



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Education, Skills and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee
Thursday 1st February 2024

Report of the Head of Education Development – Christopher Millis

Matter for Information

Wards Affected:

All Wards

Report Title: Curriculum for Wales update

Purpose of the Report:

To provide Members with an update on the Curriculum for Wales in NPT schools.

Executive Summary:

The report provides detail of Neath Port Talbot schools progress towards the Curriculum for Wales

Background:

The Curriculum for Wales is the government's response to the fact that we live in a continuously changing world and we need new ideas and creative use of technology. The aim of the curriculum is to address these challenges, to make sure every child has the knowledge, skills and educational experiences they'll need to make the most of life. The school support team in NPT aims to help each school develop its own curriculum, enabling their learners to develop towards the four purposes of the curriculum – the starting point and aspiration for every child and young person in Wales. The four purposes of the Curriculum for Wales are:

- **ambitious, capable learners who are ready to learn throughout their lives**
- **enterprising, creative contributors who are ready to play a full part in life and work**
- **ethical, informed citizens who are ready to be citizens of Wales and the world**

- **healthy, confident individuals who are ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.**

Curriculum for Wales roll-out in Neath Port Talbot

All pupils from Reception class to Year 8 from September 2023 are learning under the Curriculum for Wales. In September 2024 pupils in year 9 will begin learning under the Curriculum for Wales and this will roll-out in subsequent years until 2026 when all 3–16-year-old pupils will be learning under the Curriculum for Wales.

Progress to date and the support NPT schools receive.

Training

All schools have access to a universal professional learning offer that is both national and local. The national events include leadership training from Higher Level Teaching Assistant training through to support for experienced headteachers. There is also national guidance as well as programmes for developing an understanding of curriculum design, a shared understanding of progression and assessing for the future. The NPT specific learning offer includes a teaching and learning programme which provides bespoke support for teaching and learning that is inclusive and innovative. The aim is to enable learners to develop their knowledge, skills, understanding and experiences. There are currently three groups of teachers from primary and secondary schools. Each group has around 16 to 25 teachers (around 50 in total).

A need to understand what progression is in line with the progression code for the Curriculum is key to realising the four purposes. All schools in Neath Port Talbot have made this a particular focus. It has been central to training on inset days, some of which have been carried out collectively as part of shared cluster training, for example all staff from the Dwr y Felin cluster (over 240 staff) met for training on the Curriculum for Wales. All secondary schools engage and participate in termly subject network meetings. There are 14 subject network groups. Individual schools receive support to meet their own needs for example, how are you using rich tasks to support learning?

Curriculum Design

There is a constant focus on learning and encouraging schools to consider what the learning intention is for pupils, why are they teaching it and how will they know pupils have made progress. The shared understanding of progression, providing pupils with a broad and balanced education will develop highly effective learners and over time this will result in better outcomes for pupils in Wales regardless of how they are assessed.

Teaching and learning

The NPT school improvement team has addressed the need to evolve teaching in the Curriculum for Wales by introducing a Learning and Teaching programme for all teachers. The learning and teaching programme is developing well. The pilot group is continuing to trial innovative approaches and it is helping to shape how teachers may design an iterative curriculum. All headteachers have been informed through workshops of the process and many have nominated teachers who they believe will be able to lead the development within their own school. Two senior teachers have been seconded and they have begun to work in NPT schools at both primary and secondary level. Three groups are currently participating and early indications where teaching is being evaluated demonstrate very strong progress in nearly all lessons observed. Levels of pupil engagement are high and teachers are planning for pupils to make highly effective progress in terms of their knowledge, skills and understanding.

The NPT school improvement team support all schools to evaluate learning. Most schools are making good progress in supporting pupils to make progress towards the four purposes of the curriculum. Pre-Curriculum for Wales and particularly at secondary age, many lessons would have had a strong focus on knowledge and skills, Teachers would have felt the pressure of having to cover content as pupils moved closer to GCSEs. Following evaluation activities which focused on learning many teachers have evolved to also include the integral skills (personal effectiveness, creativity and innovation, planning and organising and critical thinking and problem solving). These higher expectations are resulting in greater levels of engagement in learning and pupils making greater progress across a broad and balanced curriculum. This is supported by recent Estyn inspections where inspectors have commented on good progress made by most of NPT schools. In the few examples where progress is limited it is because teachers have low expectations of the progress pupils can make.

Next steps:

- To continue to support schools in evaluating the progress pupils make.
- To continue to support schools in evaluating the impact teaching has on pupils.
- To continue our partnership with other services in the LA, Welsh government, colleagues in the Middle Tier, Estyn, Higher Education Institutes and our schools.
- To continue the learning and teaching programme for NPT teachers

Financial Impacts:

- No implications

Integrated Impact Assessment:

- The Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies to “pay due regard to the need to:
 - eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- There is no requirement for an integrated impact assessment as this is a matter for information

Valleys Communities Impacts:

All Neath Port Talbot schools are included within this report

Workforce Impacts:

- No implications

Legal Impacts:

- No implications

Consultation:

- ‘There is no requirement for external consultation on this item’

Recommendations:

- Matter for information. No recommendations are required.

Implementation of Decision:

- Matter for information. No decisions are required.

Appendices:

N/A

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