

Written response by the Welsh Government to the report of the Children, Young People and Education Committee entitled Report on the Teachers' Professional Learning and Education inquiry (21/12/17)

As a result of the CYP&E Committee inquiry into the implementation of Professor Graham Donaldson's Review Successful Futures, the Chair of the Committee launched a further inquiry into Teachers' Professional Learning and Education.

The inquiry reviewed the readiness of the workforce to implement the new curriculum, specifically seeking evidence on the interface with effective professional learning for the education workforce and initial teacher education and training.

The four main areas of focus were:

- Arrangements for continuing professional development for the current workforce.
- The role of initial teacher education.
- The sufficiency of the future workforce
- New professional standards for teachers.

As part of the inquiry, the Committee undertook a survey (jointly with the Assembly's Public Accounts Committee) into Teachers' Professional Learning and Education, which received 837 responses from individuals working within the teaching profession. The Committee also received 28 written submissions to the open consultation to the inquiry. The Committee held 8 evidence sessions.

The committee published their report on 21 December. The report made 25 recommendations and detailed 4 conclusions. The Committee is yet to determine whether they will be holding a plenary debate on this report, but will confirm in due course.

Detailed responses to the report's recommendations and conclusions are outlined below:

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary should undertake work as a matter of urgency to ensure that the whole workforce is prepared for the forthcoming changes to the curriculum, including the development of a detailed implementation plan.

Response: Accept in principle

Professional learning is crucial to translating the intentions of curriculum reform into practice. 'Education in Wales' reinforces our commitment to developing approaches to professional learning to ensure all schools are equipped for curriculum change. Powerful pedagogy is at the heart of curriculum reform. We recognise that rapid progress needs to be made to support our education professionals.

Welsh Government is identifying internal "champions" and, together with regional consortia, are fine tuning a national 'Successful Futures' implementation plan to deliver appropriate professional learning experiences in the context of Schools as Learning Organisations (SLO) and the Professional Learning Model (PLM).

This term, regional consortia are delivering a bespoke national training and development programme to support professional learning pioneers with their understanding of curriculum design. The pioneers will then be better equipped to engage and involve the wider schools network in testing the new curriculum through cycles of action inquiry during the Autumn Term. We are committed to securing practitioner engagement in curriculum sense-making to increase professional confidence.

Ultimately, we want to equip our practitioners with the skills to innovate and the culture to do so. In Scotland, specific gaps were identified in relation to supporting the culture shift in schools. We are tackling this issue head on through our detailed work with OECD to develop all schools as learning organisations, so all practitioners can thrive in schools with a collaborative learning culture.

An initial national professional learning approach will be made available in 2018, with a fully implemented national approach from April 2020.

Financial Implications – None. Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary must ensure that learning from pioneer schools is shared more widely across the education profession as a whole, to help ensure that the education workforce is fully aware of developments and prepared for the reforms on the way.

Response: Accept in principle

We have developed a national communications and public engagement strategy to support the delivery of 'Education in Wales: Our National Mission'. This live document will be regularly reviewed by our Programme Governance Boards. Individual communication plans are also being developed with key partners to support the delivery of the strategy, including a specific communications and engagement plan to support the development of the new curriculum.

This strategy will ensure we deliver our key objectives to deliver a connected package of reforms to prepare our practitioners for the cultural change and to simplify communication to ensure our workforce, parents, learners and stakeholders are kept fully informed at each stage of the process.

Pioneer schools have a key role in engaging with education professionals across the whole sector to share, test, develop and improve their thinking during this design phase. Regional consortia also have a key role in sharing progress with all schools and supporting teachers in the realisation of the new curriculum as it develops.

We have developed a Curriculum blog which is regularly updated with the latest curriculum thinking and developments and a termly newsletter is issued to provide regular updates to all key stakeholders. To update our network of pioneer schools, we hold regular national pioneer events. A recent event in January was attended by over 300 practitioners from pioneer schools across Wales. This provided an opportunity for practitioners to receive an update on the latest pioneer developments and consider key milestones for the spring and summer terms.

Immediate priorities for professional learning pioneer schools include testing the emerging progression framework during the summer term and leading cycles of action inquiry, supported by HEIs to begin to test the new curriculum with the wider schools network in the autumn.

The regions have used a variety of methods to deliver engagement across the wider community of schools through their cluster and engagement strategies. They have also collaborated on shared projects and resources to assure a level of consistency across the whole community of pioneer schools and increasingly amongst schools in the wider community. Full details of activities for each region can be found on Doc 2.

Financial Implications – None. Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary should explore how to better use INSET days, with time embedded for professional reflection for teachers.

Response : Accept in Principle

Inset days are important in supporting effective teaching, learning and assessment. It is important to remember that teachers in Wales are granted 5 inset days by virtue of the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document and these will continue to be made available. These 5 days should be sufficient for all schools to undertake any necessary training, planning and professional development for teachers.

Any increase in the allocation of training days would directly result in a reduction in the learning days offered to pupils and so has to be balanced with the loss of learning opportunities. The move to devolve pay and conditions later this year will provide an opportunity to actively consider the adequacy issue. Current arrangements were brought in some considerable time ago and it will therefore be appropriate to reconsider whether these arrangements are still fit for purpose, particularly in light of the wide ranging reforms that are underway.

Financial Implications – None at present.

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary should consider promoting greater use of peer to peer learning, and to encourage more development and training within the classroom, to provide a better balance for professional development.

Response: Accept in principle

The 2016-17 Estyn Annual Report, states that the most significant trend over the last 7 years is a shift in the educational culture to a more collaborative approach, particularly in developing the new curriculum in partnership with the profession. Estyn also acknowledged that investment across the different tiers of the education sector is starting to become more evident, reflecting the noticeable shift towards a '*self-improving system.*'

The Welsh Government's Professional Learning Model (PLM) provides the vision and core principles to inform the design, evaluation and quality assurance of all professional learning. The model comprises four strands, two of which focus on 'Effective Collaboration' and 'Coaching and Mentoring.' Wales is moving rapidly from the delivery of professional learning away from the school setting, to a collaborative, practitioner-led experience, embedded in classroom practice.

To enhance improvement capacity in all schools in Wales, '*Education in Wales: Our national mission*' outlines our ambition to develop all schools as learning organisations (SLOs). Since January 2017, we have been working in partnership with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and regional consortia to realise this ambition. Two of the seven dimensions of the SLO model focus on '*promoting team learning and collaboration among all staff*' and '*modelling and growing leadership.*'

Over 2,000 practitioners have contributed to early pilot programmes, with rollout to all schools in Wales planned later this year. An OECD Study Report on 'Developing Schools in Wales as Learning Organisations' scheduled for publication in April this year will provide an early baseline assessment of current peer learning opportunities in schools across Wales to enhance future capacity. A series of case studies are being developed to exemplify innovative practice across the SLO dimensions, this will provide an opportunity for all schools to access innovative international and local exemplars to further enhance peer learning aspects of their SLO profile.

The National Academy for Educational Leadership (NAEL) will consider peer to peer learning as part of its development. We are also developing further coaching and mentoring as part of its learning programmes with the Regional Consortia.

As part of its development, the Academy has recently recruited for a small group of effective and credible head teachers from across Wales to become the first group of Associates of the Academy. The Associates will play a key role, alongside the NAEL, in delivering on the ambition outlined in 'Education Wales: Our National Mission' acting as role models for school leadership across Wales.

Financial Implications – None. Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

Recommendation 5

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary should provide an update to the Committee, after the end of the next academic year, on the pilots for School Business Managers.

Response: Accept

The Cabinet Secretary will be happy to provide an update on the School Business Managers pilots within the timeframe set out by the committee.

Financial implications: None. There are no additional costs the update will be provided through planned work on the business manager pilots from existing programme budgets

Recommendation 6

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary should consider establishing a recognised accreditation system that ensures the quality of professional development on offer.

Response: Accept in principle

I want practitioners to set their own professional expectations, which will enable them to investigate, develop and share best practice via a wide range of appropriate professional learning activities. It is for this reason that I do not currently envisage a situation where one independent body (the EWC) should be given the responsibility for determining whether professional learning is quality assured, for the entire education workforce.

There are extensive and growing partnerships between the regional consortia and HEIs across the country. These have been fostered and encouraged by the changes to ITE, the regions' approach to accredited professional learning, and Welsh Government supported developments in the area of partner-based education research. **Doc 2** provides numerous examples of how the regions are working to ensure the quality of professional learning provision. While current arrangements do not reflect a fully recognised system of accreditation aligned to the National Approach to Professional Learning, officials are working with regions to verify this.

Financial Implications – None. Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

Recommendation 7

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary should provide an update to the Committee on consortia's internal/external evaluations of the professional development on offer. The details of those evaluations should be published, and the outcomes of those evaluations shared with the Assembly.

Response: Accept

The regions undertake internal evaluations of professional learning provision which are made available in a variety of ways. The CSC staff and pupil survey is designed to test learner and practitioner engagement and is completed annually, providing an insight into the impact of their work from a school, staff and learner perspective. School Improvement Groups (SIGs) provide measurable impact of collaborative work- via direct, indirect and proxy indicators. Their plans focus on school improvement priorities and meet regional need. SIGs support the capacity building of leadership at most levels and around half of the SIGs use Joint Practice Development principles.

The evaluations are published. Copies of the evaluation reports can be found at **Doc 2**.

Financial Implications – None. Costs associated with professional learning evaluation are met from existing programme budgets awarded to regional consortia via an annual grant.

Recommendation 8

The Cabinet Secretary should provide an update to the Committee, after the end of the next academic year, on the impact of Estyn's guidance for teachers on reducing workload.

Response: Accept

A timely evaluation of the impact of the guidance on reducing workload on the workforce would be welcomed, given that the production of the guidance represents a collaborative approach by all key stakeholders – Estyn, regional consortia, workforce unions and Welsh Government– to take steps to engage more closely with the profession to address workload concerns.

Following the production of the guidance a programme has been developed to raise awareness and provide best practice guidance for schools and challenge advisors, around the implementation of the guidance. This has been implemented by the regional consortia and funded by Welsh Government, with the aim of ensuring consistency of approach and clear dissemination of best practice.

Further consideration will be given to the most effective way to take forward the impact evaluation, whilst also considering opportunities to reduce unnecessary workload in other areas. A review of the impact of the guidance will take place at the end of academic year 2018/19. Lessons learnt from the thematic review of the Guidance on effective management of workforce attendance which was conducted by ESTYN after just one academic year following implementation, suggest that whilst some good recommendations for improvement were highlighted, it may have been better undertaken after a longer period following implementation to enable a larger body of evidence to be available and more conclusive trends to be identified.

Financial Implications – Costs associated with further research could/would be part of the annual remit to ESTYN.

Recommendation 9

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary should provide an update to the Committee once the terms of the thematic review on the quality of emerging professional learning provision have been agreed.

Response: Accept

The Estyn Annual Remit for 2017/18 includes a number of thematic reviews with a professional learning focus including:

- *Improving teaching and building capacity* to evaluate the impact on learners of programmes such as peer observations, coaching and mentoring.
- *Preparing for the new curriculum: year 2* focussing on specific aspects of curriculum reform, particularly leadership capacity, professional learning and the Digital Competence Framework.
- *Initial teacher education and professional learning in schools*, a baseline study of the interrelation of initial teacher training practices and professional learning in schools specific focus on coaching and mentoring.

In March this year, Estyn will report on the outcomes of the first year of a 3 year thematic review focused on 'Planning for the new curriculum.' The report will include a series of interesting practice case studies focusing on how schools are exploring the foundations needed to build a strong, innovative curriculum.

The Cabinet Secretary will update the Committee on the outcomes of the other 17/18 reviews in due course.

A wider Estyn thematic review focused on the quality/appropriateness of emerging professional learning will be commissioned following the full

implementation of the national approach to professional learning in September 2018. It is proposed that this review will evaluate:

- the quality of emerging professional learning provision to prepare practitioners for the new curriculum;
- the appropriateness and relevance of new professional learning provision and alignment with emerging professional learning priorities, linked to the AOLES;
- the consistency of provision across the Career Development Pathway key milestones;
- the alignment with the professional learning vision, principles and model.

Financial Implications – None. Any costs associated with current/further research would be part of the annual remit to ESTYN.

Recommendation 10

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary should undertake an early evaluation of the Discover Teaching campaign to establish (a) whether it has been a success and (b) whether more resource should be put in to the campaign to develop it further. In particular, the evaluation should look at those more acute areas where there are teacher shortages, and establish if specific and more direct recruitment campaigns are required.

Response: Accept

The Cabinet Secretary will undertake a rapid review of the Discover Teaching campaign to report by Easter. As well as establishing the effectiveness of the campaign, the review will include recommendations on teaching recruitment campaigns in future, including resourcing.

Financial Implications – None.

Recommendation 11

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary should evaluate the impact of the new Welsh medium recruitment incentives, and the impact of additional £4.2m funding to support the teaching and learning of Welsh, and report back to this Committee.

Response: Accept in principle

The Welsh Government has commissioned an evaluation of Welsh-medium provision in initial training education. This includes assessing the contribution

of the Welsh-medium Improvement Supplement to initial training. The findings of this evaluation may provide some evidence that could inform the delivery of the new Welsh-medium recruitment incentive.

It is too early to evaluate the impact of the new Welsh-medium recruitment incentive. The intake of trainee teachers who can apply for the incentive will start their initial teacher education in September 2018. Therefore, we need to allow time for them to undertake their training and find employment before we can fully evaluate. However, we will put measures in place to monitor the take up of the incentives at timely intervals.

The £4.2m funding to support the teaching and learning of Welsh in 2017-18 is split into a number of strands. £1.2m has been allocated to support the expansion of the Welsh language Sabbatical Scheme. An evaluation of this Scheme is currently being planned, and it is hoped that the work will start in April 2018 over a period of 2-3 years. £2.355m has been allocated to the regional consortia to undertake professional learning activities. The remaining £550k has been used to support children and young people's informal use of Welsh, which we will be evaluating during 2018-19, and communications and research activity.

Financial Implications – None. Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

Recommendation 12

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary must undertake urgent action to increase recruitment of ethnic minority teachers, and to recruit to schools in deprived areas

Response: Accept in principle

To ensure our schools truly represent the communities they serve we must widen participation to those groups currently underrepresented in Wales' teaching workforce, To this end we want our ITE routes to have the same vision and understanding of the future teaching workforce for Wales and meet the needs of talented potential teachers, whatever their background and circumstances.

In order to better understand recruitment and retention of teachers in Wales, a key piece of research has been commissioned. Beaufort Research and NFER Cymru have been commissioned to research Teacher Retention and Attractiveness in Wales for both ITE and existing teachers. This research will examine and understand the issues around teacher recruitment and retention in a number of contexts including geographic and diversity with the final report expected in autumn 2018. The research will include qualitative work to interview prospective ITE students, current teachers and stakeholders

including universities to ascertain the key drivers and the most potentially cost effective solutions.

Recruitment to Initial Teacher Education is also critical. A Welsh Government PGCE recruitment campaign targeted at undergraduates in their final year has begun and my officials continue to work with the consortia to support their Discover Teaching campaign, ensuring synergy, clarity and consistency of key messages as well as targeting key regions, subject specialisms and demographics.

Financial Implications – None. Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets

Recommendation 13

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary should ask the ITE Expert Forum to consider the issues and concerns set out in this report and report back to this Committee.

Response: **Accept in principle**

The ITE Expert forum ceased autumn 2017 when, following a public appointment process, key members Professor Furlong and Dr Lawlor were awarded positions on the EWC's Teacher Education Accreditation Board. The Board are tasked with accrediting the new programmes of ITE in Wales.

The newly established Welsh Government Teacher Recruitment and Retention Advisory Board has been tasked with providing expert advice and challenge in this area, considering issues of teacher recruitment and retention to support a high-quality education workforce that is vibrant, engaged and committed to continuous learning for all and also able to meet the demands of curriculum and wider education reform. Chaired by Professor John Gardner the Advisory Board will consider this report carefully, in providing advice to me and my officials to inform the overall strategic approach.

Financial Implications – None. Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

Recommendation 14

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary should encourage greater use across Welsh Universities of the scheme in place in Imperial College London, whereby undergraduates are exposed to teaching through modules as part of their standard degree.

Response: Accept in principle

In giving evidence to the CYPE Committee last year, I outlined my expectations for universities to introduce more students to teaching in their undergraduate studies, as part of growing the civic mission of Higher Education in Wales.

I would expect to see universities recognise the benefits of a wider community engagement with schools and resulting positive impact on school pupils and undergraduate students. I expect HEFCW to work proactively with all universities in Wales to make progress against this recommendation.

Financial Implications – None. This is covered by HEFCW budget

Recommendation 15

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary should undertake work to establish the level to which teacher workload is becoming a barrier to recruitment.

Response: Accept

As mentioned previously, the newly established Welsh Government Teacher Recruitment and Retention Advisory Board will be considering issues of teacher recruitment and will provide advice in this area.

Workload concerns vary greatly across the education workforce. Different issues and priorities are raised depending on a variety of factors including: school phase, rurality, deprivation, subject area, role, etc., as well as between the individual operating practices of particular schools and/or local authorities. Consequently, we have adopted a multiple stream approach to address these disparate matters. Our approach to concerns over workload has been to engage much more closely with the profession; looking for improvement in the education system by working with practitioners, schools and local authorities. A number of measures have already been put in place to ensure that practitioners' views and experience are fed in to the process not only with regard to new policies but in relation to existing practices as well. Detailed discussions are taking place with all key stakeholders including the Education Workforce unions to identify specific concerns and develop potential solutions. I commissioned the EWC to carry out a workforce survey, which was published

in March 2017 and this is helping to inform our developments on reducing unnecessary workload.

Financial Implications – None. Costs will be met from existing programme budgets.

Recommendation 16

The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government should invest in research to establish the levels of teacher wastage, and the causes for it. Alongside this, the Cabinet Secretary should ensure that thorough exit interviews are conducted with those leaving the profession to establish their reasons for leaving.

Response: Accept

In order to better understand recruitment and retention of teachers in Wales, a key piece of research has been commissioned. Beaufort Research and NFER Cymru have been commissioned to research Teacher Retention and Attractiveness in Wales for both ITE and existing teachers. This research will examine and understand the issues around teacher recruitment and retention in a number of contexts including the impact of teacher wastage with the final report expected in autumn 2018. The research will include qualitative work to interview prospective ITE students, current teachers and stakeholders including universities and ITE providers to ascertain the key drivers and the most potentially cost effective solutions.

The new School Workforce Annual Census will expand on information currently collected through PLASC on recruitment and retention to provide more robust and accurate evidence on teacher retention issues. WG will also work with employers on the use and benefits of exit interviews to inform retention issues, which will inform the work of the newly created Teacher Recruitment and Retention Board.

Financial Implications – As mentioned, Beaufort Research and NFER Cymru have been commissioned to research Teacher Retention and Attractiveness in Wales. This cost is already approved and being met from within the WSU programme budget in 2017/18 and 2019/19.

Recommendation 17

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary should explore further whether there is sufficient support in place for new teachers in the early years, and look to develop a more robust mentoring scheme for them.

Response: **Accept in Principle**

New [Criteria for the accreditation of initial teacher education programmes in Wales: Teaching tomorrow's teachers \(2017\)](#) makes clear the requirements for schools and HEIs to work together to support the development of student teachers. Firstly, at the programme level, programmes need to be devised so that there are structured opportunities for the different forms of professional knowledge provided by each partner to be brought together. Student teachers need regular and well-structured mentoring within their schools; in their universities they need high quality lectures, seminars and workshops. But in addition they will need opportunities, while they are based in school, to engage with the forms of knowledge that are made available through universities; when they are in university they need opportunities to engage with forms of practical knowledge that are learned in school.

We are also supporting recently qualified teachers participating in the school-based supply cluster pilot announced in October 17. These teachers will benefit from on-going professional support and mentoring in the early part of their careers to meet their induction requirements, professional development needs and to support meaningful performance management arrangements.

Introduction of new professional standards for teaching has provided greater continuity to initial teacher education (ITE) and induction, which was previously missing from trainee teachers' experience. There is now a smoother transition which is focussed on the five elements of teaching that are relevant to all practitioners. This approach allows newly qualified teachers (NQTs) to utilise the experience, knowledge and practice gained in ITE and build on that during their induction period. ITE providers will adopt the new standards fully in September 2019.

Every NQT is supported during their induction by two suitably experienced practitioners: one mentor is usually based in the same school as the NQT but may also be deployed across a number of schools or work with a group of supply teachers. The second mentor is usually external to the school and ensures a level of objectivity and consistency to the process.

Officials have worked closely with regional consortia to consider the issues associated with the introduction of new standards. As a result, consortia have received additional resource this year to ensure NQTs are better supported.

In November 2016, we published the Foundation Phase Action Plan setting out our national approach to continuously improve the way the Foundation Phase is implemented and delivered in schools and funded non-maintained

nurseries. To increase practitioners' knowledge, expertise of Foundation Phase pedagogy and the practical skills required to deliver it we are establishing a Foundation Phase Excellence Network (FPEN). The Network will strengthen collaborative work across the sector involving schools, the non-maintained sector, education services and academia. The network will aim to support education leadership in Foundation Phase, as part of the national approach to leadership development.

The development of the FPEN zone – to be launched in March - will provide a platform for all Foundation Phase practitioners to share effective practice as part of a wider national approach to professional learning.

Financial Implications – None. Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

Recommendation 18

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary should consider further the complexity and accessibility of the standards to ensure that all those across the profession have access to the standards in format that is best for them, and in a way that makes the use of the standards simple to incorporate into their working practices.

Response: Accept in principle

The new standards model replaces 55 standards with five key standards that concentrate on the essential elements of every teacher's work. The consultation involved 32 draft descriptors which, collectively, would apply to all teachers, from initial teacher education (ITE) through to school leaders. The consultation was, through necessity, a complex and lengthy document. No practitioner using the standards in their work is required or expected to engage with the standards and descriptors in their entirety.

In light of the consultation responses, we now have five standards with supporting descriptors. They are to be used in a selective way, focussing on the aspects that are relevant to where the individual is in their career and the context in which they work. For the majority of teachers and leaders this will involve reflecting on their practice in relation to the five standards. Practitioners at career points involving assessment, for example newly qualified teachers undertaking induction will be required to demonstrate all the induction descriptors in order to successfully complete their induction.

The standards were developed with the profession, for the profession and are the product of sustained engagement with the sector. The new standards are critical to achieving our national ambition for a new curriculum and have been built with that in mind. They have been developed to reflect the reforms in ITE, an evolving qualifications framework and the launch of the National Academy

for Educational Leadership. Feedback from NQTs and mentors using the standards since September 2017 has been encouraging.

Practitioners are expected to engage with the standards in a way that suits them and the online platform supports that approach. Officials will continue to work with the Education Workforce Council (EWC) and practitioners to review and refine the format of the standards, including the viability of a mobile app for the professional learning passport. A review of the standards content, format and accessibility will be considered after they have been rolled out across the profession.

Financial Implications – None at present.

Recommendation 19

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary should consider the extent to which the new professional standards provide an adequate baseline for teacher performance, and revise the standards to include a measure to identify the standards expected of a teacher in order to undertake their role effectively.

Response: Reject

The five standards clearly identify the essential elements of every teacher's work – pedagogy, collaboration, leadership, innovation and professional learning - and define what each of these elements might mean for all teachers and leaders.

If required, practitioners can explore the descriptors, which exemplify the standards in more detail. The descriptors also contain an aspirational level which provides a focus for career-long professional learning.

The descriptors that must be met to complete induction, serve as a “baseline” throughout a teacher's career.

Professional standards form an important part of the performance management process by providing a framework with which individuals' practice can be progressed and celebrated and priorities for further development identified through the use of the Professional Learning Passport. The role of the standards in relation to pay and in relation to capability procedures has not changed by the introduction of new standards.

Financial Implications – None.

Recommendation 20

The Committee recommends that the remit of the Education Workforce Council should be extended to include responsibility for professional standards.

Response: Reject

The wider education workforce is required to register with the Education Workforce Council (EWC) and to date, no representation has been made by the profession to the Welsh Government for the EWC to take on this or any other additional function.

The EWC is a relatively young organisation and since its inception in 2015 has seen the number of registrants increase by more than 50%. As such, it is important that EWC is given the time to focus on their existing core functions.

The Welsh Government will continue to follow a partnership approach in order to develop a high quality education profession, as set out in our national mission; instead of having one body take overall control.

In the development of the new standards the Welsh Government ensured there was an unprecedented level of involvement of the sector in developing and testing the standards, which included workshops, consortia events, trialing of the draft standards by practitioners in schools, as well as the formal consultation. The EWC played its part and, together with Estyn and the workforce unions, were kept informed of developments throughout the process.

Financial Implications – None. If Welsh Government had chosen to accept this recommendation as a core function of the EWC, any associated costs would have been met by practitioners' registration fee.

Recommendation 21

The Committee recommends that the remit of the Education Workforce Council should be extended to provide it with power to suspend teachers in appropriate circumstances.

Response: Accept in principle

The Welsh Government can confirm that we are in dialogue with the EWC over their continued request for Interim Suspension Order (ISO) powers.

The Welsh Government has sought conclusive evidence from the EWC as to the consequences that flowed from historical cases, where the EWC believe that an ISO power would have been an important safeguarding measure; and

the consequences due to the lack of such a power, which would otherwise have been avoided. To date this information has not been forthcoming, including instances where the employer has failed to act accordingly.

The provision of such evidence is vitally important in order for the Welsh Government to determine whether a change in the law is appropriate. Such evidence would inform the drafting of any legislative provision if that is needed, and assist in setting out the justification that would be needed during a consultation exercise and during the scrutiny of the proposed legislative change by the Assembly.

The use of ISO powers can have serious consequences for the practitioner involved. Whilst suspension is meant to be a neutral act it can create a stigma for the person concerned even if cleared of all wrong-doing. Equally, there may be evidence that in some cases an ISO would be appropriate. There have however, been several cases where the courts have found that regulatory bodies have acted unlawfully in the imposition of such an order.

The effect of removing a practitioner from the EWC Register following a charge or exceptional cases on arrest is that the employer would be obliged to immediately suspend them from their position; an action that the employer may determine is not warranted, if the case does not present serious and urgent risk to public safety.

Financial Implications – There are no financial implications for the Welsh Government as core functions of the EWC are met by the registration fees of practitioners. If however, the EWC were to be granted ISO powers in the future they may seek a fee increase to cover the cost of additional work that would be undertaken through increased numbers of Fitness to Practice hearings.

Recommendation 22

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary must ensure that there is full access to professional development for supply teachers.

Response: Accept

Schools are responsible for the continuing professional development of all staff including supply teachers. The Ministerial Supply Model Taskforce recommended that consideration be given to support the professional learning of supply teachers, particularly NQTs. Work is underway to roll-out personal access to Hwb for all supply teachers and to consider alongside the regional Consortia options to support their on-going professional learning and development to support Welsh education priorities. All registered supply teachers also have access to PLPs.

NQTs participating in the school-based supply cluster pilot announced in October 17 will benefit from professional development and performance management arrangements. Supply teachers employed by commercial recruitment agencies can also benefit from core training programmes on offer as part of the contractual arrangement between supply teacher and employing agency.

Financial Implications – Costs associated with access to Hwb, Consortia training programmes and supply cluster pilots can be met from within existing programme budgets.

Recommendation 23

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary should ensure that there is greater support for the use of the Professional Learning Passport given its potential, and the resources already spent on it. Increased levels of support could be informed through an evaluation of the current PLP, its use and the barriers to take up.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government continues to work closely with the EWC and practitioners to ensure that there is a seamless experience of engaging with Welsh Government platforms by linking all our online resources. This work will enable practitioners to not only identify their professional learning requirements but access the tools and resources to enable them to improve their practice and share resources and experiences with colleagues and the wider educational workforce.

Professional learning should be planned, recorded and reflected upon in the Professional Learning Passport (PLP) in the context of the professional standards.

In order to increase PLP usage the Welsh Government and the EWC need to be confident that the PLP meets practitioners' needs so increasing numbers are convinced about the perceived value of engaging with the PLP. This work is ongoing and includes the evaluation of the PLPs current functionality.

A new practitioner feedback facility has recently been embedded into the Passport. Welsh Government and EWC have also established a number of practitioner stakeholder groups to gather feedback from existing users engaging with the new professional standards and the induction profile for new qualified teachers.

EWC will also engage with non PLP users to identify areas for future improvement, with a drive towards a practitioner led Passport. Engaging with EWC to determine a creative way forward should now be a priority.

Financial Implications – None. Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

Recommendation 24

The Committee recommends that The Cabinet Secretary should explore the potential to build greater synergy between the Professional Learning Passport and the Welsh Government's online resource, Hwb.

Response: **Accept in principle**

Regular meetings are held between the Education Workforce Council and the Welsh Government's Digital Learning Unit, to discuss roadmaps for the Professional Learning Passport and the Hwb platform. These sessions aim to explore potential synergies between the platforms and to support an improved user journey. Given the future emphasis on digital platforms to support both teachers and learners, priority needs to be given to seek synergies from Hwb to as many relevant platforms as possible.

Financial Implications – None at present.

Recommendation 25

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary should evaluate the impact of Hwb to establish how it can be further used to help benefit the workforce.

Response: **Accept in principle**

The Learning in Digital Wales programme underwent a full independent evaluation in 2015, with the report being published (<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/evaluation-implementation-learning-digital-wales-programme/?lang=en>) in October 2016.

In June 2017 a further independent evaluation took place as part of the option appraisal around the digital tools that stakeholders wished to include in Hwb.

Further evaluations will be considered in due course.

Financial Implications – None at present.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The education workforce is not currently prepared for the implementation of the new curriculum.

There is a vast amount of professional learning activity being designed and delivered across Wales. I am focused on implementing a clear methodology for professional learning based around:

- Reflective practice
- Effective use of data and research evidence
- Effective collaboration
- Coaching and mentoring

The approach to professional learning and the new curriculum are being developed in tandem to ensure that immediate and emerging professional learning requirements are taken forward in a planned and structured way.

At the root of current reforms is our goal of developing a self-improving system. That is a deliberate step away from the top-down approach of the past, where the Government directs, instructs and sanctions, to one where it provides strategic leadership, facilitation and support.

There has been a significant investment by all consortia regions to develop capacity to support the transition to a school led system through networks, triads and mentors to support school to school working focused on practitioner inquiry and joint practice development.

To enhance capacity in schools in Wales, we have an ambition to develop all schools as learning organisations (SLOs). Since January 2017, we have been working in partnership with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and regional consortia to support this ambition. Over 2,000 practitioners across Wales have contributed to early pilot programmes with rollout to all schools in Wales planned for later this year.

The new professional standards reflect the commitment to continuous improvement and collaboration, by supporting practitioners to strive for sustained excellent practice from initial training through to school leadership. The new standards will set the bar to ensure they have the skills, knowledge and behaviours necessary to develop leadership capacity at all levels.

2. The causes of ITE course targets being missed must be addressed and remedied in order to provide the quality of teaching that is required, increase teacher numbers, and fill places. Of particular concern is the more acute problem of the lack of teachers in specific places.

Initial teacher education is currently undergoing reforms following the recommendations made in Professor Furlong's 2015 report *Teaching Tomorrows Teachers*. The Report noted that the current initial teacher education in Wales was not of the required quality to develop the teachers we need now and in the future.

New criteria for the accreditation of initial teacher education programmes, specifically designed to raise the standard of initial teacher training and to underpin the development of quality teachers, was published in March 2017. In addition, I have empowered the Education Workforce Council (EWC) to accredit individual ITE programmes, through the establishment of the Teacher Education Accreditation Board. The establishment of the board will enable more specific consideration of how the programmes will raise the quality of provision – attracting the right people with the right skills, qualifications and an aptitude for teaching, to enter the profession.

The Board will scrutinise every programme of ITE submitted to ensure that every programme is demanding, credible and professionally appropriate. This interrogation will include scrutiny of the ITE Partnerships' recruitment strategies for filling their allocated places and reaching their targets with high calibre and highly capable candidates.

We want Wales to be as attractive as possible for students training to be teachers. At the end of last year, we announced new and improved incentives to teach priority subjects such as physics, chemistry, computer science, maths, Welsh and modern foreign languages. From initial teacher education, into the classroom and through career-long professional learning, our national approach focusses on ensuring and further developing a high-quality teaching profession. We believe that this, together with a new curriculum, a new approach to the Foundation Phase and a commitment to professional learning will help attract the very best teachers to Wales.

To this end I have recently established the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Advisory Board. The Advisory Board will provide the challenge, rigour and quality assurance to inform key areas of workforce planning policy development, including implications arising from the Welsh Language Strategy – *Cymraeg 2050*. The Advisory Board will also provide expert advice to the Welsh Government on the continued progress of ITE reform and supporting the existing teaching workforce, taking into account excellent practice elsewhere in the UK and internationally.

My officials have also commissioned a key piece of research regarding Teacher Retention and Attractiveness in Wales with the final report expected in the autumn 2018.

3. That more education research in Wales is required, and the number of Wales specific education reforms would benefit from greater levels of academic scrutiny and analysis.

The Welsh Government recognises the need for academic scrutiny and analysis on our reforms. 'Education in Wales' includes an objective to "build the knowledge, expertise and research base of the self-improving system by supporting collaborations within and between schools, regional consortia and higher education institutions and committing to sharing research evidence and effective practice across the system". The Welsh Government has engaged with partners such as the OECD and the Education Endowment Foundation to enhance the use of evidence and research and its link to policy through continuing to invest in building research capacity at all levels of the system. This is in addition to commissioning independent evaluations of key aspects of the reforms.

The Research Strategic Objectives of the Welsh Government are to:

- Deliver the vision 'A National Mission' by ensuring more high quality education research is produced and informs policy and practice.
- Develop a 'self-improving' teaching system in which teachers are research-informed and research literate.
- The above to lead to more decisions being based on evidence about what works to allow resources to be focused where they will be most effective"

4. Teachers' professional development should be valued in its own right, and recognised as tool to support teacher growth, rather than as a performance management tool.

Actively participating in professional learning is a primary responsibility of every practitioner to ensure their practice is critically informed and up to date. It would not be appropriate to dictate what professional learning a practitioner should undertake, because everyone is different, however, the professional standards reinforce the expectation that all professional learning should be collaborative, coherent and research-led; ultimately challenging thinking and changing practice. The impact will be seen in the embedding of the four purposes into the learning and experiences of all our learners.

The Welsh Government's national commitment to continuous professional learning is reflected in the new professional standards for teaching and leadership. In line with the agreed principles of the new professional standards, staff should be fully engaged in identifying the aims and priorities for their own professional learning. In line with the new leadership standards, school leaders have a vital role in making this happen by ensuring that the school's culture promotes and supports professional learning. Aligned with the shift towards a self improving system, the standards have **not** been designed for use as a capability tool, linked to performance management.

A school as a learning organisation (SLO) has a supportive culture and invests time and other resources to ensure teachers can meet these standards. One of the seven SLO dimensions focuses on '*creating and supporting continuous learning opportunities for all staff.*' Staff who are part of a school that is a learning organisation take responsibility for their professional learning. They are fully engaged in identifying the aims and priorities for their own learning in line with school goals and pupil learning needs, as defined in the school's development plan. The staff's professional learning is also based on continuous assessment and feedback that are built into their daily practice. Such reflection, analysis and challenges to established thinking patterns are necessary to bring about and embed the desired change and innovation in educational practice in our schools.

There can be no organisational learning without individual learning, but individual learning must be shared and disseminated by the organisation and its members.

Kirsty Williams, AM, Cabinet Secretary for Education