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County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

Wednesday, 1 July 2020

Notice of meeting

Children and Young People Select Committee

Thursday, 9th July, 2020 at 10.00 am,
(Remote Microsoft Teams Meeting)

Please note that a pre meeting will be held 30 minutes prior to the start of the meeting for members of the committee.

AGENDA

Item No	Item	Pages
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
3.	Public Open Forum	
4.	Reflections on the Monmouthshire's schools through the COVID-19 Lockdown and the return to school in the summer. Verbal Update - Will McLean	
5.	Preparations for the September 2020 return to school - Debbie Hartevelde & Kirsty Bevan (EAS) and Will McLean	1 - 24
6.	EAS Value for Money Study - Debbie Hartevelde (EAS)	25 - 52
7.	Work Planning	53 - 62
8.	To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting	63 - 70
9.	To confirm the date and time of the next meeting	

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillors:

L.Brown
M.Groucutt
L.Jones
D. Jones
M.Lane
M. Powell
T.Thomas
J.Watkins

Added Members
Members voting on Education Issues
Only

Vacant Seat (Roman Catholic Church)
Vacant Seat (Co-optee)
E. Thomas (Church in Wales)

Added Members
Non Voting

P. Strong NEU
F. Middleton NASUWT
M. Harris (Monmouthshire Association of
School Governors)

Public Information

Access to paper copies of agendas and reports

A copy of this agenda and relevant reports can be made available to members of the public attending a meeting by requesting a copy from Democratic Services on 01633 644219. Please note that we must receive 24 hours notice prior to the meeting in order to provide you with a hard copy of this agenda.

Watch this meeting online

This meeting can be viewed online either live or following the meeting by visiting www.monmouthshire.gov.uk or by visiting our Youtube page by searching MonmouthshireCC.

Welsh Language

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public through the medium of Welsh or English. We respectfully ask that you provide us with adequate notice to accommodate your needs.

Aims and Values of Monmouthshire County Council

Our purpose

Building Sustainable and Resilient Communities

Objectives we are working towards

- Giving people the best possible start in life
- A thriving and connected county
- Maximise the Potential of the natural and built environment
- Lifelong well-being
- A future focused council

Our Values

Openness. We are open and honest. People have the chance to get involved in decisions that affect them, tell us what matters and do things for themselves/their communities. If we cannot do something to help, we'll say so; if it will take a while to get the answer we'll explain why; if we can't answer immediately we'll try to connect you to the people who can help – building trust and engagement is a key foundation.

Fairness. We provide fair chances, to help people and communities thrive. If something does not seem fair, we will listen and help explain why. We will always try to treat everyone fairly and consistently. We cannot always make everyone happy, but will commit to listening and explaining why we did what we did.

Flexibility. We will continue to change and be flexible to enable delivery of the most effective and efficient services. This means a genuine commitment to working with everyone to embrace new ways of working.

Teamwork. We will work with you and our partners to support and inspire everyone to get involved so we can achieve great things together. We don't see ourselves as the 'fixers' or problem-solvers, but we will make the best of the ideas, assets and resources available to make sure we do the things that most positively impact our people and places.

Monmouthshire Scrutiny Committee Guide

Role of the Pre-meeting

1. Why is the Committee scrutinising this? (background, key issues)
2. What is the Committee's role and what outcome do Members want to achieve?
3. Is there sufficient information to achieve this? If not, who could provide this?
 - Agree the order of questioning and which Members will lead
 - Agree questions for officers and questions for the Cabinet Member

Questions for the Meeting

Scrutinising Performance

1. How does performance compare with previous years? Is it better/worse? Why?
2. How does performance compare with other councils/other service providers? Is it better/worse? Why?
3. How does performance compare with set targets? Is it better/worse? Why?
4. How were performance targets set? Are they challenging enough/realistic?
5. How do service users/the public/partners view the performance of the service?
6. Have there been any recent audit and inspections? What were the findings?
7. How does the service contribute to the achievement of corporate objectives?
8. Is improvement/decline in performance linked to an increase/reduction in resource? What capacity is there to improve?

Scrutinising Policy

1. Who does the policy affect ~ directly and indirectly? Who will benefit most/least?
2. What is the view of service users/stakeholders? Do they believe it will achieve the desired outcome?
3. What is the view of the community as a whole - the 'taxpayer' perspective?
4. What methods were used to consult with stakeholders? Did the process enable all those with a stake to have their say?
5. What practice and options have been considered in developing/reviewing this policy? What evidence is there to inform what works?
6. Does this policy align to our corporate objectives, as defined in our corporate plan?
7. Have all relevant sustainable development, equalities and safeguarding implications been taken into consideration? For example, what are *the procedures that need to be in place to protect children?*
8. How much will this cost to implement and what funding source has been identified?
9. How will performance of the policy be measured and the impact evaluated.

Questions for the Committee to conclude...

Do we have the necessary information to form conclusions/make recommendations to the executive, council, other partners? If not, do we need to:

- (i) Investigate the issue in more detail?
- (ii) Obtain further information from other witnesses – Executive Member, independent expert, members of the local community, service users, regulatory bodies...
- (iii) Agree further actions to be undertaken within a timescale/future monitoring report...

General Questions....

Empowering Communities

- How are we involving local communities and empowering them to design and deliver services to suit local need?
- Do we have regular discussions with communities about service priorities and what level of service the council can afford to provide in the future?

Service Demands

- How will policy and legislative change affect how the council operates?
- Have we considered the demographics of our council and how this will impact on service delivery and funding in the future?

Financial Planning

- Do we have robust medium and long-term financial plans in place?
- Are we linking budgets to plans and outcomes and reporting effectively on these?

Making savings and generating income




- Do we have the right structures in place to ensure that our efficiency, improvement and transformational approaches are working together to maximise savings?
- How are we maximising income? Have we compared other council's policies to maximise income and fully considered the implications on service users?
- Do we have a workforce plan that takes into account capacity, costs, and skills of the actual versus desired workforce?




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What are the key pedagogic considerations for teaching and learning via distance?



This is not an exhaustive list but contains some considerations for how learning might be structured and sequenced to help learners through the 'blend', when a significant proportion of time will be spent learning from distance/at home.

All of the features selected below are features of effective teaching and learning. These considerations are particularly pertinent to formal or academic learning.

Pedagogic device	Why is this important in the blend?
<p>1. Advance organisers</p> 	<p>Advance organisers allow pupils (and their parents) to see a high-level overview of what will be learnt during the sequence of learning or topic and how this links to prior learning. This idea was developed by the educational psychologist David Ausubel.</p> <p>An example of how to develop an advance organiser is shown in this brief clip below: https://ebtn.org.uk/big-picture-2/</p>
<p>2. Building on prior knowledge</p> 	<p>As with all effective teaching, planned sequences of learning should seek to build on prior knowledge. Whilst this can be picked-up up as part of the 'live' element of practice, it will be helpful to provide some prompts in the school's learning platform for pupils to refer to (perhaps as part of advance organiser).</p> <p>In this YouTube clip Dylan Wiliam assesses the importance of building on learners' prior knowledge https://youtu.be/TfzBkGI9VC8</p>
<p>3. Direct instruction</p> 	<p>In all subject/learning areas, as new content is being introduced it is important to ensure that pupils develop a secure understanding.</p> <p>Where pupils are engaging with instruction live or online, it would be helpful to provide access this taught element on the schools learning platform, in order that this can be revisited by pupils, as they develop their learning further.</p> <p>Learning intentions and success-criteria should be made explicit.</p>

	<p>This video capture from Tom Sherrington, provides a good introductory guide to Rosenshine’s principles of effective instruction. https://bit.ly/3e2CUDV</p>
<p>4. Worked examples, clear modelling</p> 	<p>Modelling with ‘teachers ‘thinking aloud’ as they demonstrate how to tackle a task is an important example of the cognitive support that learners’ need’ (Sherrington 2020). An additional strategy would be to add a ‘completion problem’, where learners have to solve a partly completed problem. As Sweller et al (2019) state “completion problems may be seen as a bridge between worked examples and conventional problems”. Whilst this is an important feature of all teaching, it will become increasingly important where pupils are learning from a distance. A clip recorded on the learning platform for pupils to play ‘on demand’, for example will be helpful. The video below explains how to create a video clip https://bit.ly/31nZm6H</p>
<p>5. Scaffolding of tasks</p> 	<p>Checklists, writing frames and anticipating errors and misconceptions will be essential features of well-planned distance learning.</p>
<p>6. Provide opportunities for learners to practice and master content before being asked to solve problems or enquire.</p> 	<p>Cognitive load theory was described by Dylan Wiliam as the ‘single most important things that teachers should know’ (Kirschner and Hendrick, 2020). This theory is based on the limited ability of the working memory to code information. As we can only deal with up to ‘7 items’ in our short term memory on any one occasion, we need to be able to draw on our long-term memory to support us with problem solving. That means that we must have ‘mastery’ of the knowledge and skills required before being asked to solve a problem. With increasing knowledge practice at solving problems becomes increasingly important rather than having negative effects on learning.</p>

<p>7. Opportunities to support AfL / reflection / feedback</p> 	<p>We know that providing opportunities for learners to check and reflect upon their understanding of work/tasks and providing timely feedback to move their learning forward are crucial. This is often achieved through verbal feedback or peer assessment in a classroom setting.</p> <p>How can this be achieved when they are working online?</p> <p>We often know where key misconceptions are likely to occur within subject areas, one way that we could pre-empt this is by providing some diagnostic questions to check on our learners understanding.</p> <p>In this blog Daisy Christadoulou reflects on the use of multiple-choice questions to identify learner misconceptions.</p> <p>https://bit.ly/3hmupp4</p>
<p>8. Provide opportunities for peer interactions</p> 	<p>Evidence summarised above from the EEF suggests that in order to support learner progress in learning and support their wellbeing through the blend, we need to provide opportunities for learners to complete peer marking and feedback. Success will be dependent on two things:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensuring that learners clearly understand the success criteria for the task and how this relates to the method by which they are being assessed 2. Utilising a digital platform / technology that allows for these types of interaction to take place. A good example is Jamboard on Google classroom.
<p>9. Weekly and monthly review (retrieval practice / practice testing)</p> 	<p>The idea/concept here is a simple one. Providing periodic opportunities for learners to review their learning will help them to retain knowledge in the long term and reduce the rate of 'forgetting'. It also helps learners to make connections to new or prior knowledge if completed in an appropriately sequenced way.</p> <p>This is important where learners are learning new knowledge and skills.</p> <p>As (Bjork and Bjork 2014) state "although massing practice (for example, cramming for exams) supports short-term performance, spacing practice (for example, distributing presentations, study attempts, or training trials) supports long-term retention"</p> <p>It is also important to elicit whether or not learners have developed a deeper understanding of the material being learned. Where this learning is superficial, learners may be able to 'recall' facts from the learning, but they may not be able to 'transfer' this learning to a similar, but different scenario.</p> <p>This YouTube clip provides a good summary of the difference between recall and transfer</p> <p>https://tinyurl.com/ycwut4w!</p> <p>In the blend, this could be facilitated through creating a self-marking quiz, the following video explains how to do this in Google forms: https://bit.ly/31nZm6H</p> <p>This review by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), provides a more in depth look at the benefits and potential challenges presented by retrieval practice. https://bit.ly/2YCjrTP</p>

<p>10. Using enquiry</p> 	<p>Once pupils know enough in a subject area or topic, the blend offers opportunities to support enquiry. Google classroom and OneNote also provide opportunities to support collaborative enquiry. It's important to provide some scaffolds to support learners. Tom Sherrington (2020) provides the following helpful guidance to ensure that pupils have a greater chance of success with enquiries:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Establish the enquiry question (provide learners with examples / models of good enquiry questions and a sense of range of knowledge or skills to cover)2. Teach the enquiry skills needed in advance (what maths skills, geographical skills or online research skills will pupils need?).3. What scaffolds / resources do pupils' need to support them (deadlines are important too)?4. Monitor and provide interim feedback. Collaborative online technologies like those found in Gsuite and MS365 provide great opportunities for teachers to provide real-time and personalised feedback to learners /groups during enquiry.5. Showcase the results. It's important that learners get the opportunity to share their learning, which will help them to deepen their understanding.
<p>11. Underpinned by (domain specific) explicitly taught self-regulation strategies</p> 	<p>Self-regulation strategies have one of the biggest impacts on supporting progress in learning, however, it is essential that learners have sufficient knowledge and understanding in the area in which they are studying to be able to do this effectively.</p> <p>This useful article from the EEF looks at metacognition and self-regulation in greater depth, with practical suggestions for how these can be introduced into practice. https://bit.ly/2UOpzqX</p>

...and what should we try to avoid?

Where we are utilising technology to support the blend, there may be a temptation to provide opportunities for more open-ended, research focussed tasks, discovery learning or problem-solving tasks that utilise technology. If we are thinking about providing these types of activities, it is important to recognise what the science says.

The explanations below are provided by Paul A Kirschsner and Carl Hendrick in their book – *How Learning Happens: Seminal Works in Educational Psychology and What They Mean in Practice*, Routledge 2020.

1. **Children are digital natives and think differently from previous generations.** Kirchsner and Hendrick conclude with a summary of the available evidence that “there is no evidence that young people today have any special skills that would allow them to learn differently”.
2. **With Google, knowledge is no longer important.** An important observation here is that “there is no knowledge on the internet, only information”. Without a solid knowledge base, we can do little with what we find on the internet, or as E.D. Hirsch puts it ‘Google rewards the cognitive insider’. What we read, see and understand is determined by what we already know. Therefore, if we’re asking our learners to use the internet to support their research, it’s important they already know enough about what we’ve ask them to find out, otherwise they won’t be able think critically and discern between useful and unhelpful information.
3. **You learn to solve problems by solving problems.** To solve problems, we must first have the knowledge and skills in which we must solve that problem. Without domain specific and procedural knowledge (how to perform a task), problem-solving becomes and exercise in trial and error! As Bjork and Bjork (2014) state “the trials and errors of everyday living and learning do not seem to result in the development of an accurate mental model of the self as learner or an appreciation of the activities that do and do not foster learning.”
4. **Discovery learning is the best way to learn.** The science suggests that if learners have no prior knowledge of the domain/area in which they are working, they will have no systematic approach to finding it. Learners would therefore use a significant amount of their working memory trying to decipher the information they are finding. This load on the working memory doesn’t result in more knowledge in long-term memory as it was used to discover and not learn.

Other Design Considerations

The following design considerations are drawn from the work of Sweller et al (2019), based around cognitive load theory.

This theory asserts that there are three elements that contribute to 'cognitive load':

Intrinsic load – A measure of how many new things a learner has to do to complete a task (we can cope with between 3 – 7 items (and the interactions between them) at one time.

Extraneous load – A measure of the load of the task that doesn't support learning (we should try to reduce this where possible) e.g. unnecessary anecdotes, complicated vocabulary, flashy animation, background music could all increase extraneous load!

Germane load – A measure of the extra load required to integrate the new learning into existing knowledge (the work of learning). We can support the learning process by providing appropriate scaffolds and prompts, which can be reduced as learners master knowledge and skills.

Examples of how to reduce the extraneous load on our learners.

In order to...	We should...
Reduce the 'split attention' effect - (when learners are confronted with two complementary sources of information, which cannot stand on their own but must be integrated before they can be understood.)	Ensure that where we are providing an animation/diagram with some narration, these should be provided at the same time (not separately) in order to decrease cognitive load and facilitate learning.
Avoid the 'redundancy' effect This occurs when the two sources of information are self-contained and can be understood without reference to each other.	If we are presenting a diagram with supporting text that summarises the same information (for example) only presenting the diagram would reduce cognitive load.
Present information to maximise learning (modality and isolating elements). Effective working memory capacity can be increased by using both visual and auditory working memory rather than either 'processor' alone.	Replace a written explanatory text and another source of visual information (e.g. diagram) with spoken text and the visual source of information.

Mayer's Principles of Multi-media learning

Building on the work of Sweller et al, Prof Richard Mayer (2001) built 12 principles that should be applied when developing multimedia materials. Teachers developing digital materials should consider these as a useful checklist to maximise learning and reduce potential barriers in the development of their instructional materials. This works both online and in the classroom!

Principle?	What does this mean for the design of learning materials?
Coherence Principle	People learn better when extraneous (extra materials that are not required) words, pictures and sounds are excluded rather than included.
Signalling Principle	People learn better when cues that highlight the organisation of key material is added. For example, highlighting key words / phrases.
Redundancy Principle	People learn better from graphics and narration than from graphics, narration and on-screen text.
Spatial Contiguity Principle	People learn better when corresponding words and pictures are presented near rather than far from each other on the page or screen.
Temporal Contiguity Principle	People learn better when corresponding words and pictures are presented simultaneously rather than successively – therefore on the same slide / document.
Segmenting Principle	People learn better from an online lesson, when it is presented in user-paced segments rather than as a continuous unit. It is important to chunk material, therefore, not present everything in one resource.
Pre-training Principle	People learn better from a multimedia lesson when they know the names and characteristics of the main concepts. This links to the idea of 'advance organisers' set out above – it allows learners to add knowledge to existing schema and build on prior knowledge.
Modality Principle	People learn better from graphics and narrations than from animation and on-screen text. This approach takes advantage of both the auditory and visual channels, which can work in tandem.
Multimedia Principle	People learn better from words and pictures than from words alone.
Personalisation Principle	People learn better from online lessons when words are in conversational style rather than formal style – as might be experienced in the classroom.
Voice Principle	People learn better when the narration in online lessons is spoken in a human voice rather than a 'machine' voice.
Image Principle	People do not necessarily learn better from an online lesson when the speaker's image is added to the screen.

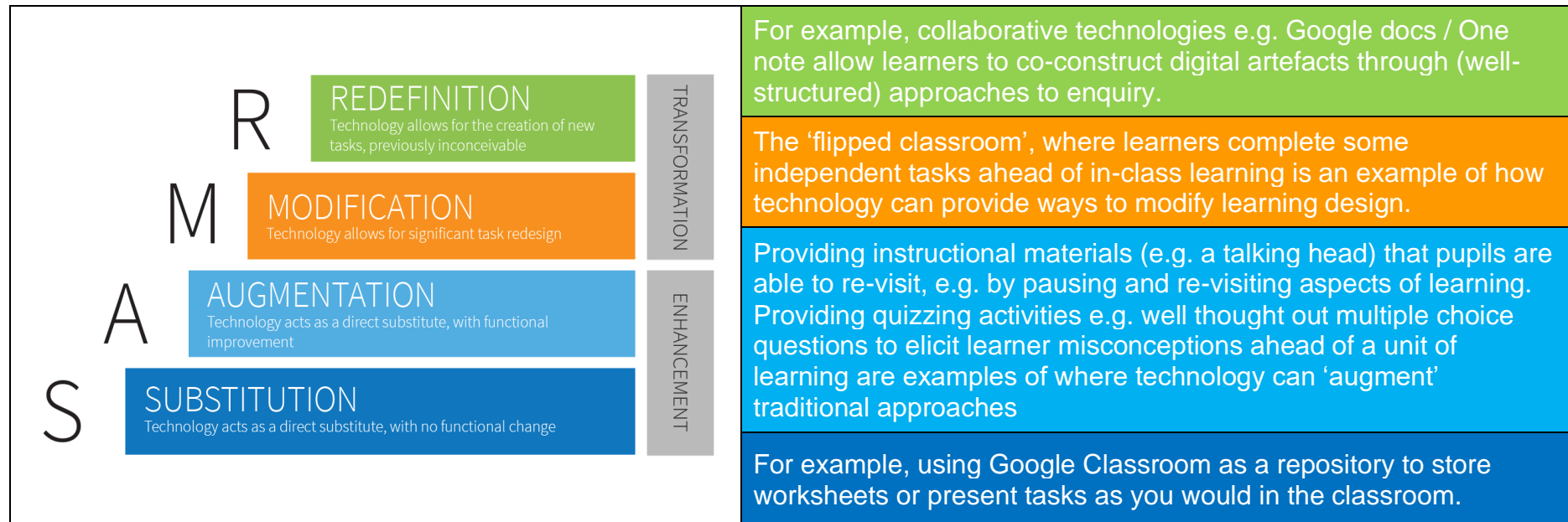
<https://ctl.wiley.com/principles-of-multimedia-learning/>

The following YouTube clip provides a clear explanation of Mayer's principles:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1fEC5rFCATw>

SAMR Model

The SAMR model shown below helps us to reconsider how we use digital technologies to support teaching and learning. It's likely that much of the distance learning provided to date has been a simple case of technology being used as a 'substitute' for traditional classroom activities, however, as time progresses (and provided that we think about the pedagogical considerations above, technology has the potential to enhance our practice). Consider the below:



References:

- Bjork and Bjork (2014), Making things hard on yourself, but in a good way: Creating desirable difficulties to enhance learning, Psychology and the real world.
- Kirschner P. A and Hendrick C (2020) How Learning Happens (Routledge)
- Sherrington T (2019), Rosenshine's Principles in Action (John Catt)
- Sherrington T and Caviglioli O (2020), Teaching Walkthrus (John Catt)
- Sweller P, van Merriënboer J. G and Paas F (2019) Cognitive Architecture and Instructional Design: 20 Years Later (Educational Psychology Review)



EAS

Education Achievement Service
for South East Wales
Gwasanaeth Cyflawni Addysg
i Dde Ddwyrain Cymru

Monmouthshire Select Committee Distance Learning July 2020

Cadw'n Ddiogel.
Dal ati i Ddysgu.



Stay Safe.
Stay Learning.

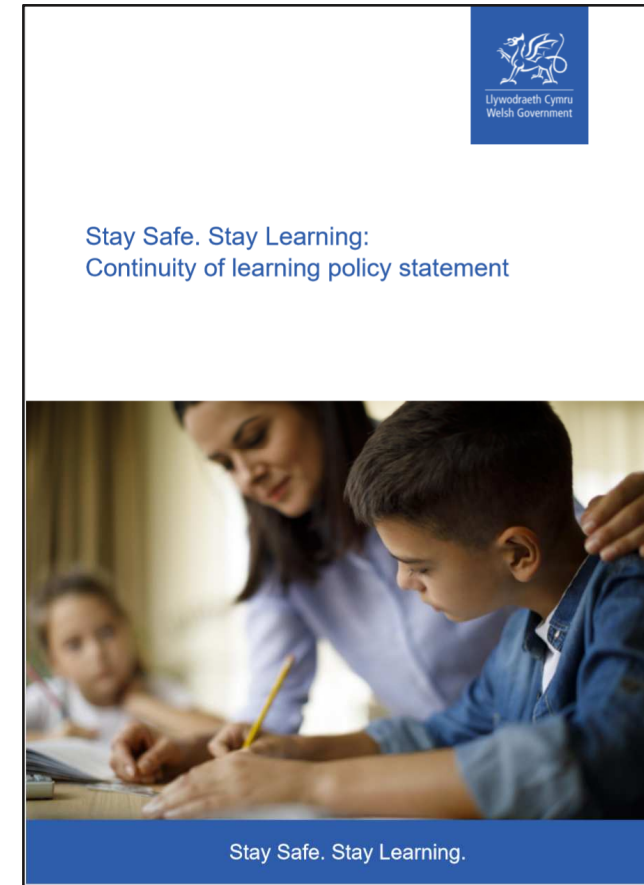
Diolch

STAFF ADDYSGU CYMRU SCHOOL STAFF



EAS Response to COVID 19

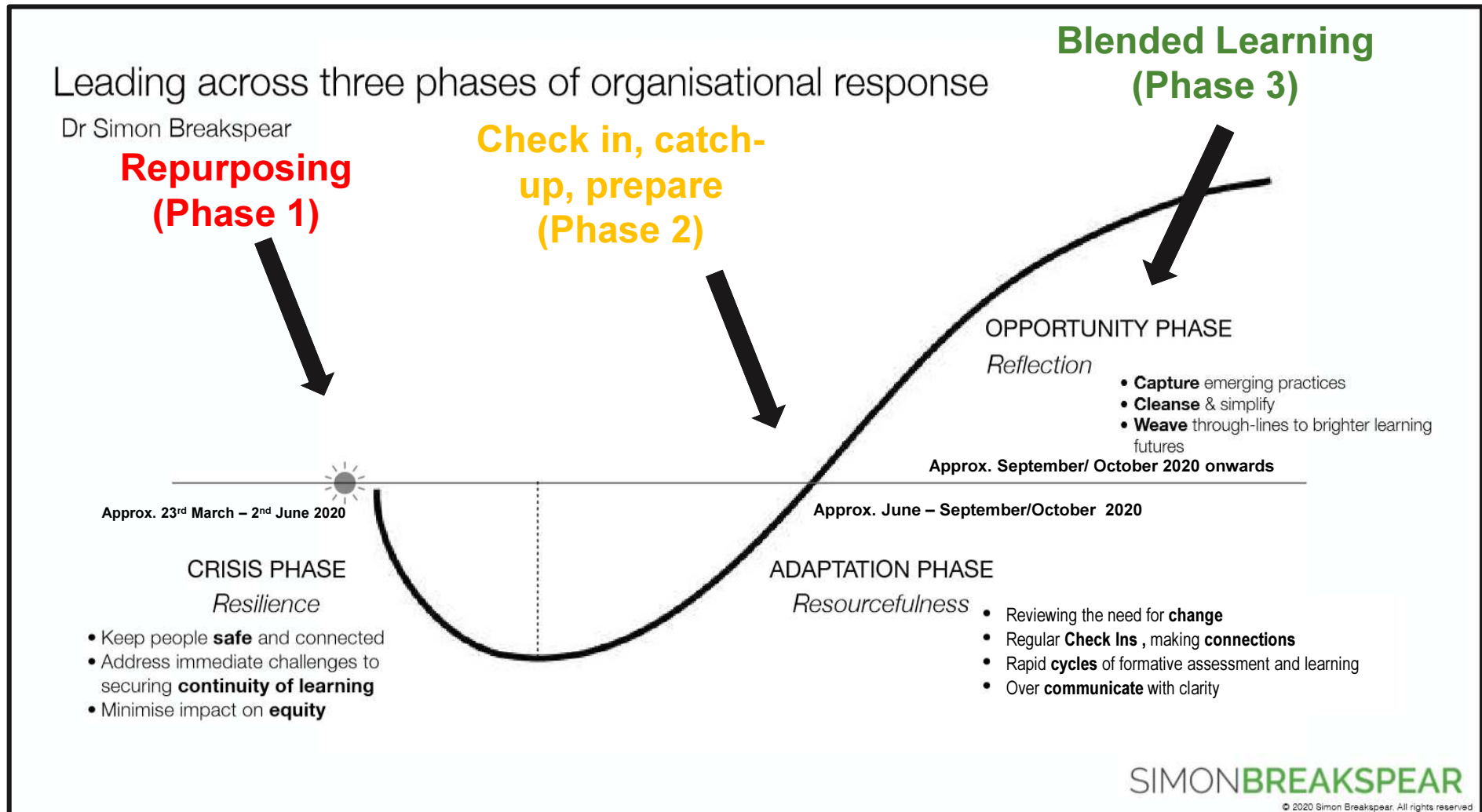
- Since the start of the pandemic, the focus of the EAS has shifted to the delivery of the National Continuity of Learning Plan, now known as #StaySafeStayLearning.
- The plan recognises that learning requires a significantly increased emphasis on all aspects of health and well-being for both school staff, families and children as we seek to address the impact of long-term social distancing and self-isolation as well as the reality of increasing numbers of bereavements.
- The EAS continues to work closely with the Director and Cabinet member for Education for Monmouthshire and Headteachers from all schools and settings to provide timely support and guidance during this unprecedented time.



EAS Strategy for Supporting Schools

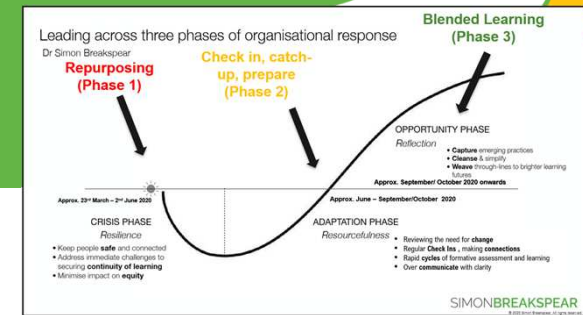
The EAS is using the “Leading across three phases of organisational change model” as designed by Dr Simon Breakspear to support schools in continuing to lead learning.

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Phase 1: Repurposing

This period of time ran from the period of closure in March 2020 to around the beginning of June.



- This phase focused on keeping pupils, staff and society safe in the early stages of the pandemic.
- Schools responded to challenges that were posed by the pandemic and began developing and refining approaches to distance learning, as well as meeting the professional learning requirements for staff, supported by the EAS.

Communication processes with Headteachers, Governors and Practitioners

- Virtual Headteacher meetings.
- The Regional Headteacher and Governor Strategy Group meets monthly to discuss and share developments.
- Chairs of Governors/ Vice Chairs of Governors meet on a 6-weekly basis.
- Challenge Advisers and Principal Challenge Advisers make regular contact with individual headteachers.
- Well established regional networks continue to meet virtually, e.g. Professional Learning Schools, Well-being Leads, Deputy Headteacher Network.

Phase 1: Repurposing



What support was provided to schools during the phase?

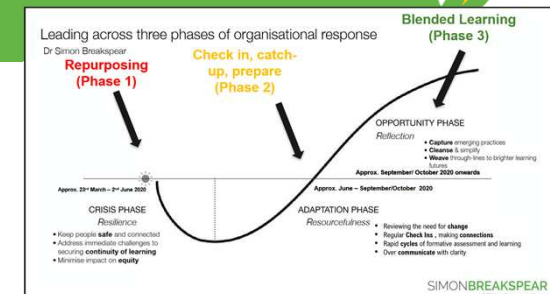
A comprehensive 'Playlist' of key information was provided to schools on a weekly basis. A slimmed down version was available for Governors on a fortnightly basis. This ensured that all correspondence, guidance materials and resources was easily accessible in one place.

Examples of support included:

- A range of models and guidance for distance learning.
- Webinars to support digital skills.
- All phase (3-19) resources to support distance learning across the curriculum.
- Subject networks, to share distance learning practice/approaches.
- Subject specific professional learning.
- Curriculum for Wales distance learning resources and webinars.
- ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) virtual professional learning.
- A range of resources to support the 'Five Rs': Re-grouping, Reflection, Renewal, Relationships and Relaxation.
- Health and Wellbeing Area of Learning Toolkit.
- Supporting virtual recruitment processes.
- Support for governors on a needs' led basis.

Phase 2: Check in, Catch up, Prepare

This next phase began at the start of June following the Ministerial announcement: Check in, catch up and prepare.



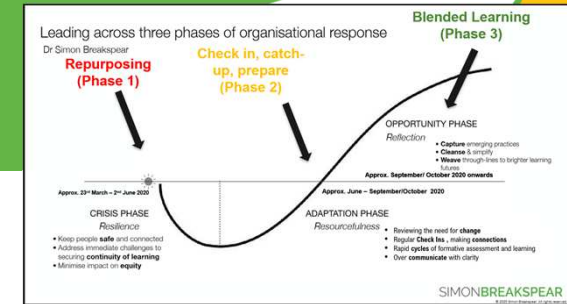
- Schools are currently planning how they will check in, catch up and prepare for a longer-term approach to distance learning across Wales.
- National guidance indicates the focus from June will be to spend time undertaking activities which support the health and well-being of learners and staff.

What support is being provided to schools during this phase?

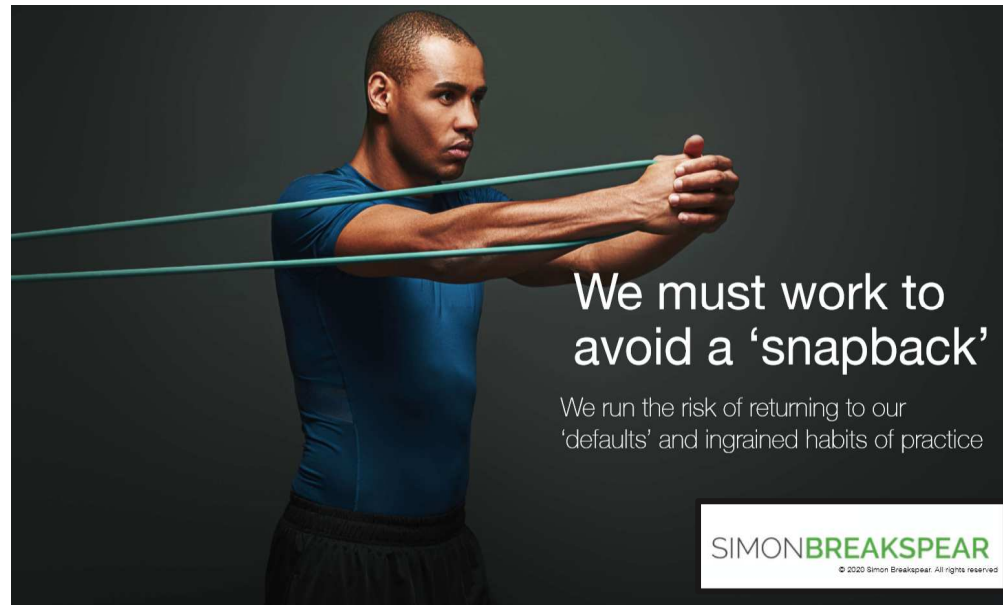
- Research informed and updated distance/blended learning guidance.
- Webinars to continue to support teachers' digital skills.
- Examples of curriculum models for the return to school, making links to the curriculum for Wales.
- Sharing of emerging and good practice for distance learning.
- Resources to support wellbeing, including RADY (Raising the Achievement of Disadvantaged Youngsters) meetings with schools.
- Support for school development and grant planning, including example models.
- Development of processes to quality assure distance learning.
- Team around the school meetings to ensure that identified schools are accessing support.

Phase 3: Blended Learning

**Blended Learning Phase (opportunity phase)
approximately September 2020 onwards**



Dr. Simon Breakspear acknowledges it is not just important to plan for the next phase, but it is also important to acknowledge what all stakeholders have been through and capture the learning that we have done within our schools and settings.



This aligns to the OECD recommendations that we should “Learn from the first phase of the pandemic. A rapid exercise of stock taking can codify the lessons learned during the first phase of the pandemic. These should make visible shortcomings, challenges, needs, as well as silverlinings.”

Phase 3: Blended Learning



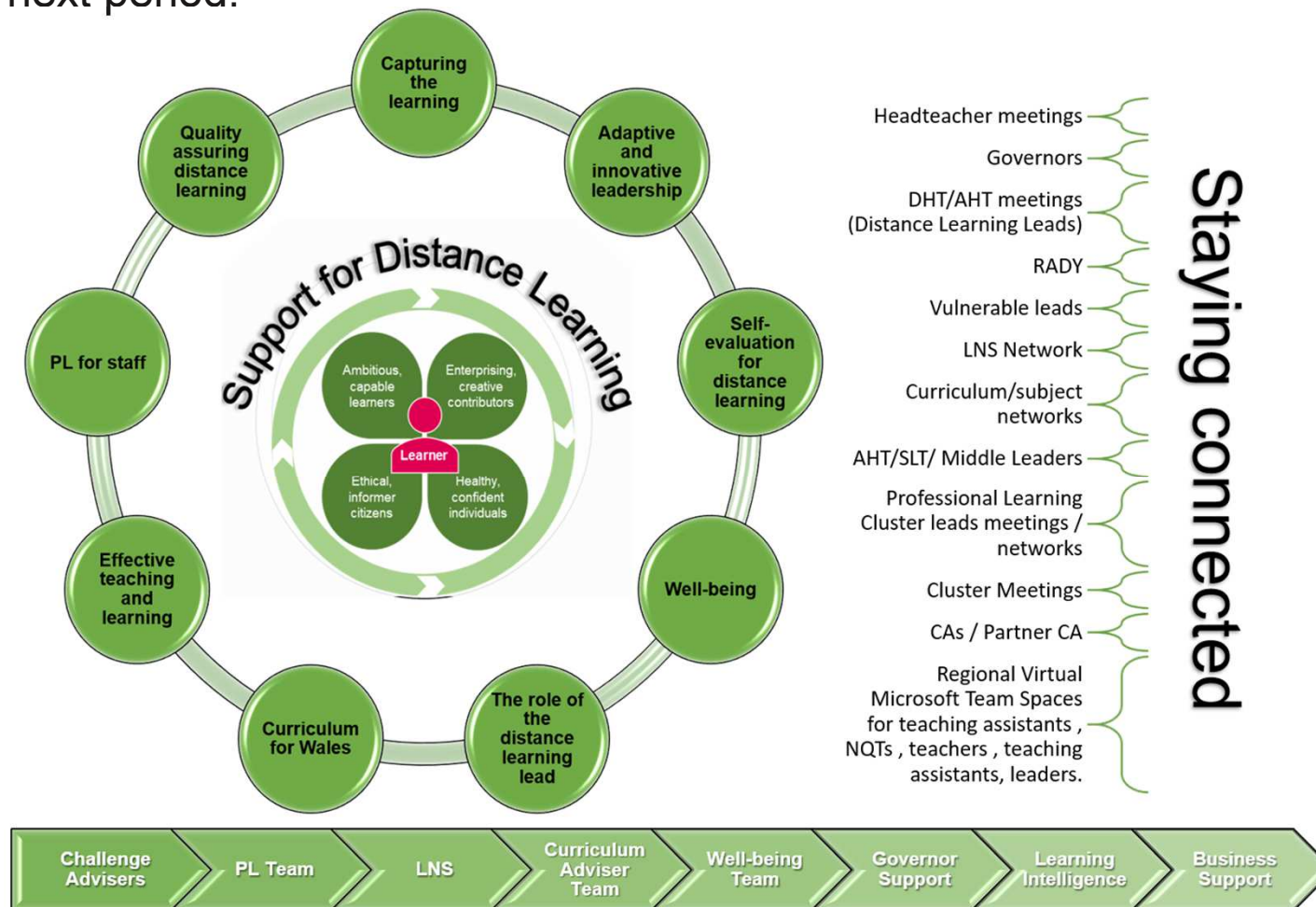
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- The EAS has worked closely with the other Regional School Improvement Consortia and Estyn to produce a guidance document for schools to support them in preparing their approaches to distance learning for the start of the new academic year in September.
- The EAS will continue to work closely with local authorities to determine the types of support that will be required to ensure this is as smooth a transition as possible.

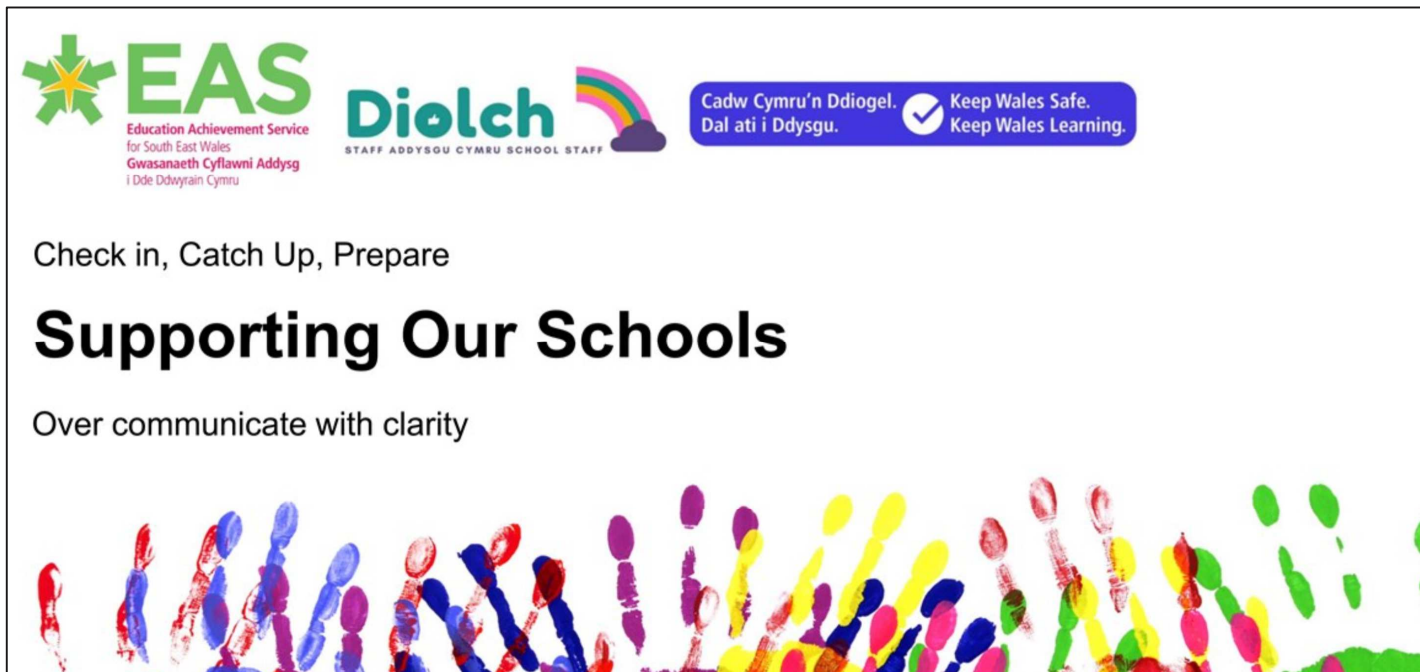
Phase 3: Blended Learning

We understand the need to over communicate with clarity to provide reassurance regarding advice, guidance, support and expectations. We have repurposed our existing delivery model to support schools and settings in a time sensitive manner during this next period.



Phase 3: Blended Learning

- The weekly ‘Supporting Our Schools’ playlist to headteachers will continue to provide timely and responsive support to schools through the relevant phases.
- This includes a focus on distance learning, detailing the support and resources available that are underpinned by WG guidance and most recent international research.



The banner features the EAS logo (Education Achievement Service for South East Wales) and the Diolch logo (STAFF ADDYSGU CYMRU SCHOOL STAFF). It also includes the Welsh slogan 'Cadw Cymru'n Ddiogel. Dal ati i Ddysgu.' and the English slogan 'Keep Wales Safe. Keep Wales Learning.' The main text reads 'Check in, Catch Up, Prepare' followed by 'Supporting Our Schools' in large bold letters, and 'Over communicate with clarity' below it. The bottom of the banner is decorated with a row of colorful handprints.

EAS
Education Achievement Service
for South East Wales
Gwasanaeth Cyflawni Addysg
i Dde Ddwyrain Cymru

Diolch
STAFF ADDYSGU CYMRU SCHOOL STAFF

Cadw Cymru'n Ddiogel.
Dal ati i Ddysgu.

Keep Wales Safe.
Keep Wales Learning.

Check in, Catch Up, Prepare

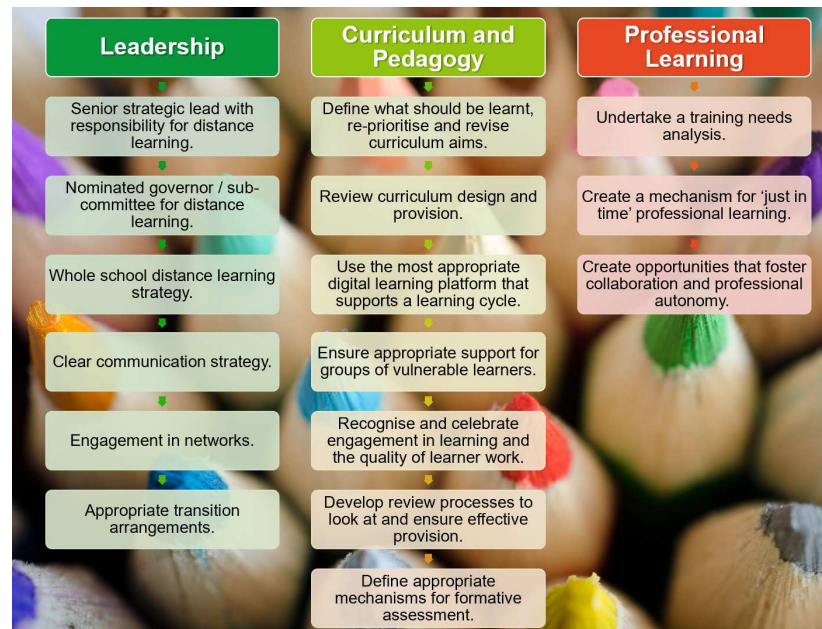
Supporting Our Schools

Over communicate with clarity

Phase 3: Blended Learning

A Checklist to support the Strategic Leadership of Distance Learning

- The aim of this checklist is to support schools and settings when considering their current and future approaches to distance learning.
- This will include approaches to blended learning when learners may experience different learning experience such as learning in school and learning at home. The checklist signposts schools to resources and guidance materials and existing good practice across the region.
- The checklist has been developed with reference to several international rapid research reviews, that take into consideration the response from countries across the world.

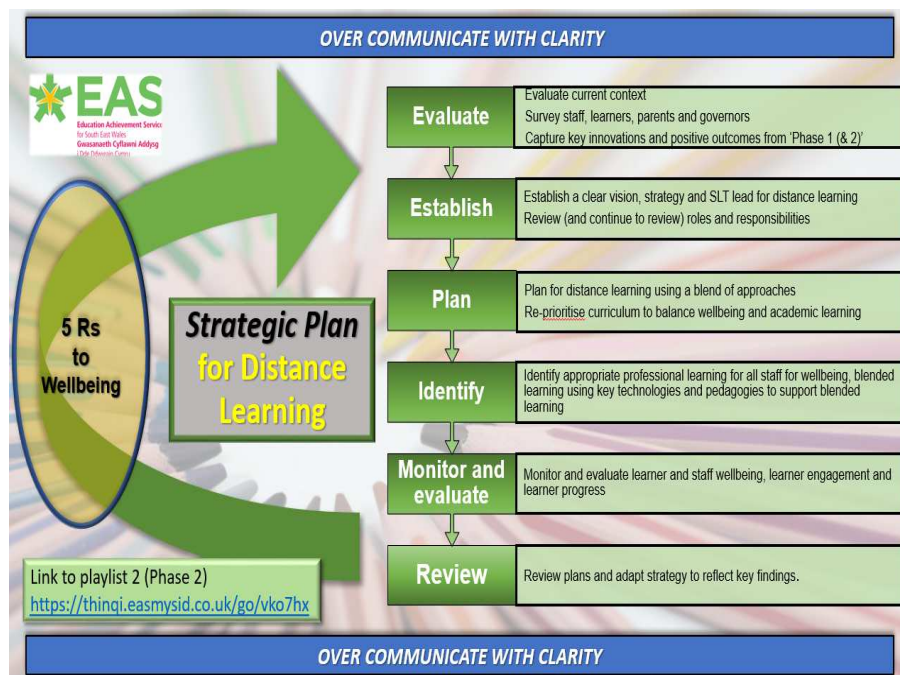


Phase 3: Blended Learning

School Development Plan Insert

To support schools in planning and quality assuring the provision and impact of distance learning, an exemplar action plan has been created. Schools will be required to submit their school development plans, incorporating the use of all grants through a 'readiness approach'. Local authorities, working with the EAS will review a range of plans.

Page 20



EAS
Education Achievement Service
The High, East Wales
Gwasgwynn, Cylfaeni, Arddrygion
101a, Rhoswari, Gwynedd

A Readiness Approach to Approving School Plans.
SDP, PDG (FSM, LAC, EOTAS, EYPDG),
EIG, PL and SEREN
2020/21

Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly Education Trust, Monmouthshire Education Trust, Newport Education Trust, Gwynedd Education Trust

Phase 3: Blended Learning




Professional Learning for Blended Learning

- The EAS will continue to provide professional learning for pedagogy and leadership, working with schools through the already established networks. For all leaders, expanding the focus on wellbeing will be a key priority in the coming weeks and months. Alongside this, there is an absolute necessity to strengthen teaching and learning to service a blended approach to learning where schools may be operating on partial or otherwise adapted schedules.
- The region will continue to support schools in developing effective strategies for teaching and learning, in the context of distance learning. This will include the blend of some class-based learning (synchronous) and some online (synchronous and asynchronous) learning.

What are the key pedagogic considerations for teaching and learning via distance?

This is not an exhaustive list but contains some considerations for how learning might be structured and sequenced to help learners through the 'blend', when a significant proportion of time will be spent learning from distance/at home.

All of the features selected below are features of effective teaching and learning. These considerations are particularly pertinent to formal or academic learning.

Pedagogic device	Why is this important in the blend?
 1. Advance organisers	Advance organisers allow pupils (and their parents) to see a high-level overview of what will be learnt during the sequence of learning or topic and how this links to prior learning. This idea was developed by the educational psychologist David Ausubel. An example of how to develop an advance organiser is shown in this brief clip below: https://ebtn.org.uk/big-picture-2/
 2. Building on prior knowledge	As with all effective teaching, planned sequences of learning should seek to build on prior knowledge. Whilst this can be picked-up up as part of the 'live' element of practice, it will be helpful to provide some prompts in the school's learning platform for pupils to refer to (perhaps as part of advance organiser). In this YouTube clip Dylan William assesses the importance of building on learners' prior knowledge https://youtu.be/1TzBkG18VC8
 3. Direct instruction	In all subject/learning areas, as new content is being introduced it is important to ensure that pupils develop a secure understanding. Where pupils are engaging with instruction live or online, it would be helpful to provide access this taught element on the school's learning platform, in order that this can be revisited by pupils, as they develop their learning further. Learning intentions and success-criteria should be made explicit.

Capturing and Sharing Good Practice



Regular PL to staff in the form of webinars, Team meetings and instructional videos. Best practice shared weekly across the school

Fortnightly regular parental communication regarding distance learning

Provides a strategic overview of content and quality of distance learning

King Henry VIII

Two Distance learning Teams also support this process

1. Group that supports staff and students
2. Planning Group for future developments

Admin monitor info@KHS email and forward messages to the correct staff members

Regular engagement updates to monitor the levels of engagement across the school

Daily monitoring of the Henry's Heroes nomination form and certificates sent out

Weekly data is analysed and shared with staff

Data collection

- Easy 4 point scale
- 1- limited or no engagement
- 2 - Under 50%
- 3- over 50%
- 4 - All work completed

Analysis

- Provide feedback to individual departments
- Identify pupils for engagement phone calls

Identify

- Barriers to learning and ways to overcome them



EAS Support for Developing Governors

Regional Governor PL Programme

(in Support our Schools and Governor Playlist – week beginning 29 June 2020)

Regional Governor Professional Learning Programme


Online Resources - Virtual Workshops
July 2020 – December 2020
Version: 26 June 2020

This Professional Learning 'Menu' is for all governors across the region. It has been developed in response to the significant changes to the ways in which schools and governing bodies have had to adapt, since March 2020. All online professional learning is available in two ways:

1. An online 'Playlist' which Governors can work through independently, at a time to suit you
2. The opportunity to attend one of a series of online 1 hour 'virtual' Workshops

All resources will be available here: [EAS Governor Resources](#)

You will need your Hwb login to access. Please contact governor.support@sewaleseas.org.uk if you cannot remember the details.



EAS
Education Achievement Service
for South East Wales
Gwasanaeth Cyflawni Addysg
i Dde Ddwyrain Cymru

Workshop Dates for Summer - Autumn Term 2020 (additional dates will be provided for Spring 2021)
To join a session click on the blue 'Workshop Date and Time' link below at the specified time – there is no need to pre-book

The Core Role of the Governor	Workshop Date and Time <i>Click blue link below to access</i>	Understanding your role and contribution to school development priorities	Workshop Date and Time <i>Click blue link below to access</i>
Governor Induction 2020 (Mandatory) – what you need to know as new governor.	15th July 2020 at 5:00pm	Governors: All you need to know about Distance Learning	14th July 2020 at 5:00pm
How to get the most from 'Hwb' and EAS online resources to support your role a Governor	20th July 2020 at 5:00pm	Governors: Your role in continuing to prepare for Curriculum for Wales implementation	9th Sept 2020 at 5:00pm
Your role as the Chair in 2020 (Mandatory for all new Chairs of Governors)	15th Sept 2020 at 5:00pm	Governors: Your role in supporting the Headteacher develop a whole school approach to Wellbeing	14th Sept 2020 at 5:00pm
Training for All Chairs of Governors on Leading Virtual meetings	6th July 2020 at 5:00pm	Governors: Continuing to develop the school workforce through Professional Learning	6th Oct 2020 at 5:00pm
Preparing governors for a role on the Headteacher's Performance Management panel	8th Sept 2020 at 5:00pm	Governors: All you need to know about School Development Planning and the Use of Grants	1st Oct 2020 at 5:00pm
Best practice for Governors in Staff Recruitment and Effective Selection	16th Sept 2020 at 5:00pm	Making the most of the information in the Headteacher's Report to Governors	13th Oct 2020 at 5:00pm
An overview of governor's role in Statutory Committees	7th Oct 2020 at 5:00pm	Please see following two pages for additional summaries of each session	
How to deal with Complaints to the Governing Body effectively and safely	14th Oct 2020 at 5:00pm		



Q&A



SUBJECT: EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT SERVICE (EAS) VALUE FOR MONEY (2019-2020)

MEETING: Children and Young People's Select Committee

DATE: xx xxx xxxx

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

1.1. Monmouthshire County Council are a partner local authority of the EAS Regional School Improvement Service. This paper describes the outcomes of an external report on the Value for Money (VfM) of the Regional Service in 2019/20.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1. This report is for information only.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1. The VfM report for 2019-2020 (Appendix A) focusses on the delivery of the regional service and the regional impact set against a number of criteria.

3.2. Members will note that the report does not break down individual LA detail. The VfM report focuses entirely on the impact of the regional service on a number of measurable outcomes that are contained within the commissioned regional Business Plan. The Council will have received a number of detailed reports in previous meetings and through LA scrutiny committees such as: LA Outcomes, Categorisation, Estyn Inspection outcomes which have specific LA information.

3.3. The report has been written by an external consultant, Rod Alcott following a tender process advertised on sell2wales. This is the third year that this consultant has reviewed the VfM of the EAS. The report has been sectioned to include the following elements:

- Executive Summary
- Recommendations
- Economy: Spending less
- Efficiency: Spending well
- Effectiveness: Spending wisely
- Equity: Spending fairly
- Sustainability: Spending for the long term
- Conclusion

3.4. The full content of the regional school improvement VfM 2019/2020 report can be found in Appendix A.

3.5. **What is Value for Money?**

VfM or cost effectiveness, is a measure of how well resources are being used to achieve intended outcomes. Good value for money is the optimal use of resources to achieve intended outcomes. VfM is usually measured by considering:

- **Economy:** minimising the cost of resources used while having regard to quality (inputs) – spending less;
- **Efficiency:** the relationship between outputs and the resources used to produce them – spending well; and
- **Effectiveness:** the extent to which objectives are achieved (outcomes) – spending wisely.

3.6. Whilst the above represent the traditional method of measuring VfM it is also possible to include two further dimensions:

- **Equity:** the extent to which services are available to and reach all people that they are intended to – spending fairly. Equity is sometimes included within considerations of effectiveness but is treated separately here to highlight its importance to the work of EAS; and
- **Sustainability:** an increasingly standard consideration within the context of the Well Being of Future Generations Act (WBFG) – spending for the long term.

3.7. In a VfM review it is also important to consider the specific context of the organisation being reviewed. Consequently, it is important to consider the specific aims and objectives of the organisation under review. To add value to an organisation a VfM review has to:

- be an evaluation of how well an organisation is performing in achieving its stated aims and objectives; and
- provide a platform to improve its performance.

3.8. **Purpose of the Review.**

For the purposes of this review the overall aim of EAS can be interpreted as its mission statement of ‘Working with partners we will aim to transform the educational outcomes and life chances for all learners across South East Wales’. This overall aim can be seen to be underpinned by the following objectives of:

- ensuring successful learning experiences and high levels of wellbeing particularly for those facing the greatest challenges;
- building effective networks of professionals, across the five Local Authorities and beyond and working together to improve leadership, teaching and learning; and
- attracting and retaining a team of outstanding people who embed our core values in their work and share a passion for excellence.

- 3.9. It must be recognised from the outset that the mission statement and its underpinning objectives have been developed based on almost ten years of experience of delivering a school improvement service across South East Wales. They represent what the organisation has determined to be the key components of an effective service and as such it is reasonable to assume that their use, as a methodological framework for gathering evidence, enabled valid conclusions to be drawn on the extent to which VfM is being achieved.
- 3.10. The value from a VfM review lies in part in the assurance that it can provide, to both providers and recipients of services. However, it can be argued that a greater added value comes from the extent to which it acts as a catalyst for improvement, based on an evaluation of a body of evidence that demonstrates what is working well and what is working less well. This in turn can lead to well informed judgements about what needs to change.
- 3.11. If one accepts the approach and underlying assumptions outlined above, then the next consideration was how to gather the necessary evidence to make a valid evaluation of VfM. However, it must be recognised that evidence gathering and analysis for this report took place in the wholly exceptional circumstances of the lockdown imposed to combat the Coronavirus pandemic. Consequently, it was an exercise undertaken entirely remotely. While this caused some inevitable logistical challenges and delays in reporting, it did not affect the quality of evidence gathered or impair the validity of subsequent findings and conclusions.
- 3.12. This VfM review drew upon information and data supplied by EAS in response to requests, evidence from external experts who have undertaken work for EAS during the year 2019-20 and information and data that is in the public domain.
- 3.13. **External Judgement of the EAS.**

Assessing the performance of EAS against the criteria outlined above the conclusion is that:

EAS continues to provide good VfM in terms of the services it provides to schools across the region as evidenced by improved outcomes for some learners and the achievement of the other objectives that it has set for itself.

This conclusion was arrived at because:

- **Economy – spending less.** EAS continues to deliver a comprehensive range of services to schools across the region from dwindling financial resources; whilst maintaining one of the highest delegation rates to schools of any consortium in Wales
- **Effectiveness – spending wisely.** School performance and pupil outcomes are improving although significant problems, that are being addressed through a comprehensive programme of support, persist in the secondary sector.
- **Equity – spending fairly.** EAS has made improving pupil wellbeing a priority, particularly for those facing the greatest challenges; and its approach is enabling significant progress to be made.

- **Efficiency – spending well.** The quality of the workforce is being enhanced through the delivery of extensive programmes to develop teaching and leadership across the region, with demonstrable positive benefits for the quality of teaching and learning.
- **Sustainability** – spending for the long term. An extensive programme of Human Resource support allied to a comprehensive programme of development support is in place to ensure the attraction and retention of high calibre professionals across the region.

3.14. As stated above the overriding purpose of EAS, as set out in its mission statement, is to ‘transform the educational outcomes and life chances for all learners across South East Wales’ and in order to achieve this it has identified the necessity to ensure successful learning experiences for pupils across the region. One approach to an assessment of how successful it has been is to look at educational outcomes as measured by:

- categorisation outcomes;
- Estyn inspection outcomes; and
- pupil outcomes.

However, it must be recognised from the outset that these outcomes cannot be achieved by any one organisation or programme of support. They require collaboration and a collective effort for which there is a collective responsibility and accountability. In relation to this report this collective responsibility and accountability extends to Welsh Government, EAS, Local Authorities and schools.

3.15. **Conclusion.**

The report concludes that VfM is a measure of the extent to which an organisation, in this case EAS, is achieving its intended outcomes and objectives from the resources at its disposal. Separate reference to outcomes and objectives should not be interpreted as implying that they are in any sense divorced from one another. On the contrary, intended outcomes will only be achieved if the organisation’s objectives represent the necessary and sufficient constituent activity that best facilitates achievement of those outcomes.

3.16. For the EAS, objectives around attracting, developing, and retaining a high-quality workforce, both within the organisation and across the schools in the region, represent a coherent set of enablers to achieve intended outcomes in terms of school performance and pupil attainment. This alignment results in objectives that are mutually reinforcing and facilitate complementary provision in terms of the delivery of support programmes.

3.17. The complementary delivery of programmes that underpin objectives aligned to intended outcomes and are closely aligned to National Objectives to help prepare schools to meet the challenges of curriculum and evaluation reform, provides evidence that EAS is ‘*doing the right things*’. Survey returns from recipient schools and participating individuals that show a high level of satisfaction with services being delivered provide evidence that EAS is ‘*doing the right things well*’. Improvements in outcomes provide evidence of ‘*impact*’ and the good use

being made of externally commissioned research to evaluate current approaches and improve future provision provide evidence of *'sustainable improvement'*.

3.18. In summary EAS is providing a service that is:

- doing the right things;
- doing them well;
- having an impact; and
- sustainable

3.19. **Recommendations**

The report notes three recommendations for consideration:

EAS needs to build upon its evolving approach to considering VfM through:

- on-going refinement of its internal reporting mechanisms.
- further developing its mid-year review of VfM
- extending engagement with recipients of its services to triangulate evidence and further validate findings and conclusions.

3.20. These recommendations will be accepted in full and will be implemented within the current business planning cycle.

4. REASONS:

4.1. The EAS through its planning cycle is required to submit an annual value for the money report on the regional school improvement service.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

5.1. There are no direct resource implications.

6. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING)

6.1. High Quality education is a fundamental pre-requisite of ensuring future local and national prosperity through the provision of an informed and well-educated workforce and society. The Local Authority's statutory role to monitor and evaluate school performance and the quality of provision, coupled with its statutory powers of intervention in schools causing concern is fundamental to ensuring that all schools provide high quality education provision.

7. CONSULTEES:

7.1. The Business Plan and the regional Professional Learning Offer is currently in the consultation process. The Consultees are noted below:

- Debbie Harteveld, Managing Director, Education Achievement Service

- Geraint Willington, Director - Resources, Business and Governance, EAS.
- Ed Pryce, Assistant Director - Policy and Strategy, EAS
- Will McClean, Chief Education Officer
- Education Achievement Service Senior Leadership Team
- Education Achievement Service Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

8.1. The South-East Wales Regional Value for Money Report (2019-2020)

9. **AUTHOR:** Geraint Willington (Director - Resources, Business and Governance, EAS)

CONTACT DETAILS: **Tel:** 01443 863145
 E-mail: Geraint.Willington@sewaleseas.org.uk

Value for Money (VFM) Review and Report for 2019/20 for the South East Wales Education Achievement Service

Report Author: Rod Alcott (External Consultant)

Date of report: 15 June 2020

Contents:

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Executive Summary

Value for Money (VfM), or cost effectiveness, is a measure of how well resources are being used to achieve intended outcomes. Good value for money is the optimal use of resources to achieve intended outcomes. VfM is usually measured by considering:

- **Economy:** minimising the cost of resources used while having regard to quality (inputs) – spending less;
- **Efficiency:** the relationship between outputs and the resources used to produce them – spending well; and
- **Effectiveness:** the extent to which objectives are achieved (outcomes) – spending wisely.

While the above represent the traditional method of measuring VfM it is also possible to include two further dimensions:

- **Equity:** the extent to which services are available to and reach all people that they are intended to – spending fairly.
- **Sustainability:** an increasingly standard consideration within the context of the Well Being of Future Generations Act (WBFGE) – spending for the long term.

In a VfM review it is also important to consider the specific context of the organisation being reviewed. Consequently, it is important to consider the specific aims and objectives of the organisation under review. To add value to an organisation a VfM review has to:

- be an evaluation of how well an organisation is performing in achieving its stated aims and objectives; and
- provide a platform to improve its performance.

For the purposes of this review the overall aim of EAS can be interpreted as its mission statement of ‘*Working with partners we will aim to transform the educational outcomes and life chances for all learners across South East Wales*’. This overall aim can be seen to be underpinned by the following objectives of:

- ensuring successful learning experiences and high levels of wellbeing particularly for those facing the greatest challenges;
- building effective networks of professionals, across the five Local Authorities and beyond and working together to improve leadership, teaching and learning; and
- attracting and retaining a team of outstanding people who embed our core values in their work and share a passion for excellence.

It must be recognised from the outset that the mission statement and its underpinning objectives have been developed based on almost ten years of experience of delivering a school improvement service across South East Wales. They represent what the organisation has determined to be the key components of an effective service and as such it is reasonable to assume that their use, as a methodological framework for gathering evidence, enabled valid conclusions to be drawn on the extent to which VfM is being achieved.

The value from a VfM review lies in part in the assurance that it can provide to both providers and recipients of services. However, it can be argued that a greater added value comes from the extent to which it acts as a catalyst for improvement, based on an evaluation of a body of evidence that

demonstrates what is working well and what is working less well. This in turn can lead to well informed judgements about what needs to change.

If one accepts the approach and underlying assumptions outlined above, then the next consideration was how to gather the necessary evidence to make a valid evaluation of VfM. However, it must be recognised that evidence gathering and analysis for this report took place in the wholly exceptional circumstances of the lockdown imposed to combat the Coronavirus pandemic. Consequently, it was an exercise undertaken entirely remotely. While this caused some inevitable logistical challenges and delays in reporting, it did not affect the quality of evidence gathered or impair the validity of subsequent findings and conclusions.

This VfM review drew upon information and data supplied by EAS in response to requests, evidence from external experts who have undertaken work for EAS during the year 2019-20 and information and data that is in the public domain. Consideration of this body of evidence enabled a judgement to be made regarding VfM and the judgement is that:

EAS continues to provide good VfM in terms of the services it provides to schools across the region as evidenced by improved outcomes for some learners and the achievement of the other objectives that it has set for itself

This conclusion was arrived at because:

- **Economy – spending less.** EAS continues to deliver a comprehensive range of services to schools across the region from dwindling financial resources; whilst maintaining one of the highest delegation rates to schools of any consortium in Wales
- **Effectiveness – spending wisely.** School performance and pupil outcomes are improving although significant problems, that are being addressed through a comprehensive programme of support, persist in the secondary sector.
- **Equity – spending fairly.** EAS has made improving pupil wellbeing, particularly for those facing the greatest challenges a priority; and its approach is enabling significant progress to be made.
- **Efficiency – spending well.** The quality of the workforce is being enhanced through the delivery of extensive programmes to develop teaching and leadership skills across the region, with demonstrable positive benefits for the quality of teaching and learning.
- **Sustainability – spending for the long term.** An extensive programme of Human Resource support allied to a comprehensive programme of development support is in place to ensure the attraction and retention of high calibre professionals across the region.

The main body of this report will detail the evidence that underpins the above conclusions.

Recommendations:

- EAS needs to build upon its evolving approach to considering VfM through:
 - on-going refinement of its internal reporting mechanisms;
 - further developing its mid-year review of VfM; and
 - extending engagement with recipients of its services to triangulate evidence and further validate findings and conclusions.

Economy – spending less. EAS continues to deliver a comprehensive range of services to schools across the region from dwindling financial resources; whilst maintaining one of the highest delegation rates to schools of any consortium in Wales

One part of arriving at an overall judgement is to look at the organisation holistically in terms of the overall resources -essentially people and money - at its disposal.

The picture is one of ever diminishing resources both in terms of income and staff numbers. The extent of the reduction in core funding, grant funding and trading income is shown below. There has been an agreed 9.6% reduction in Local Authority (LA) funding over the past 5 years which, along with the elimination of trading income, has resulted in a reduction in total core funding of some £1.26m or 28.6%

in absolute terms between 2015-16 and 2019-20: although in real terms, when inflation and pay awards are taken into account, the reduction has been in excess of 30%. Over the same time-period the reduction in the amount of grant money received from the Welsh Government has resulted in EAS having £3.7m or 7% less in grant money available in absolute terms. When reductions in LA funding, elimination of trading income and reductions in grant money received are added together the reduction in total funding is £4.94m which represents an 8.7% reduction in absolute terms ; although in real terms, when inflation and pay awards are taken into account, the reduction has been in the region of 10%.

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
LA Funding	£3,481,085	£3,376,653	£3,275,353	£3,209,847	£3,145,651
Trading Income	£924,853	£601,974	£447,460	£0	£0
Total Core Funding	£4,405,938	£3,978,627	£3,722,813	£3,209,847	£3,145,651
Grants	£52,703,146	£56,082,261	£52,033,572	£51,991,066	£49,022,408
Total	£57,109,084	£60,060,888	£55,756,385	£55,200,913	£52,168,054
Delegated to Schools	£47,413,811	£50,384,126	£46,481,315	£48,886,304	£46,142,076
Delegation Percentage	90%	90%	89%	94%	94%
Residual Income ¹	£7,687,144	£7,668,633	£7,278,655	£6,314,609	£6,025,978

However, if increases in the rate of delegation to schools are taken into account then residual income spent on running the organisation, including staffing costs, fell by some £1.66m or 21.6% from 2015-16 to 2019-20

Reduced spending has inevitably resulted in a considerable reduction in staffing numbers, with the number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff reducing from 107 in 2015-16 to 71 in 2019-20, taking the total reduction in FTE staff reduction to 36 over the period 2015-16 to 2019-20, representing a reduction of approximately one third in staffing levels.

The evidence clearly demonstrates that EAS is spending less than in previous years and that the rate of reduction is accelerating, while the overall number of schools being supported has remained largely static.

However, spending less is not in itself proof of providing VfM. Delivering VfM also requires that the reduced spending is used in a way that enables the organisation to meet its objectives and intended outcomes. The remainder of the report will look at the evidence around how well resources have been deployed.

Effectiveness – spending wisely. School performance and pupil outcomes are improving although significant problems, that are being addressed through a comprehensive programme of support, persist in the secondary sector.

As stated earlier the overriding purpose of EAS, as set out in its mission statement, is to ‘*transform the educational outcomes and life chances for all learners across South East Wales*’ and in order to achieve this it has identified the necessity to ensure successful learning experiences for pupils across the

¹ Residual Income represents the cost of delivering the Business Plan for each year after distribution of Minority Ethnic Achievement Grant (MEAG) and Gypsy Traveller Children Grant (GTCG).

region. This section of the report will now analyse what is being done to achieve this, how well it is being done and how successful it has been.

One approach to an assessment of how successful it has been is to look at educational outcomes as measured by:

- categorisation outcomes;
- Estyn inspection outcomes; and
- pupil outcomes.

However, it must be recognised from the outset that these outcomes cannot be achieved by any one organisation or programme of support. They require collaboration and a collective effort for which there is a collective responsibility and accountability. In relation to this report this collective responsibility and accountability extends to Welsh Government, EAS, Local Authorities and schools.

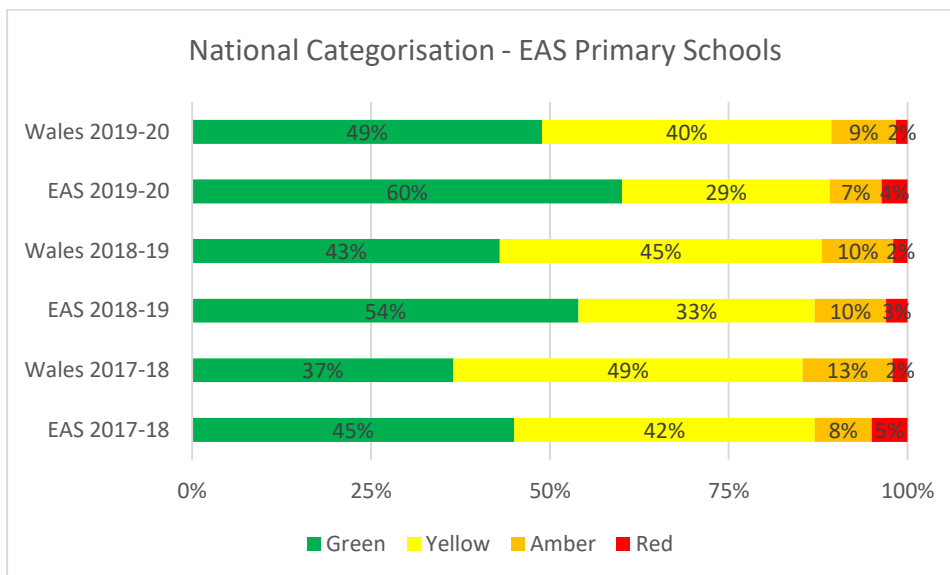
In looking at educational outcomes there is also a need to recognise the changes being introduced by Welsh Government, to evaluation and improvement (accountability) in Wales, to support the realisation of the new curriculum. These changes will result in a shift to individual school self-evaluation. This is seen as signalling a move away from a perceived disproportionate emphasis on narrow performance measures, to a wider range of indicators which better capture the whole learning experience, learner progress and Welsh Government ambitions for the new curriculum.

School performance - Categorisation:

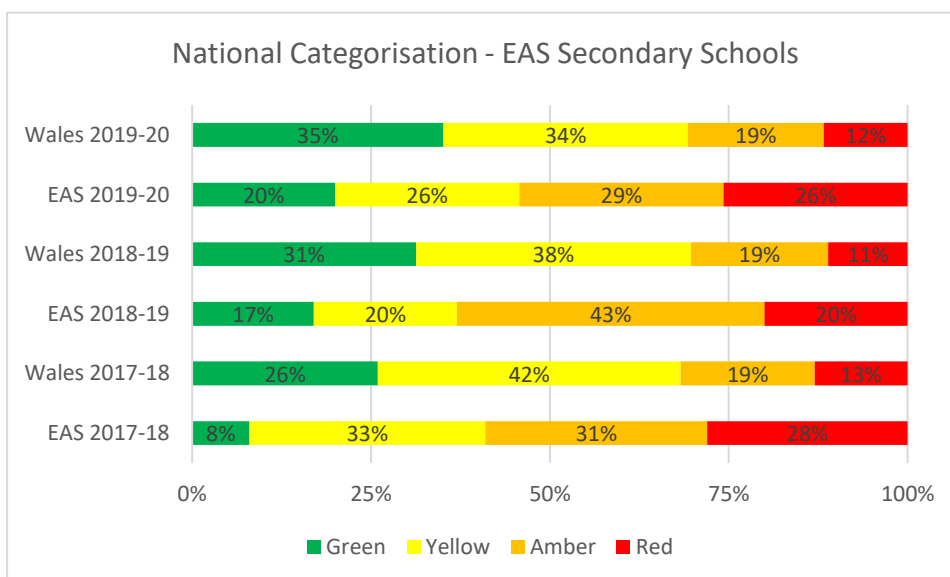
The National School Categorisation System was introduced in September 2014. The system places schools into four categories green, yellow, amber and red in descending order of the amount of support they are judged to require. Thus, green schools are judged to require the least support and red schools the most support. The system is not purely data driven, it also considers the quality of leadership and teaching and learning in schools. The model was jointly constructed between Welsh Government and the four regional consortia.

Under the proposed changes to evaluation, improvement and accountability outlined above it is recognised that categorisation will need to evolve into a more sophisticated process that looks at a broader range of indicators, such as learner well-being. It is expected that this will evolve into an ongoing process of authentication of a school's self-evaluation and priorities for development.

The categorisation outcomes go through a rigorous moderation process that allows valid comparison to be made within the region over time and between regional and national outcomes. The picture for schools in the region is illustrated below:



The above table illustrates that the combined percentage of primary schools in the green and yellow categories has remained consistent over the last three years and is broadly in line with the Wales average. However, within this picture of consistent performance it is worth noting that the percentage of primary schools in the green category has risen by 15 percentage points over the last three years resulting in the extent to which the percentage of green schools in the region exceeds the Wales average increasing from 8 percentage points to 11 percentage points.



The above table illustrates that the percentage of secondary schools in the green and yellow categories has risen from 41% in 2017-18 to 46% in 2019-20. In particular there has been an increase from 8% to 20% for schools in the green category; an improvement that has narrowed the gap between schools in that category across the region and those across Wales. This improvement has resulted in the gap between secondary schools in the green and yellow categories across the region and schools across Wales narrowing over the three-year period.

School based performance -inspection outcomes:

Another measure of school improvement is Estyn inspection outcomes across the region. In September 2017 Estyn introduced a new framework for judging school performance based upon assessments across the following five categories:

- Leadership and management
- Care, support and guidance
- Teaching and learning experiences
- Well-being and attitudes to learning
- Standards of achievement

For each category school performance is judged to be either excellent, good, adequate or unsatisfactory. As part of the new framework no overall judgement is arrived at and no assessment is made of prospects for future improvement. This marked divergence from the previous approach, coupled with the relatively small percentage of schools inspected, particularly in the secondary sector, limits the extent to which valid assessments of trend based upon comparisons with past judgements can be made. However, it is possible to make comparisons between the judgements arrived at across the region compared with those across Wales; and between primary schools and secondary schools.

In terms of these comparisons the following picture emerges for the period 2017-19:

- Inspection outcomes for primary and secondary schools combined were broadly in line with the all-Wales average across all five categories;
- Inspection outcomes for secondary schools resulting in judgements of unsatisfactory were above the all-Wales average for leadership and management, teaching and learning experiences and standards of achievement;
- Inspection outcomes for secondary schools for well-being and attitudes to learning have improved to be above the all-Wales average and those for care, support and guidance are broadly in line with the average;
- With the exception of care, support and guidance no secondary school was judged to be excellent in any category;
- Inspection outcomes for primary schools were broadly in line with the all-Wales average with judgements for well-being and attitudes to learning improving to be above the all-Wales average;
- Some judgements of excellent were made across all five categories for different primary schools.

Another method for evaluating school performance based on inspection judgements is to look at what category schools are placed in following their Estyn inspection. Post inspection all schools are placed in one of the following four categories:

- No follow-up required
- Estyn review
- Significant improvement
- Special measures

Based on inspection outcomes from 73 inspections carried out and reported on between 2017 and 2020 the position with regard to follow-up categorisation can be summarised as:

- 48/60 (80%) of primary schools - no follow-up required
- 9/60 (15%) of primary schools - Estyn review
- 2/59 (3.3%) of primary schools - significant improvement
- no primary schools in special measures

- 1/9 (11%) of secondary schools – no follow-up required
- 6/9 (67%) of secondary schools – Estyn review
- 2/9 (22%) of secondary schools – special measures
- 1/2 pupil referral units – Estyn review
- 1/2 pupil referral units – Special measures

While this picture of inspection outcomes is a snapshot based upon a relatively small sample, particularly in the case of secondary schools, it does serve to further highlight the differentiation in performance between primary schools and secondary schools across the region. There are some significant challenges in many secondary schools, where progress is not good enough and this is a key issue for the EAS and for local authorities to continue to address.

Pupil outcomes – Teacher Assessment:

As stated earlier, in addition to looking at school-based measures, one fundamental indicator of effectiveness is pupil outcomes. In the past this has involved looking at end of key stage results and analysing them both in terms of historical trend and comparative performance. However, this is no longer possible following the amendments that were made in 2018 to the use of Teacher Assessment information in Wales. These amendments were seen as necessary to support the key objectives of the Welsh Government document: ‘Our National Mission,’ in delivering robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements to support a self-improving system.

The amendments reflect a belief that Aggregated Teacher Assessment outcomes have been used for accountability purposes for too long; leading to unintended consequences that can negatively impact upon raising school standards. The Welsh Government changes are intended to ensure that there is a more coherent system where the focus is on using teacher assessment to inform better teaching and learning.

Consequently, teacher assessment data and National Reading and Numeracy Test data at a school, local authority and consortia level will no longer be published. This applies to the Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 in all maintained primary and secondary schools. The decision not to publish comparative information about teacher assessments and tests, in relation to other schools within a local authority or ‘family of schools’ is predicated on the belief that *‘Evaluating the performance of individual schools rather than generating aggregated data at local authority level will be more helpful to supporting and challenging individual schools with their improvement.’²*

Pupil Outcomes - Key Stage 4:

In 2019, the Minister for Education announced the introduction of a suite of interim Key Stage 4 performance measures that were developed through collaboration with head teachers and key stakeholders. The new measures, based on points scores, were designed to remove the historic emphasis on the Level 2 threshold measure and the narrow focus on borderline C/D grade learners that past use of threshold measures has cultivated. Instead, they reflect a school average of all individual learners’ points’ scores, rather than a percentage attaining a minimum threshold level.

These interim measures known as Capped Points 9 performance show that in 2019 performance across the region was 345.2, compared to 353.8 across Wales. This performance measure has changed since last year, as the core prescribed element is now 3 qualifications, rather than 5

² Joint letter from Welsh Government, Estyn and WLGA July 2019

previously, hence direct comparison is not possible. However, trends can be considered and in 2018 performance in this measure was 333.2 points, compared to the Wales average 349.5 points, so the gap between the region and Wales has narrowed from 16.3 points to 8.6 points.

National benchmarking data was previously provided to allow a comparison with other schools in similar socio-economic circumstances to encourage collaboration. However, it is now felt that the way in which benchmarking has been used has instead driven competition between schools and local authorities rather than collaboration. It will, therefore, no longer be provided.

While there are now significant restrictions on the publication of data that does not mean that the data is not collected, analysed and used. EAS still have access to all the data that they have had in the past and this forms part of a broad range of un-aggregated data and information that is used to evaluate and report on school performance. This is consistent with the previously stated view that '*Evaluating the performance of individual schools rather than generating aggregated data at local authority level will be more helpful to supporting and challenging individual schools with their improvement.*³'

EAS support and challenge to individual schools to promote improvement is based upon a strategic approach of moving increasingly towards a self-improving system, with more and more of the support, challenge and development work carried out by schools themselves: underpinned by a programme of regional investment in building the capacity of schools and educational settings to enable and facilitate more collaborative ways of working. This approach is enabling teachers and leaders to learn from each other, to try out new approaches and to engage with educational research as the backdrop for improvement. Across the region there are now a variety of ways in which EAS supports and challenges school improvement. The impact and effectiveness of the strategies are reviewed regularly through both internal and external processes.

These supporting and challenging strategies can be summarised as:

- the role of the challenge adviser in supporting, brokering and challenging the pace of progress schools make in addressing their identified school priorities;
- the role of EAS officers (including subject specific support, support for governors, wellbeing and equity) in supporting, brokering and challenging the pace of progress schools make in addressing their identified school priorities;
- access to funded school networks that support all aspects of professional development and school improvement focused on improving the quality of leadership and teaching and learning;
- access to a wide range of professional learning, some with accreditation options, for teaching assistants, teachers, school leaders and governors;
- peer working and peer reviews;
- the use of trained and accredited coaches and mentors for teachers and leaders, sourced from within and beyond; and
- access to eLearning materials and high-quality resources.

Evaluating the performance of individual schools also involves addressing the problem of underperforming schools across the region through the Schools Causing Concern (SCC) process. While both primary and secondary schools can be a cause for concern, it has to be recognised that on

³ Joint letter from Welsh Government, Estyn and WLGA July 2019

all outcome measures; categorisation, inspection judgements and key stage results, the performance of secondary schools across the region is significantly below that of primaries.

SCC are placed on a register based on a range of criteria, and their inclusion is agreed by local authority Directors of Education and the EAS Managing Director. The Headteacher and Governing Body are notified in writing if their school is placed on the Schools Causing Concern Register.

The register is reviewed on a half termly basis by senior officers within the local authorities and EAS, to ensure that levels of support and challenge are consistent. Progress of schools is also discussed at the meetings with all Cabinet Members for Education on a termly basis. Following these meetings schools will be notified if there are any changes to their inclusion on the register or any updates regarding support.

The composition of the register as of autumn 2019 can be summarised as:

- In total there are now 37 schools on the register. Of these 20 are secondary schools. This reflects both outcomes in the sector and the greater risk associated with underperformance in secondary schools.
- Of these 37 schools, 13 have been added, during the academic year.
- 5 schools have been removed from the register this academic year as they have made sufficient progress for their inclusion to be no longer warranted.

For 2019-20 the number of schools being removed has been less than the number being added, and there are concerns over secondary school performance across the region. Secondary schools account for 32 (13.5%) of the 238 schools across the region but 20 (62.5%) of schools on the SCC register. This means that over half (54%) of secondary schools are on the SCC register.

All identified schools have fully engaged with the SCC process in 2019-20 and in many instances, schools had made progress across the year. It was also evident that nearly all Headteachers and governors had responded positively to advice provided by EAS and LA officers.

In looking to further refine its approach EAS is planning to:

- pilot an approach to 'Team Around the School' that incorporates the SCC process;
- ensure all meetings reach a collective judgement based on the protocol's judgement criteria; and
- work with LAs to ensure schools are not producing excessive and additional paperwork in relation to these meetings

However, as the figures above relating to the composition of the register demonstrate, risks remain around the pace of tackling underperformance in leadership particularly at secondary school level. This remains an issue for governing bodies, local authorities and the EAS. as the following extract demonstrates '*.....there are some significant challenges in many secondary schools, where progress is not good enough. This is a key issue for EAS and its overwhelming priority*'⁴.

⁴ EAS Review October 2019: Steve Munby

Equity – spending fairly. EAS has made improving pupil wellbeing, particularly for those facing the greatest challenges a priority; and its approach is enabling significant progress to be made.

It is worth re-iterating here that the EAS objective refers to *‘ensuring high levels of wellbeing particularly for those facing the greatest challenges’* and the next part of this report will focus on the work being done to meet that objective.

The following extract highlights the central role that this work now occupies within EAS. *‘EAS is now, rightly, focusing on **well-being and equity** as part of its core remit. This sends an important signal to schools that they need to be about both excellence and equity and that EAS and the Welsh Government are as concerned about the progress of vulnerable groups and the well-being of children as they are about academic excellence. This is not a compartmentalised silo approach in EAS but a genuinely joined-up approach which links to the business planning process, the School Development Planning process, local target-setting and the schools causing concern protocol. Good relationships have been established with the key people in each local authority and EAS has, rightly, been very clear about what its role is and what its role is not as far as the broad welfare, Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and safeguarding issues are concerned. Good work has been done to ensure that the use of the PDG funding is evidence-based – including the use of Professional Panels’⁵.*

As part of its role in supporting those facing the greatest challenges EAS works in partnership with the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Support Hub to train its schools in an awareness of ACE and the impact they have on learning and mental health. Vulnerable learners – many of whom have experienced ACE – include grant-funded children entitled to free school meals and those in the looked-after system

More specifically, in partnership with the ACE Support Hub, EAS has rolled out a *train-the-trainer* programme to train up an ACE ambassador, known as a wellbeing lead, within each school. In turn, these wellbeing leads have been charged with implementing ACE-awareness in their individual schools. Over five school terms from 2018 to 2019, the programme delivered initial training to all the schools in the consortium. By July 2020, the goal was to have trained most of the schools in a second ACE module that encourages them to think about emotional coaching and providing safe spaces for their vulnerable pupils. There is also a third tier of staff training for schools that want to go into greater depth. This includes five hours of staff-development workshops covering the impact of attachment on brain development, building pupil resilience and focusing on the wellbeing of the educators themselves. The programme has inevitably been curtailed as a result of school closures in response to the Coronavirus pandemic but to date:

- over half of the schools across the region have received unit two training; and
- 80 schools have attended third tier of training.

EAS maintains a register of the schools that have been trained and where they are on their ACE journey so that none fall through the gaps and runs “mop-up sessions” for schools that lose their wellbeing lead for whatever reason and need further training.

The feedback from schools in the consortium has been largely positive both in relation to the way staff have engaged with the training, and how, within the consortium, schools have shared good practice in order to improve support for their vulnerable learners. Sharing within clusters – groups of primary schools that feed a particular secondary school – has helped vulnerable pupils making the transition from primary to secondary. Some secondary schools are now gathering information from the primary schools to support their most vulnerable learners, setting up separate transition plans for the most challenging children.

Many of the secondary schools in the EAS consortium have set up their own wellbeing hubs to provide a safe environment for their vulnerable learners and to help them engage in school life. Those secondary schools that are developing these hubs are seeing a decrease in exclusion rates

⁵ EAS Review October 2019: Steve Munby

and an increase in attendance rates. The hubs play a particularly important role in reassuring children transitioning from primary school, where they have often benefitted from intensive nurture and support programmes

In 2019 Public Health Wales commissioned research into the effectiveness of the roll out of ACE Awareness across the EAS. The report states:

- The feedback received by a total of 88 schools and 1,707 individuals indicates that recipients of ACE Ambassadors' training perceived it to be of use to their work and thought favourably of the Train the Trainer (TtT) programme. Yet, although reflections upon the content and delivery of the training delivered by ACE Ambassadors were mostly positive, it did appear as though some recipients believed that the training should have been more interactive.
- Overall, the findings of this study suggest that the TtT programme had been effective in developing professional learning about ACE throughout schools within the EAS region.

The leading role that EAS plays in supporting the wellbeing agenda is reflected in the fact key learning points from schools in the EAS consortium are being used to evaluate the train-the-trainer approach to inform its roll out across other school consortia in Wales.

The intention of EAS' approach is to improve the progress and provision for all vulnerable learners and its effectiveness will be monitored, and challenged as required, through the work of challenge advisers, education improvement boards and intervention meetings. Effectiveness will be measured qualitatively through:

- improved curriculum offers;
- improved engagement of carers at parental consultations, option evenings; and
- appropriate challenge and provision for all groups of learners.

and quantitatively through:

- improved attendance;
- reduced exclusions (internal and formal fixed term); and
- improved attainment of vulnerable learners.

Data on attendance, exclusions and attainment for vulnerable learners is not currently collected and EAS will have to find a way to collect this specific data if it is to realise its intention to use quantifiable measures of effectiveness.

Efficiency – spending well. The quality of the workforce is being enhanced through the delivery of extensive programmes to develop teaching and leadership skills across the region, with demonstrable positive benefits for the quality of teaching and learning.

The vital role that the quality of teaching and leadership plays in ensuring successful learning experiences is self-explanatory, widely accepted and exemplified by the following quote:

“These days, of course, it is widely accepted that second to the quality of teaching itself, the single thing that makes the biggest difference to outcomes for pupils is leadership” (Mead 2018)

EAS provides a range of services designed to improve the quality of teaching and leadership in schools across the region. This support covers the various tiers of professionals – leaders, teachers and learning support staff – who collectively are charged with ‘ensuring successful learning experiences’.

In this report - for the purposes of presentation - support provided to the various tiers are covered as discrete elements of the overall support package. However, for example, as illustrated below improvements in leadership can have a very positive impact on the quality of teaching within a school and the various support packages are complementary rather than discrete.

It would not be appropriate, within a VfM report, to provide a detailed description of the entire range of support provided. Some examples will be described here to provide an insight into the way support needs are determined and services delivered to meet those needs.

Leadership Support:

The pressing need to improve leadership in schools across the region is evident when considering inspection reports' findings on leadership for the region compared to the national picture outlined in the Estyn annual report of 2018/19. The national report states that:

- Leadership is good or excellent in around three-quarters of primary schools and in around half of secondary schools.
- In weaker secondary schools, the role of middle leaders is often underdeveloped. Middle leaders do not have enough opportunities to lead initiatives, to evaluate outcomes or to identify areas for development and plan for improvement.

Whereas:

- Across the EAS, 22% of Estyn recommendations between 2016-2020 were related to the development of aspects of leadership. However, in secondary schools 32 % of all recommendations related to aspects of leadership compared with only 18% of primary schools. In response to the pressing need referred to above, EAS has developed and refined an extensive programme of leadership professional support, based on use of the Professional standards for Leadership, across several tiers including:

- experienced headteachers;
- new and acting headteachers;
- deputy headteachers and assistant headteachers;
- aspiring headteachers; and
- middle leaders;

For *Experienced Headteachers* EAS is delivering a National Academy for Education Leadership (NAEL) endorsed Programmes of Professional Learning designed to identify and develop a growing regional cohort of aspirational leaders, current serving headteachers and experienced headteachers to expand system wide leadership opportunities.

The demographic profile of headteachers across the region reinforces the need for such a programme. In 2018, across the EAS, 20.3% of headteachers were aged 55 or over and could therefore be eligible for early retirement at any point. Consequently, the development of experienced head teachers across the EAS region, to support a self-improving system in the future, is important in developing a sustainable leadership development pathway.

New and Acting Headteachers are leaders who require support and coaching in their early Headship experiences. To meet this need EAS has, in partnership with other regions, developed a NAEL endorsed New and Acting Headteacher development programme, which is part of a national cross regional leadership development professional learning offer.

The development programme has been developed in response to the need to ensure recruitment demands are met by leaders who are qualified and prepared to become Headteachers across the EAS Region and Wales. Therefore, it is important to recruit and retain high quality inspirational leaders across the EAS; who feel supported and developed through the professional learning experiences they engage with.

EAS provides Professional Learning (PL) networks and opportunities, for current serving *deputy headteachers and assistant headteachers* (primary and secondary), special schools and Pupil

Referral Units (PRU), on a regular basis to ensure they are well informed regarding regional and national priorities, support, and best practice. The intention is to identify aspiring leaders across the region, provide bespoke PL and provide opportunities for them to experience leadership within different settings.

In particular, across the region, EAS acknowledges the need to understand the aspirations of leaders at all levels; the need to identify those aspirational leaders across the system and track the support and professional learning opportunities provided to them. There is recognition of the need to develop these leaders to provide strong leadership and improve teaching and learning in schools across the region, particularly those in the secondary sector.

EAS has prepared and delivered, in collaboration with other regions, a high-quality NAEL endorsed PL opportunity for *Aspiring Headteachers* to support them in attaining the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) qualification

In 2020, of the 30 EAS candidates, 24 gained the NPQH. This is a success rate of 80% compared to 74% in 2018/19, 70% in 2017/18 and 82% in 2016/17. The overall national rate was 83%. The total of 24 successful candidates was 5 less than the previous highest figure of 29 attained in 2018/19.

For *Middle Leaders* EAS has been engaged in the review and delivery of an NAEL endorsed Middle Leader Development Programme (MLDP). This programme provides an extensive portfolio of leadership development opportunities (endorsed, as appropriate, by NAEL) that meet the needs of all sectors. The programme is delivered in partnership with higher education institutions, regional consortia and other middle tier organisations.

In summary it is expected that, in relation to leadership across the region, this ongoing investment and development will ultimately provide schools with a sustainable supply of high-quality middle, senior leaders and Headteachers for the future.

Teaching and Learning Support:

One example of the support being provided is the design and implementation of a programme to improve the *quality and consistency of teaching, particularly within the secondary phase*.

The programme is aimed at addressing shortcomings as evidenced from inspection data. This data show that inspection outcomes between 2017-19 for secondary schools across the region resulting in judgements of unsatisfactory, were above the all-Wales average for leadership and management, teaching and learning experiences and standards of achievement. Across the region 7 out of nine secondary schools are in an Estyn statutory category, and all of these schools have a recommendation to develop their approach to teaching and learning.

Historically, EAS has provided support for teaching and learning either through Challenge Adviser co-ordination and brokerage, or through subject adviser support. Whilst this has provided some impact in some areas, there has been less impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

The approach now being adopted builds upon other existing school improvement strategies that EAS is engaging with, to support improvements in teaching and learning:

- the Peer working programmes, being led by Prof Mick Waters (referred to later in this report)
- the leading collaborative learning project with Dr Lyn Sharratt.
- The RADY (Raising Attainment of Disadvantaged Youngsters) project and evidence from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)

The programme is seen as long-term engagement strategy, working over the course of at least two business planning years that has been designed with the aim of ensuring that it:

- provides coherence with existing successful school improvement strategies;
- supports Senior Leadership Teams to engage with all key stakeholders in understanding their current baseline and desired outcome;
- reflects the current education reform agenda;
- Impacts upon the consistency and quality of teaching and learning, reducing within school variation and thus improving outcomes for all learners;
- draws upon learning from the wider educational system within and beyond Wales; and
- builds capacity to support the development of common approaches to pedagogy and a common language of learning.

Since January 2019 the EAS has been exploring different Peer Working Models with Professor Mick Waters through a programme entitled: *'A collaborative leadership approach to school improvement - Action research into effective models for peer working and review.'*

The programme is consistent with the intention across Wales to develop all schools as learning organisations in support of the ongoing curriculum reform. This peer working format is built on the philosophy of school to school collaboration explored through the Schools as Learning Organisations (SLO) model and recognises in particular that, as identified within the 2018 report by the OECD on Developing Schools as Learning Organisations, secondary schools in particular are finding it more challenging to develop as learning organisations.

The programme involves EAS in identifying, supporting and evaluating a range of peer working models for developing effective school leadership and pedagogy to include:

- primary/secondary interface; and
- core and non-core departments within the secondary phase.

These models were chosen to accelerate the culture of collaboration and joint working, with schools working with other schools to secure improvement.

Implementation of the project enabled leaders and practitioners to be able to share and develop practice to improve leadership, teaching and learning within their own contexts, particularly within the secondary phase. This was part of a planned 2-year programme with interim evaluations. The programme was implemented across the region throughout the Spring and early Summer terms 2019.

In June 2019, Professor Waters met with nearly all participant Headteachers to review the programme, and completed an evaluation of impact based on their responses. The overall view of those schools who had participated in the programme was that it had been worthwhile and successful for the majority of schools. The evaluation recommended that '...more differentiation of approach for each model would see more effectiveness', as well as a '...smaller cohort with a more limited range of models over a longer term.'

Within this context, the models of the first year were refined and revised for 2019-2020. The programme reached a point of delivery in March 2020 where many school visits had been completed,

but many were also planned for March-May, in preparation for the completion of the evaluation for Professor Waters' review day on June 22nd 2020. At this point, there was a national school closure, and the programme was placed on hold.

EAS is committed to supporting the national development and regional delivery of pathways for *Learning Support Workers*.

Investing in the teaching assistant population is seen as a priority for the region as this represents 48% of the total EAS school workforce population. The National Mission outlines the need for the entire workforce to have the entitlement for individual development in whatever role they undertake to support school improvement, ultimately improving outcomes for all learners.

The Education Endowment Foundation research 2018 "Making the best use of teaching assistant a report summary" states teaching assistants can be used effectively in 3 main areas including:

- the effective use of teaching assistants in everyday classroom conditions;
- the effective use of teaching assistants in delivering structured interventions; and
- integrated learning work led by teachers and teaching assistants.

The professional learning approach adopted by EAS, designed to make learning support staff more effective in their roles, was determined in partnership with the Cross Regional Teaching Assistant Learning Pathway (TALP) group and supported by Welsh Government. The professional learning programmes are based on experience of design and facilitation of previous Professional Learning opportunities, the National Approach to Professional Learning (NAPL) and learning gained from previous TALP regional delivery which includes views from current regional TALP co-ordinators and current practitioners.

Facilitation of TALP programmes is organised through EAS school to school models in most programmes, using the lead professional learning schools to lead on aspects of professional learning as per the agreed regional professional learning strategy.

A total of 296 participants have provided feedback on the practicing Teaching Assistant programme:

- 41% of participants stated they felt that the training would have a very high impact on their daily practice back in school;
- a further 45% stated that they felt the programme would have a high impact on their daily practice as a teaching assistant;
- 88% agreed or strongly agreed that the content of the training was relevant to them in their role in school.
- 81% agreed or strongly agreed that they have a better understanding of their role as a result of the training.

The evidence-based rationale, for investing heavily in providing an extensive suite of programmes to improve leadership and the quality of teaching and learning, is a clear demonstration of '*doing the right things*'. However, there is also a need to look at the impact that the programmes are having.

In looking at the overall effectiveness of the programmes being delivered it is reasonable to adopt the following success measures:

- In the long term, schools engaged in the programmes would expect to see an improvement in Estyn judgements for the quality of teaching and leadership and a reduction in the number of recommendations relating to leadership and teaching (18 months to 2 years).
- In the longer-term sustained (and sustainable) improvements in teaching and learning should impact on improved outcomes for learners (2/3 years).

- Support levels (categorisation) would reduce over time
- Estyn inspections / visits to schools in statutory categories would highlight improvements in teaching and learning
- Less schools in a statutory category

If one accepts the above success criteria then analysis of the extent to which they are being achieved is a valid indicator of the effectiveness of the programmes. The evidence to date shows that:

- school performance and pupil outcomes are improving although significant problems persist in the secondary sector;
- over the last three years Estyn judgements for the quality of teaching and leadership have shown a significant improvement across the region. The extent of this improvement is illustrated below:

2017

- 50% teaching, 50% leadership good or excellent
- 2% Excellent teaching, 8% Excellent Leadership

2018

- 74% teaching, 66% leadership good or excellent
- 10% Excellent teaching, 10% Excellent Leadership

2019

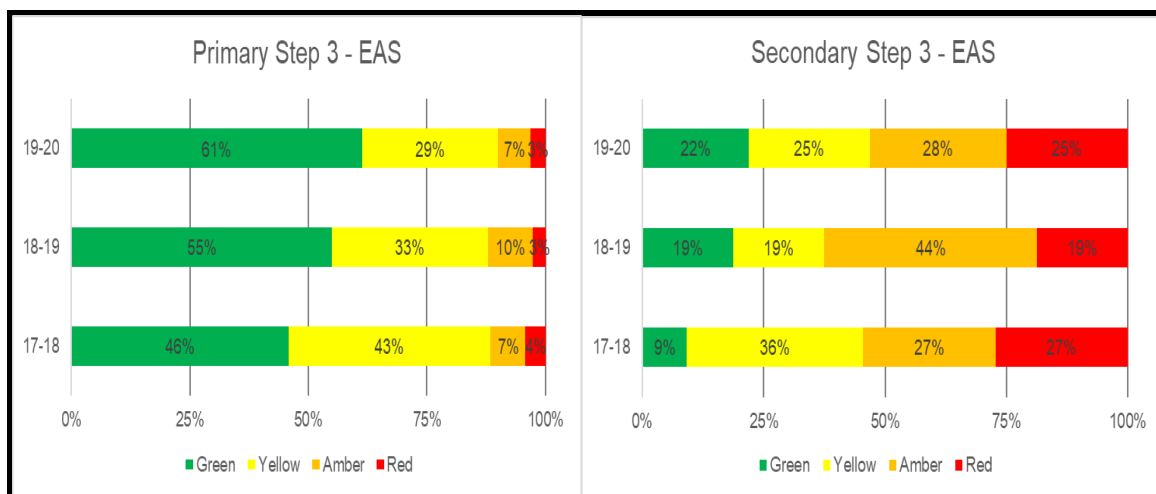
- 78% teaching, 75% leadership good or excellent
- 22% Excellent teaching, 28% Excellent Leadership

2020

- NB only 4 inspections taken place this year due to COVID-19

The aim now is to continue to improve Estyn inspection outcomes over the next three year by increasing the numbers of good and excellent leadership and teaching judgements and reducing the number of recommendations linked to leadership and teaching. For the period 2016 -2020 leadership related recommendations accounted for 22% of all recommendations. However, once again there was a significant difference between the primary and secondary sectors with the figure being 18% for primary schools and 32% for secondary schools; emphasising the problems associated with leadership in secondary schools across the region.

- Categorisation outcome data over the last three years (see graphs below) provides evidence of improved teaching and leadership in schools across the region, including a significant increase in excellent practice. However, once again primary schools show a stronger improvement picture than secondary schools.



Sustainability – spending for the long term. An extensive programme of Human Resource support allied to a comprehensive programme of development support is in place to ensure the attraction and retention of high calibre professionals across the region.

Attracting and retaining high performing professionals both within schools and EAS itself is central to ensuring sustainability both in relation to the quality of service provision and the ability to make best use of that provision to ensure continuous improvement in outcomes.

Most people would argue that attraction and retention, to promote sustainability, is heavily reliant upon:

- effective recruitment;
- providing development support;
- providing development opportunities; and
- facilitating progression;

EAS has done much over the last few years to facilitate this process, both through the comprehensive programme of development support referred to earlier and through the provision of extensive Human Resource (HR) support. As noted in previous reports the development of the Specialist HR service enables economies of scale to be achieved across the region and encourages a common approach, where possible, to the implementation of key policies and practices. The development of a range of common regional policies and guidance documents means that all school’s within the region are being recommended the same processes, reducing variability across the region in the way leadership recruitment, capability processes and performance management processes are undertaken and teacher’s pay is implemented.

The regional professional learning programmes, delivered by the Specialist HR Service, enable school leadership to access sessions that support the development of people management skills, while delivering a common message on these processes across the region.

The existence of the Specialist HR Service has encouraged greater collaborative working between Local Authority HR teams on the production of key policies and approaches. Opportunities for sharing best practice are provided regularly through half termly meetings and an increase in communication and collaborative approaches to matters has been seen over the past 12 months.

Having the Specialist HR service in a central role in the EAS has proved effective in providing clarity on the roles and responsibilities of the EAS and the Local Authorities in many processes. This has included the Headteacher recruitment process and more recently, the process for convening statutory committees for HR processes. The Specialist HR service provides a direct link for discussion between EAS teams and Local Authority HR teams, enabling messages of concern to be relayed and options to address issues to be discussed more easily.

The work undertaken by the Specialist HR service to support the ongoing development of a high- quality education profession can be summarised as:

- providing specific, high level HR support for EAS staff dealing with HR issues that arise out of the “support and challenge” role to schools being undertaken by Challenge Advisers;
- developing guidance and professional learning around people management for both school leaders and governing bodies, in collaboration with Local Authority HR, that supports both the recruitment and development of effective leaders in schools across the region;
- providing this guidance and professional learning to school leaders to enable them to effectively support and challenge their staff, build the capacity of the school-based workforce, to contribute to raising standards; and
- working collaboratively with South East Wales Consortium HR to enable a consistent approach to people management matters that impact upon school improvement.

While, for the purposes of structuring this report, the programmes of professional development and HR support are treated separately, the delivery reality is one of complementarity as the following examples demonstrate.

Effective Recruitment:

Leadership development programmes, however well designed and delivered, need to be complemented by effective recruitment if the potential benefits are to be fully realised. To facilitate effective recruitment EAS entered into a consultative process to develop new exemplar job descriptions that incorporate the requirements of the new Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership introduced in Sept 2018. Views on the content of the job descriptions were also sought from Dr Andrew James Davies of Aberystwyth University, who has published research papers on the recruitment and retention of Headteachers.

Following the development of the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher job descriptions it became apparent through discussions with stakeholders, that there was demand from schools to expand the bank of standard recommended job descriptions and EAS developed these for both Assistant Headteacher and Classroom Teacher roles. These were agreed by all Local Authority Education Directors and are now widely used across the region.

In addition to the development of exemplar job descriptions EAS works closely with the Local Authorities to provide significant support to school governing bodies in the recruitment process for appointing Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers. This support includes the introduction of new assessments methods, commonly used for leadership recruitment in other industries. These methods allow governing bodies to fully assess the skills, experience, qualities and potential of candidates for Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher positions. Recruiting the right person for the school is crucial so ensuring a governing body has a range of complimentary options for selection, that test all the requirements for the post and also the fit for the school, is essential.

Providing development support:

Discussions with school leadership members over a period of time revealed that many felt they were not prepared for the people management element of the role, as the training provided in preparing them for the role of a Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher did not previously include this element. Specialist HR has worked with the Professional Learning team to contribute towards delivery of the milestone programmes by designing and delivering HR related content, primarily focussed on managing change and holding challenging conversations. The aim is to provide school leaders with more confidence in implementing effective performance management measures to address performance issues early to support school improvement. Discussions have also been held around contributing to sessions relating to wellbeing and resilience. To date, delivery has included:

- design and delivery of a general People Management session for the Aspiring Headteacher's programme;
- design and delivery of a Making Challenging Conversations a Success session as part of the Senior Leaders milestone programme;
- design of a Managing People through Change session to be delivered as part of the national New and Acting Headteachers programme; and
- assisting the Professional Learning EAS lead for the national Experienced Headteacher programme to identify suitable external organisations to administer 360 feedback processes and sessions as part of the programme.

Conclusion:

As stated in the introduction to this report, VfM is a measure of the extent to which an organisation, in this case EAS, is achieving its intended outcomes and objectives from the resources at its disposal. Separate reference to outcomes and objectives should not be interpreted as implying that they are in any sense divorced from one another. On the contrary, intended outcomes will only be achieved if the organisation's objectives represent the necessary and sufficient constituent activity that best facilitates achievement of those outcomes.

For EAS, objectives around attracting, developing and retaining a high-quality workforce, both within the organisation and across the schools in the region, represent a coherent set of enablers to achieve intended outcomes in terms of school performance and pupil attainment. This alignment results in objectives that are mutually reinforcing and facilitate complementary provision in terms of the delivery of support programmes.

The complementary delivery of programmes that underpin objectives aligned to intended outcomes, and are closely aligned to National Objectives to help prepare schools to meet the challenges of curriculum and evaluation reform, provides evidence that EAS is *'doing the right things'*. Survey returns from recipient schools and participating individuals that show a high level of satisfaction with services being delivered provide evidence that EAS is *'doing the right things well'*. Improvements in outcomes provide evidence of *'impact'* and the good use being made of externally commissioned research to evaluate current approaches and improve future provision provide evidence of *'sustainable improvement'*.

In summary EAS is providing a service that is:

- doing the right things;
- doing them well;

- having an impact; and
- sustainable

All of which support the overall conclusion that EAS continues to provide good VfM in terms of the services it provides to schools across the region.

Cabinet, Council and Individual Cabinet Member Decisions (ICMD) Forward Plan

Monmouthshire County Council is required to publish a forward plan of all key decisions to be taken. Council and Cabinet items will only be considered for decision if they have been included on the planner no later than the month preceding the meeting, unless the item is considered urgent.

Committee / Decision Maker	Meeting date / Decision due	Subject	Purpose	Author	Date item added to the planner	Date item originally scheduled for decision
Council	01/03/22	LDP for Adoption	Check Date	Mark Hand	23/01/20	
Cabinet	02/06/21	Budget Monitoring report - month 12 (period3) - outturn	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the forecast outturn position of the Authority at end of month reporting for 2020/21 financial year	Peter Davies/Jon Davies	02/04/20	
Council	01/06/21	Final Deposit Plan for submission to WG	Check Date	Mark Hand	23/01/20	
Cabinet	14/04/21	Welsh Church Fund Working Group meeting	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 9 held on 4th March 2021	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
Council	04/03/21	Council Tax Setting		Ruth Donovan	02/04/20	
Cabinet	03/02/21	Welsh Church Fund Working Group meeting	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 8 held on 14th January 2021	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
Council	14/01/21	Deposit Plan	Endorsement of Deposit Plan	Mark Hand	23/01/20	
Council	14/01/21	Council Tax Reduction Scheme		Ruth Donovan	07/04/20	

Cabinet	16/12/20	Welsh Church Fund Working Group meeting	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 7 held on 3rd December 2020	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
IMCD	09/12/20	Council Tax base and associated matters	To agree the Council Tax Base figure for submission to the Welsh Government, together with the collection rate to be applied for 2021/22 and to make other necessary related statutory decisions	Ruth Donovan	02/04/20	
Cabinet	02/12/20	Budget Monitoring Report - month 7 (period 2)	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the forecast outturn position of the Authority at end of month reporting for 2020/21 financial year.	Peter Davies/Jon Davies	02/04/20	
Cabinet	04/11/20	Local Housing Market Assessment Update		Mark Hand	04/11/20	
Cabinet	04/11/20	Welsh Church Fund working group	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting x held on x x 2020	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
Cabinet	07/10/20	Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2020		Mark Hand	23/06/20	
Cabinet	07/10/20	Welsh Church Fund Working Group	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting x held on x x 2020	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
ICMD	23/09/20	Housing Register Review		Mark Hand	23/06/20	
Council	10/09/20	MCC Audited Accounts (formal approval)	To notify Council of completed Audit process and resultant accounts - To go to Audit Committee	Peter Davies/Jon Davies	02/04/20	
Council	10/09/20	ISA 260 report - MCC Accounts - attachment above		Peter Davies/Jon Davies	02/04/20	

Cabinet	02/09/20	Youth Service		Ian Saunders	15/06/20	
Cabinet	29/07/20	Financial Sustainability Report		Jonathan S Davies	12/06/20	
Cabinet	29/07/20	Longterm Homelessness Solutions		Mark Hand	15/06/20	
Council	16/07/20	Climate Emergency Update		Hazel Clatworthy	10/06/20	
Council	16/07/20	CEx Report		Matt Phillips	18/06/20	
Council	16/07/20	Cabinet decision re Gilwern		Matt Phillips	27/05/20	
Cabinet	15/07/20	Welsh Church Fund Working Group meeting	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 1 held on 30th June 2020	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
Cabinet	15/07/20	Outdoor Education - Service Update		Marie Bartlett	09/07/20	
Cabinet	15/07/20	Public Toilets				
Cabinet	15/07/20	5G Rural test bed		Cath Fallon/Frances O'Brien		

Cabinet	01/07/20	COVID-19 Evaluation of Recovery Phase and Establishing Aims for Response Stage			17/06/20	
Cabinet	01/07/20	Home to School Transport Policy	Deferred		20/05/20	
Cabinet	01/07/20	Household Waste Recycling Centres	Deferred		20/05/20	
Cabinet	17/06/20	Revenue and Capital Monitoring Outturn	To provide Members with information on the outturn position of the Authority for the financial year	Peter Davies/Jon Davies	02/02/20	
Cabinet	17/06/20	LDP Strategy		Mark Hand	20/05/20	
Council	04/06/20	Licensing Act Policy		Linda O'Gorman		
Council	04/06/20	Estyn Report		Will Mclean		
Council	04/06/20	Safeguarding Covid19 Position Statement		Julie Boothroyd		
Council	04/06/20	Chief Officer, CYP Annual Report'		Will Mclean	11/03/20	
Council	04/06/20	Refit Programme		Ian Hoccom	28/02/20	

Cabinet	27/05/20	Safeguarding		Julie Boothroyd		
Cabinet	27/05/20	Active Travel and Town Centres		Paul Sullivan		
Council	14/05/20	LDP Preferred Strategy	Endorsement of final preferred strategy	Mark Hand	19/09/19	
Council	14/05/20	Constitution Review		Matt Phillips	14/08/19	
Cabinet	06/05/20	Welsh Church Fund Working Group	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 1 held on 2nd April 2020	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
ICMD	08/04/20	GUARANTEED INTERVIEWS FOR CARE LEAVERS		Gareth James	23/03/20	
ICMD	08/04/20	Momouthshire Registration Service Collaborative Working Agreement		Jennifer Walton	23/03/20	
Cabinet	01/04/20	Staffing re-alignment: Community Hubs and Contact Centre		Matt Gatehouse	11/03/20	
Cabinet	01/04/20	EAS Business Plan		Will Mclean	04/03/20	
Cabinet	01/04/20	Guaranteed Interview Scheme for Care Leavers		Gareth James	28/02/20	

ICMD	25/03/20	Non Domestic Rates: High Street and Retail Rate Relief 2020/21	for approval of the adoption of a High Street and Retail Rate Relief Scheme for 2020/21, in accordance with Welsh Government guidance.	Ruth Donovan	12/02/20	
ICMD	25/03/20	Contract Extension		Tracey Harry	14/02/20	
Council	05/03/20	Pay Policy		Sally Thomas	23/01/20	
Council	05/03/20	Annual Safeguarding Report		Julie Boothroyd	06/02/20	
Council	05/03/20	Strategic Equality Plan		Alan Burkitt	26/09/19	
Council	05/03/20	LDP Preferred Strategy	Endorsement to consult on Preferred Strategy	Mark Hand	23/01/20	
Council	05/03/20	Council Tax Resolution	To set budget and Council Tax	Ruth Donovan	18/04/19	
Council	05/03/20	Mid Term Review of the Corporate Plan		Matt Gatehouse		
Cabinet	04/03/20	Investment Committee		Peter Davies	13/02/20	
ICMD	26/02/20	CHARGING APPLICANTS FOR THE MONITORING OF SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS		Phil Thomas	06/02/20	

ICMD	26/02/20	Non Domestic Rates - Application for Hardship Relief		Ruth Donovan	14/01/20	
Cabinet	19/02/20	2020/21 Education and Welsh Church Trust Funds Investment and Fund Strategies	The purpose of this report is to present to Cabinet for approval the 2020/21 Investment and Fund Strategy for Trust Funds for which the Authority acts as sole or custodian trustee for adoption and to approve the 2019/20 grant allocation to Local Authority beneficiaries of the Welsh Church Fund.	Dave Jarrett	18/04/19	
Cabinet	19/02/20	Mid Term Review of the Corporate Plan		Matt Gatehouse		
Cabinet	19/02/20	Welsh Church Fund Working Group	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2019/20, meeting 7 held on 5th December 2019	Dave Jarrett	18/04/19	
Cabinet	19/02/20	Consideration of Final Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals		Peter Davies	03/10/19	
Cabinet	19/02/20	Proposal to change the school funding formula.		Nikki Wellington		
Cabinet	19/02/20	Strategic Review of Outdoor Education		Marie Bartlett	18/10/20	
Cabinet	19/02/20	Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) review/ Policy Statement - Results of statutory consultation and proposed Final Plan	To seek approval of the Review of the ROWIP and associated policies	Matthew Lewis	18/07/19	
ICMD	29/01/20	Various roads, county wide Amendment No. 1 of consolidation order 2019 (part 2)		Paul Keeble	13/01/20	

Council	16/01/20	Council Tax Reduction Scheme		Ruth Donovan	18/04/19	
Council	16/01/20	Mid Term Review of the Corporate Plan		Peter Davies	26/09/19	
Council	16/01/20	Local Development Plan Preferred Strategy		Mark Hand	06/09/19	
Council	16/01/20	Constitution Review		Matt Phillips	14/08/19	
Council	16/01/20	Safeguarding - Annual Report to Council		Jane Rodgers	20/06/19	
Council	16/01/20	Proposed Development Company		Deb Hill-Howells	16/09/19	
ICMD	15/01/20	Archaeology Planning Advice	Adoption post-guidance	Mark Hand	19/09/19	Deferred
ICMD	15/01/20	SPG S106 guidance note	To clarify how S106 contributions are calculated	Mark Hand	01/05/19	Deferred
Cabinet	08/01/20	Ethical Employment code of practice - Approval Paper Draft		Scott James	08/11/19	
Cabinet	08/01/20	Budget Monitoring report - month 7 (period 2)	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the forecast outturn position of the Authority at end of month reporting for 2019/20 financial year.	Mark Howcroft	18/04/19	

Cabinet	08/01/20	Redundancy implications within MonLife		Marie Bartlett	07/11/20	
Cabinet	08/01/20	Homelessness Report		Deb Hill-Howells	07/11/19	
Cabinet	08/01/20	Primary School Places Reiview in Caldicot		Matthew Jones	02/10/19	

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Monmouthshire Select Committee Minutes

Meeting of Children and Young People Select Committee held at The Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Tuesday, 17th March, 2020 at 10.00 am

Councillors Present

County Councillor T.Thomas (Chairman)
County Councillors: L.Brown, M. Powell and J.Watkins

Officers in Attendance

Will McLean, Chief Officer for Children and Young People
Sharon Randall-Smith, Head of Achievement and Attainment
Matthew Gatehouse, Head of Policy and Governance

APOLOGIES: County Councillors M.Groucutt, L.Jones, D. Jones, M.Lane, P. Strong NEU, Thomas and Harris

1. Declarations of Interest.

Councillor Powell declared an interest as a Governor at King Henry VIII.

2. Public Open Forum.

No members of the public were present.

3. Chief Officer for Education Annual Report - To scrutinise the performance of the service over the previous year and to consider the strategic direction for 2020-2021 (to follow).

The Chief Officer presented his report. The purpose of the report is to inform the council of the education system's progress in the last 12 months. In 19/20 significant milestones were reached. Many schools are on a continuous and secured improvement process. Estyn outcomes are improving – 'Good' is the most common outcome, but there are too few 'Excellent' outcomes. There has been an emergence of significant grant funding through Welsh Government. Attendance is very strong, but exclusions is an area of concern. There is an increase in the days lost per pupil at primary level. At Secondary, there is a significant increase in episodes of fixed-term exclusions and days lost in total. Richard Austin, Principal Officer for Inclusion, will come in to give further detail and explanations of what is driving them. Note that individual schools are not named in the data/graphs.

Challenge:

Since the work has taken place with Cluster primary schools, are Key Stage 3 pupils better off with the change from primary to secondary – has the gap lessened?

Yes, the Councillor is referring to the work between King Henry VIII and its cluster of schools. We are seeing a concerted effort across that learning continuum in establishing the right types of skills very early in the primary schools that then allow a much smoother transition, and a continued rate of progress through secondary school. We want children to be doing really well up to the end of Key Stage 2 and transition well – it's important not to underestimate how huge the transition can be from primary to secondary, especially emotionally. There is a good example with regard to maths in King Henry and its cluster: there were children in one of our primary schools who were achieving a level 6 in maths at the end of primary, but the teacher didn't feel confident in declaring that they were performing at that level in a sustained fashion – but having the maths expertise from the secondary school allowed them to do that. Once that is then modelled into the next level of their education, we can begin to raise expectations i.e. if a child is working at Level 6 at the end of primary, you can expect that they will be A/A when they come to GCSEs.*

Are schools which are doing well being taken as models for how to achieve higher than expected standards elsewhere?

There is a huge amount of work on this across the region. EAS has established 'Leading Network Schools': they advise and support other schools, there are visits to see how they work (including those outside the county). The new approach to the curriculum is predicated on that, with significant success. Many of our schools are becoming leading network schools, and are now reaching out to help others.

Is there more liaison with Gwent schools, or is it generally for SE Wales? Where's the focus?

The focus is very much on the work in SE Wales. In education terms, 'SE Wales' is the 5 Gwent authorities. They own the EAS, which is our school improvement, so that's the vehicle for identification and arrangement for many of those support agencies which are brokered between schools. There are times when we look outside the region; for instance, the Executive Headteacher at Caldicot is also the Executive Headteacher at The Bishop of Llandaff in Cardiff. The Challenge Advisor in Chepstow School is also the Headteacher at Cardiff High School, which is a very high-performing school. We are drawing in a plethora of talents to support all of our schools. Secondary at EAS is not our strength currently, and there are schools that find themselves in challenging situations – therefore we sometimes have to look outside the region to find that support. But for primary, it's almost entirely geared within the EAS footprint.

Is there a lot of liaison between EAS and the central consortium covering the Cardiff area?

Yes, the 4 managing directors of the regional consortia area meet regularly. Since Christmas, I and the Managing Director of the EAS gave evidence in the Senedd, alongside the Managing Director and Lead Director of Central South. As Directors of Education we meet as 22, and as 5 in SE Wales as well.

The report mentions improving the rates of progress for ALN, in particular, in the next period.

Can you outline how you intend to do that?

One of the interesting things as we prepared and presented through our Estyn inspection (which will be published on 21st April), was that our learners who are in our SNRBs make good progress. We want to maximise the values that our SNRBs as a system within Monmouthshire can bring to bear on the wider system as well. We are continuing to discuss regional approaches to the very high tier needs that exist within our population, and we will continue to do that in collaboration, for all of our children. The ALN piece, as we transition into the new

legislation, is about understanding the impact of that and making sure that our schools are prepared for that. It would also be a good opportunity for this committee to have a presentation from the Regional Lead on preparedness for the new legislation, because there will be a significant change for parents: we've seen a huge increase in parents requesting statements. The whole landscape of ALN is changing very significantly. We want to make sure our whole range of ALN learners make that progress. We need to make sure we're meeting the neurodevelopmental need which we've identified.

What is the latest regarding Coronavirus?

There is a tele-conference tomorrow for all 22 Directors about Coronavirus. The first consideration had been children returning from foreign travel, following Public Health Wales advice. We met all Headteachers last Tuesday to discuss business continuity and shared contingency plans amongst all schools. There's been escalation just since yesterday, so we're continuing to support schools, and discuss ratios of teachers to children. Pregnant women self-isolating will be a challenge for some schools. There's been a spike in children and staff absences. The decision to close schools will be led by Welsh government. Provision for FSMs is being discussed with counterparts in Gwent. The Joint Council for Qualifications will make a decision around exams. Google Classroom and Hwb are being supported for learning from home. The key concerns for us are around the ratios, and when it's safe to have children in school, vulnerable learners, exams, and special schools.

How is learning for primary children being ensured? Home learning seems to make more sense for secondary children.

Hwb is a very good resource for primary children, and we're continuing to work with all of our schools to make sure that that work is accessible to everybody. Clearly, there is a concern that vulnerable learners/FSM need to have access to the necessary kit for that learning. That's one of the things that will be discussed further today, and as the situation proceeds.

What support is being put in for lost pay for supply teachers?

The Chief Officer doesn't have that information.

Chair's Conclusion:

Members need to scrutinise this report further and think of any other points that will add value before it goes to council. We need to commend schools for attendance, and those which are high performing. It is a concern that there are schools with very low numbers of FSM which are not hitting that level. Another area of concern is finance, which is a concern for people in our wards, as well as the matter of exclusions. Exclusion needs to be near the top of the agenda. We will welcome Richard Austin coming in.

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4. Scrutiny of the performance report on School Development Outcomes (to follow).

The Officer presented the report on the quality of school improvement processes. The last few years has seen an increasing and improving trend in our performance in a number of areas, such as national categorisation (more schools classed as 'Green', none as 'Red') and in the outcome of Estyn inspections, with more schools achieving 'Good', and a few as 'Excellent'. But we expect to see more. In order to secure this, we are looking at a wider range of measures and work that the schools do, in order to support that move towards further improvement. That is the basis of the report.

Challenge:

Why is there no comparison with SE Wales on the report for the year 19/20?

The data regionally for 19/20 is not available, but when it does become available we will update the report. But we wanted to share our own schools' progress in this period as soon as we possibly could.

How can it be ensured that self-evaluations are of the same standard?

The quality of the school development planning and self-evaluation processes: there is no requirement now for a school to write a self-evaluation report, but it's the quality of the process that the schools have to give them accurate judgements are evaluated through the Challenge Advice visits. Therefore, over the year, Challenge Advisors will work with the school to moderate the work that they do. For example, if there's a learning walk, the Challenge Advisor may well be involved in that. They may well look at the moderation of Headteachers or Senior Leaders' judgements on teachers' observations, but they will compare those with book scrutinise, and listening to learners. The judgement overall, therefore, is that of the Challenge Advisor based on the very rich evidence-base provided by the schools.

Taking that into account, if a school self-evaluated as 'Good' but EAS deemed it to be 'Adequate', who would be the external moderator of the standard levels?

The National Categorisation Process is used as a summary – a point in time – of where the school is. The information that's collected by the Challenge Advisor feeds into that report, and the information from the National Categorisation report will reflect the quality of self-evaluation processes that we've used here. So it has been through a process itself. Estyn will come to a school and look at it in a snapshot of time, and not necessarily focus on everything in this current model. There is a degree of assurance from our point of view that the judgements we're looking at here are made by the Challenge Advisor based on what they've seen and worked on within the school, and that will then be moderated within EAS through their discussions with their principal Challenge Advisor in order to make sure there's consistency within that team as well.

What things will be put in place to help schools to drive towards excellence?

Last year a regional protocol was initiated for looking at school development planning. Schools were invited to workshop sessions, which were very well attended by Monmouthshire schools. School development plan surgeries were attended, with secondary schools being offered advice and particular support being identified. As a result, there was additional Challenge Advisor support. In the Autumn term, we met formally with secondary schools, and reviewed the plans again, if any further work was needed. We scrutinised the 'schools causing concern' plans. The correlation between self-evaluation processes and their plans has been discussed and modified as a result of their work with Challenge Advisors.

It seems that secondary schools aren't doing as well as primary. Could this be shown in more detail in the graphs? As it stands, do the primary figures raise the overall level, glossing over the true picture at secondary level?

Yes, there are only 4 secondary schools in Monmouthshire, and the regional picture will have a lot more. The schools are all adequate or better now, the plans for all the schools are fit for purpose and meet statutory requirements. We can break the figures down further for the future.

Chair's Conclusion:

It's good that there are no schools in red. It's concerning that only one secondary is in green. Secondary schools are large organisations; it seems harder to move them. The Officer presented the report on the quality of school improvement processes. The last few years has seen an increasing and improving trend in our performance in a number of areas, such as national categorisation (more schools classed as 'Green', none as 'Red') and in the outcome of Estyn inspections, with more schools achieving 'Good', and a few as 'Excellent'. But we expect to see more. In order to secure this, we are looking at a wider range of measures and work that the schools do, in order to support that move towards further improvement. That is the basis of the report.

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Advice visits. Therefore, over the year, Challenge Advisors will work with the school to moderate the work that they do. For example, if there's a learning walk, the Challenge Advisor may well be involved in that. They may well look at the moderation of Headteachers or Senior Leaders' judgements on teachers' observations, but they will compare those with book scrutinise, and listening to learners. The judgement overall, therefore, is that of the Challenge Advisor based on the very rich evidence-base provided by the schools.

Taking that into account, if a school self-evaluated as 'Good' but EAS deemed it to be 'Adequate', who would be the external moderator of the standard levels?

The National Categorisation Process is used as a summary – a point in time – of where the school is. The information that's collected by the Challenge Advisor feeds into that report, and the information from the National Categorisation report will reflect the quality of self-evaluation processes that we've used here. So it has been through a process itself. Estyn will come to a school and look at it in a snapshot of time, and not necessarily focus on everything in this current model. There is a degree of assurance from our point of view that the judgements we're looking at here are made by the Challenge Advisor based on what they've seen and worked on within the school, and that will then be moderated within EAS through their discussions with their principal Challenge Advisor in order to make sure there's consistency within that team as well.

What things will be put in place to help schools to drive towards excellence?

Last year a regional protocol was initiated for looking at school development planning. Schools were invited to workshop sessions, which were very well attended by Monmouthshire schools. School development plan surgeries were attended, with secondary schools being offered advice and particular support being identified. As a result, there was additional Challenge Advisor support. In the Autumn term, we met formally with secondary schools, and reviewed the plans again, if any further work was needed. We scrutinised the 'schools causing concern' plans. The correlation between self-evaluation processes and their plans has been discussed and modified as a result of their work with Challenge Advisors.

It seems that secondary schools aren't doing as well as primary. Could this be shown in more detail in the graphs? As it stands, do the primary figures raise the overall level, glossing over the true picture at secondary level?

Yes, there are only 4 secondary schools in Monmouthshire, and the regional picture will have a lot more. The schools are all adequate or better now, the plans for all the schools are fit for purpose and meet statutory requirements. We can break the figures down further for the future.

Chair's Conclusion:

It's good that there are no schools in red. It's concerning that only one secondary is in green. Secondary schools are large organisations; it seems harder to move them due to the volume of staff. It seems easier to move primary schools as they have fewer staff. But secondary is so important given the exams. We would all like an improvement to the secondary schools that have slipped.

due to the volume of staff. It seems easier to move primary schools as they have fewer staff. But secondary is so important given the exams. We would all like an improvement to the secondary schools that have slipped.

5. To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 28th January 2020 were confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

6. Children and Young People Select Committee Forward Work Plan.

Richard Austin will be invited to discuss exclusions. The Chair notes it is important in the future to have more input from schools in this committee. There is a concern about the loss of pupils to schools outside Monmouthshire – Chepstow to Wyedean and Abergavenny to Crickhowell, for example. We would want to retain as many primary pupils as possible at secondary level. Cluster working helps with this, though. For example, there will be more Goytre children in secondary schools from September due to the Cluster working.

For the ALN update in April, Councillor Brown has requested an update on the pupils from Mounton House regarding their alternative learning arrangements. For 'Progress on Curriculum reform', it would be helpful to ask pilot schools to come to committee. Regarding the Welsh medium, the Chair notes that the new school is something the public has asked about, but that might have to be pushed back as an agenda item given current events.

7. Council and Cabinet Work Plan.

Nothing was discussed.

8. Next Meeting: Tuesday 28th April 2020 at 10.00am.

The next meeting is on Tuesday 28th April 2020, pending any changes in light of the coronavirus.

Though there was a constitutional amendment for members' remote attendance at meetings, there are still some technological limitations to be overcome. There is some money in the budget available for improvements. This is being looked at, especially in light of Coronavirus and its possible implications for attendance.

The meeting ended at **11.55 am**