

Report to	Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	10th June 2021
Lead Member / Officer	Huw Hilditch-Roberts (Lead Member for Education, Children and Young People/ Head of Education and Children Services)
Report author	GwE Core Leads / Geraint Davies (Interim Head of Education)
Title	Implementation of the Donaldson Report ‘Successful Futures – Curriculum for Wales

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. To present a report on how the regional consortium, in partnership with the Local Authority, are supporting schools in the implementation of the New Curriculum for Wales following the publication of the Donaldson Report ‘Successful Futures’

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. To provide assurances that all efforts are being made to support schools in the implementation of the New Curriculum and to allow committee members an opportunity to consider and monitor the plan to implement the review’s findings.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. Scrutiny Members are invited to discuss the details of this report and to identify any aspects of the work which may benefit from detailed examination in the future.

4. Report details

- 4.1. The response to COVID-19 has of course had a significant impact on schools and is likely to have disrupted some of their plans for preparation and implementing the new curriculum following the publication of the [Successful Futures](#) report in 2015.
- 4.2. The education reform programme in Wales, built around the new *Curriculum for Wales (CfW)*, provides a positive way forward as we emerge from the restrictions of the last year. Please see **Appendix 1** for an easy read guide to the changes. It has at its heart a number of guiding ideas:
 1. That the curriculum and associated teaching, learning and assessment should flow from four clear purposes agreed nationally and pursued locally
 2. That those purposes should encompass helping all of our young people to become: ambitious and capable learners; enterprising and creative contributors; ethical and informed citizens; and healthy and confident individuals.
 3. That young people's learning should build progressively towards those four purposes across their time in school education.
 4. That teachers and schools should have greater freedom to realise those purposes in ways that can meet the needs and characteristics of the young people and the communities that they serve.
- 4.3. Our approach to the reform journey has been integrated in all aspects of our work from the beginning. Not one element of the reform journey can stand alone. It is viewed from the need of learners and the baseline of individual schools and clusters to deliver change according to agreed expectations
- 4.4. As part of the support to schools for the new *Curriculum for Wales*, GwE / LA has worked with the other regional consortia to develop a national professional learning offer that integrates all aspects of the wider reform including Schools as Learning Organisations, *Y Gymraeg* (towards a million Welsh speakers by 2050) and the Additional Learning Needs Transformational Bill.
- 4.5. The improvement and support offer for schools is aimed at supporting all practitioners, and focused initially on Senior Leaders with the following themes:

1. Leading Change,
2. Leadership for the new curriculum,
3. Developing a shared vision,
4. Planning for Curriculum Change,
5. Leading pedagogy (the method and practice of teaching),
6. Professional learning.

4.6. The planned sequence of professional learning and training available to schools is outlined in **Appendix 2**. These sessions across the region are cluster-based and enable smaller groups of primary schools and their local secondary school to discuss the new *Curriculum for Wales* across the 3-16 learning continuum

4.7. A series of consultative workshops were held in April 2021 to listen to feedback from Head teachers on the professional learning offer and how best to re-engage. Over 300 Head teachers attended the consultations regionally, with over 50 from Denbighshire attending. Feedback indicated:

1. Head teachers of both primary and secondary sectors recognise the importance of continuing to collaborate across the sectors to support the 3-16 continuum;
2. All leaders recognise the importance of maintaining the momentum of the professional learning but acknowledge the challenge of timing given current pressures and challenges;
3. Leaders are keen to work with GwE and to draw on the input of external experts where appropriate;
4. Leaders recognise that flexibility in engaging with the professional learning offer is key to ensuring effective engagement.

4.8. As part of the preparations, all Supporting Improvement Advisers have facilitated sessions where schools within a cluster have the opportunity to work collaboratively to strategically plan for the implementation of the curriculum. Activities to support preparations for the new curriculum at school and cluster level have been identified within School Development Plans.

4.9. Examples of planned activities to further prepare for the new curriculum in Denbighshire schools include those listed below and form part of the Curriculum for Wales, The Journey to 2022 (**Appendix 3**)

1. identifying further opportunities for senior leaders to work on developing shared vision;
2. collaborating across schools to develop common approaches to teaching and learning and share common language;
3. identifying opportunities for teachers to collaborate to unpick and work together within a specific Area of Learning and Experience.

4.10. In addition to the Professional Learning offer, additional support from GwE is available to schools as they prepare for *Curriculum for Wales*. This support will be accessed at both cluster and individual school level, including tailored bespoke support where needed. Denbighshire schools are at differing stages of the journey and our support offer is additionally bespoke to their needs.

4.11. Further support available to schools also includes a series of 'Think-Pieces' which have been written by the GwE team as part of the weekly reform sessions with Professor Graham Donaldson. These papers, which cover key aspects of the curriculum reform journey including leadership, vision, pedagogy, assessment and curriculum design, have been shared and refined through consultation with wider partners in Local Authorities, Estyn and Bangor University

4.12. A key aspect in moving forward will be supporting schools to develop networks across all six *Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLE)*.

4.13. In supporting schools in their readiness for implementing the curriculum in September 2022, GwE are working with schools and wider partners to develop a wide range of qualitative indicators which will allow schools to reflect on how they are implementing the four purposes of the new curriculum.

4.14. Schools have access to a series of milestones within the regional information management system that allows them to reflect on their progress. Prior to the initial lockdown, over 90% of schools indicated that they were either partly on track or better in their knowledge and understanding of the new curriculum framework. Nearly all schools indicated that they were partly on track or better with their engagement and participation in cluster work for preparing for the new curriculum

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

5.1. This area of work contributes towards making Denbighshire a place where young people want to live and work and have the skills to do so. The New Curriculum for Wales will also contribute to make Denbighshire a place where young people can flourish and have the best start in life.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1. Costs will be met from existing delegated budgets to schools, Education budget and also grant funding that has been made available from Welsh Government. GwE as the Regional School Improvement Service are leading on the development and are supporting schools in the implementation of the New Curriculum for Wales following the publication of the Donaldson Report 'Successful Futures'

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

7.1. N/A

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1. No Requirement to consult with Scrutiny however Welsh Government have conducted numerous [consultations](#) in relation to this area of work.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. Costs will be met from existing delegated budgets to schools, Education budget and also grant funding that has been made available from Welsh Government.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1. Any potential risks of not meeting timescales are addressed in the bespoke planning and support packages to schools. These are managed and supported through the G6 platform and regular meetings with School Improvement Advisors.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1 Scrutiny's powers in relation to matters detailed in this report are as per:

- Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000;
- Section 7 of the Council's Constitution