



Academi Genedlaethol ar gyfer
Arweinyddiaeth Addysgol Cymru
National Academy for
Educational Leadership Wales

Our Call to Action

Inspiring Leaders– Enriching Lives

AUDIENCE

This report is for the school workforce, and those in other settings delivering the Foundation Phase, parents and carers, government and national partners, including regional consortia, local authorities, governing bodies, workforce unions and diocesan authorities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all those who gave their time and views to contribute to or support the work of this commission.

We would particularly like to thank the British Council for their support for the overseas visits.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S FOREWORD



“This report is written by serving headteachers making their call to action directly to all in the education system in Wales. It illustrates that the voice of leaders can and will make the critical difference in delivering on the promises of our National Mission”

It gives me great pleasure as Chief Executive to introduce this report on the first commission undertaken by the associates of the National Academy for Educational Leadership (NAEL). This is a ground-breaking piece of work for us here in Wales as we bring the voice of practice to bear on some of the more immediate challenges facing us as an education system. This report outlines the initial findings of the associates.

There is a clearly identified need to build leadership capacity in Wales in order that our learners can all reach their full potential. The establishment of the NAEL in May 2018 was a clear response to these identified issues. Crucially, the NAEL is a strategic body which develops wide-ranging partnerships across all sectors, as part of Education in Wales: Our National Mission 2017-21 (Welsh Government, 2017).

One of the early work streams identified for the NAEL was to establish school-based system leaders, or academy associates. The first cohort is a group of twelve highly effective headteachers who reflect some of the wide diversity of schools across Wales. They have an outward facing role, working with a range of networks to ensure that the sector feels connected to the Academy and both contributes to and understands its values and principles. They will play a key role in supporting the design, development and commissioning of leadership development

provision and will be working on key strategic areas of system-wide improvement. It is in this latter role, and in building system leadership capability and capacity, that they undertook this commission.

The commission question itself was set up through discussion between the associates, the NAEL and senior Welsh Government officials. The associates' next steps will be to share and discuss their findings across Wales. There are many lessons yet to be learnt about the process which can undoubtedly be further improved but, I believe, this sets out a level of trust and understanding which will create a truly Welsh way of working in

future, including the voice of practice in policy making.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to thank all those involved in this work - the support and encouragement given by NAEL Board and Welsh Government, Regional Consortia Colleagues, the Education Development Trust and the members of the scrutiny panel; and finally, the team led by Tegwen Ellis as Assistant Director, who have shared their expertise on the way. Above all of course, I must thank the academy associates themselves who, whilst still working as headteachers in their own schools, have lifted their eyes to system level bringing to the world of policy the crucial voice of current practice.



Huw Foster Evans

Chief Executive, National Academy for Educational Leadership

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“ *How can leaders enable high quality professional learning opportunities that improve well-being and achieve better outcomes for all?* ”

This commission report is a call to action from leaders to leaders. The report was produced by twelve associates of the National Academy for Educational Leadership and it is based on the findings from research conducted in Wales, Finland and Ontario.

The report identifies recommendations that will fit into the national cycle of policy and decision-making, in order to improve the quality of professional learning, well-being and outcomes.

A key theme of this report is that of well-being. Well-being is critical to an effective system, where investment in people and time created for professional learning and reflection is seen as an entitlement. Therefore, where there is a culture of prioritising well-being, the impact on staff and pupils is strong.

Another important theme is the positive impact of system leadership and effective collaboration between stakeholders on leadership development, well-being and outcomes. This is a crucial aspect for

development in education as we create a self-improving system in Wales.

Finland and Ontario are recognised internationally as having high achieving education systems. Finland has successfully developed and invested in well-being for pupils and staff as well as a training system for senior levels of leadership which is strengthened by research. This is also the case in Ontario, which in addition has highly effective professional learning systems in all aspects of leadership that aim to develop highly skilled leaders. Both jurisdictions have a culture in which professionals are trusted, and monitoring within their systems is seen as a method of supporting their leaders and teachers in their roles rather than as a measure of accountability.

There is much to celebrate about education in Wales. International colleagues are watching our progress in implementing Education in Wales: Our national mission (Welsh Government, 2017) and current curriculum reform. However, we also acknowledge the need to address issues which are barriers to further progress.

Our recommendations are listed below and, if actioned, would enhance the professional learning and well-being of all.

1. We should ensure that professional learning is consistent across Wales with a high-quality offer that recognises the linguistic and cultural diversity of our country. It should be a career-long continuous process and include opportunities for research and professional enquiry (Welsh Government, 2017) (see Enabling Objective 1)
2. We should positively encourage the system to allow leaders to exercise professional autonomy in their approaches to enabling collaborative professional learning and well-being (Welsh Government, 2017) (see Enabling Objective 2)
3. We should ensure leaders are enabled to effectively and confidently support the well-being of our young people by working in close partnership with other agencies (Welsh Government, 2017) (see Enabling Objective 3)
4. To improve well-being and professional learning we should accelerate the current movement away from high stakes accountability arrangements and encourage a move towards collaborative responsibility (Welsh Government, 2017) (see Enabling Objective 4).



OUR CALL TO ACTION

Introduction

In the international context few countries have not undergone some type of educational reform in recent times and Wales is no exception. The outcome from the Programme for International Students (PISA) in 2009, (OECD, 2010), identified Wales as a country that was underperforming. Since 2011, Wales has been on a journey of reform, working towards a more robust self-improving system. The Education in Wales: Our National Mission, (Welsh Government, 2017) provides a national strategy with a strong vision on how this will be achieved.

Background

The commitment by the Welsh Government to build capacity within schools by creating strong and inspirational leaders (Welsh Government, 2017) (see Enabling Objective 2) led to an invitation to the National Academy for Educational Leadership (NAEL) to carry out a commission. This has been undertaken by twelve associates of the academy who are all serving headteachers from across each of the four regional consortia. The commission looked at existing practices in Wales and included an international dimension, visiting Finland and Canada (both acknowledged by Lucy Crehan in her book *Cleverlands* as high-performing systems) (Crehan, 2016).

Commission Question

“ *How can leaders enable high quality professional learning opportunities that improve well-being and achieve better outcomes for all?* ”

The commission question focuses on how leaders within educational systems can enable high quality professional learning. Our collective experience as headteachers has led us unanimously to the starting premise that the quality of leadership and its ability to enable high quality professional learning has an impact on the well-being and outcomes of all adults, children and young people within the system.

The commission report is a unique undertaking written by the profession for the profession, to improve the system as a whole. As experienced headteachers, we have a clear insight into the Welsh education system three-tier model (Welsh Government, 2017) of education in Wales and have the passion to improve well-being and outcomes for all.

The terminology used in the Commission question needed some clarification. Working definitions of the key terms within the Commission's title are included below:

For the purpose of this report:

We consider leaders as those who have a leadership role in any of the three tiers within the system; Welsh Government, the middle tier and schools.

Based on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, we understand well-being for the workforce as having the means and ability to undertake their role effectively. For learners, it is the ability to successfully access learning in its widest sense.

Professional learning is also interpreted in its widest sense. We recognise that it is the equity of access to that learning and its quality that have the greatest impact. Outcomes are meant in their broadest terms – to include social, emotional and academic outcomes – and to include all stakeholders. The new National Approach to Professional Learning will help develop this in Wales.

This is a call to action from leaders to leaders. The aim of this report is to make recommendations for all tiers that will fit into the cycle of policy and decision-making and improve professional learning, well-being and outcomes for all. This is a high aspiration, one which can only be realised by working collaboratively for the benefit of all.

Methodology

The commission was both comprehensive and expansive in its enquiry. However, we were aware that as headteachers we are not academic researchers. This has certain benefits, in that the report is written from the perspective of practising and experienced school leaders, who have consulted with representatives from across Wales. It offers a viewpoint from leaders who understand the current strengths and areas for development in our system. The time available for the commission was short which ensured a clear focus on the key areas of consideration and led to the production of a report which we hope is accessible to all readers as well as being credible and current.

Our first step in addressing the commission was to carry out 'reconnaissance'. This involved an initial informal gathering of opinions to inform the formation of questions for the enquiry. Over the course of a number of weeks we spoke to fellow headteacher colleagues and summarised their opinions. This led to establishing clear lines of enquiry.

Early findings revealed that there were differences in the understanding of the definitions of leadership, professional learning and well-being. It was also evident that we needed to identify the barriers which were preventing leaders from enabling a high standard of professional learning that would improve well-being and outcomes.

These early findings became the focus of the enquiry questions.

1. What do you understand by leadership?
2. What do you understand by well-being?
3. What do you understand by professional learning?
4. What are the barriers to professional learning?

Following a seminar by the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, Sophie Howe, further evidence collection was agreed and led to an additional enquiry question being added.

5. What do you understand by the *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015* and how has it influenced your work?

Collectively, as associates, we defined which stakeholders in the education system it would be helpful to interview in order to address the requirements of the commission. These were then allocated across the associates. Within the course of one term, we undertook interviews and evidence collection with an extensive range of stakeholders.

The information from these interviews was collated and organised into groups. Analytical summaries were written which informed the lines of enquiry for the international study visits in Finland and Ontario. Consultation and interviews with stakeholders helped us to reach the conclusions which are included within this report.



These are our summary findings from Wales, Finland and Ontario:

LEARNING FROM WALES

Leadership

During our interviews with stakeholders and other evidence collection including international visits, it is clear to see that we have much to celebrate in Wales. Education in Wales: Our National Mission (Welsh Government, 2017) and current curriculum reform are innovative and revolutionary and developments are being watched closely by international colleagues.



Our findings indicate that one of the most important aspects of leadership is the requirement for a clear vision. During nearly all discussions with a wide variety of education stakeholders across Wales there was agreement that vision and integrity are paramount in order to improve outcomes for all. Another strong theme to emerge was the positive effect of collaboration between all stakeholders, but especially from school to school. We recognise that where collaboration and system leadership are embraced and utilised they have an encouraging impact on leadership development, well-being and outcomes.

However, our evidence also suggests that there is inconsistency in the extent of collaboration amongst schools across Wales and that system leadership and collaboration should develop further. Also, that professional learning was regarded as being crucial in terms of making progress as a self-improving system.

Generally, those questioned also touched on the concept of distributed leadership, coupled with the need for those currently in post to develop the next generation of leaders. The need to empower colleagues and enable them to lead was a common theme and creating the right environment in which to do this was essential.

Leaders recognise whilst carrying out the day-to-day operational side of their role which is important, they also need to create and allow time and space for reflection. This is challenging for all leaders. Our findings indicate that leaders accept accountability as part of their professional responsibility and commitment to their pupils and that when appropriate, challenge is welcomed. Furthermore, stakeholders suggest that different styles and approaches to leadership are needed across the system to reflect the diversity and richness of our institutions. This needs to be reflected in the professional learning offer.

Well-being

It was the general opinion of those interviewed that well-being is critical to an effective system. Being in the right frame of mind, both mentally and physically is essential for learning and teaching to be effective. There are a variety of different measures of well-being, which are currently focused on pupil well-being. Stakeholders see staff absence as an indicator of levels of staff well-being. In schools where there is an investment in people, where time is created for professional learning and purposeful reflection, there is a positive impact. Those interviewed highlighted the benefits of professional learning opportunities and a culture of support and trust. Through a supportive culture, staff feel more valued and are more resilient within their roles. As Wales is in a stage of transition educationally, it is clear there is a need to accelerate the movement away from high stakes accountability and towards a more supportive and developmental culture, which will serve to build resilience in both the workforce and the pupils to enable them to embrace the current situation.

Professional Learning

All of those asked recognise the need for the very best professional learning opportunities. There is a strong feeling that multiple approaches need to be taken to fit the diverse requirements of our schools and learners, including self-directed and peer-to-peer learning. Generally, it was agreed that a collaborative approach was most effective. Furthermore, there was a consensus of opinion from those interviewed that there was a clear link between experiencing high quality professional learning and improving well-being. The general feeling was that professional learning should incorporate opportunities for purposeful reflection and self-directed practical activities. Leaders interviewed were frustrated by some of the current challenges which include insufficient resources and the resultant lack of time which limit these opportunities.

LEARNING FROM OTHER EDUCATION SYSTEMS

Visit to Finland (19th - 23rd November 2018)



The Finland visit provided an opportunity to study in detail what has been noted internationally as a high achieving system (PISA). Our interviews and questions explored the nuances behind this position and helped us appreciate the underlying strengths in Finland whilst holding a mirror up to education in the Welsh system.

Leadership

At senior levels, there was a highly effective training system in all aspects of leadership that was aiming to equip leaders with the necessary skills. All of this was underpinned by research at University level as well as the monitoring of effectiveness by the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre. In interviews, the delegation felt that teachers and leaders were clearly trusted as professionals to do a good job. There was light-touch monitoring within the system, but this was more often seen as a method of supporting teachers and leaders in their role rather than as measures of accountability. Indeed, the overarching theme was responsibility rather than accountability.

Well-being

Pupil and staff well-being is seen as strong – people were eager to join the profession and there was a robust application process. Pupils were well-behaved and attentive, leaders felt supported by the system as a whole. There was little or no competition between schools because pupils attended their local school by default. From those interviewed, it was felt parents were clearly supportive of schools. There was a great investment in support for young people; within the schools we visited, there was often on-site support provided by school nurses, psychologists or social workers, for example. There were teams of staff dedicated to supporting additional learning needs of individuals and classes and learners receive early identification and intervention to improve. This work is collaborative between schools and is impactful. It was identified that the lack of high stakes accountability measures – whether through an examination system or an inspection regime - contributed to positive well-being and successful outcomes within the Finnish system.

Professional Learning

Initial teacher training was seen as strong and all teachers are trained to Masters level; because of that, it was believed by those interviewed that highly qualified teachers must be good teachers. Beyond that, ongoing continuing professional development was less evident from the evidence collected, although new work surrounding phenomena-based learning and information communication technology was aiming to address that.

Visit to Ontario (26th-30th November 2018)

Ontario has been identified as one of Canada's leading educational jurisdictions. Our visit to Toronto was organised through the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and this was our base for the week. During our time we visited three cross-phase schools, met with representatives from the Ministry of Education, officers from the Toronto School Board and serving principals.



Leadership

Professional learning is supported well in Ontario, through the implementation of a range of strategies. One of the strengths of the system is a comprehensive, well-established Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) (The Institute for Educational Leadership, 2013), providing valued support for professional learning.

Principals and vice-principals are allocated from a central pool to schools by the Toronto Board of Education with the expectation that they remain in one school for approximately five years. This facilitates a range of professional learning experiences in a range of settings. It prepares vice-principals for their first post as principal and prepares principals for progression into roles as centrally assigned principals and beyond as superintendents. This provides a clear pathway for developing future leaders in the system. Nevertheless, there is a compromise to be made, as the expectation to move schools can affect the well-being of principals. However, principals are well supported in their roles by centrally assigned principals who are all experienced leaders. This leads to a high level of trust and mutual respect, which in turn creates an ethos of support rather than challenge in the system.

Well-being

Well-being, defined as wellness in Ontario, is an important theme in all schools and there was evidence of this having an impact on students and staff. Schools have on site access to a range of health professionals and social workers; they are centrally funded yet part of the school team. Some intervention is provided for all schools centrally. There is also enhanced provision (called Alternative Schools in Ontario) which provides additional specialist support for pupils, including for their mental health.

School staff receive high quality professional learning from this expertise which positively impacts on the well-being of pupils and staff. A strong sense of equity pervades the system and the schools we visited were working hard to promote social justice resulting in pupils being comfortable in their school environment. Workload did not appear to be a concern for teachers; however, it should be noted that non-contact time was 25%, in comparison to 10% in Wales.

Professional Learning

Opportunities for professional learning are extensive due to a minimum individual monthly entitlement, in addition to the 25% Planning, Preparation and Assessment time (PPA) and seven annual in-service training days. There is some flexibility in the school system, and indeed the school day, to allow training to take place. All classroom teachers are qualified to Masters level and school leaders are required to undertake a comprehensive range of assessed training modules that equip them for their role. These training modules include aspects of classroom practice for teachers or leadership modules to support the move to vice-principal or principal and align with the OLF. There is an expectation that leaders are involved in professional learning communities, which provide school-to-school support on an informal basis.

CHALLENGES FOR WALES

The international jurisdictions we visited had very different provision for professional learning. Both had high levels of well-being in their systems and also high pupil outcomes. They prioritise and give more time and financial resources to support well-being. Issues with morale, recruitment and retention are a challenge to us in Wales, our learning from international colleagues has given us much for consideration. Although all those interviewed had a range of common and positive views on leadership, professional development and well-being, many challenges remain within the Welsh system.

There is at present a lack of agreed understanding of the term 'professional learning' and that it can come in a variety of forms. It is largely felt that by encouraging professional learning in its widest sense, you can improve well-being of staff by creating time to access services, develop professionally or have time to reflect.

Lack of equity in the provision of professional learning across Wales, linguistically, culturally and geographically, is a challenge. To meet these challenges which are creating barriers to professional learning, leaders should develop innovative ways to reach the widest educational communities in Wales and seek creative ways to use time and limited resources.

Almost all of those questioned stated they felt workload associated with high stakes accountability impacts on well-being. In addition, evidence was collected from across Wales which clearly indicates that there is an inconsistency, overlap and duplication in what is expected of schools from external bodies.

We are aware that there is a clear focus on professional learning through the commission question. However, during interviews and from information gleaned within and outside of Wales, it is clear that accountability in its many forms is a barrier to making professional learning more effective and is impacting negatively on well-being. This has therefore formed part of our recommendations.

There is a range of different perceptions of well-being. There are also questions concerning quantifying well-being, in regard to what is being measured and for what purpose. Although there is a focus in most organisations on the well-being of its staff, there is a growing sense that the well-being of pupils is critically important, as “most enduring mental health conditions start before the age of 14” (Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, Sophie Howe, 2018). Again, a lack of joined up services and funding is impacting on delivering effective early interventions. The *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015*, looks at ways of working that would help to overcome this barrier, stating that, “public bodies are required to think both about what they can achieve themselves and what the collective well-being objectives are for their area, together with the steps they can take to contribute to them” (Statutory guidance, page 13, section 2.4 point 40). There is currently limited understanding or knowledge of the Act across the sector. There is a fear that we may not be developing a resilient workforce or able to embrace the challenges and changes that will come with the implementation of a transformational new curriculum which places the four purposes for learners at its heart.

In order to address these challenges, we will now propose a number of system-wide recommendations. We have aligned these recommendations to the enabling objectives of Education in Wales: Our national mission (2017).



RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout this commission we have learnt from our colleagues in Wales and internationally the interrelationship of the common issues we face and the ambition to improve well-being and outcomes for all. It is the differences in accountability systems, the focus on developing a new curriculum with well-being of pupils and staff at the centre as well as a need to recognise the role of professional learning which has led us to make the following recommendations:

“ *How can leaders enable high quality professional learning opportunities that improve well-being and achieve better outcomes for all?* ”

The following recommendations have equal importance, the numbering is for ease of reference only.

1. We should ensure that professional learning is consistent across Wales with a high-quality offer that recognises the linguistic and cultural diversity of our country. It should be a career-long continuous process and include opportunities for research and professional enquiry (Welsh Government, 2017) (see Enabling Objective 1).

There is currently strong evidence to show there is too much inconsistency in our approaches to professional learning across the system in Wales. This inhibits progress towards our aspirational outcomes for all. The link between quality professional learning for teachers and high pupil performance is well evidenced. This recommendation will enable all educators in Wales to have a high quality professional learning pathway which will have a subsequent impact on outcomes for all. The National Approach to Professional Learning should help enable this.

2. We should positively encourage the system to allow leaders to exercise professional autonomy in their approaches to enabling collaborative professional learning and well-being (Welsh Government, 2017) (see Enabling Objective 2)

There is evidence to suggest that empowering the workforce to be creative and innovative with time and resources can have a positive impact on well-being and outcomes for all, especially if done in a collaborative manner. Our reconnaissance in Wales shows clearly that collaboration is variable within and across the system, and where it is strong, outcomes are often better.

3. We should ensure leaders are enabled to effectively and confidently support the well-being of our young people by working in close partnership with other agencies (Welsh Government, 2017) (see Enabling Objective 3)

Where strong links exist between schools and other agencies, outcomes are better, and this was evident from our findings in both Finland and Ontario. We believe the health of our nation, both physical, mental and emotional, is paramount to our success in Wales. This recommendation will enable all educators in Wales to have a better understanding of the *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015* and the duties it places upon them. It also supports the significant changes in the professional practice required to successfully deliver the health & well-being area of learning and experience (Donaldson, 2015).

4. To improve well-being and professional learning we should accelerate the current movement away from high stakes accountability arrangements and encourage a move towards collaborative responsibility (Welsh Government, 2017) (see Enabling Objective 4)

Evidence from all three jurisdictions suggests this will lead to better opportunities for professional learning, well-being and good outcomes for all. We believe removing unhelpful and confusing data from the public domain will also encourage greater national confidence and trust in the system. More emphasis should be placed on developing a culture of support for schools that reflects responsibility rather than accountability.

CONCLUSION

These recommendations are our call to action to all tiers within the system. We believe these recommendations will help create a positive culture of trust, respect, and professionalism, which in turn will instill a fresh sense of national pride and confidence in education in Wales. It will be crucial for all leaders across the Welsh education system to work together to effect this positive change.

The National Academy for Educational Leadership is committed to working with others across the system to see our recommendations realised. The NAEL has already made headway in ensuring high quality professional learning across Wales through a rigorous and robust endorsement process which is underpinned by the NAEL's vision for the leadership of learning, the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership and the seven dimensions of Schools as Learning Organisations.

Our next steps will be to engage with the wider system through a series of activities across Wales to develop and implement a plan for delivery. We will do this in collaboration with our partners across all three tiers, to support and lead the profession in implementing our recommendations.

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For further reading, please refer to the NAEL website: www.nael.cymru

ASSOCIATES



Gill Ellis is Executive Headteacher of The Federation of Blenheim Road Community and Coed Eva Primary Schools and has been a serving head teacher for 16 years. Her first headship was in Cardiff where she was head for 5 years. Coed Eva Primary is a green school and also a lead pioneer school for the new curriculum as well as a learning network support and professional lead school. Gill is also a published author and is a PhD student.



John Kendall has been the headteacher of Risca Community Comprehensive School since 2009. He has served on senior leadership teams in three UK schools consistently since 1994, the last two schools here in Wales. He has chaired the Caerphilly Headteachers' Association for eight years and has been on the EAS Headteachers' group since its inception. He is a mentor and a National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) assessor.



Clive Williams has over 20 years' experience as a headteacher and during this time has demonstrated his awareness of the importance of clear and robust leadership. He has worked as a head at two schools and is an experienced school adviser on a part-time basis. He is a Peer Inspector with Estyn, and provides support for four schools in Ceredigion, giving them a programme of acute support in order to raise standards and improve leadership.



Jeremy Griffiths is a very experienced headteacher and his school is an SLO lead school and a Professional Learning Pioneer. Jeremy has a good track record of leadership development. He supports a number of other schools and is also a partner in delivering the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) programme across North Wales. Jeremy has a keen interest in Leadership and Lean Management. He is a Peer Inspector with Estyn and is currently studying for an EdD at Bangor University.



Gwyn Tudur is passionate about providing an inclusive and bilingual education of high quality to all children and young people. He has been the head of Ysgol Tryfan in Bangor for the last 7 years. Gwyn is actively involved in leadership development across the region. He supports aspiring and new heads as a mentor, and as an NPQH assessor. He is currently vice Chair of CYDAG, a Peer Inspector for Estyn, and at present he also works for Gwynedd LEA as Leadership Development Officer.



Sue Roberts has over ten years' experience as a headteacher, currently at Ysgol Ffordd Dyffryn in Conwy and prior to that, she piloted the federation of two schools in Denbighshire. Sue is passionate about inclusion and leads two Resource Bases within her setting, one for pupils with ASD and one for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Sue is an NPQH Coach and is actively involved in developing and supporting leadership opportunities across North Wales.



Christine Jackson has nearly 20 years' experience as an effective and successful leader. She collaborates with school leaders across the EAS to support them in school self - evaluation and school improvement. Christine is a partner challenge advisor within the EAS and leads a Learning Network School. Christine is a mentor to a number of newly appointed and acting headteachers across the Local Authority and the EAS, as well as a Peer Inspector for Estyn.



Jan Waldron is passionate about improving education for all children. She has a strong track record of school improvement at Pontarddulais Comprehensive, which is a curriculum pioneer school. In her role as challenge adviser, Jan supports a number of schools both locally and regionally. Jan is also a coach and mentor for the NPQH programme and is an additional inspector with ESTYN. Jan has also established a successful development programme for head teachers and senior leaders.



Karen Lawrence has over 13 years' experience as a headteacher and has worked in education since 1987. She is currently headteacher at Llanfaes School with strong partnership links. Karen has made a positive impact as a headteacher working closely with the LA and ERW to mentor and support other colleagues. She has contributed to system leadership through chairing ERW Headteacher Board and being a Lead Practitioner School leader.



Janet Hayward is the headteacher of Cadoxton Primary School in Barry and has over 17 years' experience as head teacher. Cadoxton is a pioneer school for the new curriculum, professional learning and DCF. She was the inaugural Chair of the National Digital Learning Council and is a convenor of a School Improvement Group in the CSC Consortia. Janet is committed to building leadership capacity and works collaboratively with a range of school networks, as well as University of Wales Trinity St David supporting the development of initial teacher education.



Emma Coates has been a headteacher for six years and has had a positive impact upon her school, notably within inclusivity and school improvement. Emma has encouraged staff development including research activities and projects and has also been involved with and led on a number of peer inquiries within CSC. Emma is keen on developing the middle leadership tiers within education and working closely with families and communities.



Huw Powell has been in senior leadership for over eight years and a headteacher for five years. Huw works closely with both Church schools and other schools in the area. Huw is focussed on the NPQH and mentoring support and is actively involved in both activities. He is a strong collaborator, working with a number of schools and other organisations. Huw set up the Church School Leadership Programme, which has proved to be highly successful. He has recently set up a new organisation representing schools which serve disadvantaged communities.



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