



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

# Supporting curriculum design and delivery: How well are regional consortia and local authorities supporting schools to prepare for the Curriculum for Wales and improve teaching?

The report was commissioned to: evaluate the professional learning offer provided by regional consortia to schools, with particular focus on curriculum, and what impact it has had on improving teaching and learning.

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## Summary of main findings

Estyn identified a range of positive practice and evidence in school improvement services in supporting schools to prepare for reform. This included demonstrating the curriculum design process and stages of curriculum development; developing stronger approaches to supporting collaboration between primary and secondary schools and generally targeting support for schools causing concern. School Improvement Services were also considered to have built stronger relationships with schools during the pandemic and had increased the use of school-to-school support.

Estyn also considered that the support to improve the quality of teaching and learning is too variable and that school improvement services did not have a clear enough understanding of the quality of teaching and learning. In some cases, it was considered that there was insufficient support for schools and practitioners to develop their subject specific skills. Estyn also considered that

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school-to-school support was not monitored consistently; that issues in leadership and teaching were not identified quickly enough and the impact of professional learning and support was not evaluated well enough at present.

## Recommendations 1 to 4

The regional consortia and local authorities should:

1. improve the quality and impact of the support for leaders to improve teaching and learning in their schools
2. improve the support across all subject disciplines
3. provide practical professional learning opportunities that support leaders and teachers to understand better how they can design and deliver their curriculum
4. improve evaluation processes so leaders and officers monitor the impact of support for curriculum reform and teaching

## Welsh Government response

Having regard to these recommendations for school improvement services, we are working to:

- refresh the National Approach to Professional Learning to take greater account of a national entitlement to professional learning, co-constructing this with the middle tier and schools and setting out our expectations in September
- work with the school improvement services and Estyn on a clearer model for the capturing and sharing of impact information and how this feeds into service improvement
- deliver the early career support package that will enable a focus on subject disciplines and culminate in funding support for teachers seeking to undertake Masters level work
- bring experts in key areas into partnership with the regions to develop professional learning in response to new curriculum requirements e.g. the

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Diversity and Anti-racism Professional Learning (DARPL) Project led by the BAMEed (Wales) Network at Cardiff Metropolitan University will develop a national model for professional learning to support the shift from non-racist to anti-racist approaches

- build on the successful transition to a scaled up National Professional Enquiry Project (NPEP) involving almost 300 schools, with an external evaluation of NPEP reporting next term to support the move to a more sustainable, national approach

## Recommendation 5

The Welsh Government should:

5. consider how lessons learnt from the pioneer schools programme can influence future national projects

### Welsh Government response: accept

Learning from the pioneer process is absolutely critical. The ways of working outlined in the Curriculum Implementation Plan were drawn directly from the learning of the pioneer process and what worked well. As future national projects are established, we will ensure that these principles are embedded within these.

In particular, the National Network signals that genuine co-construction and practitioner ownership is at the heart of our efforts to support curriculum implementation. We are working with practitioners and partners to ensure the National Network reflects these principles and drives change, informing government policy and future refinement of the curriculum.

Similarly, in February, the Minister for Education and Welsh Language launched Camau I'r Dyfodol. Building on the principles of the pioneer model and delivered through the National Network, all schools will have the opportunity to build on their current experience of learning progression, and contribute to a shared,

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national understanding of what's important. This will bring together the expertise and experience of practitioners and education partners to co-develop a shared understanding of progression for all learners that is meaningful, manageable, and sustainable.

## Recommendation 6

The Welsh Government should:

6. clarify and streamline grant terms and conditions for professional learning and developing curriculum to enable the regional consortia better to evaluate their work

### Welsh Government response: accept

Arrangements have been put in place, with the support of regional consortia and local authorities, for grant arrangements from 1 April 2022 to better align and clarify Curriculum for Wales implementation support requirements.

## Recommendation 7

The Welsh Government should:

7. Consider approaches to enable the regional consortia better to evaluate the impact and outcomes of their work for supporting curriculum and teaching and be held to account for it

### Welsh Government response: accept

We will work with the school improvement services and Estyn on a clearer model for the capturing and sharing of impact information and how this feeds

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into service improvement.

We also plan to publish School Improvement guidance in the summer term, which will make clear that regional consortia joint committees or company boards have primary responsibility for holding their officers to account for the impact and outcomes of their work. Welsh Government will also support this by exploring the impact of school improvement services' work in bi-annual review and challenge meetings.

## Publication details

The full report will be accessible on the Estyn website from the 24<sup>th</sup> March.

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