

# Effective Practice from Primary SIGs and Pathfinders in the Central South Region



2017



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*Whilst CSC have made every effort to quality assure the practices that are detailed in the case studies and have asked for all submitted case studies to include two examples of where the effective practice has been recognised, CSC cannot guarantee the accuracy, completeness or quality of the information provided.*

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# Introduction

The Central South Consortium vision since its inception has been to develop a **high quality school led system of professional learning** in order for the region's learners to achieve the best possible outcomes; and for its practitioners to have an entitlement to a wide range of opportunities to develop their practice throughout their careers. Professional learning is key to improving the quality of leadership, teaching and learning.

Through the **Central South Wales Challenge**, schools are able to work collaboratively to meet the varied needs of their schools. The **Pathfinders** and **School Improvement Groups (SIGs)** are two methods by which the ambition of building a school led self improving system is being realised and by which the quality of leadership, teaching and learning are developing across the region.

This set of case studies focuses particularly on the work of schools in partnership in the primary sector. At present, there are 33 primary School Improvement Groups, with 270 schools engaged in school-to-school working. Headteachers, senior leaders, middle leaders, classroom teachers, teaching assistants as well as pupils are directly involved in SIG work. The focus of SIGs varies, with key areas of work centred on improving outcomes in literacy/numeracy, improving pedagogy, developing digital technology as well as improving leadership at all levels. Working within SIGS has many great benefits, not least, building capacity at all levels as well as sharing and creative practice through joint practice development. This is a fantastic testimony to collaborative working, some of the fruits of which can be seen in this publication.

Pathfinders provide schools with a different level of support; they are **intensive pairings of schools** developing a **specific area**. The pairings are mutually beneficial, allowing the building of capacity, the strengthening of leadership and channelling the impact directly to classroom level. We are now on our 4th cohort of pathfinder schools, with nearly 40 pairings.

Innovation projects are designed to focus specifically on the pedagogy of learning and teaching. This area aims to support schools in their move to the

new curriculum, being creative in their thinking and innovating collaboratively.

There is so much to celebrate in the work of our schools. A further publication detailing the work of the secondary sector, as well as further innovation projects and the work of the hubs and pioneers will be forthcoming in the summer term.

If you wish to share your work or engage in discussions of learning and teaching in your school, please contact our Strategic Lead Andrea May - [andrea.may@cscjes.org.uk](mailto:andrea.may@cscjes.org.uk).



# Supporting Vulnerable Learners

## Schools in this Partnership

YGG Llyn y Forwyn  
Gwaelod y Garth Primary  
All Saints CiW Primary

### Context of Research

To use LEGO education Build to Express (BTE) as a 'therapy' to support targeted pupils who are identified as having a social or emotional need or who find it difficult to articulate their feelings and emotions:

- Use BTE to provide pupils with a 'voice' which allows them to show their feelings in pictorial form. The LEGO kit enables pupils, who would not otherwise be able to verbalise their feelings and opinions, to communicate as equals;
- Use BTE to create a highly motivational, non-judgemental environment for pupils to express their thoughts and feelings. This type of LEGO comprises a kit containing a wide range of LEGO elements that represent ready-made metaphors which provide a scaffold for exploring or articulating feelings;
- Create a shared 'pool' of LEGO BTE resources to undertake LEGO 'therapy' strategies across the schools involved and conduct action research into the efficacy of the support;
- Share good practice in effective LEGO 'therapy' via school-to-school working and shared training
- Train teachers, higher level teaching assistants, learning support assistants and governors in the use of LEGO Build To Express (BTE) to support targeted and vulnerable pupils (via All Saints Specialist Centre School LEGO education training programmes);
- Use BTE training to enhance emotional literacy training strategies used to support targeted and vulnerable pupils as well as those with social and emotional needs in order to improve their wellbeing; and
- Involve ELSAs directly in the sharing of practice between schools in the SIG triad and with other SIGs.

### Standards/ Outcomes

The schools have systems in place to track the wellbeing of pupils targeted as having social or emotional needs which are impacting on their learning. Targets are set, along with appropriate interventions/ programmes of support, to improve attainment or address emotional needs.

Analysis of NBAR/ SELFIE (Vale version of NBAR) data is being used effectively to identify or target pupils causing concern, monitor their progress over the year and from one year to the next.

NBAR/ SELFIE data shows evidence that the targeted, vulnerable pupils have built confidence and self-esteem and levels of anger and/ or anxiety have lessened. Relationships with others have improved. There is evidence of improved attainment (eg pupils have made 2 sub-levels of progress over the year and are now at or above expected levels of attainment at the end of Foundation Phase (FP) and key stage 2).

WG test results 15-16 (increase in attainment at 115+).

### Teaching

Training to develop staff knowledge, understanding and skills in supporting pupils who have social and emotional needs has been provided via ELSA training/ attendance at the Specialist Centre training programmes held at All Saints and by effective school-to-school sharing of practice.

Key staff in all schools are confident in their knowledge, understanding and skills in the use of LEGO education BTE strategies.

Schools have reviewed the different areas of the curriculum where BTE can be implemented and, where appropriate, BTE is identified in the whole school policy for that area (ie All Saints' school policies for religious education (RE) and wellbeing).

### Leadership

Involvement in the triad has led to schools being more confident to identify vulnerable learners, target support and track progress. Schools have disseminated Pathfinder Triad action research with

staff and governors via whole school INSET, visits and headteacher reports to the governing body.

Schools have incorporated the SIG Pathfinder action plan into priority targets within their school improvement plans (SIP) for 2016-17.

Headteachers and members of the senior leadership team (SLT) are confident trying new ideas and taking risks based on the experiences and judgements of peers within the triad. Headteachers have valued learning from each other's experiences and recommendations.

Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA) are confident trying new ideas and taking risks based on the experiences and judgements of peers within the triad.

## Building Capacity

Practice has been shared with regard to wider uses of LEGO Education to support pupils at other times in the school day.

### All Saints

A weekly after school club focused on LEGO BTE is now offered. Pupils also have access to LEGO Education resources during Breakfast Club and at lunchtimes.

### YGG Llyn y Forwyn

The school has developed *Lolfa LEGO*, as well as a dedicated wellbeing suite which provides a calm yet inspiring environment in which to facilitate the work of the ELSAs and nurture and support their vulnerable pupils.

### Gwaelod y Garth Primary

The school has developed a dedicated wellbeing 'Cwtch' to deliver ELSA-led interventions using LEGO BTE)

Findings and effective strategies have been shared with schools within and outside of SIG 22.

Practice and action research is being shared with other schools.

## Unexpected Benefits

YGG Llyn y Forwyn is now providing INSET to share its practice with other Welsh-medium primaries.

Opportunity to share practice via the 'Synergy in Our System' conference workshop in January 2016.

Article in the Parliamentary Review highlighting good practice in Education in Wales Edition 2015-16 (partnership between All Saints CiW Primary and YGG Llyn y Forwyn).

Links with other SIG groups and local authority clusters who have heard about the SIG's work and have sought advice to implement LEGO Education/ BTE at their schools (especially at Welsh-medium schools)

All Saints is now piloting a project (via a Llandaff Diocesan Schools' professional learning community (PLC) to explore the use of BTE to support the values curriculum, the school ethos, wellbeing, RE and collective worship

All Saints has shared the work of the SIG Pathfinder and PLC above to provide INSET for RE/ wellbeing co-ordinators at faith schools across the Llandaff (CSC) and Monmouth (EAS) dioceses and Roman Catholic schools in the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Cardiff.

All Saints has shared the work of the SIG Pathfinder/ PLC above to provide INSET for diocesan schools' officers and people working in children's ministry/ clergy and student clergy.

All Saints has shared the work of the SIG Pathfinder and PLC above to lead INSET for other faith schools in the diocese.

# Improving Foundation Phase Provision and Developing Subject Leadership

## Schools in this Partnership

Ffynnon Taf Primary  
Tref-y-Rhyg Primary

### Context of Research

Tref-y-Rhyg Primary was supported by Ffynnon Taf Primary. The main focus of the work was on Foundation Phase and literacy leadership. Leaders from

the Foundation Phase in both schools worked together to look at best practice provision, organisation of accommodation, topic planning, phonics approaches and data tracking. In addition, the literacy leads for each school met to look at a writing scheme and the impact this had on standards at Ffynnon Taf.

The main aims were to restructure the Foundation Phase department in Tref-y-Rhyg, develop robust assessment and tracking processes and develop the teaching of writing leading to improved standards. In addition, science leaders met to develop, plan and deliver a science week in each school with the aim of raising standards in this area.

### Standards / Outcomes

The confidence of Foundation Phase staff, as well as standards at Tref-y-Rhyg during 2015-16 have improved compared to the previous year and original targets.

### Teaching

Teachers in Tref-y-Rhyg are now following a structure to ensure consistency in the delivery of writing lessons.

Teachers from Tref-y-Rhyg and Ffynnon Taf took part in a sharing best practice in literacy conference provided by the Hawthorn cluster. Both schools took away many ideas and strategies from this day and agreed to trial some of the approaches and feed back to each other during autumn 2016.

Foundation Phase provision in Tref-y-Rhyg is now more cohesive with the philosophy of the Foundation Phase.

### Leadership

Foundation Phase leadership has improved in both schools. Tref-y-Rhyg's FP leader was supported by Ffynnon Taf's FP leader to develop a strategic overview of her department. This has led to many changes in a short space of time. In turn, this has led to the professional development and enhanced leadership skills of Ffynnon Taf's FP leader.

The assessment leader at Tref-y-Rhyg has been empowered to use existing resources at the school to develop a robust and effective assessment tracking system.

### Building Capacity

The effectiveness of the middle leaders in both schools has improved. This allows work that has begun in the Pathfinder Partnership to be sustainable and developed further.

### Unexpected Benefits

While Ffynnon Taf were originally partnered to support Tref-y-Rhyg, both staff have learned from good practice in both settings. This has included impact trackers for vulnerable groups and an exciting structure for a whole school science week that Ffynnon Taf has since adopted as a termly event.

# Meeting the Needs of Learners at Risk of Exclusion

## Schools in this Partnership

Greenhill Special School  
The Court School

### Context of Research

The Pathfinder focused on developing leadership and meeting the needs of learners at risk of exclusion. Working towards the Inclusion Quality Mark standard

helped to focus on the inclusion of all learners but specifically those with ADHD whose behaviour can be particularly challenging. The Court School was supported by Greenhill Special School.

### Standards/ Outcomes

#### *School A:*

Learners achieving the Level 1 threshold in 2016 was the highest ever achieved – 50% of Year 11 and 57% of all learners entered.

The average number of qualifications achieved was 10.6, up from 8.6 in 2015.

The KS4 point score was the highest ever achieved by non-FSM learners (up from 57 to 155); and eFSM learners (up from 125 to 128).

#### *School B:*

The majority of pupils made at least 6 months progress in their reading age, with 40% of pupils tested making 12 months+ progress.

All groups made good progress (LAC and FSM) with regard to the development of oracy and writing relative to their baselines in September.

63% of pupils made 12+ improvement and 37% made 6 months+ progress in their numeracy skills over a 6 month period.

76.9% (10/13 pupils in the Language Intervention group) showed an improvement in standardised scores by at least 1 point compared to 67% in 2014-15.

All Foundation Phase pupils made good progress in terms of Phonic Skills and Language Development and achieved their targets (>50% of the year they were assessed to be working at on the LNF).

Fixed-term exclusion rates have stabilised and have reduced significantly since 2014-15.

### Teaching

Focused lesson observations are now more structured and robust through using Continua and the Estyn Framework.

Staff have accessed training with regard to ASD and have used strategies to support individuals and classes and this is improving pupils' access to the curriculum. Staff have a much better understanding of the impact of ADHD on learning.

Lego Therapy and BTE have been used effectively to support pupils' emotional literacy, social and communication skills on an individual and group basis.

Individual learning programmes have been planned and delivered both on and off the school site alongside new/ additional vocational courses being explored for 2016-17.

### Leadership

School leaders have a better understanding of the impact of ADHD on learning.

School leaders delivered performance management in a more robust and rigorous fashion linked to performance against Teaching Standards. All teaching assistants were also involved in performance of practice review and areas of further professional development were identified.

### Building Capacity

Joint training sessions with special and mainstream schools are building capacity across sectors.

Staff training in ADHD was delivered by the ADHD Foundation.

### Unexpected Benefits

The Inclusion Quality Mark Award assessment highlights many examples of good inclusive practice which could be shared more extensively with other schools.



# Raising Standards in Mathematics and Numeracy

## Schools in this Partnership

Mynydd Cynffig Primary  
Llansannor Primary

## Context of Research

Staff from Llansannor Primary were supported by Mynydd Cynffig Primary. From the outset there was a clear, focused remit for the work:

- Raise standards in mathematics and numeracy, particularly at level 5 at key stage 2 and Outcomes 5 and 6 in Foundation Phase;
- Improve pupil performance and narrow the gap through effective feedback and marking;
- Develop a professional network of support between both schools that may extend beyond the Pathfinder project timescales;
- Allow teachers time out of class to engage collaboratively in professional dialogue and practice around key SIP target areas;
- Professionally develop teams within both schools: supported school will benefit from developing newly formed SLT's leadership skills and lead school will further strengthen team work following recent amalgamation; and
- Improve outcomes for children through delivering an impact driven, whole school approach to two key school improvement areas.

## Standards/ Outcomes

Increased emphasis on numeracy throughout the school has led to a clear increase in the school's 'numeracy rich' environment. Pupils' confidence in relation to speaking and discussing numerical problems has improved, as noted during numeracy monitoring.

## Foundation Phase Outcomes

	Mathematical Development O5 or better	Mathematical Development O6 or better
<b>All pupils</b> (50 = 2%)	45 (90%)	15 (30%)
<b>Boys</b> (29 = 3.5%)	24 (82.76%)	9 (42.86%)
<b>Girls</b> (21 = 4.76%)	21 (100%)	2 (20%)
<b>FSM</b> (10 = 10%)	10 (100%)	2 (20%)
<b>Non-FSM</b> (40 = 2.5%)	35 (87.5%)	13 (32.5%)

## Key Stage 2 Levels

	Mathematical Development O5 or better	Mathematical Development O6 or better
<b>All pupils</b> (50 = 2%)	45 (90%)	15 (30%)
<b>Boys</b> (29 = 3.5%)	24 (82.76%)	9 (42.86%)
<b>Girls</b> (21 = 4.76%)	21 (100%)	2 (20%)
<b>FSM</b> (10 = 10%)	10 (100%)	2 (20%)
<b>Non-FSM</b> (40 = 2.5%)	35 (87.5%)	13 (32.5%)

## Teaching

Book scrutiny, listening to learners and lesson observations revealed a clear improvement in both the quality and quantity of numerical reasoning and problem solving work in comparison to previous monitoring.

Following the observation of Numicon-based sessions in Llansannor Primary, Mynydd Cynffig Primary plans to increase their use of Numicon apparatus, beginning with nursery classes from autumn 2016. This reciprocal relationship has been a real strength of the Pathfinder work.



## **Leadership**

The numeracy leaders within both schools had the opportunity to engage collaboratively in professional dialogue. Both report that this has grown their leadership skills in supporting the development of numeracy in a school other than their own.

Both schools were able to develop teams: the supported school benefitted from developing the newly formed SLT's leadership skills, and the lead school further strengthened team work following a recent amalgamation.

## **Building Capacity**

The schools' partnership has had a clearly impact on numeracy. The creation of numeracy rich environments has led to increased confidence in discussing numerical problems.

Also, the increase in numerical reasoning and problem solving has led to teachers and pupils being more confident. Following amalgamation, there is the opportunity to engage collaboratively in discussions about ways forward for numeracy that has improved the school's ability to improve future cross-curricular implementation of numeracy.

# Improving Extended Writing

## Schools in this Partnership

Meadowlane Primary  
Glan-yr-Afon Primary

### Context of Research

Glan-yr-Afon was supported by Meadowlane. Staff worked in pairs within their phase (Foundation Phase, KS2a, KS2b) to visit each school. The focus of this was examples of marking and assessment for learning (AfL) and extended writing. Teachers in the supported school were able to see how marking can enable pupil progress effectively and, in light of this, changes have been made to policy and practice to improve learner outcomes.

### Standards/ Outcomes

Good progress has been seen in focused marking. Listening to learners shows improvements in this area. Glan-yr-Afon has exceeded the targets that were set.

### Teaching

Following feedback from the school visit and discussion at Glan-yr-Afon with staff and the challenge adviser, the following changes to policy and practice have been made:

- Learning objective and set criteria set out in pupil workbooks by teachers;
- Marking to be carried out wherever possible during the lesson, with wish (one will suffice) and star to be used to ensure pupils are able to amend their work or meet their challenge immediately;
- Success for All to be reduced to three sessions with a reading bias. Two days of extended writing to be introduced – planning, drafting and redrafting; and
- Development of pupils' accountability for reaching targets.

Book scrutiny and listening to learners show that the changes to policy and practice are having a positive impact on provision; pupils are increasingly engaged in their learning and keen to use focused targets to improve.

The development of extended writing has been a key aspect of the work through introducing 'talk to write'.

### Leadership

Through the collaborative work, subject leaders have been empowered to lead and manage their subject areas within the school. The headteacher has linked this distributed leadership to the performance management cycle to ensure that middle leaders and subject leaders are increasingly accountable for their areas of responsibility and are working within the school cycle of self evaluation.

Marking and AfL strategies have been developed. These were initially trialed by the AfL curriculum leaders and then presented to staff.

The role of the literacy co-ordinator has been developed. Staff have been presented with an extended writing timetable. Alongside this, staff have been supported in the development of techniques and content.

### Building Capacity

Staff now use book scrutiny to ensure that response to recommendations continues and develops.

Subject leader development ensures that the leadership of key development areas in the school is sustainable.

### Unexpected Benefits

The development of the relationship between two schools has been valued. There are now opportunities for SLT, curriculum leaders and class teachers to share good practice and ideas.

Sharing of resources and INSET sessions has allowed staff to see first-hand how initiatives and resources can be used.

# Improving Learning and Teaching

## Schools in this Partnership

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg  
Santes Tudful

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg  
Ynyswen

## Context of Research

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Ynyswen was partnered with Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Santes Tudful to further develop the upward trend and enhance the work taking place. The main focus of the work was

to improve learning and teaching with a specific focus on developing excellence and the lead school's ability to lead on improvement within this area.

## Standards/ Outcomes

By sharing good practice between the two schools, standards of pupils' work have risen and become more consistent. For example, book scrutiny in both schools has challenged the standards of language and developed an agreed judgement on levels/ outcomes. By sharing good practice, YGG Ynyswen has adapted writing genres to make learning and teaching more relevant to pupils. Ysgol Santes Tudful has looked at the Nipper intervention programme to raise standards in mathematics amongst pupils in Years 2 and 4.

## Teaching

Improvements in teaching have been secured through reciprocal visits and sharing.

Assessment for learning strategies and activities for staff have been adapted following a visit from YGG Ynyswen's learning and teaching lead to Santes Tudful.

Ysgol Santes Tudful has put Nippers strategies in place to ensure that more Year 2 pupils achieve Outcome 5. In addition, the intervention will support a number of Year 4 pupils who are underachieving and at risk of not reaching the expected level.

Lesson observation has enabled staff at YGG Ynyswen to develop an agreed judgement on the features of excellent learning and teaching. The new strategies and staff understanding of excellent features has enabled 20-30% of teachers to reach 'excellent'.

## Leadership

Headteachers have shared their SIPs in order to act on targets together (where relevant). The schools' senior management teams have been able to share good practice during the process.

## Building Capacity

At Ynyswen, the process has given an opportunity for the learning and teaching lead to lead on a whole school target. As a result, through building capacity, a whole school focus on improving learning and teaching and a culture of reflective practice has been led by the learning and teaching lead. This has led to improvements in the quality of learning and teaching.

In terms of Ysgol Santes Tudful, the process has enabled learning assistants to develop their skills further with regard to testing, arranging activities, assessment and discussion with parents. These assistants will train the rest of the school.

## Unexpected Benefits

The partnership has been effective for both schools; improvements have been reciprocal and the collaboration is sustainable.

# Improving Foundation Phase Provision of Core Subjects

## Schools in this Partnership

St Illtyd's RC Primary  
(Merthyr Tydfil)

St Mary's RC Primary  
(Merthyr Tydfil)

## Context of Research

St Illtyd's RC Primary was supported by St Mary's RC Primary. From the outset of the collaborative work, clear support was provided with a focus on raising the quality of Foundation Phase

provision in the 3 core areas (languages, literacy and communication, mathematical development and personal and social development) in the Nursery.

Learning and teaching strategies to improve pupil outcomes were shared across the setting and modelled. The ways in which additional practitioners are used to impact on learner outcomes was a key focus of the work. Classroom routines were shared and explored along with the organisation of the learning environment. Staff from both schools jointly developed planning to secure deeper learning. Assessment and moderation was also a key feature of the work.

## Standards/ Outcomes

Outcomes show a positive impact in the development of the learning environment, organisation and routines. This is supported by school moderation and observations undertaken.

There is improved teacher/LSA confidence in understanding of teaching methods and curriculum requirements; this should continue to have an impact on improving standards.

The reorganisation of the classroom environment has enabled learning areas to develop and provides a balance of focused, enhanced and continuous tasks. This has led to improved transition between tasks and greater learning opportunities for pupils.

Staff also attended training and information sessions about the Foundation Phase Profile. In addition to this, the Pathfinder has been able to share data to support teacher assessment and secure baseline judgments.

## Teaching

A wide number of teaching strategies were shared through school visits and release days. To ensure that the collaboration was impactful this was linked to release days for staff to support engaging learning and teaching activities using both the indoor and outdoor learning environments.

Focus areas on domestic roleplay, numeracy and literacy areas now provide and enable different challenges according to the focus and the children's input.

## Leadership

Developing accountability in standards of learning for practitioners has been a key feature of the work; all teachers are seen as leaders of learning. Improved feedback through a standardised format to feed forward into future planned learning activities has been developed which ensures that clear next steps are linked.

## Building Capacity

Teaching and support staff were both engaged in school visits to share good practice and observe routines.

Collaborative links supported staff development at both teacher and LSA level. LSAs were provided with planning which identifies adult led activities and supports their own continuous professional development through improving questioning, active learning opportunities and effective feedback.

## Unexpected Benefits

The opportunity to collaborate with St Mary's and Caedraw in joint practice development activities has been a benefit to the partnership working. The opportunity to focus on continuous provision planning to provide progression and continuity in pupils' learning experiences and skill development has improved provision for pupils in both settings.



# Improving Standards in Writing

## Schools in this Partnership

St Patrick's Primary  
St Francis Primary

### Context of Research

Staff at St Francis supported staff from St Patrick's RC Primary School. The main focus was literacy based, specifically developing writing through Talk 4

Writing. The collaborative work included lesson observations, feedback, discussion and planning time and sharing good practice. Work was undertaken in Reception and Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. St Francis staff supported St Patrick's staff in their development of Talk 4 Writing across the school. St Patrick's staff tracked their pupils' writing from a baseline at the beginning of the collaboration through to the end of the academic year to demonstrate improving standards. The literacy co-ordinator monitored standards and listened to learners to track the improvements. Evaluation of the work was very positive from both schools with staff benefitting from seeing and sharing practice. St Francis staff also received CSC FP writing training that followed on from the training received the previous year at key stage 2.

### Standards/ Outcomes

End of phase Outcomes (Year 2) and levels (Year 6) in literacy were very positive with the improved writing levels helping to raise standards and thus LLC and English quartiles. When tracking the progress made with writing from Year 2 to Year 6, 4 of the 5 cohorts made 2 or more sub-level progress during the year. This also helped to improve the number of children achieving O6 and L5.

#### Foundation Phase

##### Y2 2015/16

Area	LLC (O5+)	LLC (O6+)
Percentage	95%	46.4%
Benchmarking	1	1

LLC - Performance at the higher Outcome 6+ in 2016 is at 46.4%. This shows a significant increase from 12.2% in 2015. The school is placed in the first benchmarking quartile.

### Key Stage 2

##### Y6 2015/16

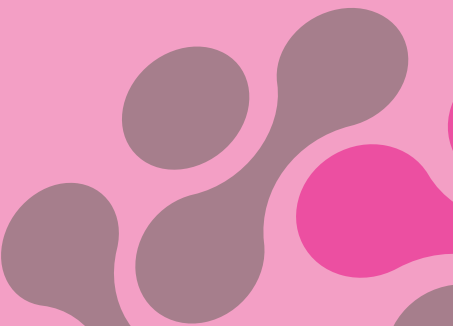
Subject	English (L4+)	English (L5+)
Percentage	92.7%	34.1%
Benchmarking	2	3

English - Performance at the higher level 5+ was low in 2015, placing the school in the fourth benchmarking quartile when compared with similar schools. 2016 data for level 5+ is at 34.1%. This places the school in the third benchmarking quartile.

Cohort 15/16 (16/17)	Average Writing Level	Overall Average Progress
Y2 (Y3)	Avg. level at end of Y1 = 1.61 (1b or O4b) Average level at end of Y2 = 2.75 (2a or O5a)	4 sub L/O progress
Y3 (Y4)	Avg. level at end of Y2 = 2.39 (2b) Avg. level at end of Y3 = 2.89 (2a)	1 sub-L progress
Y4 (Y5)	Avg. level at end of Y3 = 2.78 (2a) Avg. level at end of Y4 = 3.44 (3b)	2 sub-L progress
Y5 (Y6)	Avg. level at end of Y4 = 3.22 (3c) Avg. level at end of Y5 = 3.81 (3a)	2 sub-L progress
Y6	Avg. level at end of Y5 = 3.67 (3b) Avg. level at end of Y6 = 4.35 (4b)	2 sub-L progress

### Teaching

Foundation Phase staff received literacy training from the Central South Consortium on developing writing. The training was through discussion, reviewing good practice across other schools, modelled lessons and planning/ lesson observations. In March, literacy



advisory teachers revisited to focus on the impact and implementation of the literacy training. They found that almost all the strategies had been implemented and that staff were very positive about the impact that it is having. Teaching observed was good or better in 80% of the literacy lessons observed (with 40% of these judged excellent). Lesson observations, feedback and planning and discussion time mirrored the work with St Patrick's. Pupil voice indicates that pupils thoroughly enjoy Talk 4 Writing lessons because they feel successful and like to fully participate in this form of learning.

classroom management and organisation within a different setting. Having developed relationships, staff feel that further focused collaborations would be beneficial to both schools.

## **Leadership**

Staff in the lead school found working with another school both rewarding and worthwhile. Staff became increasingly comfortable with lesson observations/feedback with a range of staff.

The English co-ordinator improved her subject leadership as she was involved in book auditing with the advisory service as well as observation of Talk 4 Writing sessions in both phases. She met with pupils to listen to their views as well as tracking standards of writing. This information was fed back to the SLT in strategic meetings as well as our challenge adviser. Our end of year review by the CSC team identified the co-ordinator's improved subject evaluation.

## **Building Capacity**

Feedback from CSC to FP staff indicated that "nearly all pupils were effectively using their individual boxing up to support their independent extended writing" in Year 2. Also that "writing ... shows improvement in standards." Similarly, in the early years "strategies discussed in training were being successfully implemented in lower Foundation Phase." Also, staff have "developed their understanding of how to implement Talk 4 Writing strategies."

## **Unexpected Benefits**

Staff from both schools thought that sharing good practice and time to discuss and plan lessons was invaluable. They also learned much from seeing

# Improving Mathematics at 1+ Level

## Schools in this Partnership

Pantysgallog Primary  
Stacey Primary

### Context of Research

Pantysgallog Primary was supported by Stacey Primary. There were two priorities: improving pupils' mathematics at level 5 at the end of key stage 2 and developing the role of subject leaders.

The focus on developing the role of the subject leader was prioritised as a mechanism to ensure that improvements are sustainable.

Staff attended a whole school INSET delivered by the assistant headteacher of the lead school on subject leader roles within the whole school self-evaluation process. Staff from the lead school were then released to work alongside subject leaders of the support school. This focused on staff reflecting on the year and writing progress reports highlighting all the work that had taken place within their subject within the academic year and identifying the strengths and weaknesses. They then wrote action plans for 2016-17 highlighting strategically planned tasks that will need to be undertaken throughout 2016-17.

The lead school's leader of mathematics worked alongside key stage 2 staff at the support school delivering lesson demonstrations and delivering INSET on enrichment of mathematics tasks to ensure challenge for pupils became consistent.

### Standards/ Outcomes

#### Developing leadership:

Support school subject leaders have written action plans for this academic year with smart targets. Through staff discussion it has become clear that subject leaders now have a sound grasp of the expectations of leading their subject.

The impact on standards and outcomes will be more prevalent at the end of July 2017 as staff will have carried out the strategically planned tasks within their subject action plans. During 2016-17, they will be

taking part in the school's monitoring cycle observing lessons, undertaking work scrutiny, listening to learners and monitoring short term planning.

#### Improving mathematics at the +1 level:

+1 level in mathematics has increased by 19.62%, from quartile 2 in 2015 to quartile 1 in 2016. The school has achieved the challenging targets set.

### Teaching

The leader of mathematics at the lead school worked with key stage 2 staff from the support school to undertake lesson demonstrations to ensure a consistent approach to challenging tasks and looked at short term planning with staff to ensure appropriate differentiation for more able pupils.

A new scheme of work was introduced, and through staff discussion it has begun to have an impact on the learning and teaching of more able pupils during mathematics lessons.

Mathematical learning environments are being developed as part of collaborative work.

### Leadership


Subject leaders have now been designated clearly defined roles which mean they are clear on the expectations for leading their subject.

Staff discussions have shown that subject leaders now feel part of the whole school approach to the monitoring process that is developing. Subject leadership is distributed amongst a number of staff.

Subject leaders of core subjects have begun to work with the headteacher to highlight areas for whole school improvement. In the next academic year, core subject leaders will use Key Questions 1 and 2 to evaluate their subject at the end of the academic year.

### Building Capacity

Capacity in terms of subject leader roles is beginning to build as they have an understanding of the purpose of their role and how they fit into the whole school self-evaluation process.



Despite the priority in mathematics being on improving level 5s at the end of key stage 2, we focused on consistency across key stage 2 staff in delivering challenging mathematics tasks to ensure that all expected level+1 pupils were being given opportunities to extend their thinking and learning. Capacity in the teaching of mathematics has been built across key stage 2.

### **Unexpected Benefits**

Both schools have developed excellent working relationships among staff members at all levels which has really strengthened the Pathfinder support working.

In the summer term pupils from the support school visited the lead school (and vice versa) for sporting competitions and pupils were keen to continue with this as its pupils are from very different sociodemographic and cultural backgrounds.

Both schools are eager to continue to strengthen this pupil link during this academic year, including school councils meeting together and Years 5 and 6 forging relationships via email to improve literacy and IT skills, as well as continuing with the sporting competitions.

# Developing Leadership to Raise Standards

## Schools in this Partnership

Tondu Primary  
Ffaldau Primary

### Context of Research

The schools collaborated with a focus on developing leadership structures and responsibilities to raise standards, specifically on literacy and numeracy. Ffaldau Primary

was supported by Tondu Primary.

### Standards/ Outcomes

*Tondu:* L4+ performance rose in 2016. Results were similar in all three core subjects and all were above family, Wales and LA averages. All subjects were above the median, with mathematics being on the quartile between quartile 2 and quartile 1, science and core subject indicator (CSI) in quartile 1 and English in quartile 2.

*Ffaldau:* L4+ performance rose in 2016 and continued to improve with all pupils achieving level 4 in English, mathematics and science.

### Teaching

Joint working on Successful Futures outlined provision, opportunities for pupils (Pupil Pledge) and ensured staff awareness of pedagogical principles. The outcome of this work has been raised awareness of Successful Futures across both schools. Staff have an understanding of the pedagogical principles which has enhanced their provision, and using this alongside the Pupil Pledge is developing pupil independence.

Shared moderation of standards was very useful in highlighting areas to be developed and aspects of learning to be revisited. This improved outcomes at end of key stage moderation.

Joint working with a consultant to develop writing opportunities and progression through carefully constructed units of learning has carefully considered the curriculum with pupil needs.

The use of IT to develop pupil engagement and reading skills shared across the schools with joint training and development has also been successful.

### Leadership

Leadership development for the staff involved has been significant in the Pathfinder. This supported both schools as new staff came into posts and responsibilities. The impact of this is evident in the fact that the schools have maintained progress in end of key stage assessment despite new staff/ responsibilities being in place.

The collaborative working has been very effective and trust and professional awareness has been built up. This would be an advantage in continuing the project, working together on the developments that have emerged from the work undertaken in the previous year. The networking opportunities developed have led to the respective leadership teams identifying further aspects.

### Building Capacity

This has enabled both schools to support each other in the induction of new staff into the leadership teams, and to further develop the leadership of middle leaders. The capacity has reduced the risks associated with new staff induction and has maintained a strong focus on raising standards.

Both schools have valued the joint working and found that it has helped the schools to move forward on the current educational agenda.

### Unexpected Benefits

Through the collaboration of this project, both schools have shared INSET on Donaldson which has led to further aspects being identified for joint development. Staff from both schools are eager to continue this working in order to share the development of independent learning.



# SIG 14: Deepening Professional Understanding of Effective Feedback and Marking

## Schools in this Partnership

Coed Glas Primary; St Alban's RC Primary; Tredegarville CiW Primary; Mynydd Cynffig Primary; St. Mary's RC Primary (Bridgend); Bedlinog Primary; Trelewis Primary; Maesycod Primary; Radyr Primary; Penyreglyn Primary.

## Context of Research

### Aims

- Deepen professional understanding of effective feedback and marking
- Create a shared, consistent approach to feedback and marking
- Create a school policy that promotes effective feedback strategies
- Create a portfolio of examples of effective feedback to support marking policy

### Training

A SIG focus on effective feedback inspired the leaders to organise a joint training event with an external consultant. The agreement for the training was to develop an effective common approach to marking and feedback. The training provided strategies for next step marking aiming to move pupils on in their learning.

Following the training, teachers from all SIG schools carried out a joint book scrutiny exercise. They identified feedback techniques to improve standards in writing. This provided teachers with an opportunity to develop a consistent approach to book scrutiny. In order to deepen understanding back in schools, teachers and leaders provided INSET sessions to discuss new approaches to marking and feedback based on strategies learned at the training and gathered from joint book scrutiny.

### Impact

Consistent approaches to marking became common practice in schools.

Leaders created new marking and feedback policy documents.

### Standards/ Outcomes

A self-reflective toolkit on marking and feedback allowed teachers to self-evaluate their current practice using a traffic light analysis (providing leaders with a baseline).

Training provided teachers and leaders with a deeper understanding of effective feedback that could have a direct impact on the way teachers could provide high quality feedback to learners.

Schools reported that marking comments should have clear next steps and provide opportunities for children to respond to and extend their work.

### Teaching

The consistency of feedback techniques used has been improved in all schools and there is a deeper understanding of the benefits of 'closing the gap' marking.

Training was provided on success criteria for teachers with regard to what good and excellent feedback looks like using advice from an external provider.

### Leadership

Leaders established a shared vision for what effective feedback would look like back in their own schools and reviewed marking policies with leaders from other schools.

School leaders in the SIG created a portfolio of effective feedback examples to support the marking policies and deepen teachers' understanding.

Leaders were able to monitor impact using the traffic light analysis from the initial baseline prior to training and at the end of the project.



## **Building Capacity**

Leaders were able to build capacity in their own schools by giving teachers the opportunity to work alongside other teachers.

Creating a portfolio of best practice provided an opportunity for teachers to build capacity in their own schools.

## **Unexpected Benefits**

- Opportunities to moderate standards across a wider cross section of schools.
- Broader discussions regarding feedback in mathematics.
- Deeper discussions amongst teachers about effective learning and teaching and about oral feedback within lessons.

# SIG 23: Using Technology to Engage Learners and Develop Successful Futures

## Schools in this Partnership

Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr; Hawthorn Primary; Holy Family RC Primary; St John Lloyd RC Primary; Ysgol Pen y Pil; Caegarw Primary; Darran Park Primary; Porth Juniors; Llandough Primary; Rhigos Primary.

## Context of Research

In order to strengthen SIG working through using technology to engage learners and develop effective pedagogies, schools worked collaboratively to develop a history themed half termly project focusing on what it was like for a child living in their school's community during World War II.

As well as subject-specific skills, the project was designed to develop purposeful opportunities to develop Digital Competence, literacy and numeracy.

A shared Hwb+ site was created for schools to collaborate and share work throughout the project. Each school developed historical enquiry through questioning and researching the experience of a child during World War II in their local area. Pupils from each school used their findings to build their own World War II community using Minecraft. This was then shared between schools within the SIG for pupils to gain an understanding of how a child's experience of World War II depended on where they lived.

In addition, schools worked with animation company Turnip Starfish to create a shared animation using their learning throughout the project.

## Standards/ Outcomes

All schools involved in the project report impact from the collaborative work. Below is some headline data gathered:

- School A – there were significant improvements in the percentage of pupils who achieved 115+

in both the numeracy procedural and reasoning national tests;

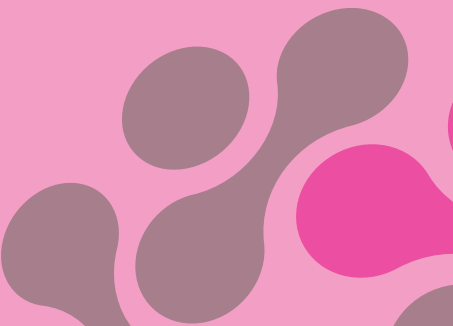
- School B - 2017 targets for oracy: 58% level 5 - on track to achieve this; 2017 targets for mathematics in Year 6: 58% level 5 - on track to achieve this;
- School C - 10% improvement in Year 5 performance in national reasoning tests at 115+; 55% of Year 5 on track to achieve level 5 in oracy and 45% of Year 5 on track to achieve level 5 in mathematics;
- School D - 28% increase in the percentage of Year 5 children achieving 115+ in the procedural tests; and
- School E - 91.1% of pupils achieved level 4+ in oracy; 93.3% achieved level 4+ in mathematics; Year 6 performance in the national numeracy procedural and reasoning tests was above local authority and Wales averages.

## Teaching

The project had a significant impact on learning and teaching in most of the schools participating. Nearly all schools stated that pupils were more engaged through using hooks at the start of their projects.

As a direct result of the project, pedagogy was transformed through use of ICT as a stimulus to engage all learners. This was further strengthened through the use of a shared Hwb+ site which enabled pupils to collaborate and provided them with an audience for their work. Pupils engaged in meaningful assessment for learning through the peer assessment of other children's blogs, including those from other schools. This resulted in an improvement in the quality of children's writing because they were writing for a real audience.

The work of the project allowed staff to evaluate their use of ICT and supported them in preparing for the implementation of the Digital Competence Framework (DCF). As a result, staff are providing more purposeful and meaningful opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT skills across the curriculum. Nearly all teachers taking part in the project stated that the use of Office Mix in Hwb+ raised oracy standards because pupils understood that their presentations would be viewed by pupils from other schools.



During the project, pupils created a collaborative animation about the journey of an evacuee from Cardiff to the South Wales valleys with Turnip Starfish. As well as developing historical enquiry, this reflects the rationale of the Expressive Arts Area of Learning and Experience outlined in Successful Futures.

## **Leadership**

INSET sessions were delivered to teachers involved in the project by J Protheroe of Darran Park Primary. This work was shared with other staff at home schools. Other classes within the home schools then carried out similar projects.

Pupil Digital Leaders from Darran Park Primary school visited a number of schools taking part in the project to lead Minecraft workshops. A number of schools taking part in the project adopted this model of pupil leadership to support other teachers within their schools to deliver the project.

## **Building Capacity**

The good practice of the project has been shared at: a challenge adviser conference (December 2015); a CSC conference (January 2016) and a Microsoft Showcase Schools Conference (June 2016) - the first ever to be held in Wales. Through the sharing of the work of this project, it is hoped that other schools will replicate this way of working.

The project was designed to reflect the Four Purposes of Successful Futures. Through developing their understanding of their community and how events of World War II affected it, pupils were developing their learning as ethically informed citizens who are ready to be citizens of Wales and the world. In addition, pupils developed as ambitious, capable learners through using digital technology creatively to communicate, find and analyse information throughout the project.

## **Unexpected Benefits**

The success of SIG work empowered Darran Park to become a Digital Learning Hub School – this will support schools with the implementation of the DCF.

Blitz: Wales at War led to improved pupil collaboration and communication skills, due to the opportunities they had to work with pupils from a range of other areas and types of schools (eg Welsh-medium and faith schools).

Pupil confidence, ICT skills and leadership skills have improved, and Digital Leaders from Darran Park Primary won a National Digital Learning Award for their work with other schools. Microsoft wishes to produce a model of their work to share with schools throughout the UK. Hwb also wish to create a resource to share this work that all schools can access.

In addition, over 50% of schools improved their Hwb usage, with 25% moving from red to green.

# SIG 24: Hwb to Support Moderation

## Schools in this Partnership

Archdeacon John Lewis  
Primary; Blaengarw Primary;  
Brynnau Primary; Cadoxton Primary;  
Coedylan Primary; Croesty Primary;  
Cwmfelin Primary; Llantrisant Primary;  
Nantymoel Primary; St Andrews  
Major CiW. Primary; St Joseph's  
RC Primary; Ysgol y Ddraig.

## Context of Research

The work began with the development of an inter-connecting series of Hwb networks for SIG 24 schools:

- Welsh oracy moderated portfolio;
- Numerical reasoning moderated portfolio;
- SIG 24 community network;
- Office 365 Welsh second language;
- Office 365 numerical reasoning network; and
- Cascade training for all staff by SIG 24 administrators within their own schools.

This was completed along with four designated staff development days:

- CSC Hwb specialist provided training to build inter-connecting Hwb networks;
- Training for each SIG 24 Hwb administrator to maintain networks;
- Digital collation and moderation of Welsh second language oracy evidence; and
- Collation, moderation and transfer of numerical reasoning portfolio to SIG 24 Hwb network.

## Standards/ Outcomes

SIG 24 has improved numeracy outcomes in the Welsh Government (WG) tests.

In the WG numerical reasoning test, the SIG 24 average reduction of the <85 band was greater than the Welsh average in 3/5 instances.

The SIG 24 average increase in the >115 band was greater than the Welsh average in 4/5 instances.

There are improved standards in Welsh second language at the end of key stage 2 across SIG 24, with 85% or more of pupils achieving level 4+ at the end of key stage 2.

## Teaching

Consistency in teacher assessment across 12 schools in respect of Welsh second language oracy and numerical reasoning has been improved.

There is increased use of Hwb+ platform by the majority of SIG 24 schools for teachers and pupils. Schools report that this is engaging pupils more and integrating the DCF into planning and provision.

Staff members across all 12 schools are now able to join and create virtual staff meetings. This allows schools in SIG 24 to share expertise and collaborate without the need to share a site.

Professional learning related to improving practice is seen as a positive and central message within SIG 24.

High expectations with regard to Welsh language development have been secured.

## Leadership


Subject co-ordinators gained experience in promoting the development of other colleagues by sharing good practice in both the use of Hwb+, moderation and standardisation.

Highly effective collaborative work has consequently been embedded across SIG 24 with Hwb+ as the vehicle for driving standards in learning and teaching.

## Building Capacity

A cross-collaboration model for joint practice development and action research has been established which serves as a vehicle for driving





standards in learning and teaching in other curriculum areas.

Sustainable subject leader networks are established in Welsh second language, numeracy and literacy.

There is raised awareness of, and familiarity with Hwb+ tools and increased teacher confidence to deploy them effectively.

Skills of staff across the schools were distributed and improved by those sharing their expertise across the SIG group.

### **Unexpected Benefits**

Sustainable distributed leadership opportunity for developing aspiring leaders across SIG 24.

# SIG 27: Embedding Formative Assessment

## Schools in this Partnership

Bryn Celyn Primary; Gelli Primary; Llanhari Primary; Marlborough Primary; Pen-y-Bryn Primary; Springwood Primary.

## Context of Research

Developing effective assessment for learning was the primary purpose of the project. In January, SIG 27 organised a two day conference focused on embedding formative assessment - 'Leadership for Teacher Learning' delivered by an external consultant. Teachers across the six schools worked in teaching triads to evaluate the effectiveness of 'new' AfL strategies on groups of pupils learning.

## Standards/ Outcomes

From working in the triads, colleagues observed that the AfL strategies were having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Baseline data collected in terms of pupil attitudes, numeracy data, and teacher attitudes/ knowledge before and after training showed that the collaborative work had a positive impact.

## All schools

Listening to learners' evaluation evidences that all children understand the value of the AfL approaches and most know their next steps in learning. During lesson observations, all teachers' use of AfL was judged as good or better. Book scrutiny showed that written feedback was helping to close the gap effectively. Changes have been made to learning and teaching policies in response to classroom practice. Assessment policy and procedures were updated.

## Data – pre and post mathematics test

Of the 27 pupils whose pre and post-test papers were submitted, 18 (66.7%) made progress, 3 (11.1%) made negative progress and 6 (22.2%) were static. Average: test 1 – 6.8 compared to an average for test 2 – 8.1

## Summary of pupil questionnaire results post project

	Yes	No
<i>I like numeracy more now than I did before the AfL project started</i>	42	15
<i>I had more fun in numeracy before the AfL project</i>	13	43
<i>I was better at numeracy before the AfL project</i>	13	42
<i>I knew how to improve my numeracy skills better before the AfL project</i>	17	38

## Teaching

Staff implemented a range of AfL strategies, sharing good practice at learning and teaching meetings. Staff worked together to develop a whole school approach to assessment – including AfL and written feedback. All staff collated a body of evidence to demonstrate the depth and breadth of their practice.

Nearly all teachers are using an extensive range of AfL strategies to support their differentiation. Lesson observations indicate positive impact on learning and teaching. Through book scrutiny, most teachers are engaging pupils in closing the gap dialogue.

Schools report positive actions and outcomes for teachers from the collaborative work.


## Leadership

All schools included AfL in performance management targets for teachers. Many schools included AfL in performance management targets for LSAs.

All schools took part in triad training led by one of the schools in the SIG. There is now an agreed process for triad working and all schools took part in triad working across schools.

## Building Capacity

In the sample school, staff took responsibility for their own professional development. One aspect of this that was significant for one member of staff was



in the way feedback was delivered in the triad. This needed to be structured, relevant and tactful. The teacher felt that this would help her when feeding back from monitoring sessions undertaken in our own school. She was also keen to lead the school in triad training and use this as a fundamental tool in our next monitoring cycle.

All schools noticed that staff engaged in the project gained experience with leading projects, leading INSET sessions.

### **Unexpected Benefits**

With AfL interventions, the biggest impact appeared to be with lower ability and middle ability pupils, when compared to the more able and talented (MAT).

The confidence and enthusiasm of teaching staff who were involved directly in school-to-school working, triad observations and presentation of information at a SIG sharing event.

All schools, at all levels, are continuing to develop excellent professional working relationships focused on school improvement.

# SIG 31: Developing Outdoor Provision in the Foundation Phase

## Schools in this Partnership

Windsor Clive Primary;  
St. Fagans CiW Primary;  
Nottage Primary.

### Context of Research

With a common focus on the issue of improvement, the purpose of the collaborative coaching programme was to encourage the development of a whole school coaching programme and in doing so collaborate with two other schools within a defined SIG. The focus of the coaching was to develop the outdoor provision in the Foundation Phase.

Each half term a year group met from Nursery to Year 2. The work was undertaken in an inner-city school that serves a large, socially and economically disadvantaged area, an urban Church in Wales primary school and a primary school in a seaside town suburb. A 'GROW' coaching model was applied that aligned with the principle that the coach manages the coaching process whilst the coachee leads the content. The dialogue always occurred within the context of the school development plan, and the coaching programme started with practitioners within the Foundation Phase sharing reflective practice on pupil engagement in phonic sessions.

The SIG case study about the collaborative work includes:

- Information on the practical structural necessities for effective peer coaching;
- Information on any improvements that were gained in standards as a result of the work;
- Follow-up work completed by teachers and headteachers;
- Details of any resources used to complete the work; and
- Lessons learned by the schools and class teachers in completing the programme.

### Standards/ outcomes

A key outcome impacted at an individual and collective level, where both coaches and coachees needed to develop sensitive active listening skills, share knowledge and evolve the quality of the questioning. It was also vital to recognise that a long-term vision was needed as while the process developed, capability results may not be immediate. This vision also had to reflect the culture and values of the school whilst aligning closely with concomitant strategic development planning.

The impact of core coaching skills of observation, questioning and reflection was significant. There was a detectable impact on their classroom practice, and coached teachers felt more confident to apply questioning strategies that promoted pupil interaction with their peers.

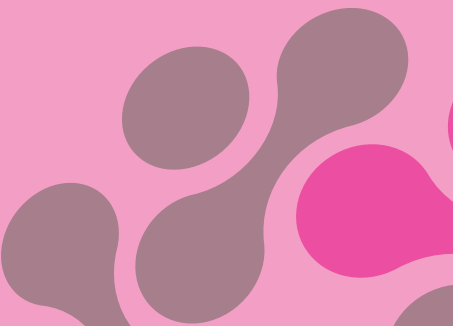
Clearly, staff support coaching was used as a way to implement change. The target was to achieve aspirational targets through evidence-based collaborative learning strategies that initiated context-specific change.

It was not seen as merely an addition to the workload, but instead it could be seen to contribute to the continued upskilling of the staff, a means of improving motivation, maintaining challenge and enhancing learning.

Additional outputs included new knowledge of professional outdoor learning practice reflected in the teaching plans and shared good practice and resources. The coaching intervention enhanced decision making, management skills, problem solving strategies and cohesive team working, that underpinned the development of collective leadership. This ultimately occurred through a triad that constituted a reflective practitioner group. Perhaps, most importantly, coaching undoubtedly had the applied impact to improve pupil outcomes.

### Teaching

Coaching highlighted the importance of practical knowledge, and the value in learning from observation that can be used to model practice as well as develop practice.



Following the coaching sessions, staff understood the benefit of school-to-school improvement and welcomed the sessions, whilst also asking for another cycle of coaching as they now saw it as a non-threatening reflective tool. Coaching became a prioritised learning opportunity that allowed coaches to use time between meetings for more productive reflection in and on action.

The interactions generated evidence-based professional dialogue that had an impact on daily professional practice and embodied transference of knowledge to a range of contexts. It became apparent that collaborating on professional practice may be more effective than reflection and discussion, alone. Each year group from Nursery to Year 2 worked hard to develop their outdoor provision prior to, and following the coaching sessions. Foundation Phase leaders noted a marked improvement in the provision by practitioners and the way children access the outdoor provision.

## Leadership

With regard to the leadership and management of coaching, it can clearly be used to inform CPD provision and development, and highlight in-school good practice. Foundation Phase leaders in all three schools need to promote the medium and long-term sustainability of the coaching and, to work really effectively, coaching should be embedded in the school culture. A culture is something that is learned and shared by a staff team.

Clearly the case study highlights the benefits of coaching with regard to developing a dual managed environment based on collective, emerging leadership of learning. Emerging leadership behaviours facilitated an increase in the coachee's skills, knowledge and self awareness. This was further reflected in the fact that teachers were able to identify their own coaching style separately from the performance management and monitoring systems.

There was evidence of an improvement in peer coaching skills for senior leaders through:

- Better developed skills of teaching staff and leaders in effective observation and evaluation;

- Enhanced collaboration and sharing of information about teaching standards;
- A more precise focus on enhanced outdoor learning;
- Improved support for teachers in becoming increasingly more reflective about their own practice, and the practice of others; and
- Development of effective case studies to share with the SIG and across the region.

## Building Capacity

Training in the coaching process was crucial to building teachers' capacity and confidence, through enhanced trust and more transparent accountability. Following the first SIG coaching session, teachers engaged in dialogue with their colleagues and discussed their observations. Practice and environments were changed and genuine excitement about this partnership grew amongst staff at an early stage. Outdoor learning environments were developed to provide opportunities for children to work both independently and collaboratively.

Coaching helps build a staff ownership of CPD, and showed that sometimes school, classroom based CPD can be more meaningful than off-site CPD.

To continually evolve the quality of the coaching, there needs to be a clear responsibility for the process of monitoring coaching practice.

## Unexpected Benefits

- Developing context-specific professional development linked to coaching
- Reducing staff's natural fear of observation; specifically by other schools
- Separating coaching needs from performance management to ensure a non-threatening process
- Capacity and time; ensuring sufficient time for coaching triads to meet. However, this was not an issue in this case due to the high quality support provided by all three headteachers



# SIG 32: Improving Foundation Phase Provision

## Schools in this Partnership

Albany Primary; Coryton Primary; Llanedeyrn Primary; Park Lewis Primary; Rumney Primary; Severn Primary; Grangetown Nursery School.

### Context of Research

The collaborative work began with a clear agenda and focus. This was to reflect on, and improve pedagogy in Year 1 so that it more closely aligns with the philosophy associated with the Foundation Phase.

The main focus of the work undertaken was to develop the skills of teaching staff in observation and evaluation and for them to be increasingly reflective about their practice. Year 1 staff in SIG schools attended a training session called 'Rich & Irresistible! Ensuring Challenge within the Foundation Phase'. Following this session, staff decided on an action research project that they would carry out at their school. They worked on their research questions in their own schools for a six-week period and then met again to share findings. The results of the work have been drawn together in a document called ["No Action Without Research. No Research Without Action"](#).

### Standards/ Outcomes

As the research projects were different in all schools there have been a variety of outcomes including:

- Improved Enhanced and Continuous Provision enabling children to apply, consolidate and extend their skills;
- Improved self and peer-assessment skills enabling the children to be more insightful and recognise the next steps in their learning;
- Improved engagement levels of the children;
- Children are more excited about, and engaged in their learning;

- Children are more confident and are learning from each other;
- Children have become more focused and independent in accessing an enriched and stimulating learning environment; and
- Calmer classroom environments.

### Teaching

The research projects have had a positive impact on the teaching of children in Year 1 including:

- Improved planning;
- Introduction of new assessment for learning strategies;
- Better pupil voice; and
- Changes to timetables to give staff more time to observe children.

### Leadership

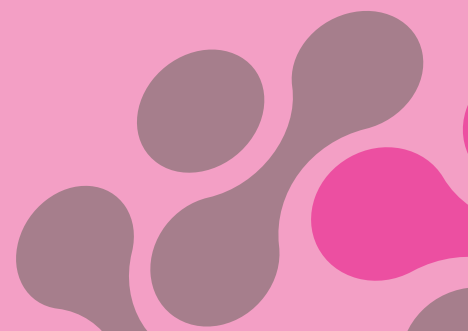
Giving teachers the opportunity to lead these research projects has made them all more reflective practitioners. They have been able to reflect on their practice and highlight what was going well and what needed improvement. They have acquired a range of new research skills including collecting and analysing data, and they were able to measure the impact of the changes to pedagogy and practice. They have improved their knowledge and skills in relation to good practice in Foundation Phase and they have communicated this to their colleagues.

### Building Capacity

The teachers involved have all shared ideas and learned a great deal from each other. They have disseminated the outcomes of their research with staff in their own school and some of the new ideas are being trialled in other areas of the school, eg key stage 2.

The group will continue to meet in the future to improve practice further.

# Using Hwb+ to Engage Learners



## Schools in this Partnership

Cwmclydach Primary  
Ysgol y Ddraig

### Context of Research

The senior leadership team and staff were keen to expand the opportunities for pupils from both schools to work together to create a framework for successfully achieving Digital Competence

whilst maximising the use of Hwb+. It was agreed that such opportunities should be relevant, challenging and exciting with activities that enhance learners' experiences through stimulating and thought-provoking tasks.

It was seen that the link between the two schools offered a canvas for pupils to develop and practice a wide range of digital skills with tasks which were LNF rich. In addition, the pupils were developing their interpersonal skills and fostering citizenship skills on a wider level. In terms of the teachers involved, the project provided an opportunity to share experiences, improve their own IT skills, plan jointly, challenge and support each other in terms of improving pupils achievement.

The project was 'story' led where pupils were given real life problems to solve and explore, collaborating with each other. In this case, a character lost in time called Pi (3.14159) who was working with pupils in Cwmclydach tweeted a GPS location where he had left us some information back in 1965. The pupils visited the GPS location to find his inventor, Doc Brown, had crashed his DeLorean. This began our adventure. Cwmclydach pupils solved the problem of how he could go and find Pi. The TARDIS crashed the next day at Ysgol y Ddraig linking the schools.

This exciting use of a character leading pupils on a journey had a significant impact in terms of pupil engagement as its innovative approach hooked the pupils and gave them an audience for their real life problems. The character used Twitter to give the pupils instant feedback, instructions and encouragement in real time. Using Hwb+, pupils were able to work closely together and staff used the discussions, surveys and blog features in their teaching.

A series of videos of the work can be found [here](#).

### Standards/ Outcomes

The project allowed for the Digital Competence skills to be purposefully incorporated in lessons. Pupils of all abilities were more engaged and gained confidence to take part in the tasks. The more able pupils completed challenging and extending tasks successfully.

Pupils' grasp of a range of skills has strengthened and is apparent in the standard of their oral work, LNF tasks and through their ICT work across the curriculum. The use of Hwb+ has increased across the two schools with pupils using Office 365 to create, explore, share, collaborate, discuss etc. This has sparked great interest and enthusiasm among the pupils towards mathematics and numeracy in general - particularly in relation to investigative tasks.

The project required the learners to work at higher ICT National Curriculum levels and have opportunities to apply new skills in a wide range of contexts.

Through Hwb+, pupils have developed as independent learners. They are keen to solve creative, ambitious LNF rich tasks. The initial tasks were set but the pupils led their learning using the latest emerging technologies purposefully. From researching, designing and 3D printing pyramids, creating 3D Ancient Egypt worlds in Minecraft to costing, buying and making pizzas in Pompeii.

### Teaching

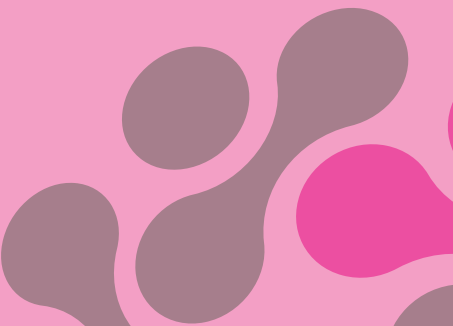
Each feature within Hwb+ was matched to skill development/ application across the project.

The project encouraged staff to develop and improve their practice by experimenting with different methods of work, using Hwb+ and allowing pupils to lead their own learning.

Staff involved have improved their use of Hwb+, exploring features they had not exploited previously.

### Leadership

Collaboration between the staff in the schools allowed for professional learning, with staff improving their IT skills, Hwb knowledge and usage, Digital Competence inclusion and the sharing of expertise.



Staff in both schools can now share the insights they have gained from the project to staff in their own school, including support staff and wider stakeholders.

## **Building Capacity**

The project design has been outlined as a template for collaborative digital-driven work in other schools across the Central South Consortium and Wales.

The project design will be shared with the Welsh Government's National Digital Learning Council as a model of practice in both Digital Competence and the use of Hwb+. Cwmclydach Primary School is a Professional Learning Hub for Central South Consortium, and as part of their 'Strategic Use of Digital Technology' programme the project design will be shared with the delegates from Central South Consortium.

## **Unexpected Benefits**

Due to the collaborative, digital-driven nature of this project, IT skills and Digital Competence would be developed with confidence, however the pupil-led LNF rich tasks allowed a multitude of skills across the curriculum to be developed in a 'holistic' and meaningful way. Digital Competence skills were clearly embedded in the tasks, and purposeful manner.

All staff involved, including support staff, developed their own knowledge base of IT and Digital Competence with pupils explaining how to use elements such as Hwb+ features, designing Minecraft and the use of the 3D printer creating a truly inclusive learning environment.

Pupil engagement was high, even the most reluctant learners became enthused with the tasks. The engagement permeated to all staff in the schools with pupils updating staff on the developments of the project with knowledge and enthusiasm.

The use of Hwb+ in school and at home was increased with the use of Hwb+ for home learning and the sharing of work between home and school increasing. Parents have become increasingly more involved in the project through home tasks and viewing pupils' work on Hwb+.