leaders and practitioners to collaborate to unpack the potential of each AOLE through modelling, designing and sharing curriculum practice.
- Ensure that direct engagement between secondary and primary schools, continues in order to support learner transition irrespective of the timeline for implementing the new curriculum adopted by the secondary school.
- Develop a regional qualitative framework for holistically capturing and evaluating progress in a school / cluster.
- Revise processes for addressing schools causing concern and work with Local Authorities to establish and implement clear regional structures and protocols for identifying, supporting and challenging school causing concern.

- Further strengthen the culture, behaviour, systems and processes so that leaders and teachers are incentivised to adopt a collegiate approach to school improvement.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 The Joint Committee is asked to accept and approve the content of the report together with the high level regional priorities outlined above.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6.0 Equalities Impact

- 6.1 There are no new equalities implications arising from this report.

7.0 Personnel Implications

- 7.1 There are no new personnel implications arising from this report.

8.0 Consultation Undertaken

- 8.1 Consultation with GwE Management Board.

9.0 Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 - Supporting leaders and staff in schools and PRUs to evaluate their provision in response to COVID-19 and to identify what has worked well and the areas that require further work

OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

Nothing to add from a propriety perspective.

Statutory Finance Officer:

I note that part 5.1 of the covering report confirms that there are no financial implications arising from the decision sought here.

Supporting leaders and staff in schools and PRUs to evaluate their provision in response to COVID-19 and to identify what has worked well and the areas that require further work

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The response to COVID-19 has dramatically changed our lives. In this challenging context, the education system and schooling has been significantly disrupted. On 23rd March 2020, schools were re-purposed to support children of key workers and some vulnerable learners whilst also supporting all learners to stay safe and keep learning at home.

On June 3rd 2020, the Welsh Government (WG) announced that there would be a phased opening of schools from 29th June, 2020 to give all pupils the opportunity to “check in, catch up and prepare.” Welsh Government published their Learning Guidance [<https://gov.wales/keep-education-safe-guidance-learning-over-summer-term>] to provide advice on learning and teaching taking place in schools and settings for the remainder of the summer term and to support practitioners as they prepare for the autumn term.

On July 9th, 2020 the Education Minister confirmed that all pupils would return to school in September, and that schools were required to return to full capacity by September 14th. Welsh Government published further learning guidance [<https://gov.wales/guidance-learning-schools-and-settings-autumn-term-covid-19>] for the autumn term that gave schools and supporting partners a common set of priorities for learning, regardless of the level of operations in response to COVID-19.

During the Autumn Term, the level of disruption to schools varied considerably across the region, with some schools regularly having whole year cohorts self-isolating at home for an extended period, to others that were able to open to all pupils throughout the term.

On January 4th 2021, schools remained closed to all children except those of key workers and some vulnerable learners following the introduction of a second lockdown period, with schools providing remote learning for most of the spring term.

In the week commencing 22nd February 2021, under 7s in the foundation phase started back at schools, with other primary school children and older secondary students (Years 11 and 13) returning back on 15th March 2021. From 12th April 2021 primary, special and secondary schools and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) returned to provide onsite provision for all learners.

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report provides an overview of how schools and PRUs in North Wales have responded to COVID-19 and is based on evidence gathered by GwE Supporting Improvement Advisers as part of their work in supporting schools during the spring and summer terms 2021. The main focus during this period was to work in partnership with school and PRUs to support them to evaluate the quality and impact of their provision during the lockdown periods.

The template included in *Appendix 1* was used as a '*prompt*' for discussions with the schools which they could also use to record and collate the information gathered. However, there was no obligation for schools to use this template. It was emphasised that the questions presented were only examples of areas and aspects for consideration and not intended to be interpreted as a comprehensive and exhaustive list. The starting point of all discussions was the school's self-evaluation and their processes for gathering evidence.

For each school and PRU, Supporting Improvement Adviser reported on:

- How the school evaluated its provision and impact during lockdown;
- What the school has identified as the key strengths of its provision for teaching and learning during lockdown;
- How the school is planning to build on its successes to develop the new curriculum;
- What improvements in provision and standards the school has identified as a result of targeting their grant spend;
- School evidence for impact of GwE support/involvement and identification of additional support in going forward;
- Areas that needed further development and support.

MAIN FINDINGS

PRIMARY AND SPECIAL SECTORS

How have the schools evaluated their provision and impact during lockdown?

Overall, primary and special schools have made timely and purposeful use of national, regional and local authority guidance throughout the COVID pandemic. Nearly all schools have managed to evaluate the quality of their provision through lockdown using a variety of useful sources of information and evidence, including regular discussion with other cluster schools and the link GwE officer. Most schools have gathered the views of stakeholders via questionnaires for pupils and parents, telephone calls or conversations with individuals. Many have made significant adaptations and improvements to their provision based on these findings. The nature of inquiries have varied and included a wide range of questions pertaining to checking well-being, ensuring that pupils had appropriate equipment to complete their work, checking availability of a digital connection and relating to the frequency, appropriateness and quality of provision provided across subjects.

Most headteachers and senior leaders have had access to teachers' digital classes, and have informally scrutinised learners work and monitored the quality of both remote and blended learning provision on a regular basis. Some of the best practice have observed live or synchronous teaching and learning, as well as observing remote well-being sessions. Many leaders and staff evaluated provision by monitoring pupils' work on digital platforms such as Google Classrooms and SeeSaw. This has included the monitoring of formative assessments and the quality of feedback to pupils. Some schools have developed systems that allow a constant open and honest dialogue with parents, as well as monitoring the consistency of provision between classes and monitoring the wellbeing of their staff and school community. Some primary schools have managed to undertake more formal book scrutiny sessions, learning walks and the occasional lesson observation (sometimes as part of staff Performance Management).

The quality of provision for supporting pupils' well-being has been a strength, with nearly all schools checking in with pupils and families on a regular basis. There were robust arrangements in place across most schools to monitor attendance and engagement levels during the lockdown periods. Many schools reported that engagement levels improved steadily in the second lockdown in January 2021. A few schools noted some low level disruption when learners returned to school and the inability of a few pupils to re-engage with school life.

Pupils' learning has been tracked through a range of different methods in schools across the region, with many focussing upon a range of basic skills including the use of literacy and numeracy data. Tracking systems for pupils' progress vary in quality between schools. However, nearly all leaders effectively tracked engagement during lockdown and some have developed highly effective systems for tracking and targeting provision for families.

Many schools prioritised working with individuals identified as vulnerable or requiring additional support. Support for vulnerable pupils was often timely and families were provided with a variety of means of learning including paper based activities. However, many leaders have identified that these learners did not always make expected progress during the lockdown period and that some ALN and/or previously struggling learners had experienced some degree of regression in the standard of their language and maths skills. Many schools have put in place appropriate measures to support and target these learners. Nearly all schools have undertaken some form of baseline assessments on return to school following lockdown in order to determine the level of support and intervention needed and to identify target groups of pupils. A number of schools noted pupils' standards had slipped following the first lockdown and implemented successful intervention strategies to raise standards when pupils returned to school in September 2020.

Some schools have noted a deterioration in pupils' Welsh language skills with this being dependent on the language spoken at home.

Headteachers managed to hold regular staff meetings and team meetings on a digital platform throughout the lockdown period, in order to discuss and monitor engagement, pupils' progress and the suitability of tasks, ALN provision and pupils' wellbeing. Nearly all schools have considered the impact of their provision and have adapted accordingly as lockdown continued.

Many schools continued to hold virtual meetings for governors on a regular basis during lockdown, including conducting Headteacher Performance Management. Many have also discussed the findings of questionnaires / evaluations with the governing body, but there have been limited opportunities for governors to visit schools in a formal capacity to conduct monitoring activities and evaluation. However, governors were increasingly involved in self-evaluation during the spring and summer term 2021 in many schools. In some schools this has included evaluating monitoring reports and undertaking activities such as scrutinising pupils' work.

Many primary and special school leaders' have noted that their evaluations have enabled them to continue to focus upon improvement planning throughout the period and have identified the need to improve key skills and wellbeing and continuing to improve provision for Curriculum for Wales and ALN transformation.

What have the schools identified as the key strengths of their provision for teaching and learning during lockdown?

Strength was seen in staff and pupils' ability to adapt quickly to change, with many significantly improving their digital skills and their use of various software and apps. Nearly all school said that the adaptability and creativity of staff when developing remote and blended learning approaches was a strength. There was a marked difference in the quality of provision from the first lockdown to the second lockdown with most schools providing varied and meaningful tasks. Many teachers were able to adapt their provision to provide an offer that was as near to their usual classroom practice as possible. Many schools have reported they have used various digital platforms effectively for teaching, including See Saw, Class Dojo, Teams and Google Classrooms, which have easy access for senior leaders to monitor the standard of provision. Provision of live streaming or synchronous learning improved significantly during the second lockdown.

The quality of teachers' 'Assessment for Learning' via remote learning improved and progressed to include feedback on pupils' work in the form of recorded voice as well as written comments. This enabled a learning dialogue to take place between teacher and pupil in many schools, giving pupils an opportunity to respond to feedback and improve their finished work. Most schools noted a rich variety of tasks were provided, including literacy and numeracy

tasks, theme work as well as physical, creative, outdoor and well-being activities. Many pupils also gained in confidence with assessing the quality of their own work and were becoming more independent in their learning.

Nearly all schools clearly prioritised its pastoral and well-being arrangements and placed pupil and staff wellbeing at the heart of their approaches during lockdown. The quality of provision for supporting pupils' well-being has been a strength, with nearly all schools checking in with pupils and families on a regular basis. Concerns were raised to the local authorities about families who were uncontactable.

Many schools felt there had been an increased sense of collaboration and teamwork during this period. This extended to their cluster schools and beyond. The development of the GwE Support Centre encouraged the sharing of resources and expertise and contributed to teachers having meaningful discussions about the quality of the provision. The use of digital platforms made the process more time efficient and has paved the way for future working and collaboration between schools.

Many leaders have identified the opportunity to review general communication with stakeholders during the period – this was made more effective and efficient and used to support learning, for example through regular newsletters, video bulletins, effective use of social media, etc. Communication with parents certainly improved during the lockdown period. However, many schools have noted the need to more effectively support parents and carers to help their child to learn.

Key worker provision in schools was strong and improved over the period, moving in most schools from child care to an improved focus upon learning and wellbeing. In many schools during the second lockdown, key worker provision was better aligned to remote blended learning which improved consistency and supported pupils' transition back to school. Teaching assistants played a notable role in providing this support in many schools.

Many primary schools made very good use of a range of reliable and useful pupil performance indicators, including standardised spelling, reading and numeracy data and/or teacher assessment data to gauge the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on pupil progress and standards. Schools subsequently identified struggling pupils who required additional support. Across the clusters, pupils requiring supplementary support receive a range of effective strategies and programmes, e.g. SAFMEDS numeracy fluency, Headsprout, Reading Eggs, ELSA and the new RILL language programme. This use of diagnostic assessment has enabled these schools to closely monitor pupil progress.

Following the full-time return to school in March 2021, many schools have set up a valuable range of evidence-informed academic and well-being provision such as Seasons for Growth, Friends Resilience and ELSA programmes.

How are the schools planning to build on its successes to develop the new curriculum?

A positive outcome that has arisen during to the pandemic is the development of strong collaborative work within schools and across clusters. This is a very strong growth point regionally for preparing and implementing the new curriculum. The four transversal themes of the school as learning organisation (trust, time, thinking together and technology) have been very evident throughout the lockdown periods. The increased use of technology has allowed relationships and collaboration to develop further providing a strong base for schools and clusters to move forward with their preparations for the new curriculum.

Many staff members have had to rapidly upskill as provision moved on to the digital platform. Most headteachers have identified the digital competence is an area that has developed well

over the past twelve months and they are very keen that this progress in pupils and staffs digital learning is continued. Schools have undertaken a range of professional learning offered by regional consortia around the use of digital technology to support teaching and learning. A greater number of practitioners are now able to confidently use an increasing range of technology to support the learning. Many primary schools have based their remote and blended learning provision on the 12 pedagogical principles as outlined in the *Successful Futures* report. Schools intends to build on their growth points during the lock down periods to further evolve the breadth of experiences and progress of learners. An example of this is the increased emphasis on the pedagogy of big questions related to *What Matters* statements / Areas of Learning and Experience. The majority of schools noted they used this time as an opportunity to experiment with teaching methods, choosing to continue the practice of sharing work on digital platforms within the classroom, in order to develop pupils' independent learning skills.

Nearly all primary and special schools have already started to consider their vision for the new curriculum considering what is relevant to the local area, Wales and the wider world.

The well-being of both staff and pupils was a key focus for all schools throughout the pandemic and continued when pupils' returned to school. Most schools have noted that they will build on this work to develop their whole school approach to wellbeing. Nearly all schools have greatly developed the well-being element and learning in the outdoors, appreciating the contribution of these areas to a broad and balanced curriculum.

The development of the GwE Resource Centre has encouraged primary and special schools to share their resources and plans. Headteachers plan to continue to share work on curriculum development across their cluster and to work together to develop a 3-16 continuum for their local curriculum. Many schools are making good progress in planning a local curriculum that includes planning for pupil voice and engaging with a variety of community stakeholders. Many primary schools are building on the innovative, creative and collaborative practice developed during the pandemic to prepare for implementing the new Curriculum for Wales.

Many primary and special schools' planning now reflects the 4 purposes of the new curriculum and time has been allocated to staff to further develop their knowledge and understanding through attending purposeful professional learning. Many schools have also developed dimensions of Schools as Learning Organisations through giving staff time to work on Curriculum for Wales aspects. Schools have established processes in order that staff can share newly acquired information or good practice. Schools in some clusters are participating in a range of useful and effective cluster initiatives, e.g., the cluster peer review work (School Partnership Programme) and engagement with evidence-based projects with Bangor University, e.g., NPEP enquiry project.

What improvements in provision and standards have the schools identified as a result of targeting their grant spend?

In most primary schools, Recruit, Recover and Raise Standards (RRRS) funding has targeted groups of learners to address identified gaps in their learning. The grants have also been targeted at pupils showing low resilience, lack of confidence and poor engagement. Many schools have used the grants to provide Basic Skills support and intervention following lockdown. Resources were purchased and support staff allocated to deliver interventions. Some schools struggled to find additional staff to cover these roles and so have used the grant to extend the working hours of some staff already on their books, whilst ensuring that the additional hours are spent to support the identified groups of learners.

Targeted areas of support include literacy, numeracy, digital competence, early intervention in phonics and developing independent learning skills. There are many examples of targeted support leading to improvement in pupils' IT skills and general confidence in using hardware and software. Nearly all schools have undertaken baseline formative assessments on return to school following lockdown in order to identify target group pupils. Good use has been made of the accelerated learning resources developed by GwE which were based on research into effective intervention strategies. Many schools are reporting that pupils who are receiving additional support as a result of the grant are making good progress in their learning following their small group provision. Schools are very aware that there may be a long term impact on pupils' learning and well-being that is not yet visible.

Many primary schools have offered nurture support to children who are struggling since the lockdown. Increased wellbeing provision has been made available as more pupils were struggling to adjust following lockdown. Wellbeing surveys and teacher and parent referrals have been used to identify pupils for targeted intervention. Wellbeing provision has also been extended to include support for families to ensure that pupils and parents are able to deal with this unprecedented situation.

Most schools have used some of their professional learning grant to develop their staff's digital competence to deliver effective remote and blended learning as well as using the funding to develop their knowledge and understanding for implementing the Curriculum for Wales

Impact of GwE support/involvement and identification of additional support in going forward

During this period of often overwhelming challenges, many primary and special schools noted that they have valued and benefited from the regular contact and support provided by GwE link officers, especially in helping them maintain a positive mindset. Headteachers have appreciated the reassurance and pastoral support provided by their Supporting Improvement Adviser (SIA) and the regular checks on their wellbeing. Many schools commented on the useful general advice and support from GwE and the local authority throughout the challenging year, for example, the risk assessment dashboard co-created by GwE and LA was extremely helpful and timely. Schools noted that there was a good balance between challenge and support with strong focus on wellbeing and safety. Most schools have appreciated the genuine concern for their wellbeing and also the practical support provided by GwE regarding operational issues, e.g., risk assessments, self-evaluation reports, guidance on remote and blended learning and the resource library (GwE Support Centre). Coaching and mentoring provided by SIAs was also well received as well as the bespoke support for individual schools.

Headteachers greatly appreciated the role of the School Improvement Advisor (SIA) in providing initial guidance and support to schools and clusters to develop their remote and blended learning provision. Many noted that the facilitation of cluster meetings were initially crucial to share ideas and good practice for developing their remote learning provision and more recently in planning for the new curriculum. Many noted that the cluster meetings were both supportive and informative as well as having a positive impact on their mental health and wellbeing.

In addition to the support for teaching and learning and operational issues, headteachers have expressed their appreciation to the support provided for their strategic planning and especially in preparation for the new curriculum, e.g. vision building, change management and curriculum design workshops. They have been able to manage daily operational issues whilst also maintaining a focus on their long term planning for implementing the new curriculum. Many headteachers appreciated the consistency in the approach taken across the region. GwE's encouragement and facilitation of collaborative working has also encouraged greater

consistency across clusters and the sharing of expertise and resources. It has also enabled co-planning and joint working to implement the reform journey.

Professional dialogue between schools and the link SIAs has helped to ensure that their planned grant expenditure is targeted appropriately. Schools have generally appreciated the time-saving benefits and usefulness of the grants dashboard to monitor spending. Many schools has also appreciated the range of professional learning offer available and the flexibility regarding delivery and timing. Many schools commented on the range of online training and webinars available through the GwE Support Centre and noted that this had impacted positively on the quality of their blended and remote learning provision.

SECONDARY SECTOR INCLUDING RELEVANT SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND PRUs

How have the schools evaluated their provision and impact during lockdown?

In response to the operational and learning guidance provided by Welsh Government, secondary schools have had to adapt their quality assurance processes and systems. There has been a strong focus and commitment across almost all schools and PRUs to constantly reflect on, review and further develop practice at all stages during the pandemic. There are numerous examples where schools have effectively utilised the expertise of the link SIA to support them with this work.

In almost all schools, middle leaders and/or senior leaders have regularly monitored the quality of provision via Google classrooms (or other digital platforms), or by sampling pupil work at various interims. In nearly all schools, senior and middle leaders have tracked pupil engagement and have held meetings to discuss, for example, quality of provision, challenge in the level of learning, quality of feedback and pupil voice feedback. An example of good practice is a school using Google Meet to record live sessions which were then utilised for professional learning for the purposes of improving and enhancing delivery. There are other examples of senior and middle leaders informally undertaking 'drop ins' during live-learning sessions via prior arrangement.

Many schools have held sessions for departments to share best and effective practice, leading to higher levels of staff confidence in sharing work and approaches, and in collaborating with other colleagues. Middle Leaders in most schools have access to Teams / Google Classrooms in their subjects / year groups. This has provided an overview and an opportunity to quality assure teaching and learning in their own curriculum areas. Findings have been discussed with senior leadership teams to inform any further developments or adaptations required. In one example, when learners and parents had noted that remote learning during lockdown at times was overwhelming, a school responded by offering a break between online lessons, lengthening lunch time, offering a half day on wellbeing to encourage time away from the screen. A parent noted in a feedback questionnaire to one school that the wellbeing sessions have allowed the opportunity "to re-connect with my child" during the intensity of the lockdown period.

Parental and teacher feedback, have both been important in evaluating impact, but it would be fair to conclude that most schools have more effectively evaluated the quality of provision through stakeholder and pupil voice, and through an analysis of levels of engagement and wellbeing rather than via scrutiny of skills and standards as previously would have been the case. However, evaluation for improvement requirements has been more analytical since Easter 2021 in the majority of schools.

Senior and pastoral leads and their teams in all secondary schools, have monitored pupil engagement in remote and blended learning. Most schools use tracking software to track pupil engagement which is available to all members of the school community. Many have prioritised

the engagement and progress of the most vulnerable learners, providing additional support where needed and also making every effort to ensure they attended face-to-face support in the onsite Hubs during periods of lockdown. Strong structures have been established in most secondary schools to contact learners and parents/carers to discuss concerns and to offer support. When appropriate, concerns were escalated to the attention of the Local Authorities.

Schools and PRUs have used surveys and questionnaires to evaluate the impact of changing working practices on staff and on their learners. In nearly all cases, schools have used parental feedback from questionnaires to enhance educational provision. Examples of this include reducing the number of different subjects taught in one day to developing project based work for a longer time scale, to allow the pupil's work to better fit in with the family's IT capacity.

Professional dialogue between senior and middle leaders has been a feature of evaluation processes. Scrutiny of pupil work involved looking at books and tasks completed on-line. Virtual parents' evenings have also been an important source of evaluative feedback. Many schools have commented that parents' evenings have been successfully conducted - with effective use of new software to schedule appointments online. Schools have evaluated the systems from teachers and parents' feedback, and some say they are likely to continue with the system moving forward.

Some schools evaluated their learners' digital skills in order to focus training on approaches, platforms and digital tools that would be most easily accessible and have the greatest impact on online teaching. Survey results from staff have also been used by schools to plan the professional needs of staff. For example, one school invested in training all staff as Google Educators Level 1.

In many secondary schools, senior leaders have prioritised the monitoring of assessments in Key Stages 4 and 5, including those to inform the Centre Determined Grades, checking that they were robust and rigorous. The awarding of Centre Determined Grades has taken a considerable amount of time during the spring and summer terms 2021 for both subject teachers and leaders at all levels.

In some Welsh medium/bilingual schools, a strong focus has been placed on the constant evaluation of pupils' Welsh language skills, especially those pupils who are from non-Welsh speaking homes or have been part of immersion programmes. This has helped some schools maintain and improve the learners' Welsh language skills.

Following a multiagency pilot during 2019-2020 with a small number of schools, Welsh Government and Estyn have been working with local authorities and regional consortia during spring/summer 2021 to offer all secondary schools in special measures the opportunity to be involved in multi-agency working. This approach has initially concentrated on discussions around wellbeing and the quality of remote and blended learning provision. More formal monitoring and scrutiny will commence in the autumn term 2021.

Developing new approaches to Quality Assurance has been a focus of the work of some of the secondary alliances where leaders have shared practice and developed new processes. For example in a couple of schools, staff have completed an audit of digital skills and school leaders have planned INSET and Professional Learning opportunities for staff based on the findings. Progress against the audit has been reviewed during the year to measure the impact.

What have the schools identified as the key strengths of their provision for teaching and learning during lockdown?

The upskilling in digital technologies has been identified across all schools as a key strength during the pandemic. Leaders and teachers have demonstrated great professional agility in

acquiring new knowledge and skills to deliver learning online. This has been supported by innovative approaches to professional learning and sharing effective practice both within and across schools. Collaborative working within schools and between schools has been a notable strength. Key approaches within GwE-facilitated Alliances included collaboration on policies, resources and communication as well as joint standardisation and moderation. All schools have shared resources and effective practice through their alliances and the GwE Support Centre.

Many schools have reported that there has been greater creativity in teaching and learning. Leaders at schools, at all levels, have made timely and purposeful use of regional and national guidance to steer and modify their approaches and have provided detailed guidance and expectations for staff. The guidance and approaches used are also based on national and international research of identified effective practice.

The focus on wellbeing has been strong across all secondary schools and PRUs. Most schools have implemented weekly, sometimes daily contact with vulnerable learners and parents/carers; this has usually involved an organised network of leaders/pastoral staff/admin staff and others. Where concerns have been raised, the schools have worked in collaboration with the local authority and external agencies to support those learners and their families, and many have attended the Hub provision to receive face-to-face support.

Most schools kept a strong focus on a 'blended' learning approach during lockdown and have managed to ensure that a proportion of their lessons were taught 'live'. The live streaming of lessons increased during the second lockdown following changes to the Welsh Government guidance. Some lessons were more effectively delivered through asynchronous means, allowing learners to access lessons and resources at different and more convenient times. There are examples where morning registration sessions and school assemblies have also been effectively delivered live online.

Guidance and communication with parents/carers has been a consistently strong feature of provision across the secondary schools. Many schools noted that the communication with parents and other stakeholders over teaching and learning provision has altered and improved significantly during this period. Communication has had to be adaptive and frequent and schools have developed virtual approaches, such as using Teams meetings and on-line parents' evening apps to develop their communication systems. Many schools reported that they made purposeful use of questionnaires to gather the views of stakeholders, which has led to adapting and improving provision in many cases. Sharing protocols and expectations regarding remote learning with parents/carers is an aspect that had improved significantly by the second lockdown. For example, one school has developed a website for parents to share information and guidance on how to support their child with 'how to videos'. However, this is an aspect that can be further developed in many schools to help parents and carers support their child's learning.

How are the schools planning to build on its successes to develop the new curriculum?

Collaboration and sharing of effective practice has developed well across the schools. Learning in new technologies, digital pedagogies and adaptations to the school day structures can be further developed to support learning within the new curriculum. The progress made in digital competency will also help establish growth points for ensuring there is curriculum innovation and confidence in use of new technologies amongst staff and pupils. Schools are currently identifying growth points to take advantage of the advancements seen in digital learning, independent working and creative learning. Online learning will provide important and innovative ways to deliver the new curriculum and to further develop independent learning. The new technology will also support 3-16 collaboration and improved communication with stakeholders. Many schools have experimented with new approaches to planning which have

involved some integration across subjects and some longer units of work, with more pupil independence and choice built in. Close evaluation of such changes will be useful for schools and PRUs when developing their curriculum plan.

Schools have further strengthened home-school relationships as parents have been more involved in understanding and supporting the curriculum offer to learners during this time. Learner voice has also increased as learners have been able to have greater choice and input to their work and schools have responded to feedback to adapt provision where appropriate. Learner voice has also been especially important during the pandemic for measuring impact on engagement and wellbeing and this is seen by many schools as a vital aspect of their planning in moving forward.

During the lockdown, schools and PRUs have had the opportunities to work as a learning organisation, strengthening and developing the 4 transversal themes of Time, Thinking Together, Trust and Technology. More than ever, schools have had to ensure continuous learning opportunities for all staff to deliver effective distance learning and to make appropriate use of technology.

An increasing number of secondary schools have developed their relationship with the primary schools in their catchment area and have started to meet to discuss Curriculum for Wales developments. Many senior leaders have attended GwE training sessions on change management, creating a shared vision and joint planning and SIAs are following up this initial engagement with more bespoke support at school and cluster level.

The COVID period has demonstrated that the schools can be resilient in the face of frequent, disruptive and sudden change. The focus on well-being and resilience of pupils is an area that has also developed well during the pandemic. Many staff have begun to consider the implications of health and wellbeing on learning opportunities and experiences for their learners. During this time of national curriculum suspension, staff have had the opportunity to identify the learning priorities for their school and as a result, design learning and experiences to meet the needs of their learners and in line with the four purposes of Curriculum for Wales.

The Minister for Education, has confirmed that the Curriculum for Wales will continue to be implemented in primary schools, maintained nursery schools and non-maintained nursery PRUs from September 2022. The Minister has also confirmed that some additional flexibility will be given to secondary schools. In 2022, schools that are ready to roll out the curriculum to year 7 will be able to press ahead. However, formal implementation of the new curriculum will not be mandatory until 2023, with roll-out in that year to years 7 and 8 together. This will also be the case in special schools and all-through schools for 3 to 16-year-olds.

GwE will encourage secondary and special schools who are able to proceed to implement the new curriculum with Year 7 from September 2022. We also realise that some secondary schools may choose to continue their path towards curriculum reform from September 2022, and will implement the new curriculum from September 2023 when it will become mandatory for years 7 and 8. However, it is important that the work of reforming the curriculum, and particularly direct engagement between secondary and primary schools, continues in order to support learner transition irrespective of the timeline for implementation adopted by the secondary school.

What improvements in provision and standards have the schools identified as a result of targeting their grant spend?

Overall, many secondary schools have prioritised funding for cohorts of specific pupils such as pupils who are preparing for 'examinations' (Years 11, 12 and 13), vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils, Year 7 and any specific groups or individuals who require additional

support. Targeted areas of support include literacy, numeracy and digital competency, developing independent learning skills and engagement through training.

Schools have been creative in the solutions adopted, for example:

- employing mentors to drive interventions with specific pupils
- employing learning coaches to address the barriers to learning and improve inclusion
- providing additional lessons for pupils
- releasing members of staff to lead on literacy and numeracy or appointing an additional teacher to undertake literacy and numeracy sessions with specific groups of pupils who needed additional support during lockdown
- appointing a leader for a whole school Accelerated Learning Programme in order to plan additional support for pupils

Other examples include either appointing additional teaching assistants / coaches or increasing the time of existing teaching assistants and coaches to undertake catch up and coaching sessions. Many have focused funding to ensure appropriate support for pupils who were disengaged from education during lockdown.

Through the Professional Learning grant, secondary schools report that staff have engaged well in relevant and timely professional learning during the lockdown period in order to ensure that they have a firm understanding of effective remote and blended learning. This has without doubt impacted positively on the quality of provision offered.

Schools have used the PDG grants to support disadvantaged pupils. For example, the grant has been effectively used to support pupils who are eFSM to access music lessons, access digital devices where needed and to ensure continuation of learning. Most schools have used the grant to ensure that eFSM learners have additional support in smaller groups or are supported by mentors and counsellors.

Impact of GwE support/involvement and identification of additional support in going forward

Nearly all secondary schools and PRUs have been positive and grateful for the frequent and adaptive support of SIAs during the COVID period. This has included frequent pastoral and wellbeing calls and visits as well as SIA meetings with other SLT and middle leaders at the Headteachers request.

Schools have been very positive about the contributions of GwE to the local Secondary Heads forums that have regularly met since March 2020. Heads have also expressed their gratitude for the regional Heads meeting and especially the support for the Centre Determined Grade awarding process. Schools also note their appreciation of the support offered by SIAs to the awarding process (including additional support from the core subject advisers).

The guidance and support for remote and blended learning has been very well-received and some schools have altered their approaches to planning and provision based on their use of resources shared through the GwE Resource Centre. Schools have mostly been very positive about the alliances and GwEs facilitation of this opportunity to collaborate with other schools

The COVID Risk Assessment dashboard and the grant dashboard have also been very well received.

Many schools have expressed their appreciation of the Leadership Development Programmes that have been adapted to be delivered online.

There has been a positive response to the termly bespoke GwE Support Plans and especially the flexible approach adopted to allow for mitigating circumstances.

Evaluating Outcomes at KS4 and 5

In his written statement (dated 21 June 2021) the Education Minister confirmed *‘that the suspension of Key Stage 4 and legacy sixth form performance measures will be extended to the 2021/22 academic year. Qualification awards data will not be used to report on attainment outcomes at a school, local authority or regional consortium level and must not be used to hold schools to account for their learners’ outcomes.’*

He also confirmed that *‘all schools and post-16 providers will continue to be required to undertake effective self-evaluation to support continuous improvement. Our evaluation, improvement and accountability arrangements require consideration of a broad range of information, relevant to a school’s own context, when undertaking self-evaluation and identifying improvement priorities. This will involve schools, with support from local authorities and regional consortia, using the learner level information they have to reflect on and improve their existing arrangements.’*

Therefore in the autumn term 2021 GwE will support schools to evaluate their Centre Determined Grades and the lessons learnt during this year’s process.

Below are aspects that schools should consider during their evaluation:

- what lessons were learnt about the robustness of in-school standardisation and moderation procedures? To what extent will processes be further honed?
- are you confident that all leaders across the school have robustly and purposefully identified their 2021-22 priorities for action? What plans have been adopted to support subject leaders with this work if some concerns have arisen?
- to what extent are you confident that all departments [where relevant] ensured effective guidance, support and feedback to maximise the contribution of ‘course work’? What plans have been adopted to support departmental leaders where concerns have arisen?
- what was demonstrated as your areas of key strengths? What plans have been adopted to share these across the school?
- have you identified any areas/subjects where further veracity and accuracy of tracking and assessment need to be honed? What plans have been adopted to support subject leaders/teachers with this work so that in-school variance can be effectively targeted?
- to what extent will findings impact on current assessment, targeting, tracking and intervention processes and procedures?
- to what extent will findings impact on your Curriculum for Wales priorities for action for this year and beyond?
- to what extent will findings impact on your plans for further developing provision for literacy and numeracy at KS3?
- to what extent will findings impact on your plans for further developing wellbeing, attendance and inclusion?
- to what extent will findings impact on plans to further bolster support for vulnerable groups of pupils?
- what plans are in place to work collaboratively with other regional school to support and aid further improvements? To what extent will collaboration include the contribution of middle leaders and teaching staff?

AREAS THAT NEEDED FURTHER DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

School across all sectors have identified the following areas where they would like further support:

- Curriculum for Wales implementation - especially curriculum design and planning to deliver the Areas of Learning and Experience (AOLEs);
- Approaches to assessments and the concept of progression in preparation for the new curriculum;
- Tracking pupil progress;
- Links to the wider reform such as ALN and the Welsh Language;
- Embedding a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing;
- Re-engaging groups of learners in September 2021 that have not managed well during lockdown;
- Improving teaching and learning, differentiation, formative assessment and feedback to learners;
- Improving Welsh Language skills and especially oracy;
- Strengthening transition arrangements and provision between primary and secondary/ special and developing a 3-16 continuum;
- Implementing actions from multiagency 360 support plans (specifically in schools causing concern);
- Further hone quality assurance processes and evaluating the quality of provision and pupil progress;
- Developing quality enhancement in line with the four purposes of the new curriculum
- Use of reliable data as evidence for improvement;
- Enhance parental engagement to support the learning;
- Further establish and develop peer review through the School Partnership Programme
- Developing collaboration on a wider strategic level in order to move towards a self-improving system;
- Accelerated Learning Programmes to address impact of lockdown on basic skills;
- Preparation for examination in summer 2022;
- Evaluating the impact of grant expenditure.

The findings above are also relevant to both special schools and PRUs. However, the following aspects have also been identified as areas for further development and support:

- Embed the present collaboration projects and share the learning across the sector;
- Continue to offer lead opportunities to middle managers to provide them with opportunities to further develop their leadership skills;
- Work together to analyse the effectiveness of the joint work;
- Continue to design and plan rich learning experiences around the four purposes and identify the best ways to assess progress across the range of learner needs.

REGIONAL PRIORITIES

The evaluation process has identified the following high level regional priorities:

- Establish a clear regional strategy to implement the Welsh Government COVID-19 recovery plan: Renew and reform to support learners' wellbeing and progression (first published 16 June 2021)
- Establish development networks for each Area of Learning and Experience (AOLE) at regional and a local level to enable school leaders and practitioners to collaborate to

Appendix 1

unpack the potential of each AOLE through modelling, designing and sharing curriculum practice

- Ensure that direct engagement between secondary and primary schools, continues in order to support learner transition irrespective of the timeline for implementing the new curriculum adopted by the secondary school.
- Develop a regional qualitative framework for holistically capturing and evaluating progress in a school / cluster
- Revise processes for addressing schools causing concern and work with Local Authorities to establish and implement clear regional structures and protocols for identifying, supporting and challenging school causing concern
- Further strengthen the culture, behaviour, systems and processes so that leaders and teachers are incentivised to adopt a collegiate approach to school improvement.

Appendix 1

School based evaluation. There is no obligation for schools to use this, however, it can be:

- Used by the school to populate themselves
- Used by the school to check against their own self-evaluation processes
- Used by clusters or collaborations as a basis for their collaborative evaluations

School	Link SIA
Covering the period of Spring / Summer Term 2021	
Main strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	
Areas that need further development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	
Action and Progress	
How has our school evaluated its provision and impact during lockdown?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has our school summarised findings in order to note strengths, areas for improvement and planned for further improvements? Have we examples to evidence this? • If our school has not been able to maintain processes to date due to Covid restrictions, what are the intentions for the current term? 	
What is the quality of our provision for teaching and learning during lockdown?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does our evidence highlight about learner progress during lockdown? Does this include vulnerable learners? • How has provision for teaching and assessment evolved in our school during this period? • What are our main strengths in teaching and assessment, achievement and progress? • What aspects need to be further strengthened in terms of teaching, assessment, achievement and progress? • What challenges have we identified in terms of teaching and learning in moving forward and what are our intentions in response to these? 	
How is the school planning to build on its successes to develop the new curriculum?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have we measured progress in relation to the reform journey? • How have we contributed as a partner to cluster working? • How are our school developed the dimensions of Schools as Learning Organisations during this period? • How have we taken advantage of peer work to validate our evaluations and support us in our improvement journey? Do we play a corresponding role with our partner schools? 	
How has the school monitored and evaluated the use and impact of the various grants available and what key messages have arisen to date?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have we targeted grant expenditure and what impact has this had on provision and standards? • What are the messages for future grant expenditure? 	
What is the quality of our provision for learner wellbeing during lockdown?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does our evidence highlight about learner wellbeing during lockdown? • What are our main strengths in wellbeing provision? • What aspects need to be further strengthened in terms of wellbeing provision? • What challenges have we identified in terms of wellbeing in moving forward and what are our intentions in response to these? 	

How has leadership across our school evolved during lockdown?

- What have been the main challenges?
- Have we had opportunities to develop or innovate?
- Have we leadership practices that could be shared with other schools?
- Have we identified leadership aspects that need support?



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

22 September 2021

Report by: Arwyn Thomas - GwE Managing Director

Subject: Evolving regional structures and processes to support schools causing concern

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 Share information with members of the Joint Committee about evolved regional structures and processes to support schools causing concern.

2.0 Background

2.1 In 2019/20, Welsh Government and Estyn piloted a multi-agency support approach with ten secondary schools across Wales. The schools were a mixture of schools in Estyn statutory category (special measures or significant improvement) and those identified by local authorities and regions as being at risk of causing concern. Two regional schools were asked to participate in the trial. For each school, a multi-agency panel was formed to work together to support the school, identifying and agreeing its issues and needs, formulating a bespoke support plan for the school, monitoring the impact of that support and determining what improvement should look like over a set period of time. Due to the challenges presented by the Covid pandemic the trial was suspended mid-term. However, Welsh Government and Estyn considered that there had been sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the multi-agency approach was likely to be an effective way to support schools'

progress and improvement longer term. As a consequence, in moving forward, it was decided that it would be beneficial to roll out the multi-agency approach to those schools that need the support the most – specifically secondary schools in special measures. As a result, four regional schools will now be participating in the revised approach.

2.2 In response to the above mentioned national approach, GwE Management Board deemed it timely to review regional processes for supporting, monitoring and challenging all schools which are causing concern or which are demonstrating early signs of decline.

2.3 The aim is to ensure that all identified schools move along the ‘desired’ line of trajectory at the required pace and that a consistent approach to challenge and support is applied across the region. However, it is recognised that progress, in some schools, will not always be demonstrated by a simplified linear progression.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 The report outlines the main actions and developments undertaken by the regional *Task and Finish Group* established by the GwE Management Board to oversee the work.

3.2 To ensure that we moved away from the stigma and terminology of the now abolished national categorisation system, it was decided to define all establishments as being on a continuum of autonomy towards becoming a self-improving school. The greater majority of our regional schools will be schools who are either consistently strong with minor areas requiring improvement or generally strong with some areas requiring improvement. These schools are generally identified within a trajectory model as the strongest performers or the rapid and steady improvers [Appendix 1 - Trajectory Model]. These schools have no need for intense, specialist targeted support - improvements are usually addressed through peer collaboration, generic universal GwE/LA Professional Learning Programme, actions and professional learning programmes as identified in the School Development Plan and via bespoke GwE Support Plans.

3.3 A smaller percentage of schools will require targeted support on their self-improvement journey. These are the schools who will be supported by the multi-agency approach as they emerge and develop on their journey to become self-improving establishments. Some of

these schools may demonstrate some strong elements but significant areas require improvement. In some schools there will be numerous areas requiring improvement. These schools are generally identified within the trajectory model as either rapid decliners, slow decliners or improver decliners. A minority will be identified as weakest system performers and most will be in an Estyn statutory category

- 3.4 Within the revised regional structure [Appendix 2] a multi-agency group will be established within each local authority. Membership will comprise of senior officers, lead officers from the relevant services and the GwE Core Lead.
- 3.5 To ensure a consistent application and approach by each group, behaviours and values were discussed and agreed upon, in addition to a regional set of thresholds and triggers which will be applied when identifying and planning support for those schools causing concern [Appendix 3 Values and Behaviours]. Training for all officers and advisors to ensure a common understanding of values, behaviours and how to consistently apply thresholds will be planned and delivered during the Autumn Term.
- 3.6 Where a school is identified as 'causing concern', the lead officer and the Core Lead will work with the leadership team to develop a holistic 360 support plan around the school. The plan will ensure a more comprehensive approach to driving improvements at the required pace.
- 3.7 The multi-agency group will undertake responsibilities for ensuring the delivery of the plans and the monitoring process. Plans will be regularly reviewed and adapted to address on-going requirements. Where concerns arise around lack of progress or pace of progress, action will be escalated to the Local Quality Board which will be chaired by the Director of Education/Head of Service [Appendix 4 Escalation of Concerns]. It will be at the discretion of the Director of Education/Head of Service as to whether executive statutory powers will need to be applied when concerns have been escalated.
- 3.8 The evolved structures and processes will be applied regionally from the Autumn Term 2021 onwards to ensure a more comprehensive and holistic approach to supporting schools

causing concern. A joint approach between GwE and the LA services will be taken to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the revised approach.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 The Joint Committee is asked to note and accept the content of the report.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. GwE will operate within current financial resources.

6.0 Equalities Impact

6.1 There are no new equalities implications arising from this report.

7.0 Personnel Implications

7.1 There are no new personnel implications arising from this report.

8.0 Consultation Undertaken

8.1 Consultation took place with GwE Management Board and senior officers from all of the six local authorities were actively engaged in the development of the model. A further consultation with head teachers will be undertaken at each local authority level during the first half of the Autumn Term.

9.0 Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Trajectory Model
- Appendix 2 - Revised Regional Structure
- Appendix 3 - Values and Behaviours
- Appendix 4 – Escalation of Concerns

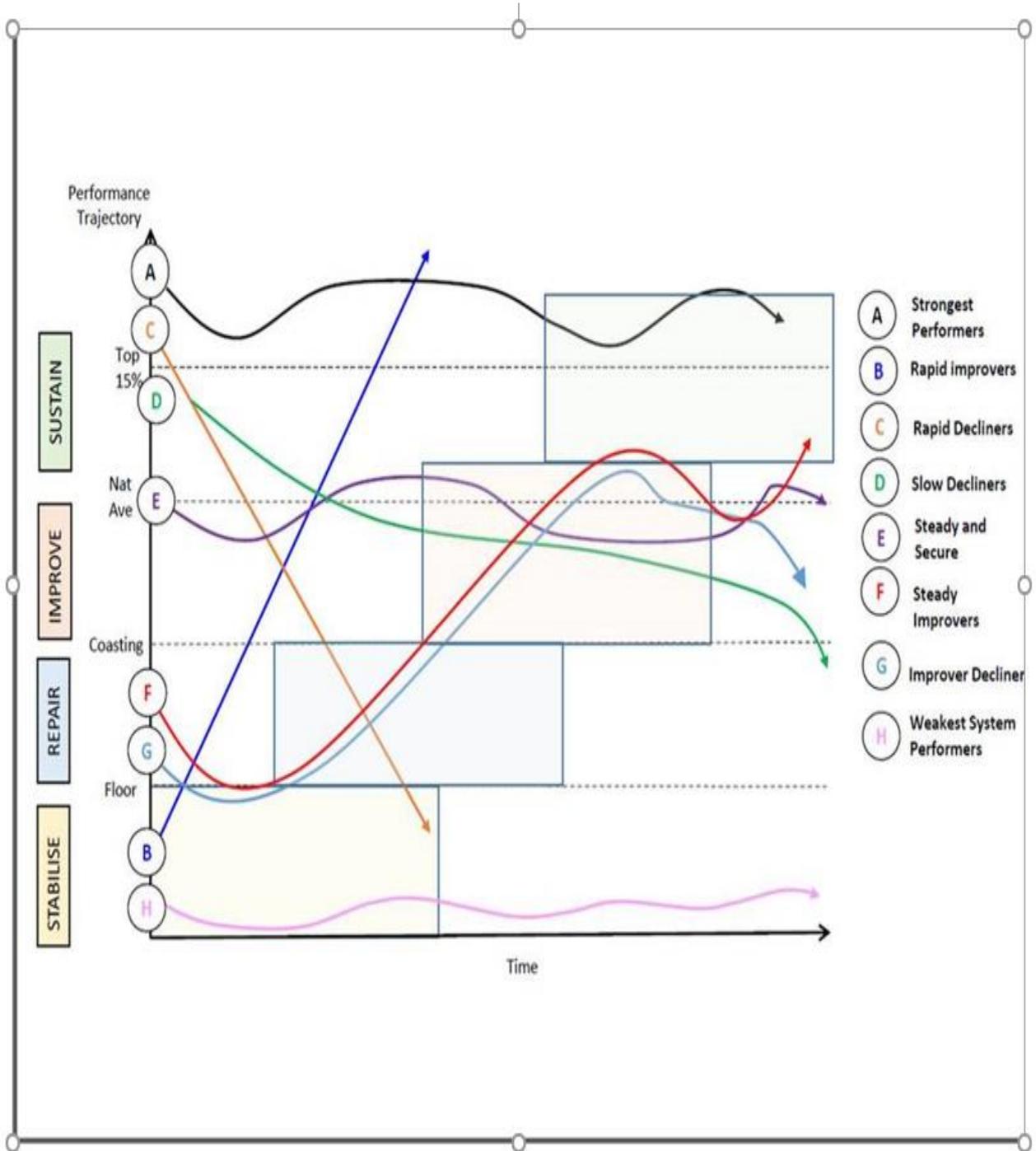
OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

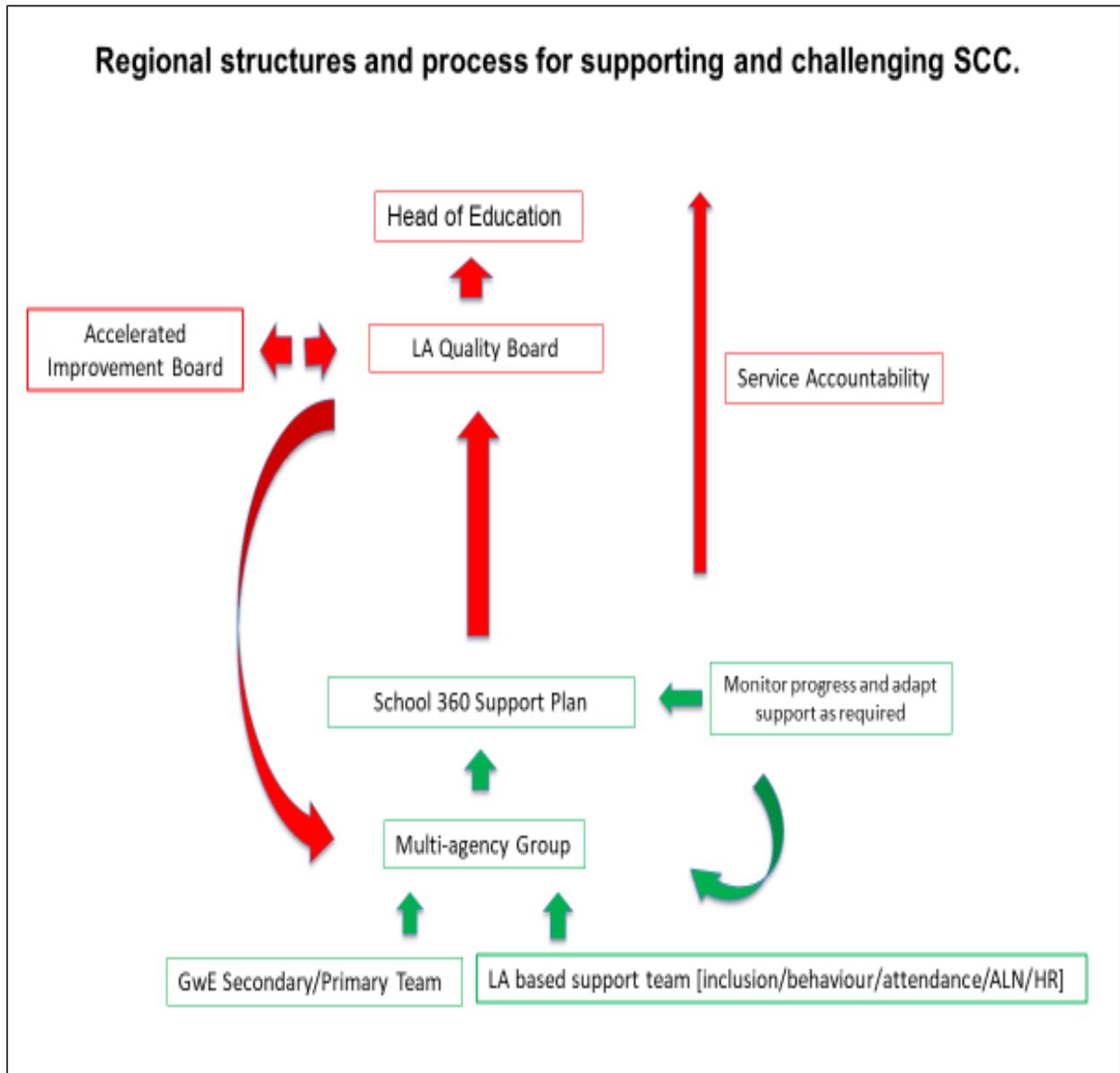
Monitoring Officer:

Nothing to add from a propriety perspective.

Statutory Finance Officer:

I note that part 5.1 of the covering report confirms that there are no financial implications arising from the decision sought here, and that GwE will operate within their current financial resources.





VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

- aligning our work with the National Evaluation, Improvement and Accountability framework and approaches adopted in the national pilot for SCC.
- ensuring synergy through co-owning problems, collaborating, co-constructing and thinking together.
- partners which are mutually accountable for all aspects of support and challenge.
- ensuring processes are solution focused and actions are evidence based.
- being honest, open, trusting and transparent.
- demonstrating positivity, humility, ingenuousness, sincerity and integrity.
- promoting learning of new approaches, strategies and techniques through being open minded and by looking outwards.
- ensuring clear lines of communication.
- being proactive, distilling what is of importance and be audit light.
- ensuring confidentiality, consistency and professionalism between all partners.
- being adaptable, purposeful and rigorous in approaches.
- celebrating achievement and acknowledging the success of individuals, teams and the organisation.

CYNNYDD MEWN PRYDERON / ESCALATION OF CONCERNS
ADRODDIAD GAN Y GRWP AML-ASiantaethol i'r Bwrdd Ansawdd
REPORT BY MULTI-AGENCY GROUP TO LOCAL QUALITY BOARD

Ysgol / School		ALI / LA	
Pennaeth / Headteacher		Dyddiad / Date	
YCG / SIA		Swyddog ALI / LA Officer	
Arweinydd Craidd / Core Lead		Cadeirydd GAA / Chair MAG	

Gwybodaeth cyd-testunol / Contextual information

Crynodeb o'r pryderon a'r dystiolaeth / Overview of concerns and supporting evidence

Mae safonau perfformiad disgyblion yn yr ysgol yn annerbyniol o isel.
The standards of performance of pupils at the school are unacceptably low.

Mae methiant wedi bod yn y ffordd y mae'r ysgol yn cael ei rheoli neu ei llywodraethu.
There has been a breakdown in the way the school is managed or governed.

Mae ymddygiad disgyblion yn yr ysgol neu unrhyw gamau a gymerwyd gan y disgyblion hynny neu eu rhieni yn rhagfarnu'n ddifrifol, neu'n debyg o ragfarnu'n ddifrifol, addysg unrhyw ddisgyblion yn yr ysgol.
The behaviour of pupils at the school or any action taken by those pupils or their parents is severely prejudicing, or is likely to severely prejudice, the education of any pupils at the school.

Mae diogelwch disgyblion neu staff yr ysgol o dan fygythiad (p'un ai drwy fethiant disgyblu neu fel arall).
The safety of pupils or staff at the school is threatened (whether by a breakdown of discipline or otherwise).

Mae'r corff llywodraethu neu'r pennaeth wedi methu, neu'n debyg o fethu â chydymffurfio â dyletswydd o dan y Deddfau Addysg.
The governing body or head teacher has failed, or is likely to fail, to comply with a duty under the Education Acts.

Mae'r corff llywodraethu neu'r pennaeth wedi gweithredu, neu'n bwriadu gweithredu, yn afresymol wrth arfer unrhyw rai o'i swyddogaethau o dan y Deddfau Addysg.
The governing body or head teacher has acted, or is proposing to act unreasonably in the exercise of any of its or his or her functions under the Education Acts.

Argymhellion Gweithredu i'r Bwrdd Ansawdd Lleol / Recommended Actions for Local Quality Board

RHAN 2 / SECTION 2

YMATEB Y BWRDD ANSAWDD / LOCAL QUALITY BOARD RESPONSE

Dwysau gweithredu : Penderfyniad dilynol gan y Bwrdd Ansawdd Lleol Escalation of action : Follow-up decision taken by Local Quality Board	
	Dim gweithredu pellach ar hyn o bryd / <i>No further action at this point</i>
	Addasu Cynllun Cymorth 360 i ymateb i'r pryderon <i>Adapt 360 Support Plan to address identified concerns</i>
	Trefnu cyfarfod ffurfiol gyda'r Pennaeth a Chadeirydd y Llywodraethwyr <i>Formal meeting with Head teacher and Chair of Governors</i>
	Cyflwyno Hysbysiad Rhybudd / <i>Issue warning notice:</i>
1	Gofyniad i sicrhau cyngor neu gydweithio <i>Require school to secure advice or collaborate in order to secure improvements</i>
2	Penodi llywodraethwyr ychwanegol <i>Appointment of additional governors</i>
3	Atal awdurdod dirprwyedig y corff llywodraethu i reoli cyllideb yr ysgol <i>Suspension of delegated authority for the governing body to manage a school's budget</i>
4	Penodi Bwrdd Gweithredol Interim <i>Appointment of an Interim Executive Board (IEB)</i>
RATIONALE TU ÔL I'R PENDERFYNIAD / RATIONALE BEHIND DECISION	
Arwyddwyd / Signature Pennaeth Addysg / Head of Education	Dyddiad Date



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

22 September 2021

Report by: Arwyn Thomas - GwE Managing Director

Subject: Regional strategy - Renew and reform: supporting learners' wellbeing and progression

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To present information, and for Joint Committee members to approve our 'Regional strategy - Renew and reform: supporting learners' wellbeing and progression'.

2.0 Background

2.1 The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that even in the most challenging of circumstances positive change is possible. In North Wales, GwE, the Local Authorities, Schools and PRUs have seized opportunities to explore innovative ways of working.

2.2 As we undertake national reform, it's clear that we are in a different place to the one that we imagined when the guidance for the Curriculum for Wales was published 18 months ago. We recognise that some of the preparation time for the curriculum will have been devoted to managing the impact of the pandemic over the past year. On the other hand, with an even stronger focus on well-being and significant investment in teaching and learning, the values underpinning the curriculum have been at the heart of how schools have been working. GwE is fully committed to supporting schools and PRUs to maintain this momentum to ensure that every learner in north Wales is offered provision of the highest standard.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 Attached (Appendix 1) is our 'Regional strategy - Renew and reform: supporting learners' wellbeing and progression', which sets out the strategic direction of our work during the

next stage. Through working with partners and key stakeholders and listening to them, we have identified the following themes to support our aim of ensuring that every pupil in north Wales benefits from provision of the highest possible standard. These themes are noted in our Business Plans and implemented through partnership programmes and an offer of generic and differentiated bespoke support to our schools and PRUs.

- The Reform Journey / Curriculum Realisation
- Re-igniting learning (Recruit, Restore and Raise Standards) [RRRS]
- Strategy to support parents / carers to help their children to learn
- Learner and whole school well-being
- The well-being of the workforce (GwE and schools)
- Additional Learning Needs (ALN)
- Y Gymraeg
- Leadership Development
- Digital
- Professional Learning

3.2 In addition, it is outlined how we will evolve the regional model, developments in terms of the schools partnership programme, peer review and school to school support, along with the structures and processes at work to identify and support schools causing concern.

3.3 In North Wales, GwE and the six Local Authorities are committed to work in partnership with schools to develop a robust accountability system that has the confidence of all key stakeholders and holds each partner fully accountable for their role in developing our learners. System expectations in north Wales are clearly outlined, and what we aim to achieve by September 2024.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 The Joint Committee is asked to accept and approve the Regional Strategy

4.2 To decide whether there are any aspects they wish to discuss further in future meetings.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6.0 Equalities Impact

6.1 There are no new equalities implications arising from this report.

7.0 Personnel Implications

7.1 There are no new personnel implications arising from this report.

8.0 Consultation Undertaken

8.1 Consultation took place with the regional Headteachers' Strategic Forums, representatives from the Local Authorities, Full Team, Management Board and the Joint Committee.

9.0 Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 - Regional strategy - Renew and reform: supporting learners' wellbeing and progression
-

OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

Nothing to add from a propriety perspective.

Statutory Finance Officer:

I note that part 5.1 of the covering report confirms there are no financial implications arising from the approval of the regional Strategy, as GwE will operate within their current financial resources.

REGIONAL STRATEGY

Renew and reform: supporting learners' wellbeing and progression

CONTEXT

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that even in the most challenging of circumstances positive change is possible. In North Wales, GwE, the Local Authorities, Schools and PRUs have seized opportunities to explore innovative ways of working. Schools have delivered meaningful teaching and learning experiences through a creative blended learning approach. These experiences need to be built upon to avoid a 'snap back,' keeping the positive learning that has been developed during this time and preparing for the future. The four transversal themes of the learning organisation of time, trust, thinking together and technology have developed as strong foundations of a collaborative way of working as we move forward with the reform agenda.

As we undertake national reform, it's clear that we are in a different place to the one that we imagined when the guidance for the Curriculum for Wales was published 18 months ago. We recognise that some of the preparation time for the curriculum will have been devoted to managing the impact of the pandemic over the past year. On the other hand, with an even stronger focus on well-being and significant investment in teaching and learning, the values under-pinning the curriculum have been at the heart of how schools have been working. GwE is fully committed to supporting schools and PRUs to maintain this momentum to ensure that every learner in North Wales is offered provision of the highest quality.

We will ensure that all learners in North Wales are able to learn effectively. Their mental health and emotional wellbeing, their relationships and their physical health are all critical enablers of good learning. We will support schools to focus on these areas and also to develop the key enabling skills which include oracy, literacy, numeracy, planning, organising and critical thinking.

We will support schools to ensure that learners are making meaningful progression in their learning. Focusing on progression is forward-looking, emphasising what learners need to make the next steps in their education. This avoids a deficit based model focused on 'catching up' on everything that has been missed. Appropriate assessment arrangements support this progression, helping to identify, capture and reflect on individual learners' progress over time. We will support schools to develop both formative and summative assessment as they plan to implement the new curriculum.

The Minister for Education, has confirmed that the Curriculum for Wales will continue to be implemented in primary schools, maintained nursery schools and non-maintained nursery PRUs from September 2022. The Minister has also confirmed that some additional flexibility will be given to secondary schools. In 2022, schools that are ready to roll out the curriculum to year 7 will be able to press ahead with that. However, formal implementation of the new curriculum will not be mandatory until 2023, with roll-out in that year to years 7 and 8 together. This will also be the case in special schools and all-through schools for 3 to 16-year-olds.

GwE will encourage secondary and special schools who are able to proceed with their current plans to implement the new curriculum with Year 7 from September 2022. We also realise that some secondary schools will continue their path towards curriculum reform from September 2022, and will implement the new curriculum from September 2023 when it will become mandatory for years 7 and 8. However, it is important that the work of reforming the curriculum, and particularly direct engagement between secondary and primary schools, continues in order to support learner transition irrespective of the timeline for implementation adopted by the secondary school.

Beyond 2023, the Curriculum for Wales will be rolled out on a year-by-year basis, and the first qualifications designed specifically for the Curriculum for Wales will be awarded in the 2026-27 academic year, as planned. The reform of qualifications will play a fundamental role in the success of the curriculum and GwE will support the work of Qualifications Wales over the coming year to help shape a set of qualifications of the highest quality that are aligned with the philosophy of the new curriculum.

In North Wales, GwE and the six Local Authorities firmly believe that it is of the utmost importance, that leaders and staff in every establishment are encouraged and supported in the work of forging strong and effective partnerships within and across the education system. Our regional approach has already adopted a cluster/alliance working model to implement key transformational reform areas such as curriculum development, ALN and Welsh Language. It has also been used effectively to share resources and effective practice during the COVID-19 pandemic. GwE is fully committed to continue this work and also to develop and embed structured and planned partnership programmes that will be evidence informed. GwE and the six Local Authorities, will continue to support schools and PRUs to ensure that peer engagement and collaboration becomes a mainstay of our approach in developing a robust, sustainable and effective self-improving system.

We fully support the Minister's vision, as outlined in the '*Cymraeg 2050: our plan for 2021 to 2026*' strategy, to create bilingual citizens who are confident to use Welsh in all aspects of everyday life. GwE will work in partnership with the six Local Authorities to ensure that schools and PRUs are fully supported to develop the Welsh language skills of the workforce and the learners.

The Welsh Government have updated the document '*Curriculum for Wales: the journey to 2022*' which sets out the expectations on schools to reform the curriculum. GwE will support both regional and national networks for curriculum implementation from the autumn onwards. Regional schools will work in partnership with Professor Graham Donaldson, GwE and the six Local Authorities in developing effective practice to unpack the potential of the six Areas of Learning and Experiences (AOLEs) and to develop whole school curriculum design and assessment.

Structures and processes for identifying and supporting schools causing concern will ensure that intervention is timely and appropriate to the context of the school. All schools identified as a school causing concern will have a holistic 360 support plan clearly articulating the nature and intensity of the support provided by either GwE or the Local Authority service that is

responsible for the delivery. This process is outlined in the Partnership Agreement between each Local Authority and its schools. All schools causing concern will be involved in cluster/alliance working that will also contribute to their improvement journey.

GwE and the six Local Authorities, will work closely with key partners such as Welsh Government, Estyn and Qualifications Wales to influence policy, the new Estyn Framework and the reform of qualifications to ensure that we contribute to implementing the Minister's priorities.

THEMES

Through working and listening to partners and key stakeholders, we have identified the following themes to support our aim of ensuring that every learner in North Wales is offered provision of the highest quality. These themes will be actioned by our Business Plans and will be implemented through partnership programmes and an offer of differentiated generic and bespoke support for our schools and PRUs.

The Reform Journey / Curriculum Realisation

- Ensure support for schools in responding to the education reform journey, with strong emphasis on pedagogy, effective teaching and action research.
- Ensure good or better use of formative assessment strategies in all schools.
- Ensure support for all schools in responding to the education reform journey, with strong emphasis on the 12 pedagogical principles and action research.
- Ensure consistency in schools' understanding of the key principles of the new assessment guidance.
- Ensure support for schools in relation to whole-school Curriculum Design and within AOEs.

Re-ignite learning (RRRS)

- Implement programmes which aims to mitigate the effects of school closures on pupils' reading and writing attainment in both English and Welsh.
- Evidence-based teaching strategy designed to help pupils improve their fluency and progress in mathematics.
- Develop online resources suitable for both school staff and parents to enable use of these interventions to assist the reading development of children.
- Continue to develop and produce a suite of universal support materials for secondary numeracy and literacy.

Strategy to support parents / carers to help their children to learn

- Develop a holistic package that supports and helps parents and carers to transform their understanding of learning and what they can do to help their child.
- Develop a comprehensive course for parents and carers, giving them all the tools, knowledge and confidence they need to help their children to learn while they are at home.
- Provide written guidance containing strategies and techniques that parents/carers can use to support their child's learning.

- Provide practical strategies, activities and techniques that can be used by parents and carers to help their children to learn.
- Develop and adapt resources appropriately to meet the needs of specific groups of parents and carers.
- Review the provision that is offered across the region in order to ensure that current resources fully and effectively support and meet local and regional needs.

Learners and whole school wellbeing

- Continue to work closely in partnership with Local Authorities to provide wellbeing support for learners in schools and settings.
- Continue to provide support to school leaders on the identification, engagement and support for specific groups of disadvantaged and vulnerable learners including those who have been disproportionately affected by school closures.
- To further develop & implement the national PDG strategy across the region.
- Develop a Whole School Approach to wellbeing, promoting 'Ethically Informed Citizens of Wales'.
- Co-create Whole School Wellbeing resources with schools from across the region.

Workforce wellbeing (GwE and schools)

- Continue to work closely in partnership with Local Authorities to provide wellbeing support for practitioners in schools and settings.
- Support the emotional well-being of the individual in the context of their professional role.
- Placing health and wellbeing at the heart of everything we do.
- Use a coaching framework in conversations, meetings and everyday leadership to unlock potential and encourage individual growth.

Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

In collaboration with the Local Authorities:

- Support the process of reviewing the quality of ALN provision.
- Develop a professional learning offer that meets the needs of the workforce.
- Continue to support clusters to develop innovative plans to achieve ALN transformation goals.
- Continue to support the delivery of the schools support and training programme.

Y Gymraeg

In collaboration with the Local Authorities we will work to implement the Welsh Government '*Cymraeg 2050: our plan for 2021 to 2026*':

- Develop the informal use of Welsh through 'Siarter iaith' and 'Cymraeg Campus'.
- Provide a professional offer for the Welsh language which is part of the region's Accelerated Learning Strategy.
- Offer professional learning to develop the Welsh language skills of the workforce.
- Promote the profile of the Welsh language amongst leaders in preparation for the Curriculum for Wales and the Welsh Government target of achieving a million Welsh Speakers by 2050.

- Provide support for schools and settings who teach through the medium of Welsh as their first language to improve the Welsh First Language skills of their learners, and especially those from non-Welsh speaking homes.
- Work in partnership to support each Local Authorities with their WESP priorities.

Developing leadership

- Ensure that all learning organisations have the leadership capacity at all levels to inspire, coach, support, share practice and collaborate at all levels to ensure all learners' achieve their potential.
- Ensure that the principles of distributive leaderships are embedded in all learning organisations across the region.
- Continue to offer a wide range of Professional Learning opportunities in relation to leadership developmental programmes in order to develop present and future leaders:
 - Middle Leaders
 - Senior Leaders
 - National Professional Qualification for Headteachers (NPQH)
 - New and Acting Headteachers
 - Experienced Headteachers:

Digital

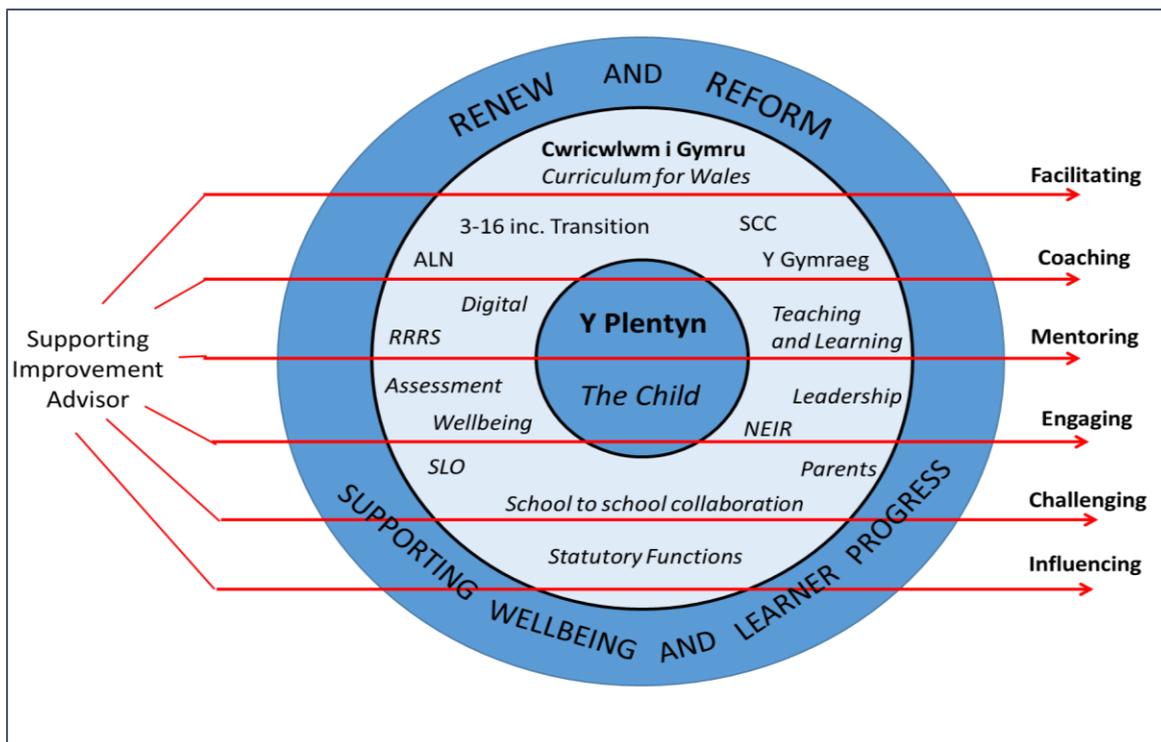
- Ensure that the region's schools' understanding of digital resilience is current and that the teaching and learning of digital security issues is purposeful and effective.
- Develop effective digital leadership within the region's schools to strengthen strategic approaches to improvement planning, change management and impact monitoring.
- Ensure professional learning opportunities are available to all school staff to train them how to use the tools available through *Hwb* and how to make effective use of the tools to improve the quality of learning.

Professional Learning

- Provide professional learning and bespoke support and guidance to schools and settings to help them realise the Reform Journey and prepare for the new curriculum.
- Provide access to a range of regional and national professional learning, including access to coaching and mentoring, for all educational practitioners in schools and settings that is appropriate to their role and responsibility in line with professional standards.

EVOLVING THE REGIONAL MODEL

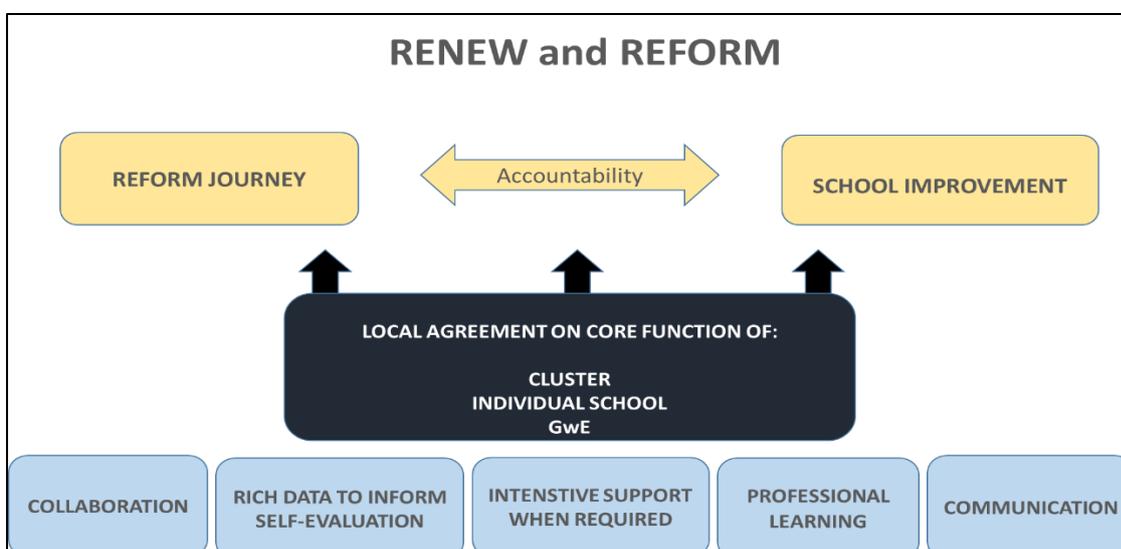
The role of the Supporting Improvement Advisor (SIA) is continuing to evolve as we continue to meet the needs and expectations of all our stakeholders. Our approach will be to support wellbeing and learner progress through working in partnership across the system to enable renewal and reform. With the learner at the centre of everything we do, advisors will use a variety of approaches to support Welsh Government in renewing education post pandemic and ensuring the reform journey remains on track.



The two core aspects of our work moving forward; the reform journey and school improvement will be underpinned by five areas of work:

- Collaboration
- Rich Data to inform Self-evaluation
- Intensive Support when required
- Professional Learning
- Communication

The Core Function of the work will involve a regional partnership approach with collaborations of schools and individual schools. This will give local flexibility regarding the model of delivery.



To ensure that we continue to meet the requirements and expectations of stakeholders, our schools partnership model will need to further evolve. With schools, clusters and alliances at differing points on the self-improving continuum, a nuanced approach will need to be adopted.

Primary focus is on enabling schools to improve by developing a high quality self-improving system which ensures the best for every child.

Arrangements at all levels will be rigorous, robust and coherent and underpinned by the principle of encouraging and supporting schools, clusters and alliances to take increasing ownership and accountability for their improvement journey.

We will ensure that the regional approach for schools partnership is:

- Fair: where we promote equity and inclusion and never lose sight of the learner.
- Coherent: where schools and GwE work together with locally determined core functions, roles and expectations.
- Proportionate: where we ensure that we have a manageable model which makes a difference to all schools. Our approach will support greater autonomy for those schools, clusters and alliances who have the capacity for self-improvement, whilst also allowing for a more comprehensive and intensive support package to be agreed with schools who face specific challenges at a certain point in time and for a specific period of time.
- Collegiate: where no school sees itself as an island. By working together in a structured way, schools can improve faster and more sustainably. Peer collaboration and engagement will be a central feature of our model. All key partners will engage in developing collective efficacy based on high trust, transparency, openness and honesty. It is about partners working together to build capacity into the system through quality enhancement processes and activities.
- Transparent: where we recognise the breadth of learning experience across the region and the value added by schools, leaders, teachers, support staff and advisers working together to an agreed common purpose.

As we move forward with the planning and delivery of the reform journey, our school partnership approach will allow flexibility for schools, clusters and alliances to agree core functions for:

- collaborative developmental work
- approaches to supporting improvements in individual schools within their cluster/alliance
- reporting and accountability processes

Clusters and alliances will also be given the flexibility to agree what the core function and contribution of GwE should be to the three aspects identified above. Where a cluster/alliance determines it has the capacity to undertake many of the core functions, it will be given resources to support with the work and the contribution of GwE will be proportionate. Where a cluster/alliance determines that they require GwE to undertake a greater percentage of the

core functions, the level of resources allocated will be proportionate. GwE contribution could include:

- Leading on or participating in quality assurance or quality enhancing opportunities
- Leading or contributing to developmental work
- Coaching or mentoring groups or individuals
- Facilitating cluster/alliance collaborative activities
- Leading on whole school or cluster/alliance professional development
- Delivering a more intensive support package to individual schools within a cluster/alliance
- Specialist role contributions
- Supporting the professional development of the workforce
- Signposting and sharing best practice

Roles and contributions will be defined within a cluster/alliance '*partnership agreement*' which will be reviewed and evaluated at the end of the year (see Infographic below).

SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME						
CORE FUNCTIONS	CO-DEVELOPING		SUPPORTING IMPROVEMENTS		REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY	
	<i>What?</i>	<i>How?</i>	<i>What?</i>	<i>How?</i>	<i>What?</i>	<i>How?</i>
Cluster						
Individual Schools						
GwE						
IDENTIFIED EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME						
AGREED ALLOCATED RESOURCE BY GwE FOR CLUSTER						
£XXXXX						

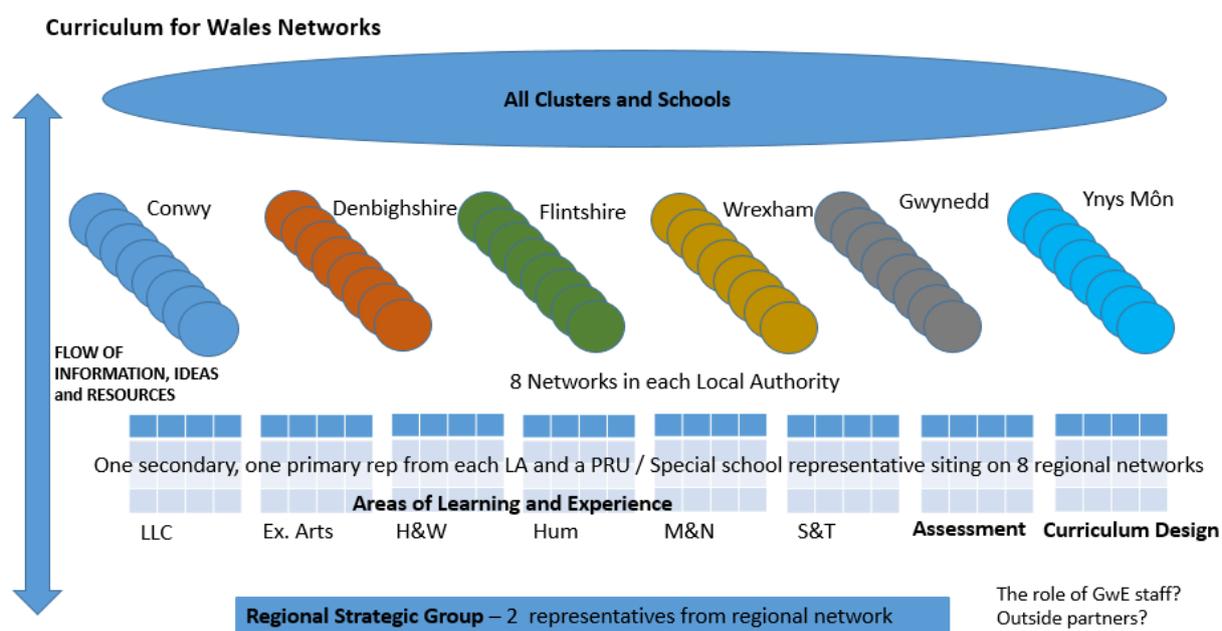
To strengthen the development of the new curriculum, AOLE development networks will be established at regional and a local level. School leaders and practitioners will collaborate to unpack the potential of each AOLE through modelling, designing and sharing curriculum practice.

Collaborative networks will work on the following areas:

1. Unpacking the potential of one of the AOLES
 - Language, Literacy and Communication (both Welsh and English)
 - Mathematics and Numeracy
 - Science & Technology
 - Humanities
 - Health and Wellbeing
 - Expressive Arts

2. Assessment
3. Whole school Curriculum Design

School based practitioners and wider partners from across the region will have the opportunity to work collaboratively with a network of peers supporting curriculum design and AOLE development on a local and regional level. Practitioners will communicate and cascade learning and successful practice across the schools within each local authority and contribute to developing planning and design models to support schools in trialling, evaluating and preparing the workforce for first teaching. The principle of subsidiarity will ensure a local context to this work.



Eight local AOLE networks will be established in each Local Authority, one for each of the areas noted above. Individuals from these local groups will represent the LA in eight regional AOLE networks, ensuring consistency of approach across the region. A regional strategic group, made up of cross-sector representatives from the eight LA groups will provide direction and an overview of the work.

Networks will have access to Professional Learning and work in partnership with Professor Graham Donaldson, GwE and the six North Wales LAs in developing effective AOLE practice which will support all schools on their Reform Journey.

Peer review and school to school support

In North Wales, we firmly believe that peer review and school to school support should be a key driver for continuous improvement in schools as they plan to deliver the new curriculum and national reform. We will work with schools and PRUs to embed a programme of peer review that is based on the following processes:

- **Self-review:** effective peer review should start with how well the school knows itself and be led by the school being reviewed. Self-evaluation should focus on the learner, their achievements, progress and experiences in school and focus on learning and teaching, leadership, the development of a learning organisation culture, well-being of pupils and staff, equity and inclusion. In moving forward, the self-evaluation should also focus on the four purposes of the new curriculum and evaluate the progress the school is making towards realising the new curriculum. The self-evaluation processes should allow the school to identify areas of strengths and priorities for improvement. It should also identify aspects of their improvement journey that require peer support to aid improvement.
- **Peer-review:** the most effective peer reviews have an agreed focus. The purpose of the collaboration must be to improve outcomes and any agreed focus should be based on strong evidence of what's needed to improve and what outcomes would be most benefit to the school. Peer reviewers working as a team or trio work best where they can triangulate evidence and jointly analyse their findings. They are not there to pass judgement but to seek evidence and agree findings to be shared with the school. The partnership must be founded on a clearly articulated shared moral purpose with transparency, trust and honesty crucial and integral to the process. The peer review should also provide professional development opportunities and include leaders at all levels.
- **School-to-school support:** if peer review is going to be a vehicle for ongoing improvement in school systems, then it must go further than the review itself and involve school to school or cluster support. Where the outcomes are owned by the staff, the long-term and sustainable impact will be greater. This helps to further build capacity and increased resilience within a self-improving system. The partnerships built should therefore go beyond school leaders and engage with students, teachers, families and communities.

Schools Causing Concern

Structures and processes for identifying and supporting schools causing concern will ensure that intervention is timely and appropriate to the context of the school.

A **Multi-agency Group** will meet on a regular basis (monthly or as appropriate) to:

- Identify those schools at risk of causing concern
- Agree with the school the bespoke 360 support plan. Plans will clearly identify which service will provide support and resources against identified actions
- Agree the monitoring arrangements of the 360 support plans
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the 360 support plans and work with schools to monitor progress and impact
- Share any effective practice within and across regional local authorities
- Where concerns escalate, the Multi-agency Group will report to the Quality Board so that Directors/Heads of Service can make informed and timely decision regarding the use of statutory powers of intervention

The **LA Quality Board** will meet on a half termly basis and will be chaired by the Chief Education Officer. Decisions for action by the Board should be recorded and shared with the Multi-agency group or supporting service as appropriate.

The Board's main focus will be on:

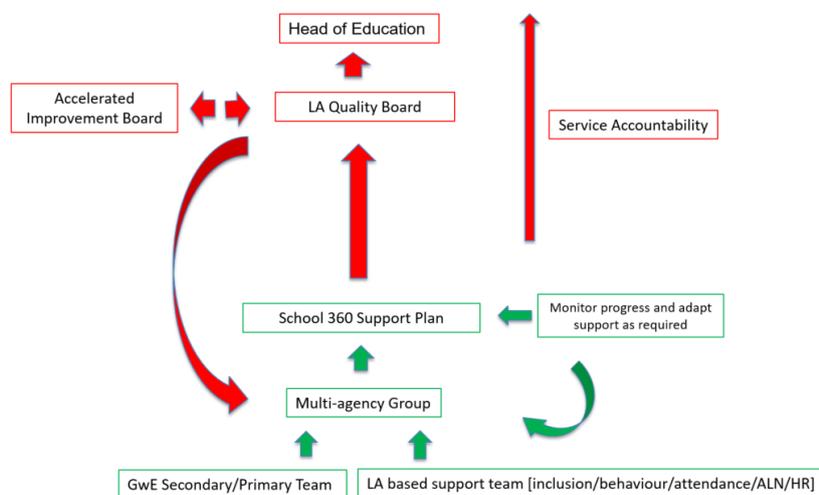
- assessing the progress of those schools causing concern that have been identified by Estyn or by local processes
- assessing the quality of the support planning for schools causing concern undertaken by the Multi-agency Group
- ensuring the Multi-agency Group undertakes its monitoring functions effectively
- taking required actions when escalation of concerns are shared by the Multi-agency Group and specifically around ability of school leadership and governance to improve at sufficient pace
- considering use of statutory powers of intervention when there are concerns around progress or pace of progress
- identifying best practice to share within and across local authorities

Where required, the local authority could also establish an **Accelerated Improvement Board** to support individual schools on their improvement journey. Membership will include representatives from the local authority, GwE, the head teacher and the governing body of the school. The purpose of the AIB will be to:

- Provide support for school improvement
- Provide an internal and external challenge forum
- To identify any concerns
- To identify any actions to be prioritised
- To further inform the Head of Education as to whether it is necessary for the LA to use its powers of intervention

The regional structures and processes for supporting and challenging schools causing concerns are summarised below:

Regional structures and process for supporting and challenging SCC.



Statutory Functions and Accountability

The GwE Core Lead and the Supporting Improvement Advisers will work in partnership with Local Authority officers to implement the *Local Authority-School Partnership Agreement*. Monitoring and evaluation of overall standards, quality of teaching, learning and leadership will be undertaken by GwE's Core Lead and Supporting Improvement Advisers working in partnership with schools and clusters. However, GwE and the six Local Authorities will work with schools to evolve the current accountability system to allow schools and clusters to become more autonomous. Peer review will be a key element in supporting schools to evaluate their strengths areas for improvement and in helping them focus on specific improvement areas as they plan and deliver the new curriculum.

In moving towards a self-improving system, there will be a greater emphasis on moral and professional accountabilities. Accountability relationships for school will include those with pupils, parents, colleagues and the local community. The challenge for us over the next few years will be to create a culture where schools feel greater ownership of accountability and shift the perception that accountability is based just on data and inspection and imposed from above.

In North Wales, GwE and the six Local Authorities are committed to work in partnership with schools to develop a robust accountability system that has the confidence of all key stakeholders and holds each partner fully accountable for their role in developing our learners to become:

- Ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives;
- Enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work;
- Ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world; and
- Healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

System expectations in North Wales

By September 2024:

- All schools will meet the statutory requirements of the *Curriculum for Wales* and each school will have a strong relationship with their community and are developing a broad range of learner skills that will make them ready for further education, training and employment.
- Planning around the four purposes of the new curriculum will provide a balanced offer to meet the needs of all learners.
- A basic skills strategy comprising literacy, numeracy and digital competency will underpin the curriculum in every school.

- A strategy for children who are vulnerable to learning, concentrating on their inclusion, emotional wellbeing, attendance and any additional learning needs will be operational and impacting positively on their progress and wellbeing.
- We will have worked with schools and local authorities to adopt a new accountability model, which will include robust quality assurance processes, to ensure that there are clear and appropriate lines of accountability at all levels for regional school improvement and developments.
- An effective school causing concern strategy will be in place with the right capacity to identify and address need.
- Improving teaching will be at the heart of all improvements.
- Mature school collaborations through clusters and alliances will be in place across the region and a more collegiate approach to school improvement will be firmly established in order to secure better outcomes for learners.
- A robust regional Welsh in Education Strategic Plan will be operational to fully support both local and national priorities for improving the Welsh Language skills of both learners and the workforce.
- There will be a robust professional learning offer in place that meet the needs of all leaders and teaching staff to help each school implement all aspects of the reform journey and enable their learners to develop towards the four purposes of the new curriculum.
- GwE will effectively operate as a learning organisation in line with the seven 'action-orientated' dimensions identified by the OECD, and will have strong mature partnerships with its key stakeholders that will include a clear communication strategy.



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REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

22 SEPTEMBER 2021

Report by: Alwyn Jones - Assistant Director

Subject: Y Gymraeg - Cluster Plans and 'Ein Llais Ni' Oracy Project

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To share information about the arrangements and plans for two main work streams in the business plan for Welsh this year - arrangements for the Cluster Plans and 'Ein Llais Ni' Oracy Project.

2.0 Background

2.1 **Cluster Plans** - Following discussions with Authority Officers, it was agreed that there is a need to reconsider arrangements for encouraging cluster collaboration and allocation of funding to support the objectives i.e. Developing the language skills of the workforce and supporting Siarter Iaith and Cymraeg Campus activities.

2.2 **'Ein Llais Ni' (Our Voice)** - A successful application was made to Welsh Government early in 2021 for funding to support us to undertake the 'Ein Llais Ni' oracy project. The aim of the project is to:

- Improve learners' attitudes and readiness to communicate through the medium of Welsh and contribute confidently to their bilingual communities both within and outside of school.
- Introduce the programme of traditional, digital and live 'Ein Llais Ni' strategies; which are of relevance to the Welsh context.
- Support and develop learners towards the Four Purposes, learners who are proud of their Welshness and confident, bilingual communicators.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 **Cluster Plans** - as regards these plans, the intention is to review planning, delivery and reporting on progress to ensure the effectiveness of the grant and collate information about achievements and effective delivery methods in future. Working with the Local Authorities, we will:

- Develop the use of the 'dashboard' to share information/the plan/funding and report on progress. Welsh language SIAs, Authority officers and Catchment Area Language Coordinators will have access.

- Ensure that planning aligns with WESP outcomes and that catchment area language coordinators are increasingly aware of those targets.
- Ensure a financial allocation for every cluster - in discussion with Authority Officers, consider the number of schools and specific requirements to target.
- Ensure ongoing discussions about the impact of any actions and next steps.
- Encourage regular meetings with cluster schools, make use of the Workforce Census when planning for needs, strategic use of the Sabbatical Schemes and principles of the Siarter Iaith and Cymraeg Campus frameworks.
- Share effective practice and achievements of the cluster plans via GwE's Support Centre website and in national networks e.g. 'Siarter Iaith'.

3.2 'Ein Llais Ni' (See Appendix 1) - the aim of this project is to develop and strengthen the model for teaching and improving oracy skills in schools in the context of the Curriculum for Wales (*signature pedagogy*). The main priorities are as follows:

- The need to build confidence and reignite enthusiasm towards using Welsh as a natural medium of communication and blend this with the need to improve welfare and wellbeing by developing all learners' communication skills.
- Respond to the report by Professor Neil Mercer and Dr James Mannion, 'Oracy across the Welsh Curriculum' in 2018.
- The teaching and learning of oracy skills need to be transformed in order to meet the 'Welsh Government's aim of 'Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers' and the Curriculum for Wales.
- The need to integrate the principles of the model with schools' late immersion plans and build on their accelerated learning strategies.
- Evidence suggests that closing schools due to COVID-19 has widened the attainment gap between learners from a cross-section of linguistic backgrounds and particularly those from less privileged backgrounds.
- A number of teachers acknowledge a lack of confidence and specialist subject knowledge in the teaching and assessment of oracy across the curriculum.
- The need to ensure that language and expertise in specific areas and subjects contribute towards the project.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 The Joint-Committee is asked to approve the content of the report and plans to develop the project in line with targets set by Welsh Government.

5.0 Financial implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. GwE will operate within current financial resources.

- 5.2 'Ein Llais Ni' Project - a successful application was made to Welsh Government early in 2021 for funding to support an action research project to raise standards in Welsh oracy.

6.0 Equalities Impact

- 6.1 There are no new equalities implications arising from this report.

7.0 Personnel Implications

7.1 'Ein Llais Ni' Project – Appoint a temporary Project Officer to co-ordinate the work alongside a Research Officer from Bangor University's Education Department.

8.0 Consultation undertaken

8.1 Consultation with GwE Management Board and Local Authority Officers.

9.0 Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 - 'Ein Llais Ni' project.

OPINION OF STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

Nothing to add from a propriety perspective.

Statutory Finance Officer:

I confirm that a letter has been received offering a £210,900 grant for the 'Ein Llais Ni' project. As the covering report notes in part 5.1, it is expected that GwE will implement the schemes within their current financial resources, including this grant.

'Ein Llais Ni'

GwE Oracy Project

A successful application was made to Welsh Government early in 2021 for funding to support us to undertake an action research project to raise standards in Welsh oracy.

The aim of the project is to:

- Improve learners' attitudes and their willingness to communicate in Welsh and contribute confidently to their bilingual communities, both in school and beyond the school gates.
- Deliver a programme of 'Ein Llais Ni' strategies, which are a combination of traditional, digital and live elements, and which is of relevance to the Welsh context.
- Support and develop learners towards the Four Purposes, learners who are proud of being Welsh and who are confident, bilingual communicators.

Priorities:

- Map out a programme that includes traditional, digital and real-life strategies in combination with Voice 21/Trysorfa Llais 21 against current research on developing bilingualism in schools, including adaptations to the programme to set it in a local and Welsh context.
- Establish a Steering Board to oversee and contribute to the project.
- Appoint a Project Officer to co-ordinate the work alongside a Research Officer from the Education Department, Bangor University (under the supervision of Professor Enlli Thomas).
- Plan and introduce effective strategies and pedagogy to share with schools.
- Work with a range of schools implement the strategies in action and receive feedback on the effect on learners' progress and enjoyment.
- Make the programme relevant to a Welsh, contemporary and varied context, offering suggestions, practical ideas as well as successful practice based on the principles and original recommendations of Mercer and Mannion.
- Extend the project to other parts of Wales in order to enhance and evaluate it.
- Evaluate the impact of strategies and adaptations and pupils' confidence and attainment.
- Develop and produce a digital report in response to and following on from the report of Mercer and Mannion report - 'Oracy across the Welsh curriculum'.
- Hold a National Conference to launch the research work and supporting resources, and to raise awareness of the findings of the 'Ein Llais Ni' project.

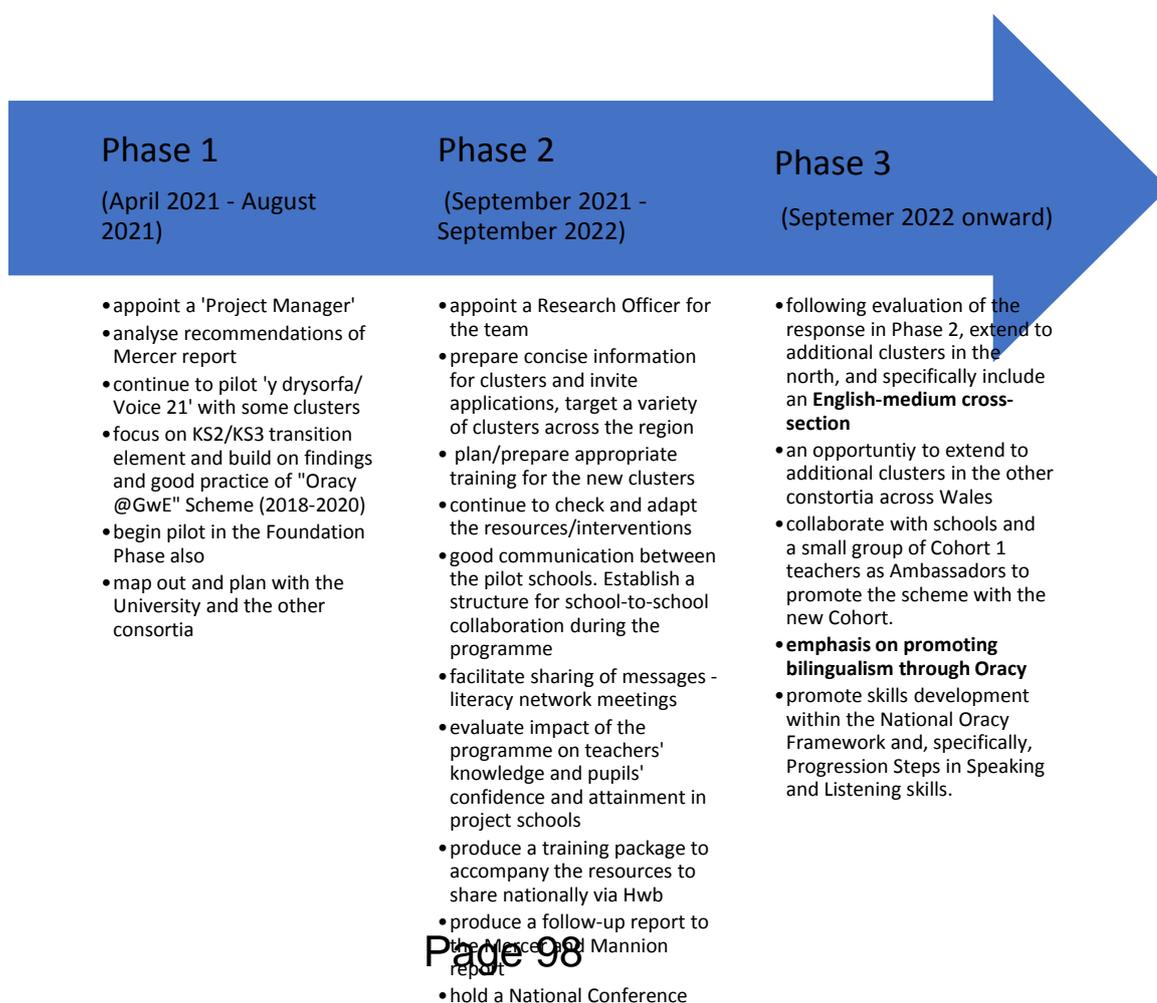
Outcomes:

- A clear strategy for teaching oracy, which is dedicated to the Curriculum for Wales, well designed and supported by a support package for professional learning for schools.
- Teachers will have a secure understanding of how to use and adapt language effectively in various situations and for different audiences, and of the advantages of bilingualism.
- Teachers will have a secure understanding of the various ways of using a range of apps and digital programmes to enhance the teaching of oracy, and plan stimulating and interesting experiences relevant to real life and that ignite learners' enthusiasm to communicate.
- A positive impact on pupils' oracy skills and their willingness and enthusiasm to use the language in school and in their community.
- An increase in the number of pupils who are confident to use the language to express themselves and communicate their thoughts and ideas in school and in their community.
- Less variation within and between schools in terms of teaching oracy.
- It will contribute effectively to improving learners' well-being as they express themselves and access every part of the curriculum and school life.
- Create centres of expertise and develop networks to share strategies for teaching and learning oracy, which will be central for dissemination work in the future.
- An accessible platform for resources and supporting resources - create a training package to accompany the resources to be shared on the GwE Support website/Hwb nationally.

Impact and benefit of the project for stakeholders:

- **Learners** - their confidence and speaking, listening and communication skills will develop and strengthen; their skills will transfer successfully to other areas and subjects across the curriculum, equipping them to communicate confidently in Welsh beyond the school walls.
- **Teachers and Teaching Assistants** - they will develop a learning climate which puts the development of oral skills to the forefront at every opportunity in order to foster natural communicators in Welsh; they will have a clear understanding of the various elements underpinning teaching oracy effectively, and plan purposefully to that effect.
- **School leaders** - the Welsh language will be a part of the school's vision, implementing a Welsh ethos and environment by integrating the Language Charter Framework and the Four Purposes of the new curriculum. There will be an awareness of the bigger picture and the importance of developing the Welsh language to create bilingual citizens who are confident to use Welsh in all aspects of everyday life (WG Cymraeg 2050 Strategy), and of the strategic responsibility of LAs through the WESP.
- **Parents** - they will have a deeper understanding of the benefits of being bilingual and support approaches to teaching Welsh; they will show an interest in their children's oral skills in Welsh and strive to develop their own Welsh language skills.
- **Local Authorities** - they will be key partners in the process of supporting schools via the WESP, and see benefits from the collaboration in order to support targets They will see the project as an opportunity to embed and extend the language to other areas of the curriculum, and to develop new and current approaches to planning for the Curriculum for Wales.
- **Education Consortia** - they will be aware and clear about the project and the approach, receive regular updates regarding developments, contribute to developing and promoting it and communicate nationally and locally via Hwb.

Timetable:



Governance:



Agenda Item 11

GwE: Joint Committee – 22/09/2021



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

22 SEPTEMBER 2021

Report by: Alwyn Jones - GwE Assistant Director

Subject: Digital Learning

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 Share information with members of the Joint Committee in relation to 'Digital Learning'.

1.0 Background

2.1 Ongoing developments through the Hwb / EdTech programme has led to improved core infrastructure and increased number of user devices being rolled out across the region's schools aimed at increasing engagement with a series of national strategies/priorities.

2.2 In order to ensure a clear strategic direction for the implementation of these strategies and priorities, it is proposed to establish a Regional Digital Learning Group to plan and oversee specific aspects of the work.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 Attached (Appendix 1) is the terms of reference for the Regional Digital Learning Group.

3.2 The main purpose of the group will be:

- Set out a strategic direction to support GwE, Local Authorities and Schools to implement the above strategies.
- To make all stakeholders aware of developments in relation to the above strategies / priorities.
- To give LA's a space to discuss and share experiences in relation to the EdTech programme.
- To ensure that schools are made aware of developments and opportunities that arise through the wider digital learning agenda.
- To share effective practice locally and regionally.
- To give strategic input to national, regional and local professional learning programmes.
- To explore and promote opportunities to use digital technology to support the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) in all streams of digital learning.
- To explore how digital technology can support the development of all areas of the reform journey.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 The Joint Committee is asked to accept and approve the terms of reference of the Regional Digital Learning Group which will set the strategic direction to support GwE, the Local Authorities and schools in implementing national strategies and priorities.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6.0 Equalities Impact

- 6.1 There are no new equalities implications arising from this report.

7.0 Personnel Implications

7.1 There are no new personnel implications arising from this report.

8.0 Consultation Undertaken

8.1 Consultation with GwE Management Board

9.0 Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 - Digital Learning Regional Group terms of reference

OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

Nothing to add from a propriety perspective.

Statutory Finance Officer:

I note that part 5.1 of the report confirms that there are no financial implications arising from approving the remit of the Regional Digital Learning Group. Therefore, I have nothing to add to the report from a financial propriety perspective.



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Terms of reference

Digital Learning Regional Group

Context

Ongoing developments through the Hwb / EdTech programme has led to improved core infrastructure and increased number of user devices being rolled out across the region's schools aimed at increasing engagement with a series of national strategies/priorities :

- Promoting and maintaining a Hwb first approach
- EdTech Programme
- Digital Competence will be a core requirement of the Curriculum for Wales, identified as one of the cross-curricular skills along with Literacy and Numeracy
- Enhancing digital resilience in Education action plan
- Digital Professional Learning Journey – identified in Our National Mission
- National digital learning self-review tool
- Remote Asynchronous Learning Design / Remote Synchronous Learning Design
- Computing strand within the Science and Technology Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE)
- New Digital Technology GCSE / A-Level
- E-sgol

Main Purpose

- Set out a strategic direction to support GwE, Local Authorities and Schools to implement the above strategies
- To make all stakeholders aware of developments in relation to the above strategies / priorities
- To give LA's a space to discuss and share experiences in relation to the EdTech programme
- To ensure that schools are made aware of developments and opportunities that arise through the wider digital learning agenda
- To share effective practice locally and regionally
- To give strategic input to national, regional and local professional learning programmes
- To explore and promote opportunities to use digital technology to support the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) in all streams of digital learning
- To explore how digital technology can support the development of all areas of the reform journey



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Functions

Ensure a clear strategic direction for the effective implementation of the above strategies / priorities through planning and overseeing the following aspects:

- Embedding Digital Competence as a cross curricular skill that is used to improve the learning across various contexts
- Promoting the use of tools on the Hwb platform with all schools
- Raising awareness of digital resilience and various strategies to keep pupils and schools safe in line with the Welsh Government's strategy and action plan
- Planning engagement with the Digital Professional Learning Journey when the guidance is launched
- Planning engagement with the National digital learning self-review tool
- Analyse the data produced by the self-review tool to identify local and regional professional learning needs
- Raising awareness of the national Remote Asynchronous Learning Design project to improve learning experiences during any distance or blended learning activities
- Sharing best practice across the region, in reference to Digital Competence, Digital Resilience, Blended Learning, Distance Learning or any pioneering practice
- Preparing schools to be ready to implement the computing strand of the Science and Technology AoLE
- Exploring ways that digital technology can support WESP and other priorities within the reform journey

Membership

The core membership of the group will include representation from the following:

- GwE Digital Lead
- The six Local Authorities – one representative per LA

Occasional attendees can be invited in line with the determined priorities and the issues that will be discussed.

Reporting

This group will formally report to the regional management board per half term with minutes from meetings and will submit recommended actions for approval.



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

22 SEPTEMBER 2021

Report by: Arwyn Thomas, GwE Managing Director

Subject: GwE Concerns and Complaints Handling Procedure

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To accept and approve GwE's Concerns and Complaints Handling Procedure.

2.0 Background

2.1 GwE is committed to dealing with any concerns or complaints regarding the service in a prompt and transparent manner according to the policies and protocols of Gwynedd Council as the host authority or, where appropriate, the policies of individual authorities.

2.2 Appendix 1 outlines GwE's procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints. The different types of possible complaints and protocols for dealing with them are outlined.

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 The Joint Committee is asked to accept and approve GwE's Concerns and Complaints Handling Procedure.

4.0 Financial implications

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5.0 Equalities Impact

5.1 There are no new equalities implications arising from this report.

6.0 Personnel Implications

6.1 There are no new personnel implications arising from this report.

7.0 Consultation undertaken

7.1 Consultation with GwE Management Board.

8.0 Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1 - GwE Concerns and Complaints Handling Procedure

OPINION OF STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Act 2019 places a statutory requirement on public service providers in Wales to adopt complaints procedures that are consistent with a model process published by the Ombudsman. Whilst GwE itself is not subject to the requirements of the Act the adoption of these arrangements will ensure clarity on how to deal with any complaint received from a member of the public, whilst other matters are dealt with under the appropriate procedures currently in place .

Statutory Finance Officer:

I note that part 4 of the covering report confirms that there are no financial implications arising from approving the procedures for dealing with concerns and complaints. Therefore, I have nothing to add to the report in terms of financial propriety.

Appendix 1 - GwE Concerns and Complaints Handling Procedure

GwE Joint Committee 22/09/2021



GwE Concerns and Complaints Handling Procedure

GwE is committed to dealing with any concerns or complaints regarding the service in a prompt and transparent manner according to the policies and protocols of Gwynedd Council as the host authority or, where appropriate, the policies of individual authorities.

In the first instance, the aim is to deal with complaints informally and find a fair, coherent, consistent and impartial solution. Where this is not possible, a process of making a formal complaint can be pursued.

The different types of possible complaints and protocols for dealing with them are outlined below.

Type of complaint	Policy and protocol followed
General complaint about GwE's service from a member of the public	Gwynedd Council Concerns and Complaints Policy (Appendix 1)
Complaint from a member of GwE staff about working conditions, conduct of a colleague.	Gwynedd Council complaints procedure (Appendix 2)
Complaint from a school/individuals within a school about GwE's service	Respective authority's procedure and policy for dealing with complaints (Appendix 3)
Dissatisfaction from a Local Authority about an aspect of GwE's service	Follow Inter-Authority Agreement Arrangements

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

Link: [GWYNEDD COUNCIL CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY](#)

CORPORATE SUPPORT DEPARTMENT



8.2 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If there is a complaint regarding the work, (apart from complaints relating to salary for which there is a separate procedure), the complaint can be lodged using the following procedure:

1. The Head of Department should be contacted as they, in most instances, are best placed to discuss the complaint.
2. The member of staff can discuss the issue themselves, or ask a representative as defined in paragraph 10 of the Employment Relations Act 1999* to discuss on their behalf or with them.
3. Should the matter want to be discussed further after meeting with the Head of Department, the representative should be contacted and instruction sought, and the issue can be discussed further with the Head of Department, if necessary. If there is still dissatisfaction, the complaint can be presented in writing (by the member of staff or their representative).
4. The Head of Department or Senior Officer nominated by them will consider the complaint.
5. The complaint will be discussed with the member of staff and representative, if necessary, and the authority will reply in writing within 14 days.
6. Should the member of staff remain dissatisfied with the response received, there will be an opportunity for conciliation with the Head of Department and Representative from the Corporate Support Department and the Employee's Representative.
7. If there is still dissatisfaction regarding the issue, a letter can be written to the Head of the Corporate Support Department who will direct the issue to the Local Appeals Panel within ten working days of receiving the request.
8. The appeal will be heard by the Employment Appeals Committee.
9. The relevant Union will receive a copy, for information purposes, of the decision made by every Employment Appeal Committee and it will be open for the employee to bring any such policy or principles arising from any case to the attention of the Local Joint Committee.

In cases claimed as being urgent, every effort will be made to ensure that the implementation of the above procedure is undertaken as soon as possible.

* *Definition of representative from the Employment Relations Act 1999:*

(a) an officer employed by a trade union in accordance with sections 1 and 119 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992,

(b) a trade union officer with written certification from the union to testify that the officer is experienced or trained in representing employees in disciplinary hearings or complaints.

(c) another employee of the employer

Summary of stages in a complaint from a school/individuals within a school about GwE's service
Stage 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal discussion between the school and GwE officer aiming for a prompt and acceptable resolution
Stage 2
If the above is unsuccessful, school to present a complaint to the respective Education Authority e.g. Gwynedd, Anglesey, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Wrexham
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School head to write to the Head of Education outlining the complaint • Discussion between the Head teacher and Head of Education to obtain a clear understanding of the complaint and the school's desired solution • Individual Education Authority to deal with the matter in accordance with the respective Authority's relevant policy as appropriate to the circumstances • The Head of Education will decide whether or not the complaint should be presented to GwE
Stage 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Education to present the complaint to the Managing Director of GwE • GwE Managing Director to arrange an investigation • Written response from GwE to the Authority, approved by the Managing Director