**Strategic Briefing: Education Reform, Professional Learning and the Digital Dimension**

**Seminar for Lithuanian Educators, January 2023**

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**The Context of this Briefing**

**The Curriculum**

* Five years (plus) of co-construction with schools and strategic partners
* A fundamental change to the way we think about curriculum – from national prescription to subsidiarity and school-level curriculum making
* A ‘purposes driven’ curriculum focusing on the holistic outcomes of schooling and not just knowledge, skills and attitudes – ‘the people we make’
* Live September 2022 for all primary schools
* Half of secondary schools have voluntarily adopted for Y7, September 2022
* Relevant to this briefing
  + Digital competence as a cross-curricula skills framework
  + Science and Technology as one of six Areas of Learning and Experience

**Professional Learning**

**For all of these and others not mentioned, see:**

[Professional development - Hwb (gov.wales)](https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development) – content describing policy and providing guidance

and

[Policy insight events - Hwb (gov.wales)](https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/policy-insight-events) – recording of the events we run for schools – wide policy area coverage

**PLE** – new Professional Learning Entitlement focuses on equity of access and consistency of quality of provision across the country.

See:

[National Professional Learning Entitlement - Hwb (gov.wales)](https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/national-professional-learning-entitlement)

**Research and Enquiry – NSERE** – Many strands of the strategy are now operational, including collaborative research programmes between HEIs, school-based enquiry programmes and a pedagogy and learning design focused research collaborative

See:

[The National Strategy for Educational Research and Enquiry (NSERE): vision document | GOV.WALES](https://gov.wales/national-strategy-educational-research-and-enquiry-nsere-vision-document)

[National professional enquiry project - Hwb (gov.wales)](https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/national-professional-enquiry-project)

[National pedagogy project - Hwb (gov.wales)](https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/national-pedagogy-project)

**The National MA**

* Operational – 250+ enrolled and several pathways, inc. ALN, Leadership and Curriculum Design
* Continue to fund, and clarify eligibility for funded places
* Now funding the development of a follow-on Ed.D as part of sustainability plan

See: [National MA (Masters) in Education (Wales) - Hwb (gov.wales)](https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/national-ma-masters-in-education-wales)

**Schools as Learning Organisations, the National Resource for Evaluation and Improvement, the Professional Standards**

* Continue to be core architecture for school and individual improvement
* Headline – SLO expanding to WGLO and Wales as a Learning Country in collaboration with OECD
* Headline – NREI now live and in use
* Headline – new push on the relationship between Professional Standards and Teacher Appraisal

See:

[Schools as learning organisations - Hwb (gov.wales)](https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/schools-as-learning-organisations/?_ga=2.12309812.1813323380.1668498545-1905174236.1656393066)

[The national resource: evaluation and improvement - Hwb (gov.wales)](https://hwb.gov.wales/evaluation-improvement-and-accountability/the-national-resource-evaluation-and-improvement)

[Professional standards - Hwb (gov.wales)](https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/professional-standards/)

**Remote Asynchronous learning Design**

* Developed as ‘e-learning’ content in response to quality issues during covid
* Five modules that focus on using classroom practice as the basis for creating asynchronous remote learning resources and experiences
* Offer practical advice to help practitioners develop resources that will engage learners, enable learning and continue effective provision outside of the classroom
* Freely available in English and Wales on the open web

See:

[Repository - Hwb (gov.wales)](https://hwb.gov.wales/repository/resource/0078d8f2-f161-4867-b373-229ed63f2a47)

**Post COVID – Learning Continuity and Digital and Blended Learning**

* Creation of a Learning Continuity Branch in Welsh Government – high Ministerial priority
* Focus on preparing for **disruption from any cause** – guidance and planning template issued to schools in December 2022
* Digital and Blended Learning Plan for Wales as post-COVID response and new normal – focus on:
  + Leadership and Culture
  + Professional Learning and Innovation
  + Curriculum, Provision and Pedagogy
  + Education Technology

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[Digital Professional Learning Journey - Hwb (gov.wales)](https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/digital-professional-learning-journey/)

**Next Steps in the Development of our National Digital and Blended Learning Plan**

The DPLJ has now to be converted into a national digital and blended learning plan – key principles include:

* **Policy coherence** – the development of the plan must recognise ongoing reform priorities, including ensuring learning continuity, developing the skills of teachers, reform of the school day, meeting the needs of disadvantaged learners and community focused schools
* **A lean Welsh Government team** – we have limited resources in the WG for this, so we need to keep the team lean and maximise the impact of collaborative working
* **Strategic partner collaboration** – it is essential that our partners in the field play their part in the development and ownership of the plan
* **Co-construction with schools** – this plan, like our curriculum, will be developed jointly with schools using co-construction from first principles

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**Appendix: Wales in the World**

Wales is a small country of just over three million people with some but not all legislative and regulatory powers delegated from the UK Government – among these is Education. For this reason, we are keen to engage with other countries across the world, and to learn from countries like us and different from us. The summary below shows a range of areas in which we work with partners across the globe.

**British Council Wales**

Summary of areas of work:

* The Welsh Language Project in Patagonia
* Language Assistants Programme
* Lesotho Teacher Placement Programme
* International Professional Learning Communities
* Support for the Confucius Institute
* The Welsh-Argentina Society
* Dolen Cymru
* Routes into Languages Cymru
* Cardiff University
* Welsh Centre for International Affairs

**Holocaust Education Trust**

* HET delivers the Lessons from Auschwitz Project, which takes upwards of 80 Welsh students aged 16-18 from school sixth forms and colleges each year on a visit to Auschwitz.
* HET were able to adapt to the challenges posed by the travel restrictions by developing a ground-breaking, interactive, digital platform and successfully delivered the programme virtually in 2021 and 2022

**Umeå-Wales Collaborative International Doctoral Experience for Education PhD/EdD Candidates**

* Joint project between The School of Education’s Educational Sciences Postgraduate School at Umeå University, Sweden and Bangor University to match 30 students per HEI on a week-long collaborative project

**Atlantic Rim Collaboratory (ARC)**

* Wales is a member of ARC, which is a global educational movement that advances equity, broad excellence, inclusion, wellbeing, democracy, sustainability & human rights in high quality, professionally run systems

**OECD**

* Wales has a long term and strategic relationship with the OECD education team. OECD has contributed as critical friend to our reform journey, undertaking a range of country diagnostic visits charting progress in realising our reform and improvement journey
* Wales and OECD are working together to expand the Schools as Learning Organisations (SLO) model to middle tier and government levels, but also to develop learning country models by applying SLO to the whole system. Includes work for Wales to support SLO development in other territories

See: [Developing Schools as Learning Organisations in Wales | en | OECD](https://www.oecd.org/education/developing-schools-as-learning-organisations-in-wales-9789264307193-en.htm)

**Consortium of Institutions for Development and Research in Education in Europe (CIDREE)**

* The CIDREE network promotes the exchange of information and expertise among professional educators. Its members are the lead organisation in their countries for providing professional policy advice to Ministers on key aspects of education

See: [Cidree – Consortium of Institutions for Development and Research in Education in Europe](https://www.cidree.org/))

**Taith**

* Offers pupils and staff at Welsh schools opportunities to participate in transformative and life changing mobilities abroad. They provide opportunities for schools to enrich the learning of their pupils, the learning and professional development of their staff, and to work in partnership to develop new ideas and ways of teaching, including development of the new curriculum for Wales

**MIT Global Teaching Labs**

* A partnership initiative between the Welsh Government’s Education Directorate and MIT’s International Science & Technology Initiatives (MISTI) office. The programme enables primary schools, secondary schools & further education colleges across Wales to draw on the STEM expertise of instructors from the world’s top science university through short, high-impact teaching placements and cultural immersion experiences

See: [MIT Global Teaching Labs in Wales (gtlwales.online)](https://gtlwales.online/)

**National Academy for Educational Leadership (NAEL)**

NAEL appoints an annual cohort of Associates who are “thought leaders” for the education system in Wales in developing new and better ways of doing things in schools. In order to equip the Associates to fulfil this role they are exposed to system leadership in an international context which impacts on the development of the NAEL and supports improving standards for schools.

See: [Home - National Leadership Wales (nael.cymru)](https://nael.cymru/)

**World Education Summit**

See: [World Education Summit 2023 - World Education Summit | Global Education Conference (worldedsummit.com)](https://www.worldedsummit.com/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIqMbMsLuy-wIVBt7tCh2KWgW-EAAYASAAEgIdN_D_BwE)

The Summit is an annual virtual gathering of the greatest minds in education, passionate teachers and leaders from all over the world. In 2020 and 2021 we funded a number of spaces for education practitioners to attend and to have a year’s access to the resources from the Summit. For the first time in 2022 the Summit included a specially curated Wales Stage, which gave a global platform to education professionals based in Wales.

Update:

* Year One – bulk-procured tickets for over 2,500 Welsh delegates
* Year Two – tickets for up to 5,000 delegates, and a Welsh ‘stage’ showcasing our academic and school improvement work
* Year Three (March 2023) – up to 10,000 tickets, a Welsh stage and collaborative presentations on the global stage for SLO, Initial Teacher Ed and our work with the ARC
* Year Three – extend the opportunity to access the WES to further groups, including LA Education staff, schools’ Chairs of Governors, others being considered
* Year Three – deepen the impact by working with SI partners to integrate WES into school PL and INSET

**European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education**

Wales is a member of this independent organisation that acts as a platform for collaboration for its member countries, working towards ensuring more inclusive education systems.

**ERYICA (European youth information and counselling agency)**

A European network of national and regional organisations which aims to promote co-operation in the field of youth information work and services. The overarching aim is to uphold the right of young people to full and reliable information, which helps them to make informed choices, promotes their autonomy and ability to think critically, and underpins their full and active participation in society.

**Network for the Promotion of Linguistic Diversity**

European wide network working in the field of language policy and planning for Constitutional, Regional and Small-State Languages across Europe. Exchanges best practices on language planning and to promote the use of minority languages in education.

**Global Teacher Education Community**

A developing project which aims to give the teacher education sector in Wales a platform and online community to discuss, develop approaches and generally share wisdom with the global teacher education community. HEI stakeholders are currently developing a paper outlining the scope, aims and objectives of project.

Update – we have agreed to launch the GCoTE in March 2023 in the WES