



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Education, Skills and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee
December 5th 2024

Report of the Head of Education Development – Christopher Millis

Matter for Information

Wards Affected:

All Wards

Report Title. School Improvement Team – Teaching and Learning

Purpose of the Report:

To monitor on the progress of the NPT Teaching and Learning Strategy

Executive Summary:

Overall, the local authority has a clear vision and strategy for improving teaching in NPT schools. The support for the development of teaching in the local authority is strong and impacts on pupil progress and wellbeing successfully.

Background:

We recognise the scale of the challenge school leaders face in improving and evolving teaching in line with the expectations of Curriculum for Wales. At the heart of Curriculum for Wales is the pursuit of the four purposes, the principles of progression and the progression code, all of which present us with the challenge of evolving teaching to support pupils to progress with their knowledge and understanding, cross curricular skills, integral skills and values and attitudes. At the core of this curriculum also lies the emphasis on the process of learning rather than the final product of learning. All this represents a significant challenge and the need for a clear vision and strategy for how NPT will strengthen teaching in line with the expectations of Curriculum for Wales, while at the same time supporting our schools to address our changing pupils' needs in relation to the impact on young people of COVID-19.

Strengths

The local authority provides a wide range of support focused on improving teaching that impacts on improving pupil progress successfully. This support includes but is not limited to:

- Education Support Officers (ESO's) continue to model and coach effective self-evaluation alongside school leaders through listening to learners, learning walks, work scrutiny etc. This modelling is focused for the most part on evaluating the impact of teaching on pupil progress more effectively. Consequently, leaders are more able to identify appropriate and precise areas for improvement with the quality of teaching within their schools.
- Teaching and Learning Programme – Primary and Secondary Schools

- Year 1 - Delivery of six-day Teaching and Learning sessions with bespoke follow-up support for teachers between each session.
- Year 2 - Participants work in collaboration in triads to continue to evolve teaching within each other's schools with a specific agreed focus. Approximately 40 individuals from 20 schools per year.

The programme is designed to:

- Develop a shared understanding of progress in the Curriculum for Wales.
 - Evolve individuals' pedagogy through a self-improvement model.
 - Coach individuals to lead on evolving teaching across their school using the resources, models and research from the programme.
 - Evolve teaching through collaboration within and across schools and clusters.
 - Embed self-reflection and improvement as an integral part of professional development for evolving teaching for individuals and schools – self-sustaining systems of improvement.
- Bespoke support to improve the quality of teaching of literacy, numeracy, digital and Welsh language skills. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Collaboration with Read, Write Inc. (A commercial synthetic phonics programme) - professional learning and ongoing coaching to improve the teaching of early literacy skills. 22 schools currently access this ongoing professional learning.
 - Professional learning and in-class coaching to improve the teaching of mathematics using the Concrete, Visual, Abstract approach, in line with expectations outlined in Curriculum for Wales
 - Professional learning and in-class coaching from the Welsh language team
 - Bespoke digital support dependent on School Development Plan priorities.
 - Foundation Learning workshops. The focus for the last academic year has been on practitioners evolving their pedagogy to meet the needs of their learners through an enquiry approach.
 - A focus on improving pedagogy in every secondary Subject Network meeting.
 - Bespoke support for improving teaching through ADDs and INSET in individual schools. For example, developing the teaching of discussion and debate.
 - Facilitating effective opportunities for teachers to take ownership of improving their own teaching practice through the enquiry approach. (NPEP, Cluster enquiry projects, Foundation Learning workshops, Cardiff University etc.)

As a result of the above, strengths with teaching in NPT include:

- Nearly all teachers develop strong relationships with pupils based on mutual respect.
- Nearly all teachers ensure that pupils participate appropriately in lessons, maintaining good standards of behaviour.
- Most teachers have good, up to date subject knowledge and through a range of teaching methods and resources, stimulate and challenge pupils to achieve, including those with additional learning needs (ALN).
- Most teachers deploy teaching assistants effectively and they work in purposeful partnership with teachers to enhance pupil progress.
- Most teachers support pupils' wellbeing successfully.
- Many teachers provide pupils with engaging and purposeful learning experiences.
- Many teachers are developing a shared understanding of progression well. As a result, their teaching is evolving to focus more on developing pupils' values, attitudes and integral skills in addition to knowledge and understanding and skills.
- Many primary school teachers support the development of pupils' oracy, phonological awareness and reading skills successfully.

- Most teachers have effective provision for mathematics, ensuring most pupils make good progress in developing their mathematical knowledge and understanding.
- A majority of teachers are strengthening their teaching of mathematics well through the use of the concrete, visual, abstract approach. Where practice is strongest, teachers allow more time for pupils to explain their understanding using manipulatives and visual representations as well as working in the abstract. Pupils are stronger in their use of mathematical vocabulary and are able to explain their thinking.
- Most teachers support the development of pupils' digital skills effectively.
- Most primary school teachers support the development of pupils' Welsh oracy skills well.
- A majority of primary school teachers support the development of pupils' higher order thinking skills well.
- Many teachers use a variety of assessment for learning (AfL) strategies to enhance learner progress well. For example, many teachers make pupils aware of the criteria against which their work will be assessed and opportunities for pupils to self-assess their work appropriately. However, in a minority of schools, teachers need to develop more consistent and effective practices for AfL and strengthen teacher feedback for pupils to enhance learner progress.
- Many teachers in the LA take an increasing responsibility for their own professional development in improving their own teaching practice. For example, many NPT teachers are engaged in the enquiry approach where they reflect upon and improve their own practice in response to the needs of their pupils.

Areas for development

- We need to evolve teaching at secondary level to incorporate a broader range of skills including pupils ability to solve problems, to plan and organise, to be creative and to
- We need to continue to strengthen the teaching of pupils' skills, particularly teaching of writing skills.
- We need to strengthen the teaching of cross-curricular skills in secondary schools.
- We need to continue to support schools to continually evolve their teaching in line with the vision of Curriculum for Wales and the progression code - enabling pupils to progress towards the four purposes by developing their knowledge & understanding, skills, integral skills and values and attitudes. We need to continue to support schools to focus on evolving their teaching to support learning as a process rather than a product.

Financial Impacts:

All NPT schools receive funding for professional learning to strengthen teaching. The Education Support Officers work with schools and report to Welsh government to ensure good value for money.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is for monitoring purposes.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

No implications as this includes all schools

Workforce Impacts:

No implications

Legal Impacts:

There are no legal impacts as this report is for monitoring purposes.

Consultation:

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item as this report is for monitoring purposes.

Recommendations:

No recommendations as this is a report for monitoring purposes only.

Reason for Proposed Decision:

No decision required

Implementation of Decision:

N/A

Appendices:

None

Officer Contact:

Mike Daley – Lead Education Support Officer m.daley@npt.gov.uk

Chris Millis – Head of Education Development c.d.millis@npt.gov.uk