

UPDATE REPORT

PRIORITY 2: Developing a high-quality education profession – improving the teaching and learning in our schools

Partneriaeth provides strategic support for several key areas that align with national priorities to develop teaching and learning across the curriculum.

(i) Professional learning, enquiry and research to realise curriculum – school-led (NPEP, research, pedagogy school funding)

Fifty-nine schools across Partneriaeth (15 Carmarthenshire, 16 Pembrokeshire and 28 Swansea) have undertaken research and enquiry through NPEP. A launch event in October 2022 established expectations and ensured focussed sharing of research already embedded in schools. This process is well-supported by HEI colleagues at UWTSD and Swansea University. The post-16 NPEP is now incorporated into the regional NPEP work and this has improved coherence for schools across the region having previously been established as part of a separate project.

Funding is allocated by Welsh Government for three levels of schools - Established/Developing/Emerging.

Established schools have been involved in research and enquiry for many years and have regularly shared at a regional and national level. Eighteen schools in Partneriaeth (3 Carmarthenshire, 3 Pembrokeshire and 11 Swansea) are established NPEP schools and they have previously had their research projects published on Hwb. These schools lead enquiry cluster groups and share their expertise with regards to research and enquiry supporting schools in carrying out their enquiries and completing reports.

Developing schools have some experience of research and enquiry although this may be limited to one or two people or departments. They have developed their schools as an enquiry organisation by scaling across departments and, in a few cases at a whole school level. Twenty-five schools across the region (9 Carmarthenshire, 9 Pembrokeshire and 9 Swansea).

Emerging schools have limited or no experience of research and enquiry. These schools are supported by the Established schools as well as the HEIs. (3 Carmarthenshire, 2 Pembrokeshire and 11 Swansea)

Cluster communication continues to develop to ensure that the focus of research within a cluster is shared beyond the schools undertaking NPEP. Clear roles and expectations have been established with research schools and the Partneriaeth support plan with HEIs has been completed during the autumn term. This has enabled a more effective approach to research and enquiry.

In addition to the support provided by Established schools, HEIs have offered a range of online sessions such as 'Data collection and analysis', 'Research methods and ethics',

‘Writing the section 2 reports’ as well as several ‘Coffee and Enquiry’ sessions whereby schools can drop in to ask questions and gain support from HEI colleagues.

Next steps:

- To plan and hold a conference in July 2023 to share good practice across the region.

(ii) Professional learning for developing practice and reflection (RALD / WCLD, SLO, Pedagogy, Professional Standards)

SLO

The SLO approach was introduced in 2017 to support schools to prepare for the new curriculum in 2022 and continues to be a Welsh Government priority as we move into the next phase of Curriculum for Wales roll out.

A research paper¹ published in summer 2022 concluded that the positive impact of the SLO model was hindered by a lack of any clear guidance on the practical processes that underpin success. In response to this, Partneriaeth established an SLO working group made up of head teachers and senior leaders from 13 schools across the region.

The SLO Working Group is a five part programme that focusses on how leaders can use the SLO model as the basis for continuous development; specifically highlighting key strengths, areas for development and effective ways of working to enable all staff to develop professionally.

The working group has been tasked with sharing their SLO ‘journeys’ through the following 5 stages: initial findings; evidence base; identified interventions; intended impact of chosen intervention; review. The schools’ processes will be shared on a Partneriaeth SLO website which seeks to offer practical support, resources and examples of how to develop each of the seven dimensions of the SLO model. This practical resource is intended to be a catalyst for positive engagement with the SLO model as a contributory factor and key attribute of schools’ realisation of Curriculum for Wales as outlined in the School Improvement Guidance. In addition, it is anticipated that the resource will support engagement with the National Resource for Evaluation and Improvement and The Professional Standards.

Integral Skills

The development of the Integral Skills are key areas for skills development for many schools within the region. The integral skills of creativity and Innovation underpin the four purposes and should, according to Curriculum for Wales Guidance, be developed within a wide range of learning and teaching.

Senior, middle-leader and teacher dialogue with Partneriaeth officers and SIAs identified the need for focussed professional learning in this area. As at the heart of these two skills is the importance of learners recognising, using and creating different types of learning value. The

¹ Alma Harris, Zoe Elder, Michelle Suzette Jones and Angella Cooze, ‘Schools as Learning Organisations in Wales: Exploring the Evidence’, Wales Journal of Education, 24/1, DOI: 10.16922/wje.24.1.3 Summer 2022

Professional Learning workshop with Professor Christian Byrge took place in December 2022 with additional sessions planned in June 2023 as part of the 2023-24 Business Plan.

Thirty teachers from across Partneriaeth signed up for the sessions (6 Carmar, 7 Pembro, 17 Swansea). However, 15 practitioners eventually attended the session due to staff illness in schools. School Improvement Advisers were also able to attend.

All attendees agreed or strongly agreed that the content of the PL opportunity was appropriate and improved their knowledge of creativity. With 100% of attendees stating that they would recommend the training to others. All felt confident that they would now be able to trial the strategies in the classroom, with many stating that they planned to share this PL with their colleagues in school.

As part of the Evaluation 1 form the opportunity to take part in a funded 'Into the Classroom' Working Group was offered to attendees. This group would allow collaboration to support the implementation of their learning into their classrooms/schools. Six schools signed up for the 'Into the Classroom' Working Group with representation across all 3 LAs (1 in Carmarthenshire, 1 in Pembrokeshire and 4 in Swansea) The Working Group met in February 2022 and shared their initial actions and implementation in their classrooms/schools following the PL opportunity. The group have planned how they wish to proceed with their development in Creativity and Innovation, and are working on creating and sharing a resource across the region of their work.

Next Steps:

- Complete co-construction of the SLO website ready to launch by September 2023
- Continuation of the 'Into the Classroom' approach

(iii) Literacy & Numeracy Grant / Primary LNF Oracy Scheme for Wales

Partneriaeth has co-ordinated and established networking and professional learning opportunities that focus on driving improvements in the teaching and leadership of literacy and numeracy in schools. Literacy and numeracy coordinator meetings have been established for secondary settings. Primary AoLE networks have been established and, in the future, will focus on how to develop literacy and numeracy in authentic, disciplinary contexts.

Beneficial termly meetings between Partneriaeth and LA literacy and numeracy leads have taken place. Officers have collaborated and developed a draft operational plan to ensure that Primary Oracy funding is utilised effectively delivering appropriate and contextualised support for schools. This work will be developed with LA officers to ensure consistency and coherence.

Partneriaeth has provided bespoke literacy and numeracy support to schools. The brokerage between LA officers and Partneriaeth is effective. However, officer capacity both within Partneriaeth and across the 3 LAs is potentially an issue and there is a need for greater collaboration in order to utilise resources effectively.

Literacy and numeracy conferences are being held in the summer term and will focus on strategies to ensure effective approaches to cluster/secondary/primary skills development which drive high quality teaching and learning. Partneriaeth schools that have been identified as having practice worth sharing will present alongside experts in the field including David Didau, Dr Debbie Morgan and Christopher Such.

In addition to the conferences, Partneriaeth has developed other open offer professional learning opportunities to develop approaches to writing and vocabulary development. 11 schools took part in a 'No More Marking' programme with a focus on standardising and improving understanding of what effective writing looks like from 3-16. Resources, messages and findings from the programme will be shared in the summer term via network meetings and Partneriaeth case studies. Partneriaeth has worked closely with practitioners and local authority staff to develop and deliver professional learning on explicit vocabulary instruction. Almost 100 practitioners from 73 schools attended the training. 14 schools have gone to participate in follow up work which involves action planning on how to embed and develop the strategies and resources shared with them. All these participants commented on the positive impact that the training had had on their teaching and learners' understanding of how vocabulary is constructed.

Next steps:

- Develop and share examples of skills practice worth sharing
- Continue to collaborate with LAs to ensure that there is equity of support in literacy and numeracy across the region.

(iv) Regional Support for Modern Languages / Building capacity for MFL in the primary sector

Partneriaeth has continued to provide regional support for Modern Languages. However, the level of direct support from the region has been less than in previous years due to staffing changes in May 2022. Termly meetings have been held for secondary heads of departments with a teacher from the region facilitating the meetings on behalf of Partneriaeth. These arrangements were formalised in Spring 2023, with the appointment of a lead school to co-ordinate the meetings on behalf of the region and attend national fora. For example, Global Futures steering group will be attended on behalf of Partneriaeth and key messages shared.

In Spring 2023 clusters were allocated grants to enable secondary schools to support primary schools within their clusters to build capacity to teach international languages in primary schools. Partneriaeth is also co-ordinating the trialling of a new set of resources to teach French in primary schools with 5 schools participating in the trial in the Summer 2023 term. The feedback from the schools will contribute to the development of the resources which are due to be available to schools in 2023/24 if the pilot programme is successful.

In Summer 2022 Partneriaeth held a second conference for all schools within Partneriaeth exploring the theme of *Bilingual to Multilingual: building inclusive classrooms*. The programme for the conference included presentations from keynote speakers such as

Mererid Hopwood, Deirdre Kirwan and Professor Linda Fisher and over 60 delegates attended the event. The conference also included presentations from the 8 schools that had been part of the pilot using the '*Bilingual To Multilingual: A Toolkit for Developing Translanguaging and Plurilingual Skills to Build Inclusive Classrooms*' funded by Partneriaeth. In her presentation Prof Linda Fisher stated that the work that was being carried out in the region in this context was "ahead of the world" and the presentations from the schools showed the positive impact of this project in their schools. The impact demonstrated ranged from a substantial increase in confidence as learners, with multiple languages being used regularly in classrooms and wider schools environment without the need for encouragement, to improved social cohesion, with multilingual learners feeling far more valued, and a decrease in bullying. As result of such positive feedback on the initial pilot, the pilot was further extended in September 2022 with 6 of the original schools continuing to develop their work further and 2 new schools joining the pilot. The project is now focussing on supporting schools to embed the use of translanguaging into day to day classroom practice, with schools so far reporting greater confidence and trialling innovative practice.

Next steps:

- To further formalise the regional support for MFL and agree on an operational plan for 2023-24
- To evaluate the plans / work at cluster level as result of the cluster funding for MFL
- To arrange a third conference in June / July 2023 and consider the next steps with the pilot and the toolkit.

(v) Digital Competence Framework / Coding and Digital Skills

The Digital Competence framework is a key element of the cross-curricular skills as set out in the Curriculum for Wales framework. Partneriaeth's professional learning offer for Digital Learning was developed to support leaders and practitioners to implement the Digital Competence Framework by providing a resilient strategy accompanied by exemplar material targeted at key decision makers. During the Spring term three sessions were run across the region for Primary based colleagues, while a single session brought secondary colleagues together. Twenty-one Primary colleagues attended from Pembrokeshire schools, 37 from Carmarthenshire and 47 from Swansea while 13 colleagues attended the Secondary session. These sessions were co-constructed with relevant LA colleagues and were well-received by delegates.

The sessions increased understanding of the mandatory elements of developing digital competence as a cross-curricular skill, as well as progression within the Digital Competence Framework. Attendees also developed an understanding of how to integrate digital competence skills in and across the curriculum at a local level.

An approach to developing a whole school strategy for implementing the DCF following a six-step strategy of gathering information, designing your strategy, getting started, reviewing, scaling-up and sustaining momentum was shared. Current and new tools for mapping the implementation of the Digital Competence Framework were also shared and

well-received. However, it is too early to fully evaluate the impact in the classroom and this will be evaluated during the summer term through case studies.

Partneriaeth has also continued to support schools to ensure that online safety practices are as robust as possible. Three sessions were again co-constructed and delivered with LA colleagues being targeted at school-based colleagues with responsibility for leading on Online Safety and/or Safeguarding Officers. Over 100 schools attended the events that were run during the Autumn term (Pembrokeshire 26, Carmarthenshire 40, Swansea 45). Colleagues from the Hwb Team in Welsh Government were also in attendance.

The sessions raised awareness of how to ensure a high level of digital resilience across all stakeholders. It gave attendees a greater understanding of the 360 Safe Cymru framework and how it can help ensure a school's online safety practices are as robust as possible and made colleagues aware of the latest online safety learning and teaching resources available. Further support that is available via local authority and regional colleagues as well as relevant external professional bodies was also highlighted.

Partneriaeth has also developed a website to support the Cracking the Code agenda. A number of 'How-to' guides have been developed and case studies from schools are also shared on the site. Partneriaeth runs a loan scheme for coding kit which enables schools to assess coding devices on a trial basis before purchasing such devices. Fifty-four schools have accessed equipment through this scheme and will provide feedback regarding the use of these devices to deliver the computational thinking element of the Digital Competence Framework.

Next Steps

- To work with LAs to identify and share good practice
- To liaise with LA colleagues and use feedback provided by schools to inform the purchase of future loan kit
- To liaise with the Hwb team to ensure that the latest developments in the Hwb platform are shared with schools

(vi) Welsh in Education

The development of Welsh in Education is key to meet the objectives of Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy. Partneriaeth officers are key contributors to the national and cross-regional work and contribute to the work of developing, reviewing and implementing national plans. A cross-regional plan has been agreed and supported by WG, and Partneriaeth has been identified as the lead region for Welsh first language.

Partnership working with LA leads is strong and this effectively supports the strategic planning and delivery. This enables officers to discuss and plan a joint PL offer and utilise funding appropriately and meet the needs of schools. Grants have been distributed to all three LAs to support their priorities in addressing their Welsh in Education Strategic Plans. All LAs also received grants to support and facilitate the delivery of the Siarter Iaith.

At regional level, Partneriaeth officers have provided bespoke support to Welsh first language and second language departments to address identified needs, and termly network meetings for both first and second language Welsh have been held to offer training and support in areas such as progression, assessment and pedagogy. Nearly all schools attended each of the termly meetings and the feedback from attendees has been overwhelmingly positive with consistent commentary that the sessions were meeting the needs of their schools.

Training was delivered across the region on the 'Tric a Chlic' synthetic phonic programme with sessions held for teachers and TAs in Welsh medium and English medium primary school. 162 of teachers and TAs attended the training and the effect of the training upon delivery of the programme in schools will be reviewed in 2023/24. Training also delivered on the 'Ffa-la-la!' programme – a unique methodology that focuses on improving Welsh speaking ability and confidence in primary schools through music and creativity. 26 teachers from across 20 schools were part of the pilot. As a result of receiving extremely positive feedback from the attendees following the training the intention is to roll out the training across the region in 23/24.

A range of high-quality resources were developed and shared with both primary and secondary schools. These include a range of resources to support the teaching of Welsh at GCSE level (First Language and Second Language) e.g. new and original short videos to develop recount, inference, comparison skills and language analysis. In addition, new resources such as *Rhwng y Llinellau: Hybu sgiliau darllen (promoting reading skills)* have been published and shared with all schools.

In December 2022 *Hanes yr Iaith* videos and supplementary educational resources were launched, and the response has been positive with the resources used within and beyond the region. *Stori Sir - Sir Gâr* resources were developed in Autumn 2022 by a team of officers, authors, and teachers from the region to introduce and deepen the knowledge of learners aged 8–12 about some of the legends and histories of the area, and to strengthen learners' language proficiency. The teachers that were involved in the development of the resources valued the professional development opportunity, and the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues from other schools. The resources offer a range of activities from various Areas of Learning and Experience. Similar resources for Pembrokeshire and Swansea are currently in development and will be published in 2023/24.

Sharing good practice is a key part of the work in the context of Welsh in education, and case studies are continuously being captured and shared both at meetings and training sessions as well as by digital platforms. A video showcasing Partneriaeth's LLC pilot project *Deall y Daith Ddysgu* was shared in a national event recently and was highly praised across the regions. *Deall y Daith Ddysgu* was a project where Partneriaeth officers worked closely with two all age schools from Pembrokeshire LA and their feeder primary clusters to ensure a shared understanding of progression within listening. They shared resources and pedagogical strategies in order to ensure progression along the language continuum as part of the project. A video is also being created in collaboration with primary and secondary schools to demonstrate best practice in using Pie Corbett in Welsh language lessons.

The *Clwb Ysgol* social media platform and promotional campaign was rebranded and relaunched in 2022/23 with digital content shared weekly on social media to promote Welsh education and bilingualism as a skill. *Clwb Ysgol* has also been used to promote resources created by Partneriaeth. Short videos were created and shared with the aim of promoting Welsh medium education to parents. These videos have already reached over 150,000 people.

Siarter Iaith resources were also created by Partneriaeth and shared on the Clwb Ysgol site. Short videos were created to present the *Siarter Iaith* to school leaders, governors and parents with ideas on how to deliver the aims of the *Siarter* within the school. Due to the popularity of the videos a request came by WG and the other regions to adopt these resources as national resources. These videos are now being used by WG on the official *Siarter Iaith* site on Hwb.

A Strategic Adviser for Welsh in Education was appointed in December 2022 and started in post in March 2023. Partneriaeth have also appointed an Adviser to support secondary second language Welsh to start in September 2023. Both posts had previously been vacant since March/April 2023 and some of the work in this area was hindered as a result of capacity issues. The new appointments will enable Partneriaeth to ensure that provide a far wider programme of support to schools in the future.

Next Steps:

- To develop a new regional strategy for Welsh in Education, in collaboration with LA officers.
- Extend and deepen the support for the teaching of Welsh, and supporting Welsh education across the region.

(vii) Post 16 Improvement

The cross-regional leadership development programme for post-16 is established and was endorsed in November 2022 by NAEL. Results Driven Group have been running an ILM level 5 qualification for since Autumn 2022. 15 delegates from Partneriaeth schools registered for the programme. The content of the sessions was adjusted throughout the programme in response to feedback.

As a result of the training delegates reported that they were more able to be strategic in their roles. Examples of how they put their learning into practice included meeting with the senior leadership team to develop planned strategies, utilising taught coaching techniques and VESPA questions to support learner wellbeing, creating a vision for their Sixth Form and adopting new pastoral systems to support learner progression and attainment.

Following the completion of the leadership programme 13 delegates took up the offer of 1:1 coaching sessions which supported and facilitated implementation of planned initiatives from their learning on the programme. However, to successfully embed learning from the programme, delegates highlighted the main barriers as being time to embed, followed by senior leadership support and availability of resources.

NQT Post-16 Module Development & Delivery

A post-16 module for NQTs is currently being developed with the cross-regional team with a draft outline agreed. The module is scheduled to be ready for delivery asynchronously in the summer term 2023.

VESPA / A Level Mindset

VESPA professional learning sessions were planned for the spring and summer terms 2023. The first session was attended by delegates from 14 schools with sixth forms from Partneriaeth. Initial feedback of this support has been extremely supportive however, a full evaluation will be carried out following the second part which will be delivered in June 2023. To ensure equity for all schools, all resources are shared and can be accessed via the Post-16 Teams page. It is intended that VESPA case-studies will be developed over time.

Bespoke training has been agreed with schools in Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire.

A Level Conference

The A level conferences for English and Welsh are well-established and have been very well-received across the partnership.

Next Steps

- Development of a cross-regional post-16 professional learning programme for the next academic year.