



ESTYN THEMATIC REVIEW
**Local authority and regional consortia support for schools and PRUs in
response to COVID-19**

ACTION, IMPACT AND GROWTH POINTS
JANUARY 2021 - APRIL 2021

**R1: Urgent response to address barriers to home learning, especially where these relate to
lack of access to computers or internet connection**

Local Authorities have worked with schools to enable all learners to access remote education during this period. Access challenges for learners have largely been met by the commitment, creativity and persistence of schools. Schools have loaned significant numbers of laptops/Raspberry Pis/wireless dongles to learners who do not have them at home from their own resources and have accessed grants or used donations to help fill gaps when needed. They have also recalibrated their expectations around timetables to support asynchronous/recorded approaches to allow access to a single device by more than one user in a household. Where necessary, paper copies of work have been delivered to households throughout lockdown. These approaches have had a significant impact of the engagement of some learners.

**R2: Improve the quality of the distance and blended learning experiences for pupils by
supporting more effective teaching across and within schools and PRUs.**

Distance and blended learning provision

- GwE have supported schools to make effective use of blended learning and recovery curriculum guidance to plan retrieval practice and new learning when returning to face-to-face teaching and learning.
- Regular meetings with head teachers (individually) and through head teacher forums have initiated and prompted reflective practice and the sharing of practice and ideas.
- Individual support has been given to a number of senior leaders and heads of department – particularly where leaders are new - and to teachers in the authority, including NQTs. Networking meetings – Foundation phase teachers/ Literacy and Numeracy leads/ curriculum leaders/ heads of subject/ heads of VI Form – have been well received and proved mutually supportive. Coaching support is also being provided for a number of leaders in schools.
- All schools received guidance documentation regarding Remote and Distance learning to support Head teachers and teachers in planning remote learning as part of provision for learners, to assist schools in managing parental and stakeholder expectations, supporting schools to make best use of live learning and to enable schools to evaluate



Collaborating · Learning · Succeeding

remote learning practices and when reporting to stakeholders including governing bodies.

- All schools received guidance for parents on remote and distance learning. These documents were co-created between schools and GwE / LA officers.
- Weekly discussions with Head teachers in a pastoral role included discussions around blended and distance learning.
- The collaborative sharing of blended learning materials allowed resources to be seen by SIAs and enabled feedback to be given on the quality of the work.
- Some SIAs received invitations to attend live lessons with learners.
- GwE have reported to the Joint Committee and to various LA scrutiny committees throughout the period, bringing together an evaluation on the provision during the period.
- The current GwE Supporting Improvement Advisor work programme is based around co-evaluating the provision during the lockdown period, return to school and identifying development needs that have arisen from the period.

Strengths and shortcomings in the provision of distance and blended learning for pupils

- The strengths that have been noted include the use of digital technology in allowing the learning to take place, collaboration including sharing of resources and practices, partnerships with parents and development of different types of pedagogy over the period.
- Collaboration within the schools and across the schools has also been a major strength over the period. Despite having to make considerable adaptations to operational practices due to Covid, schools continue to be very reflective on their own plans and actions and are fully embracing and adapting parameters in order to improve further. Alliance / Cluster working and Peer Review involvement are all a demonstration of the commitment schools have in looking to draw down good practice and develop a stronger foundation for an approach as learning organisations and self-improving schools.
- Secondary Alliances have identified Teaching and Learning as a priority – collaborating to develop effective classroom pedagogies; intelligent technologies and engagement in both online and face to face learning; and feedback and assessment. GwE facilitate the T&L forum meetings and to date schools have shared effective practice / resources and identified next steps to develop the collaboration and provision in schools. This collaboration has ensured more consistency in provision across the authority.
- Areas that schools have found difficult include the consistency of learner engagement. This has been variable both within schools and across schools and has limited learner progress where engagement has been low. IT equipment, both software and hardware has also limited provision and progress in some cases. Where provision has been inconsistent, SIAs have worked with the school to ensure teachers are well equipped to provide an education for learners.
- Engagement levels have increased over the second lockdown period.



Collaborating · Learning · Succeeding

- Where things that haven't been as successful, consistency, capacity of the infrastructure, ensuring continuity of feedback.

Supporting schools to develop teaching and learning strategies that build the resilience of pupils' learning and develop their independent skills

- During this period, more than ever, schools have had to ensure continuous learning opportunities for all staff in order to ensure that they are able to deliver effective distance learning and to use technology creatively in order to facilitate this distance learning. Through the Professional Learning Grant teachers have engaged in relevant and timely professional learning during the last year to ensure that they have a firm understanding of what effective distance learning should look like. In some schools this has included weekly cluster meetings, head teachers' forums, subject specific training, developing distance learning models within teams or across clusters, developing remote/blended learning models.
- During lockdown, there were opportunities for schools to work as learning organisations to strengthen and develop the 4 transversal themes of Time, Thinking Together, Trust and Technology. There has been the promotion of team learning and collaboration among schools and staff to ensure that schools are able to deliver effective distance learning to all their students.
- Professional Learning has continued during the period. Examples of this have been PL given by the Foundation Phase Team which has included:
 - NQT training on Language, Literacy and Communication with the main focus of session on reading
 - How do we teach reading?
 - Strategies to engage the 'Love of Reading'
 - What are higher order reading skills?
 - Ideas for challenging reading tasks in the enriched and continuous provision

And further professional learning on developing mathematical, numerical and numeracy skills across all areas of learning and provision delivered on request from clusters and high risk/ schools in statutory category/Estyn follow up. Further professional learning included 'The Role of the Adult' aimed at practitioners facilitating the learning in the FP. This focused on:

- Effective questioning e.g. Blank levels of questioning to encourage children to reflect and to develop their higher order thinking and oracy skills
 - Effective strategies to promote and develop independent learners
- Whilst there is still a focus on current logistical challenges, Headteachers have been keen to keep developing aspects of teaching and learning. 'Secondary Alliance' and Primary Cluster Plans have been finalised and networking in this way has been a



Collaborating · Learning · Succeeding

valuable strategy for sharing best practice. School SLTs have found the EDT SPP Peer Review training also extremely valuable in supporting evaluation.

- As a Consortium we have ensured that we have promoted the use of Remote Asynchronous Learning Design through our weekly bulletin. We have also tasked several of our subject advisors to work with secondary schools to delve deeper into the RALD Modules and develop effective practice examples which will be hosted on our new website. We have 25 resources thus far which include PowerPoints, videos, Podcasts and Vodcasts from teachers and students alike.
- We see asynchronous and synchronous learning design as an integral part of teaching and learning moving forward and will endeavour to upskill one practitioner from every catchment area who can then cascade the learning to all schools.

Supporting schools - Remote and Distance learning

- All schools received guidance documentation regarding Remote and Distance learning to support Head teachers and teachers in planning remote learning as part of provision for learners, to assist schools in managing parental and stakeholder expectations, supporting schools to make best use of live learning and to enable schools to evaluate remote learning practices and when reporting to stakeholders including governing bodies.
- All schools received guidance for parents on remote and distance learning. These documents were co-created between schools and GwE / LA officers.
- All secondary schools and primary schools who are a cause of concern have a bespoke Support Plan which includes support for developing and strengthening blended teaching and learning.

Coping with any future periods where blended and distance learning may be necessary

- In the primary sector, Supporting Improvement Advisors have worked closely with their link cluster, facilitating collaboration around effective classroom pedagogy, feedback and assessment and the use of technology to enhance provision during this time. Schools have evaluated that they were in a far stronger position to provide an education during the second lockdown period and that if at any time they have to return to a period of lockdown, they have processes and resources in place to do this effectively.
- Alliances and Clusters have mutually shared resources in blended learning, initially within alliances and clusters and then via the regional resource. This sharing was also supported by a full exchange of ideas around progress in blended learning, approaches to teaching and learning in the pandemic including assessment and experiences of agile and effective approaches to professional learning. These resources can be accessed in the school to school resource section of the Regional Support Centre - [Regional Support Centre](#). GwE have regular meetings with schools to support schools to evaluate provision and their quality assurance activities – identifying strengths, areas to develop and planning PL opportunities for staff. Schools have captured good practice and shared across the school e.g. resources on shared drive, staff website on online learning, every teacher to create a case study of best practice, weekly drop-in sessions for teachers to



Collaborating · Learning · Succeeding

share good practice and challenges, designing INSET to develop staff digital skills and confidence.

- The following resource centre data has been made available up to the end of April:

	Published Resources	Unpublished Resources
FPh	35	56
KS2	75	73
KS3	52	14
KS4	75	41
KS5	5	2

- Number of page views since launch - 20,000
- Number of resources downloaded since launch - 3,400
- Most visited page - KS2 School to School resource

R3: Develop coherent approaches to improve progress in literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills of vulnerable pupils who have been disproportionately affected, for example pupils who are eligible for free school meals

Advice and guidance provided to schools to support their use of additional funding to support pupils whose skills have been affected by the pandemic

The consortia additional PDG funding has funds on support for schools/settings in three categories:

1. Teaching and whole-school strategies
2. Targeted support to accelerate learning and supporting key groups of learners
3. Wider strategies (including supporting parents and carers)

The above model focused on both universal and targeted approaches (using the FMS/LAC data as source for targeting schools/settings).

1. Production of literacy resource materials and translation of High Frequency Word strategy/Rapid Reading strategy for all learners.
 2. Numeracy Catch Up - Transfer of key stage 2 SAFMEDS cards onto CRAM app for accessibility for all learners across the region / transfer of key stage 3 Mathematics materials into SAFMEDS cards and CRAM app.
 3. Universal I Literacy Catch Up Programme - see targeted support
 4. Universal Health and Wellbeing resources and programmes
1. RADY Pilot - We targeted schools in areas with high numbers of FSM/Vulnerable Learners.
 2. All schools/settings have access to Thinking Differently about disadvantaged learners as part of the PLO

Wider Strategies:



Collaborating · Learning · Succeeding

1. **SEAL** - In regards to universal Health and Wellbeing we purchased the SEAL license for all settings and LA's across the region. Most schools have accessed this.
 2. **Trauma / ACE Informed Schools** – over 1500 attended the session and we currently have our Cohort 5 10-day Diploma. We also have 1 school with the highest number of FMS working towards the TIS benchmark /award.
 3. **Talk boost** – we have up skilled both SIA's and LA staff in regards to Early Years Interventions for the development of Speech and Language via the TA's.
 4. **ELSA** – we have also increased the ELSA training from our regional ALN/Inclusion group to target settings who have had no staff trained / or increase capacity, this will cover the training, resources in both languages and ongoing supervision by the Education Psychology Team in each of the LA. All schools and settings via the LA have accessed the offer.
- In many schools the RRRS grant has been allocated to support pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Additional staffing achieved through the RRRS grant have been given the opportunity for smaller groups or further targeted interventions across all Key Stages. Schools have appointed additional Teaching Assistants to work with learners on their literacy and numeracy and to support the vulnerable learners attending hubs in school. Small intervention groups are identified, and targeted support is offered through extraction groups. Literacy and Numeracy catch-up programmes delivered by trained TAs have been increased to encompass more pupils (focusing on standardised scores). Attempting to deliver this remotely has proved more difficult than whole class teaching. Learner and parental feedback strongly indicate that this additional provision is being warmly received.
 - Schools have attended a range of Professional Learning opportunities, including live remote sessions and online webinars introducing a range of strategies and resources. A cohesive support package has been in place for schools to help them improve the quality of teaching and maximise learner outcomes, especially of vulnerable learners. These resources focus on improving the following aspects:
 - ✓ Basic reading and reading fluency
 - ✓ Reading comprehension and vocabulary skills
 - ✓ Basic numeracy and numeracy fluency skills
 - ✓ Improving pupils and learning and revision strategies
 - ✓ Some of the strategies and support materials were designed to be used in school and by parents at home to support their child's learning
 - This has ensured well informed School Leadership Teams knowing how best to support Teaching and Learning in supporting literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills of vulnerable pupils. It has also ensured that Teaching/support staff have been upskilled in the identification of literacy and numeracy needs of every learner and/whilst promoting independent learning. These resources can be found on the regional support centre - [GwE Support Centre](#)
 - GwE have supported schools that have completed national tests during the autumn term to analyse the data and plan evidence based practice.



Collaborating · Learning · Succeeding

- Secondary Alliances and Primary Clusters have shared effective practice on developing pupils' interaction and social skills during live-streamed lessons e.g. interactive digital tools, effective use of breakout rooms, whole school campaign 'switch your camera on'.

Specific schools or cohorts of pupils disproportionately affected

We have worked closely with each LA to ensure all LAC have access to digital resources with evidence of ongoing dialogue with WG and its impact. The LAC PDG individual bursary was made available to support any identified gaps / additional support required. In addition, many non-teaching staff (such as Social Workers/ESW'S) attended some of the PLO in regards to trauma informed practise. The cluster LAC PDG model was flexible in regards to how schools/cluster used the grant and some of the funds has been used to increase 1:1 and Play Therapy sessions/ELSA/Friends. We also adapted our PLO to Designated Teachers to support the distance learning and transition back to school.

- Schools have adapted their provision and school timetable based on pupils and parents questionnaires. Further sessions have been arranged for pastoral tutors to meet with pupils in small groups to offer social interaction between peers and to discuss what has worked well and the barriers to online learning.
- In Secondary schools the use of data tracking and intervention has improved using the new 4Matrix data packs and data walls. Regular conversations about learners and their progress are taking place and allowing targeted intervention work.
- Where family / learner engagement has been low, learners from English speaking families who attend Welsh medium schools have made limited progress or have shown some regression. GwE have worked closely with LA colleagues to produce resources, provide support and to plan for recovery. This includes the appointment of a new 'Y Gymraeg' lead within GwE to ensure robust planning for recovery support and to strengthen collaboration between GwE officers and LA in supporting schools.
- Ensuring the needs of MAT pupils has stayed on school's agenda by contributing to cross-consortia info-posters with tips to help leaders, parents, practitioners and pupils themselves with blended learning. Small groups are targeted for after-school intervention to reach A*-A grades. This work has been done in conjunction with training from GwE. The introduction of Additional Maths for the most able has encouraged the development of the higher-level skills required for A*-A.
- Schemes of work in KS3 are under review to ensure engagement and challenge of all ability groups, adopting the new teaching and learning strategies highlighted in the GwE training.
- GwE have supported schools that have completed national tests during the autumn term to analyse the data and plan evidence-based practice.
- Strong structures in place to monitor pupil engagement during online learning – attendance, interaction and completing work. Schools are contacting families when there are concerns and supporting learners that have personal and social anxiety.



Collaborating · Learning · Succeeding

Specific skill areas affected

Through co-evaluation with schools, the impact on learner skills is seen to be variable across the region. Where learner engagement has been low, basic skills have been impacted upon as well as learner social skills and readiness for learning. The RRRS support for schools has been put in place to support schools in Literacy and Numeracy. The RILL (Remote Instruction of Language and Literacy) project has been established to support schools in re-igniting learning and developing basic skills, especially vulnerable learners. The project is fully bilingual and has been piloted with 15 primary schools across the region. There will be a regional roll out from this term with all primary schools, inviting engagement with their vulnerable learners. Two research officers will enable us to train all interested schools across the region and give them access to the programme, offer ongoing support and drop-in implementation sessions, provide additional support to target pupils/families over the summer holiday and to monitor and evaluate the impact of the programme.

Further support for schools in the core subjects include:

Mathematics

- Developed accelerating learning resources, guidance and support – focusing on evidence based strategies for improving fluency and recall in basic numeracy skills, and ensuring resources are accessible to all and suitable for a blended learning scenario.
 - ✓ shared overview in Heads of Maths and Numeracy Coordinators meetings.
 - ✓ offered professional learning opportunities for teachers and teaching assistants in the form of online webinars.
 - ✓ bespoke ‘One to one’ school support to address specific needs.
- Half termly Heads of Maths meetings, where time has been used to share GwE’s Blended and Distance learning guidance, including exemplar subject specific models of effective and strategic planning for a blended learning scenario, share best practice in the region and facilitate discussions on effective, practical strategies for T&L.
- Additional professional learning opportunities has been organised for Mathematics teachers:
 - ✓ ‘Teaching Mathematics to mixed ability classes’ online workshop: focusing on sharing good practice, research findings, practical resources and strategies that focuses on differentiating and ensuring an appropriate level of challenge for all.
 - ✓ ‘Distance learning in Mathematics’ online workshop: delivered by a leading practitioner in the region, focusing on effective use of online platforms for asynchronous & synchronous teaching, sharing and modelling practical strategies for engaging all learners, and using assessment for learning to steer planning in the right direction.
- Programme of support put in place to support newly qualified teachers during the pandemic.
- Network meeting specifically for early career Mathematics teachers: focusing on sharing practical resources, guidance and additional CPD opportunities. Facilitated discussions on sharing good practice and planning for the future.



Collaborating · Learning · Succeeding

English

- Delivered subject specific training focussing on delivering elements of the English curriculum remotely – oracy and writing.
- Effective retrieval practice identified as an essential aspect in remote teaching in order to assess prior learning and make connections. Training session open to English teachers across the region and a forum to share best practice established.
- Bespoke support provided to schools in delivering key elements of the GCSE English/ Literature course remotely. This work has focussed on supporting the development of learning plans and teaching resources.
- Best practice case studies identified in English and shared regionally.
- Programme of support put in place to support newly qualified teachers during the pandemic. Seven week programme/ practical sessions focussing on effective teaching and learning particularly in remote settings.
- Literacy Intervention Programme developed based on the needs and feedback from secondary schools. Two tiered, comprehensive package of resources to support teachers and teaching assistants in developing the literacy skills of identified learners. Programme is used widely across the region /package of professional learning to support teaching assistants.
- Bespoke training provided to schools with high numbers of vulnerable learners focussing on accelerating literacy skills.
- Development of the *Herio* website and KS4 instructional videos to support learners. These can be accessed through an app or through the website
- Bespoke reading pilot introduced to 10 secondary schools across the region. Schools with our highest numbers of LAC/ FSM learners have been targeted. 'Building Reading Power' is a pilot which aims to improve the reading skills of struggling readers who also lack motivation and interest. Schools involved have been provided with the practical resources they need as well as a programme of professional learning which focuses on effective teaching of reading; building fluency; improving engagement and strengthening reading habits at home. As well as upskilling classroom teachers, we are also working with TAs and Learning Coaches. Bangor University are working with GWE on this project to monitor and evaluate the impact of this pilot. If successful, this will be shared regionally.

Science

- Development of the blended learning guidance and modelled examples, which has been shared with all Heads of Science through network meetings and with individual departments.
- Development of GCSE booklets to support learners who cannot access digitally – shared with all departments.
- Modelling of online quizzes and knowledge organisers to assess pupil progress – with key departments.
- Co-construction of schemes of learning for online delivery.



Collaborating · Learning · Succeeding

- Further development of the www.tanio.cymru website and creation of resources that have been used by both teachers and pupils from across the region.
- Programme of support put in place to support newly qualified teachers during the pandemic
- Co-construction of resources and training plan with the literacy lead to develop reading and oracy in Science. These have been used in key schools to support development of skills.
- Differentiated work booklets for GCSE pupils, identifying the key knowledge, terminology etc. have been produced and shared.
- Development of accessible assessment material (reduced reading age and complexity) /exam questions to support learners with less developed skills – both numeracy & literacy.
- Development of supporting materials and modelled examples to develop numeracy Skills in Science have been shared with key departments and training has been provided to support teachers to differentiate and deliver the numeracy.

Welsh

- Specific workshops were held for Heads of Welsh departments in the region on the blended teaching and learning of language
- Workshop entitled 'Datblygu iaith a'r meddwl creadigol trwy ddysgu ac addysgu'n gyfunol' held as part of the GWE PLO.
- A series of 'Be' sy'n bosib?' (GWE) workshops were held to promote the use of Google for Education digital tools and others (on Hwb digital platform). These open workshops proved to be very popular with primary and secondary teachers alike across the region.
- Specific support provided for Welsh departments to develop their resources and their interactive use of their digital platforms so as to enable them to target specific cohorts of pupils quickly.
- Members of Welsh departments were encouraged to joint national KS3, KS4 and KS5 working groups to develop innovative teaching and learning resources to share nationally via the Hwb platform.
- 'Dysgu Carlam – Y Gymraeg' resources were created specifically in order to support whole school literacy interventions.
- 'Y Gymraeg ar Garlam' scheme was established so that literacy co-ordinators and Heads of Welsh departments in the region can share resources to support interventions that target the cross-curricular literacy skills.
- In response to the need to support and develop learners' oracy skills a successful bid was made to Welsh Government to develop the 'Ein Llais Ni' oracy scheme (based on the 'Dy Lais Di' scheme which was piloted locally), and this scheme will be disseminated and embedded across the region.



Collaborating · Learning · Succeeding

How we are addressing this issue in our longer-term plans and policies

In regards to Health and Wellbeing the key areas of evidence from schools/settings are:

- Re Connecting friendship groups and relationships.
- Structure and Routine
- Targeting Physical Health – some learners have done no physical activity
- Increase in learners who are anxious
- Sleep patterns and attendance
- Speech and Language in the early years
- Digital gap in regards to tackling pupil/family poverty
- Further engagement with parents / carers
- Developing independent learners.
- Further requests for school counselling and some schools stating the need to additional school-based counsellors and CAMHS.

There is a need to build the above in to the school curriculum and planning.

The 2021-2022 Business Plans show that this aspect is an important part of our strategic objectives and regional priorities:

Strong & inclusive schools - committed to excellence, equity & well-being

4.1 - Wellbeing and Learning

- Continue to work closely in partnership with Local Authorities to provide wellbeing support for practitioners and 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 disproportionality affected by school closures.

4.2 - Parental support strategy

- Develop a parental support strategy to help parents and carers on how to best support their child’s learning.

PDG / LAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To further develop & implement the national PDG strategy across the region. · Embed the PDG LAC cluster/alliance model across the region
Whole school wellbeing (AOLE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 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



Collaborating · Learning · Succeeding

<p>Strategy to support parents / carers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 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.
<p>Re-ignite learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 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.

R4: Establish strategies to monitor and address the long-term impact of the pandemic on pupils' physical and mental health

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are ensuring that the Framework on embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being is central to our work with schools. A recent meeting of the regional key partners agreed on the Governance and accountability for the framework moving forward. • We have also been working closely with Wellbeing Leads/Healthy School across the region to ensure we are consistent in our approach in supporting schools. We are currently mapping the GwE/LA universal Health and Wellbeing across the region and this should be available before half term. • A week of PDG workshops: Impact and Evidence based Practice - took place between March 22-26 and was well attended by school practitioners and educational partners. This learning and sharing week, was a week-long celebration and sharing of work from across Wales regarding provision and progress of disadvantaged learners through targeted PDG expenditure. It was designed to highlight the importance of aligning PDG to research-based interventions and development in Teaching and Learning practices to assist the disadvantaged learner



Collaborating · Learning · Succeeding

and engage in face-to-face learning. During the week, consortia, schools and settings and professional partners put on a range of professional learning workshops, discussions and talks. This is available on the HWB platform with 18 hours of PLO for schools/settings and LA.

<https://www.gwegogledd.cymru/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Rhaglen-GDD- -PDG-Focus-Week-Programme.pdf>

- The Directors of Education across the region have identified parental engagement as a regional priority. A regional group with representation from each authority has been set up to look at a strategy to help parents / carers support their child's learning. We have worked closely with Mike Gershon, author of more than 40 books on teaching, learning and education, including numerous bestsellers in rolling out bilingual online teaching resources in supporting the role of parents / carers in helping their children to learn. The resources and website that Mike Gershon has developed is a strong starting point for supporting parents and we have been working with Mike to ensure that the website is bilingual and free to every parent in North Wales.
- We have also worked with Claire Chidley Following in running a series of wellbeing workshops 'Looking after myself' aimed at school and LA staff. In the sessions, Claire, an expert in well-being, change and resilience, explores the meaning of well-being and how we can create a balanced perspective about work and life. These workshops have been used in group situations or by individuals. As well as providing information and tips on wellbeing and resilience, they have been designed to give the workforce time and space to consider how prepared they are to face the challenges of a rapidly changing external environment.

The four workshops focus on a different aspect of wellbeing.

Session 1: Understanding my Resilience and Reaction to Change - <https://youtu.be/tDKLAaEoFjs>

Session 2: The Keys to Resilience-Developing Vision and Purpose - https://youtu.be/nuRVRi_M7c8

Session 3: The Keys to Resilience-Developing Emotional Intelligence - https://youtu.be/vudqzc_jnMw

Session 4: Healthy Living - <https://youtu.be/37z5H73oelg>



Collaborating · Learning · Succeeding

Each workshop lasts between 45-60 minutes including time build in for personal / group reflection and they can be used as a series of workshops or you can use them discretely as single sessions.

- Several school leaders have been offered a 'reflective space' to engage with an external coach to discuss any aspect of their own wellbeing. A number of Head teachers from across the region have taken up this offer and have provided positive feedback regarding the process.

Impact of the pandemic on pupils' mental health

Schools and settings have used a range of wellbeing measures / surveys to gather evidence on the mental health of learners. LA's & Schools have used and accessed the Children's Commissioner Office Me and Coronavirus Survey in order to further target key areas within their curriculum. For example, some schools have used the Edinburgh Warwick mental Health scale. Other schools have implemented the Trauma Informed Schools I wish my Teacher Knew survey to get learners to reflect and move forward.

Some schools have used the Drawing and Talking intervention with LAC as a meta emotion philosophy in regards to reflecting on feelings and developing emotional literacy. Another procured the service of a Drama Consultant to work with all learners from year 7-9 to discuss the impact of school lockdown on mental health via an art-based workshop.

We have also worked with the Mental Health UK Charity to support the implementation of the BLOOM mental Health school programme across the region. The curriculum resource is available in both Welsh/English - targeting learners at KS 4 and Post 16. More than half of the secondary schools attended the sessions with bespoke session in Welsh. One school implemented the programme with the sixth form with focus on:

- Building Resilience
- Exam Stress and managing pressure
- Social pressures
- Friendships

Support provided to schools so far to help them address pupils' needs

We have supported individual Pastoral staff in both primary and secondary schools, focus has been on up skilling staff in universal approaches to supporting health and wellbeing and mental health of learners. Examples include the increase in the number of school who have accessed the PLO in Trauma Informed Schools/Relational Play and also managing anxiety in children. We have also adapted our PLO for Designated Person to include a section on effective strategies.

Schools have also accessed the SEAL resources in addition to our resources in the support centre.



Collaborating · Learning · Succeeding

The national PDG focus week was also about supporting vulnerable learners and strategies for schools to use.

We have also targeted 50 schools across the region to participate in the Adoption Cymru/WG pilot in regards to PLO and membership for schools.

R5: Create opportunities to measure and evaluate the impact of policies and practices developed during this period to inform future ways of working and designing the curriculum

Evaluating the work of the consortium since the start of the pandemic

Internal self-evaluation processes, external reviews on our current practice and direction of travel, and consultation with headteachers and the Local Authorities.

Reports to GwE Joint Committee:

- Transition back into school
- Wellbeing
- Blended learning Resources
- Re-starting learning model for North Wales
- GwE work programme and Regional Priorities
- Qualifications
- Annual Report 2019-20
- Professional Learning - GwE offer to schools Summer Term 2020
- Accelerated Learning Programme
- ALN Transformation
- Schools in category
- Budget monitoring
- Annual Budget
- Supporting Schools
- Reform Journey & Professional Learning
- Distance / Remote Learning and parent / carer engagement
- Developing Accelerated Learning programmes for the Welsh language
- Estyn Thematic Review
- Governance Arrangements: Internal Audit
- Internal Audit Reports
- Risk Register

Current work programme for SIAs with every school involves working in partnership self-evaluating the school's provision during the past year. This includes evaluating the impact GwE's support during the period and also future support needs for schools and clusters.



Collaborating · Learning · Succeeding

MAIN OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

- Effective collegiate and collective regional approach between the six local authorities and GwE.
- Joint working has ensured strong governance and regional consistency in support, messaging and guidance given to schools.
- Strengthened collaboration between peers at a cluster/forum level has ensured effective co-constructed strategic thinking and direction.
- Clear regional and local approach in place for effective repurposing of both the service and its schools.
- Schools are well informed and confident that effective support is available should any needs arise.
- School leaders' wellbeing supported through regular and clear communication.
- Clear guidance given on how to prioritise and structure both Distance and Blended Learning.
- Schools provided with coherent guidance and resources to effectively support vulnerable learners with their wellbeing, engagement and learning.
- Best practice being shared across schools and clusters, i.e. engaging with reluctant learners and families, digital platforms and communication systems, blended learning models, etc.

Our priorities are a combination of improving school provision, leadership and outcomes, as well as delivering the reform journey. The four purposes should be the starting point and aspiration for schools as they prepare to design the new curriculum. Our priorities are aimed to support schools as they work towards those four purposes.

The regional priorities and areas for improvement are based firmly on the findings of our internal self-evaluation processes, external reviews on our current practice and direction of travel, and through consultation with headteachers and the Local Authorities. Our Business Plan also addresses Welsh Government and the Local Authorities strategic priorities that fall within the remit of the work of GwE. Additionally, GwE will work in partnership with Local Authorities to support additional local priorities, as appropriate. It also takes into consideration the views and priorities of other middle tier partners such as Estyn, Qualifications Wales, WJEC, National Academy for Educational Leadership (NAEL), Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and Education Workforce Council (EWC).

Supporting schools to continue to make progress with curriculum reform

- GwE have supported all schools with additional capacity funding to work collaboratively as clusters across the wider reform including ALN Bill, Curriculum, Cymraeg – all have engaged to work collaboratively to write a plan to meet given success criteria (can share examples of this planning).
- GwE have taken cluster approach to engage with schools to deliver national Curriculum for Wales Professional Learning. Aimed at senior leaders – over 60 sessions in January/February 2021. This has allowed smaller attendee numbers in the sessions



Collaborating · Learning · Succeeding

which in turn allows more bespoke contextual discussion between colleagues – all SIAs facilitating the discussion so this ensures that the conversation is ongoing. Created weblinks with activities which continue to be live and schools can continue to work on these back in school.

- Supporting schools to reflect on learning and of newer ways of working through Covid-19 – as learners have returned to school face to face learning, allowing schools to reflect and consider learning forward as part of the reform journey to 2022 e.g. consideration of the 4 Purposes, use of digital technologies, strengthened relationships with parents and carers, role of health and wellbeing, collaboration within and across schools – questions that are part of the summer report.
- Following discussion with Management Board, GwE have carried out series of roadshows with Headteachers across each LA to update on the PL for CfW, listen to any concerns, gauge opinion as to how best to re-engage with the PL programme. Numbers attending roadshows was in excess of 50 in each LA and feedback showed:
 - Primary and Secondary leaders see the importance of continued 3-16 discussions offered in this programme
 - All leaders keen to maintain the momentum, although recognise that timing of this is difficult
 - Leaders are keen to collaborate with GwE to engage and work with external curriculum experts where appropriate
 - Leaders recognise that flexibility of this programme will be key to enable their engagement
- CFW PL programme will be re-engaging with webinars in May 2021 and fully re-engaging with cluster sessions on developing shared vision, planning for curriculum change in June 2021 (share overview shared with schools)
- Co-created a series of think-pieces in small teams of SIAs focusing on key aspects of the curriculum reform e.g. pedagogy, leadership, vision, assessment, curriculum design. Have introduced and worked with wider partners to develop these further e.g. LAs, Estyn, HEIs, WG.
- Following on from this, have designed workshop to support schools in creating an implementation plan for September 2022. Considers activities as part of the phases identified in the Journey to 2022 e.g. engagement, design planning and trialling. Have upskilled all SIAs and this session taking place at an individual cluster level across the region before June 2021 – feedback from headteachers shows that this allows schools to consider where their growth points are, building on what is already effective. Clear commitment from most schools to continue to develop collaboration across their networks (share an example of implementation plan).
- GwE have clear commitment to develop own team of SIAs – weekly sessions with whole team alongside Professor Graham Donaldson as sponsor to the work and to guide and advise. Working in smaller teams to develop own understanding of the CfW framework, considering variety of approaches and models, beginning to look at planning progression within an AoLE – capturing learning as a team to inform next steps of



Collaborating · Learning · Succeeding

support for schools and to develop consistent messaging and create examples that can be shared with schools.

- Have developed a strategy for delivering a sequence of PL for CfW - with clear identification of key messages and how these will be cascaded through all networks, subjects, middle leaders, teachers, HLTA - allowing for equity of access for all (show overview of sequence).
- Planning for support across all AoLEs – creating networks across the region, working in collaboration with LAs and with practitioner involvement. This will allow opportunity for local sense-making.
- Continue to ensure that our PL is well informed and based on informed research, are involved in series of collaborations with external partners:
 - Presented at international conference on developing SLO through pandemic with British Columbia, Germany, Australia, Louise Stoll, Claire Sinnema – ongoing collaboration to take this work forward
 - Monthly sessions with Scottish Government – Curriculum Dept, working on developing a qualitative framework and looking at developing the ‘how’ - skills and tools to support curriculum design
 - OECD work on health and wellbeing
 - Continue to work collaboratively cross regionally to develop national PL programme, evaluating engagement and allowing voice of headteachers to feed into the process
 - Continue to meet WG weekly to consider the national approach to supporting schools with the CfW agenda
 - Continue to support schools in developing enquiry skills through links with CIEREI and NPEP work.

Schools' readiness for curriculum implementation

- Regular discussions with SIAs on weekly basis – allowing successful practice to be shared.
- Engagement across the PL programme and how schools are engaging at school level against the Journey to 2022.
- Collaboration across the cluster – collaborative plans have identified their own measures of success.
- Reflections from Covid-19 to learn from a newer way of working and as broader principles across the reform to include the change in behaviours – e.g. consideration of SLO, re-considering vision against the 4 Purposes.
- G6 milestones e.g. ALN.