

Consortia Gwella Ysgolion Rhanbarthol Regional School Improvement Consortia



The Road to Cross Regional Working – May 2018

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Background

The four regional consortia first came together to begin the process of cross regional working in September 2015. It was apparent at this time that collaborative working would provide many benefits for each of our regions, most critically for all learners. However, while we agreed that cross regional working provided a logical way forward, at this stage the infrastructure was not in place to move forward consistently and coherently.

Roll forward two years, and the cross regional outlook was very different. We had built upon the shared objective of joint working and witnessed numerous positive steps forward and significant successes, not least the progression of the joint project Securing Teacher Assessment Programme (STAP), National Categorisation and the collapsing of the Education Improvement Grant (EIG) into a single grant. Alongside this progress, we made positive strides forward in overcoming the practical obstacles to cross regional working, such as recruiting a cross regional project manager and establishing cross regional working groups associated with work streams in key areas.

Where are we now?

Critically, clarity of purpose exists in the form of a well-defined joint plan. The recommendation made in the 2016 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report that “regional consortia should coordinate and collaborate among themselves, enhancing consistency in the quality of services” has been realised. The scale of the task is understood and planned. As the consortia leads we each sponsor specific projects within the joint plan and regularly share information about project progress as well as activity in other consortia areas with a view to eliminating duplication and providing consistent, high quality provision across Wales.

Cross regional working is ambitious, but our aims are clear. We will ensure a planned and consistent approach that establishes standardised levels of expectation and service. All our learners, regardless of individual need and location, should receive a learning experience that is of the highest standard and has demonstrable impact on their life chances. The cross regional work fundamentally drives and supports this ambition.

Our Regional projects

The joint plan identifies 9 projects:



Project

Project Overview

Project Aims



Evidence shows that excessive workload is impacting on teacher recruitment and retention. Welsh Government have worked alongside Estyn and produced a clear set of do's and do nots to help clarify workload expectations for all teachers across Wales. A national training programme has been developed to support all schools in their journey to reduce workload, by up-skilling teachers to maximise effectiveness and efficiency in giving feedback, whilst creating the best impact for pupils. Through research, school visits, case studies, partnership working and listening to learners, evidence-based examples have been collated to show how schools can develop their

- To develop teachers in school that can use feedback effectively, so that it has the least impact on teacher workload but ensures the most effect on pupil progress.
- To ensure alignment with the Curriculum for Wales and reinforce that good teaching and learning means employing assessment for learning principles and encourages children and young people to take

feedback mechanisms to ensure greatest impact on learners.



Since July 2016, the four regions have been working more collaboratively on the development of professional learning offers for school leaders. In July 2016, this work commenced with the creation of a revised offer for aspiring headteachers at the request of Welsh Government. The new National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) programme was created and has since been revised. The introduction of the Shadow Board for the National Academy for Educational Leadership (NAEL) has accelerated this joint working and the regions have responded accordingly with agreement to extend the commonality on a phased approach.

increasing responsibility for their own learning.

- To develop and deliver common provision for aspiring headteachers, headteachers new to post and experienced headteachers across the four regions in a phased approach.
- To procure or develop tools and documents to support the aim.
- To engage with agencies whose work impacts upon the project purpose and feed in new information emerging from these agencies developments e.g. NAEL Endorsement Criteria
- To raise the profile of Wales as a premier location for teachers to live and work and in so doing significantly increase the number and quality of teachers and headteachers applying for jobs in Wales.
- To support the retention of teachers by raising awareness of opportunities for career advancement and movement within Wales.
- Aims to be achieved under the banner of "Discover Teaching" a multi-platform campaign.
- To identify, share and implement excellent school improvement practice across consortia.
- To identify and address shared developmental needs using self-evaluation as a starting point.



Wales currently has difficulty recruiting teachers to available teaching and headteacher roles. This clearly negatively impacts upon learner experience and has far reaching cost implications resulting in a significant barrier to maintaining and improving teaching standards in Wales. Ultimately, for the consortia to achieve their school improvement objectives, it is essential that recruitment and retention issues are addressed to provide a secure foundation for all other initiatives. Failure to do so not only jeopardises the success of other projects but also negatively impacts all steps towards sustained school improvement



Improving standards in schools is the core responsibility of the consortia as the deliverers of school improvement in Wales.



Established to raise the profile of the cross regional projects and the overarching work of the consortia to foster understanding and ensure consistency of message and elimination of duplication of effort. Additionally, the team are tasked with addressing communications issues relating to operational efficiency and delivery of communications needs of all cross regional projects.

- To establish a cross regional communications team.
- To establish, develop and implement effective cross regional communications.
- To raise the profile of cross regional projects and the work of the consortia



The Post-16 Learning project team are responsible for delivering upon the actions assigned to the consortia set out in Welsh Government's A Level Review. In addition, the team are developing a bespoke Post-16 Leadership Programme.

- To establish a cross regional group of nominated Post 16 representatives from each consortium.
- To work collaboratively to identify and implement objectives and deliverables derived from Welsh Government A Level Review and deliver consistently across the four regions.
- To develop a Post-16 Leadership programme.



Proactively and consistently supporting the development and realisation of Welsh Government's Curriculum for Wales agenda.

- To build a better way to learn, achieve excellence together and inspire healthy, enterprising, confident young people.
- As our young people live in a world that is always changing, to build a system that will adapt to ensure young people are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed for now and the future.



The project teams' fundamental mission is to collaboratively audit, co-ordinate and disseminate research, and to provide proactive, focused support to the consortia professional learning programme and Welsh Government Schools as Learning Organisations model dimensions.

- To articulate a clear research strategy, policy and plan.
- To co-ordinate and disseminate consortia research and ensure elimination of duplication.
- To jointly commission and manage high quality



To establish a cross regional programme of professional learning.

- research where clear need is established.
- To ensure maximum benefit to teachers and the consortia.
- To ensure value for money.
- To support and progress the Welsh Government Schools as Learning Organisations model dimensions.
- To engage with and develop partnerships to ensure excellence, integrity and applicability of research.

- To develop and deliver a common provision for teachers and teaching assistants across the four regions in a phased approach.
- To establish professional learning definition, framework and offer.
- Establishing and evidence basis based on practice
- Sustained engagement with other partners across the 3 tiers.

All projects are aligned with a focused project team who are responsible for scoping, shaping and delivering the project.

Future blogs will provide project specific updates, the next will focus on Leadership Development.

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