
SECURING QUALITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

ORIGINS

Over the past four or five decades there have been a number of significant changes made to the education system in both England and Wales. Specifically, in Wales, there will continue to be major changes in line with the findings outlined in the Donaldson report (2015). Major factors driving these changes have been to increase the level of autonomy along with the accountability of schools and the school leaders with the intention of creating a self-improving system. Ultimately, with the aim of improving standards and maximising positive outcomes for the pupils within the education system regardless of a pupil's background or location.

These values can be traced back to James Callaghan's (1976) speech at Ruskin College, Oxford. He emphasised the point that all children have the right to a high quality and a high standard of education. It could be argued that there might always be an element of division as long as there are private and state schools, along with selective grammar schools in England. Therefore, it is vital that changes are made to ensure that the standards in state schools are consistent and aspirational to minimise any possible imbalances.

Callaghan's speech was an unprecedented event, as it was the first time that a UK Prime Minister talked publicly about education, bringing the matter to the attention to the general population. From this point on, education became a political issue that would be further subject to changes as the various governments and political parties have altered over the forty years since the Ruskin speech.

Callaghan put forward the case for a 'core' curriculum. Allowing schools, a certain level of freedom but with the parameters of a curriculum to ensure that all pupils were taught specific topics or information. The issue of controlling a school's 'freedom' was evidenced with William Tyndale Junior School Affair starting in 1974. In this case, it was abundantly clear that allowing a school total 'free rein' was not going to result in successful outcomes. The lack of leadership structure as a result of the radically progressive methods, led to chaos with pupils and staff free to do whatever they wanted. These issues were raised by concerned parents and some staff, leading to a reduction in the autonomy of the LEA and government authority being increased. This was the catalyst to the major changes in the education system. Changes that have been brought about by both the Conservative and Labour governments.

Events in 1976 precipitated a period of great change in both the main stream and SEN education. A report published by Warnock (1978) emphasised the need for change in SEN education. Numerous recommendations were made by the report, namely allowing SEN pupils to have the support and facilities

required for them to thrive and maximise their potential. Essentially, they Warnock's report had the same underlying values that the recommendations made about main stream education had. In that, the education system should "equip children for a lively, constructive place in society and also fit them to do a job of work" (Callaghan, 1976). Essentially, allowing pupils to opportunity to be the best they can be.

The changes continued even with the change in political leadership. The Conservative government amended the Education Act (1980, 1986) making it compulsory for schools to have governing bodies and for the governing body to produce an annual report. The intention was to start to make school leaders more accountable for their decisions and outcomes.

Widely considered as the most important of the changes was the Education Reform Act (1988). It created grant-maintained schools directly funding by central government and independent of local authorities, the local management of schools, open enrolment of pupils and crucially the establishment of the National Curriculum and thus national testing. These four factors where designed to improve the standards and quality of education by putting the onus on schools to become more accountable. With the governing body and the headteachers responsibilities much increased.

Unlike cases such as the Tyndale Affair, the increased autonomy of the school was 'kept in check' by the highly developed centralised framework of the National Curriculum. National testing provided data and measures by which schools could be compared and performance could be quantified. As is often the case, a major change can be met with resistance or unforeseen issues. Schools and teachers were concerned about the lack of funding to implement the changes and the affect that they would have on work load. This led to strikes in the late 80's but did give rise to the Teacher Working Pay and Conditions that are very similar to the ones used today.

Though many of the amendments and changes to the Education Act where initiated by Callaghan's Labour government, grant-maintained schools were primarily a Conservative ethos. Funding the schools directly, without LEA involvement, mirrored or modelled the grammar school system. However, Labour governments have slightly adapted this model with the introduction of foundation schools leading to academies. With each change of government more changes have been brought about. Ultimately, the aim should be to improve the education system, making it the best it can be.

The accountability system needs to rigorous if a model of increased autonomy is the be successful. Four years after the Education Reform Act, national inspectorates were established; Ofsted in England and ESTYN in Wales. These bodies were tasked with inspecting schools and reporting on what they find, publishing their findings to the public. This is a method of making schools more transparent and open rather than hiding behind closed doors. Essentially, state schools are funded by public money; therefore, it could be argued, that the public is intitled to see where or how effectively the money is being used within state schools. Schools have a certain level of accountability to the tax payer in that respect along with the pupils

and parents that they are responsible for. However, publication of data in the form of, for example league tables, to the public can have a significantly positive or negative impact on the perception of a school.

Tony Blair's new Labour government provided a fresh impetus to bring further change to the education system. Accountability was again a key driver behind the changes. Initially, the Schools Standards and Framework Act (1998) forced LEAs to prepare development plans with specific school and LEA targets. Further changes, overseen by the then Education Secretary, David Miliband were very much focussed on streamlining accountability and to provide personalised education. His vision can be summarised with his following quote; "We set ourselves the task of delivering an intelligent accountability framework, a simplified school improvement process and improved data and information systems" (Miliband, 2004).

In line with his vision to streamline the accountability progress, Miliband oversaw the amendments to the Education Act (2005) to reduce the inspection burden that school would face. Inspections were shortened and a much greater significance and emphasis was placed on self-evaluation. The importance and potential of self-evaluation in the education system had been championed by academics, in particular, John MacBeath (1999). He stresses that benefit of successful self-evaluation to schools, though correctly points out that the systems required need to be robust and rigorous.

The focus on streamlining the accountability progress has survived the most recent change in government with the current Conservative government, "reducing central and local government prescription for all schools to give heads and teachers the space to focus on what really matters" (Gove, 2012). To action this, the National Curriculum was made more concise, routine Ofsted inspections of outstanding schools were stopped and a modified inspection framework developed. The focus of inspections reduced to four areas and parents would be informed of the findings in a more 'user-friendly', online format. Allowing parents to make more informed choices and judgements about schools. This is an important point as schools are very much accountable to the parents of the pupils that they serve and as with any industry or service, data and information can be very difficult to interpret if you are not in that specific industry or service.

Within Wales, the inspectorate ESTYN now has five inspection areas: standards, wellbeing & attitudes to learning, teaching & learning, care, support & guidance and leadership & management. These inspection areas form a more rounded consideration of a pupil's education, considering the wellbeing and personal aspect of education. Schools evaluation processes are regarded, which is significant, as in order to self-improve you must be adept at self-evaluation.

Though many of the various changes and challenges to the education system mirror that of England, Wales does face its own specific issues and the creation of the Welsh Assembly Government has allowed the system to be tailored to suit or address these. One such example would be the creation of the education consortia funded through the LEA which in turn are funded by the Welsh Assembly. Theoretically, these consortia conform to the key features of a self-improving system as their intention is to enable schools to critically evaluate themselves, share good practise, work collaboratively and build capacity from within.

However, sceptics might identify flaws or issues in this scenario. With government funding being stretched in the current economic climate, does there need to be another layer between the Welsh Assembly Government and schools receiving funding? In a fully, genuinely successful, autonomous system; should the government not directly fund the school without the involvement of any outside organisations? This would be a truly aspiration target. To achieve that level of trust would required extremely robust self-evaluation system along with a totally open and honest approach to accountability.

The categorisation model that was established by the Welsh Assembly Government initially had the intention of deciding how much schools needed to improve and as a consequence of this decision a package of help, support and funding would be designated. This was a significant step towards the concept of a self-improving, autonomous system; unfortunately, it has some what lost its purpose and is more often seen as a 'ranking' tool. However, the initial concept is progressive, allowing schools to work together, schools to be pioneers and innovators and importantly providing the help and support to allow school to improve themselves from within.

Though it has perhaps lost some of its initial focus, the categorisation model along with the new inspection frameworks and curriculum are more than likely to remain in place regardless of future government changes. Therefore, the challenge is now to develop the current self-evaluation and accountability systems and processes into the best that they can be, perhaps to the aspiration state mentioned previously. This could be done by using other education system in other countries as models or by adapting how this process is successfully carried out in other industries to education. Ultimately, as institutions such as the World Bank state, the education system should maximise pupil outcomes, and as a nation we should want our own education system to be the best it can be.

MODELS FOR CHANGE

Research indicates that provided there is sufficient accountability that school autonomy can result in positive outcomes (OECD, 2010). The next steps in the UK education system are to aspire to developing a self-improving system where autonomous schools take ownership of their responsibilities, work as teams, identify strengths and weaknesses, evaluate performance honestly and realistically and build capacity for self-improvement. Countries such as Finland, Singapore, Canada, have widely-regarded successful models that the UK could use for ideas and examples before adapting to fit ourselves. Numerous factors are required to create these self-improving systems with ethos, culture, environment all playing a part; therefore, there is no 'one size fits all' approach.

Subsequently, to develop a successful self-improving system, a range of variables need to be considered. Within a school environment, the leadership team and their ethos are of paramount importance has this

will drive the system. The staff are also crucial as it is indeed them that will carry out the system. As a professional, a member of staff has other accountabilities, such as adhering to the relevant teaching standards. Ideally, staff must share the ethos of the leadership team but also feel valued and motivated to participate in the system. The role of the leadership team is therefore vital in formulating a successful self-improving system within a school.

This is a difficult system to achieve. The current model, which is very data led in terms of exam results etc, is fairly easy to manage. Comparisons can be readily made with schools placed in quartiles based on data that is generated from standardised, uniform sources such as GCSE results. This productivity model makes observing 'good' or 'bad' schools straight forward. In reality, this is probably an overly simplified approach; with the more qualitative features of education removed from these measures. Is a school in an affluent area that achieves a high A* - C percentage 'better' than a school in a deprived area with a lower A* - C percentage? Any future self-improving system would strive to take these features into account; the issue would be how to record and demonstrate that. Reports or findings of inspections for example might have to be more descriptive rather than focussing solely on data. Strong management and a clear focus would once again be vital in being able to achieve this.

Any type of change can be difficult and require effort and commitment. There are various models which describe methods and techniques to facilitate change within large organisations. Many of them share intrinsic values but different methods may suit different scenarios. Kotter (1996) describes his "8 Step Model of Change". His model can be illustrated with the following model:



Fig 1: Adapted from Kotter (1996)

Kotter's model is applicable in a school environment. Initially, what he refers to as 'urgency' might come from various forms; they could include poor results, failed inspections, negative community perceptions of a school or issues with previous leadership styles. These issues could very well provide the catalyst of change within the school coinciding with a change in leadership. However, even within traditionally successful schools to implementation of the findings outlined in Donaldson's "Successful Futures" (2015), will force change.

New leaders will often inherit staff including their leadership team. Employment regulations and teaching unions mean that staff cannot simply be demoted or lose their jobs if a new head is appointed. This could be a very difficult situation for a leader wanting to facilitate significant change within the school. Arguably, step two of Kotter's model is the most significant as failure here will stop progress abruptly. This is the place in the model where personalities and existing school culture could clash. A headteacher would have to identify key 'allies' that share their vision or ethos. This approach is common to other change models for instance when Collins (2001), describes "getting the right people on the bus and in the right seats". Within a school, it would also be prudent to involve influential people from across different departments and levels. This would foster to feeling that all members of staff are valued and that everyone has a significant role to play in the changes. Fundamentally, the aim of the self-improving system is that everyone can work together, sharing good practise and motivating one another to succeed and improve.

The next few steps should flow fluidly provided the foundations of the new vision is stably embedded. Constant communication and promotion of the vision will give it magnitude and allow staff to consider how they might fit into or contribute to the new vision. Conversely, staff that could be considered 'obstacles' to change might be easier to spot and the new leader could implement proactive actions to address them which might require difficult conversions. However, in the climate of accountability this would be necessary for progress to be maintained.

In terms of motivation and maintaining momentum, step 6 is paramount. Often one long-term goal can feel like an insurmountable task, it is far easier psychologically to achieve a series of short-term goals. An added benefit of a short-term goal is the positive reinforcement derived from achievement that is gained, helping to continue the drive for change. Additionally, it allows a leader to praise and reward staff for their achievement, perpetuating the positive atmosphere of success and staff morale within a school, as Kotter describes in step 7. Once, the final step of the model is reached the change should then be a well-integrated system that all staff are onboard with.

Kotter's model does have a high weighting on the involvement of staff, initially key members of staff, but it also normalises change. This is critical to the ultimate goal of self-improvement, as to improve you have to change. There are multiple reasons why staff would be reluctant or even afraid of change so the processes outlined in this model could go some way to alleviate these reasons. Limitations to are evident in the model, as it could become a top-down, time consuming approach that, without the correct leadership, could

alienate or frustrate staff. Once more, the leadership and management of any change is crucial to its overall success.

Comparably, to that of Kotter, Lencioni's model outlines a series of steps that are required to be completed in sequence and failure to do so would halt the process. Although the titles given to the stages vary across the two models, the essence of the models is similar. Emphasis being placed on the value and importance of solid team work and a positive and trusting working environment. As a self-improving system is the ultimate goal within the education system, establishing trust within a school is crucial. Being able to admit and recognise your own failings or weaknesses is difficult as it could make an individual feel very vulnerable both professionally and personally. Fostering a working environment where it is acceptable and encouraged to be self-critical requires an open atmosphere where support is readily available and staff are motivated to want to improve their own practice. Time is needed for this to evolve and could be difficult as the fundamental ethos of the school and the mindset of staff may have to change.



Fig 2: Lencioni 5 Step model (2002)

Furthermore, Lencioni (2002), explicitly mentions accountability within his model. Describing that to maximise positive outcomes staff have to be accountable for their performance and actions. Including the ability to properly self-evaluate this should allow a school to thrive. This has to work in tandem with a secure support network where additional training or mentoring is routinely available. If you are expecting staff to identify areas they could improve upon you have to then help them to improve these. Personal accountability is a strong motivator for most people, in my opinion people try to do their best. In addition, if a strong team-work ethic is embedded in the school, peer accountability will also be evident along with staff working together, openly and honestly, to maximise outcomes.

An older model proposed by Tuckman (1965), could still be considered valid today. It shares many similarities with the previous models mentioned; however, Tuckman included an "adjourning" step to his model. This has parallels with the elements needed to achieving the end goal of a self-improving system.

After achieving the results, this extra step provides the time for reflection and evaluation, allowing staff to consider, as the diagram shows “Now what?”. Incorporating this final step into Kotter’s and Lencioni’s models could provide the self-evaluation aspect that is the ultimate aim for the education system.

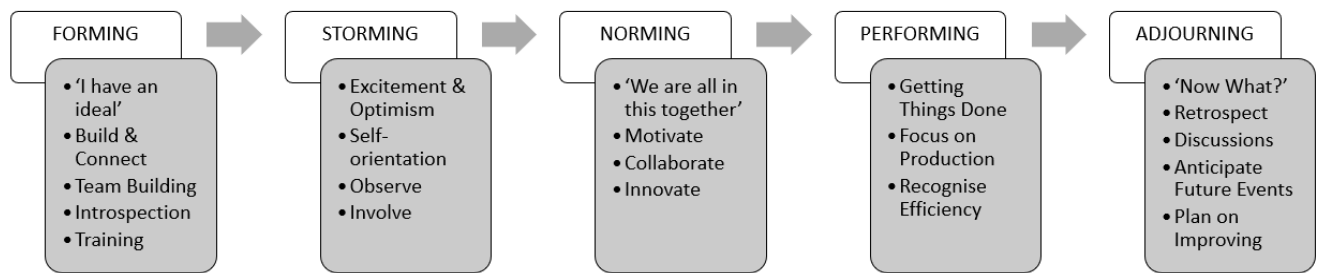


Fig 3: A Representation of Tuckman's Model (1965)

STAFF ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff are governed by various types of accountability which evolves as modern life changes. Primarily, teachers have professional standards which they are expected to adhere too. In this respect. they are accountable to the school or council that employs them and to the profession of teaching. Being part of a school means that there is a certain level of accountability to the local community that the schools serves. As an individual, teacher have a personal accountability to do the best job that they can. Finally, of upmost importance, teachers are accountable to the pupils (and their parents) that they teach. Not only to deliver a high standard of education to the pupils but also to care and consider their well-being. Possibly, this element is the most affected by changes to modern life with the significant increase in the use of social media of the past decade or so.

Professional standards now include specific points referring to the rights of a child and particularly in Wales, this has been a large influence on the new teaching standards. Staff are accountable for caring for the pupils that they teach and must adhere to the safeguarding procedures. Within the four walls of a school building this is not up for debate; an issue that will continue to be a 'grey area' is a teacher's accountability out of working hours. Social media and the digital footprint that people now possess is and will continue to cause issues within numerous professions not just teaching. Similar to the medical profession or the police force, teachers should consider that they are never 'off duty' and that you have to take personal responsibility for your actions and at times justify your actions.

Returning to role of a teacher within the school, the new teaching standards in Wales have changed in line with the drive for autonomy and self-improvement. Pedagogy is obviously still the major contributor to the standards; but innovation, collaboration and professional learning are included. These elements feed into the various change models, in terms of staff being allowed to have ideas and the freedom to try them out

along with the chance to work in collaboration with others. Leadership is now in the standards for all teachers and not just staff that currently hold teacher and learning responsibilities. This is a positive step towards the autonomous, self-improving system. It means that as individuals, teachers can take responsibility and demonstrate their leadership skills regardless of their current role in the school. This builds capacity from within and with the application of successful mentoring and guidance could develop a more skilled workforce. Challenge and ambition will be encouraged which could be a motivating factor for staff. Unlike in private industry, there are no 'bonuses' in teaching. If the profession is to attract people in the future then the profession needs to be appealing and has to compete with other industries. Continuing to improve systems to make teaching a satisfying and fulfilling career is one way in which teaching could achieve this.

Donaldson has stated the importance of creating independent, problem-solving, self-evaluating, literate and numerate pupils that are appropriately equipped to deal with the modern life that they are part of and will start their chosen pathways in; should current teaching standards not echo that? As teachers, we should practise what we preach and I feel that the new teaching standards will allow for this.

SWOT ANALYSIS

In business, SWOT analysis is a common tool used to evaluate and to enable a plan to be developed to improve. It requires strengths and weaknesses to be identified which provide the evaluation element. Considering the opportunities and threats provide the self-improvement element. This style of planning is increasingly utilised within the education system.

As numeracy co-ordinator I have responsibility for ensuring that all departments implement the numeracy section of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) effectively. This has involved carrying out whole school INSET, book monitoring and visits from the county advisors. Initially, the aim was to embed suitable, appropriate tasks within departments schemes of work and to map them on to the LNF. The new aim is for departments to track progress across specific strands. Arguably, tracking pupil progress is a fairer judgement rather than just relying on final grades. The tracking progress includes a start point or base line which you can then use to determine how much progress a pupil has made. As previously mentioned, changes to the styles of inspection mean that this is becoming more common place.

Therefore, in terms of accountability, as numeracy co-ordinator I need to be able to provide evidence of this tracking process to the senior leadership team and if required inspectors. As a co-ordinator, I am not required to develop the tasks and track them myself but I have to ensure the various heads of department understand their accountability with regards the LNF. Senior leadership also have accountability as they are required to have a clear overview of how the numeracy strands are tracked and evidenced across all

departments. However, as a whole staff, we have a responsibility to equip pupils with the relevant numerical skills that they require to succeed within our subjects but also in the wider world. As Donaldson describes, pupils need to be leaving school numerate with the skills required to be employable. The publication of the Donaldson report along with the new teaching standards is going to make it easier to embed numeracy tasks as it is now an 'official' requirement of all staff.

In light of these changes it is important that a clear, united vision of how this is to be done in our school. As skills co-ordinators, myself, along with the literacy and digital competence co-ordinators will have to work together as a cohesive team. Having all three skills co-ordinators involved will mean that the tracking progress developed will be consistent across the three skill areas which should lead to less confusion within staff. Regular meetings with our respective line managers in the senior leadership team will enable us to communicate effectively and keep the leadership team informed of the process. This will reinforce the whole school nature of any policies or systems that are developed.

Recently, we were given the opportunity to participate in a skills review by the county where a team of advisors planned to visit each secondary school in the county and evaluate the skills provision that they observed. We saw it as an opportunity for us to have an evaluation from outsiders (critical friends) and the possibility of being able to collate or share good practice with other schools in the county. The process was designed to mimic an inspection which has provided useful insight into the process. As is often quoted, "knowledge is power", knowing where we stand can only be considered a positive step.

STRENGTHS

Armed with the report from the skills review and my own experiences in my role as numeracy co-ordinator; this coming year, the tracking of the progress made in specific numeracy strands is to be my focus. Strengths are evident across departments and as a school that I believe we can build upon.

The majority of subjects have existing numeracy tasks that adhere to the framework and from the book monitoring it is clear that these tasks are completed by pupils. Previous staff INSET have been tailored towards promoting numeracy and there was evidence that departments had attempted to incorporate the suggestions into their schemes of work. As described by Belbin (1981), a team has nine types of members and to initiate change 'drivers' are required. Within his model 'drivers' would be described as either "resource investigators", "shapers", "team workers", "implementers" or "complete finishers" (Belbin, 1981). These are the people that embrace or are receptive to change, actively making the effort to do so. To drive forward subsequent changes, these members of staff will be crucial so being able to identify them has proven very useful.

As a school, significant changes have been made this year. Unfortunately, redundancies mean that Maths, along with numerous other subjects, will be taught by an increasing number of non-specialists. The structure of the school is to change from departments to areas of learning and experience (AoLEs) where subjects are grouped together, for example Geography, History and Religious Studies will become known as Humanities. A change driven by Donaldson's recommendations and in preparation for the new curriculum. This period of change could be perceived as a strength as it provides an opportunity for the AoLEs to strongly embed numeracy tasks within their updated schemes of work. Furthermore, the larger AoLEs, in comparison to the previous individual departments, will promote increased collaboration between staff. In addition, the 'drivers' will be distributed throughout the AoLEs which will be advantageous for maintaining the momentum and focus needed during the changes.

Consideration of the new ESTYN inspection framework provides a further area of strength, in terms of professional accountability. Starting from September 2017, numeracy (and/or skills) is included within two of the five inspection areas. Both within inspection area three regarding the provision of skills but importantly also in inspection area one which refers to the standards and progress of skills. The fact that progress of skills is now part of the inspection framework is a significant change. As professionals, we have an accountability to perform and adhere to the relevant standards and judgement criteria. The addition of need to account for the progress of skills means that all staff will need to consider appropriate numeracy skills within their subject.

Sharing good practice is an aspect that as a school has been a focus over recent years. Specifically, regarding skills, carousels have been run where department were asked to bring examples of their tasks and all staff were able to look around at them. This has helped to foster an environment where sharing ideas is more prevalent and common place. It is successful way of sharing ideas as actual practical tasks are evidenced. It allows staff to use their initiative and be inspired by other subjects. This echoes Tuckman's third step "norming", as staff have been motivated to share and contribute but also be innovative.

WEAKNESSES

In order to improve, you have to be pragmatic and realistic when evaluating or else it will not be a worthwhile process. A possible flaw to self-evaluation is that it relies on personal perception of a situation. People could have the tendency to be over confident or overly critical. Therefore, having an output from an outsider can be extremely valuable. A second opinion could act as a form of moderation, either confirming or identifying inaccuracies in the evaluation. In Wales, the formation of the consortia has created the challenge advisor role for schools to benefit from. These 'critical friends' are tasked with helping schools to look at their performance and systems critically; aiding schools to plan for improvement. On the whole, the

report from the recent skills review has agreed with our own thoughts as skills co-ordinators on our weaknesses and will form the basis for the actions required for us to improve.

A significant area is the element of progress throughout specific strands. As previously mentioned, with the new inspection framework this is an area that has to be addressed as a priority. Currently, departmental numeracy tasks have been mapped to show the section of the strand that they address. For example, a year 7 history task could allow the pupil to achieve strand 7N4. Currently, the pupil may not have the opportunity to achieve to 8N4 within the context of a history task in year 8, therefore the element of progress is missing.

An ongoing weakness is still the suitability of the task regards the level of challenge and numerical skill required to complete the task. I believe some staff, particularly from traditionally 'non-mathematical' subjects, can be intimidated by numeracy. Although, a substantial amount of work has gone into staff INSET along with help and advice being actively offered concerning task ideas, in a minority of cases it could still be improved upon. Continuing to promote the importance of numeracy and maintaining the regular staff INSET training should help to address this weakness area further.

Finally, the last key weakness has been the lack of consistency in the storing or collection of evidence. Consistency is a crucial aspect in ensuring that any system is working well and is securely embedded into the working environment. The 'driver' departments have taken responsibility and are actively collating evidence of pupils' work and regularly referring to numeracy tasks with lessons. Participation in the recent skills review provided a very telling insight into this area. It was the first time that I have been involved in the listening to learners' process and it was interesting to listen to the different pupil's opinions and perception of numeracy across the curriculum. Contrary to the usual paper-based book monitoring, having a discussion with the pupils was a great way of gleaning more detail, giving the work in their books context. This is definitely something that I feel we should be doing more of as a school. To twist the weakness into a positive, it shows that what is being asked of staff is possible as there is clear evidence that departments have achieved it. Going forward these departments could be utilised as case studies or examples to demonstrate how they have been successful.

OPPORTUNITIES

The beginning of a new academic year is a prime time to start with a new focus and put a plan into action. Staff will be more receptive to change and the vision can be clearly expressed by the head and senior leadership team. The initial INSET day on return from the summer holidays will be used to draw the staff's attention to the focus of evidencing the progression of literacy, numeracy and digital competence skills within their subject.

As mentioned, within the school, the formation of the new AoLEs provides a positive opportunity for change to occur. Each AoLE will be provided with the previous examples of numeracy tasks that they have submitted along with which specific strands on the numeracy framework these tasks address. This should initiate further sharing of ideas and promote discussion as a new mix of staff will be involved. Advantageously, 'driver' staff are distributed fairly evenly throughout the AoLEs, which is an unexpected benefit to the reorganisation. Staff will be expected to identify which strands they feel that their AoLE can contribute to. This puts the onus on them to make the decision, giving them a certain amount of autonomy over the decision. Meaning that they are more invested in the process, feeling part of the changes rather than having the changes forced upon them.

During the initial presentation, examples of how progress can be shown will be shared with staff. A range of examples from different subject areas will be used along with actual examples of good practice from currently within the school. The intention of this is to demonstrate what the final outcomes should look like, essentially modelling what is expected as you would within a classroom. Having to create tasks and generate ideas based on areas that you are not familiar with can be a daunting and difficult task. However, adapting an existing example feels far more achievable. This echoes the sentiment behind Kotter's step six of achieving small goals. To compliment this, the use of actual examples from within the school should empower staff to realise that the changes are well within our capability as a team. Consequently, should staff wish to, there are opportunities to work collaboratively with others. In addition, most people like to have their efforts recognised; using these internal examples should give those 'driver' staff a discrete acknowledgement of their good work. In order to maintain staff moral and motivation, positive recognition is crucial as otherwise staff could become disillusioned and the momentum generated for change will dissipate.

Individual staff now have a professional accountability with regards numeracy with the release of the most recent teaching standards. In addition, senior leaders are expected to have knowledge of the whole school overview with regards to literacy, numeracy and digital competence. Previously, as a co-ordinator, I have been aware of the whole school overview but have had limited opportunities to share this with the senior leadership team. In light of the new staffing structure, as skills co-ordinators we will now have a single line manager within the senior leadership. Subsequently, this should aid with the formulation of a clear, united vision with regards to skills within the school. In response to the changes in the inspection framework, an increased emphasis on skills has been included within the school development plan (SDP). Line managers on the senior leadership team will now require heads of AoLEs to refer to skills within their own departmental development plans (DDPs). Furthermore, the information and data that will be generated from the implementation of tasks to demonstrate progression will be additionally included in the school evaluation report (SER).

THREATS

When implementing a change, a major threat to the success will be lack of consistency. Failure to ensure consistency, in this case across the whole school, will result in the vision being diluted and ultimately unsuccessful. To achieve the necessary consistency, all staff need to be using or adhering to the new system and senior leaders need to be reinforcing the vision regularly. A united team with a clear vision and end goal will mean that the pupils benefit from the consistent approach and reduces confusion. As many academics' state, for example Belbin (1981) teams are complex, containing different characters and personalities, being able to motivate and recognise the specific contribution that each individual can contribute is the key to successful leadership. Knowing the team well enables leaders to get the most out of them and will contribute to achieving consistency.

In business, the 'golden thread' theory is widely used. This stresses the importance of knowing the team and organisation well. Subsequently, the new plan or system is introduced and the team is tasked with following it. The final stage to the 'golden thread' is to evaluate the outcomes. It is here where possible threats to the changes can materialise. Although, adaptations to the way schools are inspected and judged are being made, the system still has a heavy weighting on quantitative data over qualitative. Primarily for the fact that it is easier to collect, process and collate. To evaluate the effectiveness of new changes data does need to be analysed.

To provide a baseline to demonstrate whether improvements have been made over the coming year to departments numeracy tasks, the findings from the skills review could be used and at the end of the year the senior leadership team could conduct a similar process to observe any changes. Further to this, as a co-ordinator I will also be able to look at all the tasks as AoLE submit them and make a judgement on the suitability. Previously, the evidence has been stored within specific departmental folders which I believe has slightly limited to opportunities for collaboration. To combat this, a new spreadsheet has been designed that allows all department or now AoLEs to map their tasks on the numeracy framework and hyperlink to electronic copies of their tasks. Tasks can be uploaded in various digital forms from images, videos, scanned work, PowerPoint presentations etc. This should enable all AoLEs to contribute and provide evidence regardless of whether pupils use exercise books in the subject which has been an area of contention previously.

Included within the spreadsheet is a tab that displays a whole school overview showing which strands have been mapped, which strands have been selected as progress strands by AoLEs and during which term tasks are to be completed. As senior leaders are expected to have knowledge of the whole school coverage, all

the information they require is now to be available in one location. This might prove useful to them during line manager meetings and book monitoring throughout the year.

As a school I feel that increasing the opportunities for listening to learners will enable us as skills coordinators to evaluate the effectiveness of the newly development skills progress tasks but also provide valuable insight into a range of strategies or systems. I propose that the senior leadership team consider this in the coming year. However, difficulties could arise with the regards to logistics of these sessions, for example whether to hold them during or after school and initially with the pupil's own readiness to discuss their opinions. The latter would be slightly dependent on the individual personality of the pupil, although as outlined in Donaldson's report (2015), we need to be ensuring that all pupils are able to self-evaluate and be confident to talk about their own educational experiences.

The evidence collected throughout this year should be used to evaluate the success of the changes when and could point towards any issues or problems that have arisen. Negative evidence could be perceived as a threat as it could simply leads to the changes being written off as failure. However, in a truly self-improving system, negative evidence should be valued as strongly as positive evidence. It can help to identify the areas required to further hone the process or changes and ultimately led to continued progress and improvement. As professionals this is the mind-set need to adapt to or develop if we are to make the education system in Wales a truly autonomous.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the education system in the UK has undergone numerous significant changes in the past forty years. Catalysing these changes was the politicalisation of education which led to the exposure of faults and shortcomings to the public. The majority of the changes have been made with the intention of improving the education system. Comparing ourselves with other countries world wide has further informed the changes and provided the vision of creating a self-improving system; where schools take responsibility for their outcomes, critically evaluate their performance and plan how to improve.

Although examples and models of good practise can be drawn from other countries such as Singapore, Canada, Finland; due to cultural differences it is not as straight forward as a 'one size fits all' approach. Culture, political climate and in the case of England and Wales, the devolution of certain powers make developing a successful system a complex process. Indeed, Wales' autonomy from England within education has caused the formation of a different hierarchy of accountability to that of England, with schools, governors, LEAs, consortia, ESTYN and the Welsh Assembly all playing a role.

At national, county or indeed within the school itself, facilitating and overseeing change requires strong leadership. Leaders must have a clear vision of what is need to be achieved and develop a plan to execute this. This requires team work as one person cannot do everything; therefore, good communication is essential. All staff must be made aware of the vision and buy into it to begin the change process. As the different models of change suggest, different leadership styles may approach this in different ways and indeed different methods maybe required for different staff even within the same school. The mark of a good leader is the ability to identify the strengths and weaknesses of all their staff and motivate them to work efficiency and effectively towards the common goal or vision.

If levels of autonomy are to continue to increase but to ensure that this does not result in schools reverting back to the issues outlined in examples such as the Tyndale Affair, strong self-evaluation and accountability systems must be securing embedded. Achieving this will result in progressive, self-improving schools where innovation and collaboration are actively encouraged, ultimately maximising pupil outcomes.

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