

Gallwch ychwanegu'ch targedau o'ch aseiniad diwethaf (Ond yn berthnasol os yr ydych wedi cwblhau aseiniad) / Please add your targets from the previous assignment (Only relevant if you have completed an assignment)

	Targed/target	Yr hyn yr wyf wedi'i wneud yn yr aseiniad hwn What I have done in this assignment...
Targed/Target 1	To add previous targets at the beginning of the assignment	Added targets to assignment
Targed/Target 2		
Targed/Target 3		

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Part B: How a school develops one aspect of its SDP: a report that critically reflects on the actions, impact and evidence base.

Introduction

This report summarises the data and materials acquired for a particular area of a school's School Development Plan (SDP). The one area from the School Development Plan this report will focus on is developing a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. The strategic goal of the school is to provide better student and staff wellbeing support. This report examines the process of self-evaluation, stakeholder involvement, and evidence-based analysis that was used to identify, address, and quantify the impact of this target.

Following BERA (2018) guidelines, the school in which the SDP was taken from will remain anonymous throughout. From the latest Estyn report from 2016, School X is an 11-16 mixed comprehensive school maintained by Swansea local authority. There are 780 students enrolled, and the school houses a unit that helps key stage 3 and key stage 4 students with significant and multiple learning difficulties from within the local authority. School X holds 7% of pupils who reside in the 20% most deprived areas of Wales. 13% of students qualify for free school meals, which is less than the 17.4% national average for secondary schools in Wales. (Estyn, 2016).

Literature review

The School Development Plan (SDP) is a tool used by schools to establish their vision, goals, and objectives over a certain period of time. It is a process that involves self-evaluation, data analysis, involving stakeholders, strategic planning, measuring impact, and continuous improvement.

According to the Welsh Government (2019), the SDP contains the specific actions a school will take in order to consistently increase student outcomes. Evidence-based educational policy is seen as a crucial element of attempts to improve student outcomes (Levin, 2010; Rosenkvist, 2010). This is where we can use the SDP to give a clear-cut overview of what needs to be achieved and the steps to follow in order to achieve the targets that are outlined and prioritised.

An SDP can be viewed as an effective tool for improving school management. Through the setting of clear objectives and developing action plans, it is believed that schools can enhance their management structures and ensure that they are making progress towards

achieving their goals (Department for Education, 2017). An SDP also helps schools to monitor their performance and evaluate the effectiveness of their policies, processes, and procedures. School self-evaluation is crucial when creating a School Development Plan as it informs the plan.

According to Demetriou and Kyriakides (2012), the group that established self-evaluation procedures regarding educational theory and research had the highest impact on school self-evaluation. Furthermore, their research findings suggested that using this strategy for a longer length of time might maximise this impact. This suggests that school development planning should be a longer-term endeavour with a theoretical and empirical foundation rather than a short-term task. The issue with this is the differing views on what is considered as long- and short-term planning. The Welsh Government (2019) states that one academic year is not a long enough time period to successfully incorporate practice and measure success, so therefore the targets set within school development plans should not be rushed to ensure the proper development of the target. Moreover, this argument is strengthened by Davies and Ellison (2003). They claim that while short-term planning works effectively in the majority of schools, there is evidence that it is "prescriptive" and "reductionist." This context can then be utilised to inform both medium- and short-term planning by agreeing on long-term goals for the school. Considering Schildkamp's (2019) argument that school administrators and teachers should begin the process of school development with "clear and measurable goals," this is significant. By setting long-term objectives, it will be possible to collect information that will be useful for carrying them out.

As well as self-evaluation, Demetriou and Kyriakides (2017) view the involvement of stakeholders in the development of an SDP to enhance the quality of education is paramount. Stakeholders in a school would include students, parents, and the wider community. Through the involvement of stakeholders during the process of finding ways to improve the school, Fullan argues that levels of participation would increase, and they would adopt a more positive attitude towards changes and evaluation results as they have been involved in the process and helped towards planning appropriate success criteria (Fullan, 2001).

In addition to this, the Welsh Government (2016) states that planning for development must include family and community involvement (FaCE) in order to establish an "ethos" of value towards the community. Bridghouse and Woods (1999) make note of how the school location can impact the involvement of stakeholders. In regard to parents, if the school is in a wealthier area, or the school is a private funded school, then parents are more likely to want

to be involved in their child's school as they primarily want their child to succeed. On the other hand, if the school is in a deprived area, where it is a struggle for parents to get their children to school from one day to the next, then participation from parents will be at a much lower scale as their background lack consistent support and a lower drive to succeed. Bridghouse and Woods (1999) argue that partners and stakeholders must carefully balance their pressure and support. The likelihood of success will be higher if they are able to achieve this while cooperating with one another.

To further this argument, Busher, Harris, and Wise (2000) assert that there is a beneficial relationship between teacher development and school growth. This shows that teachers' ongoing professional development is crucial for advancing education. This demonstrates that school growth should involve the entire school and a wholistic approach and is not solely the responsibility of teachers and administrators.

Wellbeing

It is advised that the SDP focus on two to five priorities (Hanover Research, 2014). The objective of well-being, and more particularly the creation of a whole-school approach to wellbeing through the use of pupil voice, will be the focus of this report.

Research by Durlak et al. (2011) identified the correlation between student social and emotional wellbeing and academic performance. Their study found that students with higher levels of wellbeing had higher overall GPAs and lower levels of absenteeism. Similarly, Gadermann et al. (2016) found that student wellbeing had a significant impact on academic achievement, with students who experienced more wellbeing achieving better grades and performance. Furthermore, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), school-based interventions that focus on psychological and social wellbeing improve both student health and educational outcomes. Additionally, such interventions lead to improvements in classroom climate and increased teacher morale (WHO, 2004).

The Welsh Government (2021) released 'framework on embedding of a whole school approach to emotional and mental wellbeing'. This framework indicates that only through pupil engagement will effective learning take place (Welsh Government, 2021). This enhances the view that a wholistic approach to supporting student wellbeing is a priority. It can be argued that teachers are not equipped to teach students about positive mental health due to lack of training. Shelmey et al (2019) states the expectation for teachers to have a better understanding of mental health problems in adolescents is rising. However, Howard et al. (2017), emphasise that the CentreForum Commission "understood that teachers are not

mental health professionals," and training would be helpful for giving them the skills and knowledge necessary to refer a pupil to outside organisations who are better qualified. As a result, this research demonstrates that, despite the fact that it may be challenging to integrate wellbeing education into the curriculum, instructors can benefit from wellbeing training that will help them recognise wellness-related issues and introduce wellness concepts to their students. Linking to the SDP, it is recommended by the Welsh Government (2019) that schools should review pupil wellbeing often, and by reflecting upon the results, develop success criteria to address the issues raised.

Developing an action point

School X achieved judgements of 'excellent' in the wellbeing portion of the last inspection report by Estyn in 2016. Due to the school not being inspected since then, they used self-evaluation methods such as reviewing previous SDPs and targets within them in order to prioritise aspects they wanted to include in the current SDP, in which they found pupil mental health and wellbeing to be at the forefront, especially after the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The school also wanted to further implement the Welsh Government (2019) framework in order to improve the wholistic approach to mental wellbeing amongst their pupils. This target is ongoing and is expected to be implemented by June 2023.

To do this effectively, School X recognised the need for a document which encapsulated the wellbeing of all year groups and gave an overall consensus of what they needed to improve and methods in order to get there. Here, it is evident that School X was actioning upon the issues raised from the self-evaluation process. In order to obtain the information for such document, School X created pupil questionnaires which were completed by pupils time from Year 7 to Year 11 during the morning registration period in order to gain a general consensus of the nature of pupils' wellbeing throughout the school, in the majority of aspects of school life. The results of the questionnaire were collected and inputted into a document which included an overview of all year groups within the school. The school also took into consideration other factors such as the number of internal and external exclusions, attendance of pupils, the number of pupils attending the 'wellbeing room' situated within the school and the referral of pupils to external agencies. School X then used data analysis by inputting the information from all of these contributing factors to overall wellbeing into spreadsheets for not only each year group, but each form class within the year group, meaning that every child was included in the process. The spreadsheet was able to give a clear overview of pupil wellbeing and showed the school what issues needed to be prioritised. However, although this approach is successful in including every child, due to the information it contained, only Senior Management, and the pastoral team had access to the

document. Although the reasoning behind this decision is valid, with the target being embedding a whole school approach to wellbeing, this is a limitation as it did not involve all members of staff.

The next stage of the SDP is strategic planning with the use of stakeholders. The stakeholders within School X included the Senior Leadership Team, teaching staff, support staff, pupils, governors, and any external agencies the school would work with. By including a number of stakeholders in the process, the school were able to involve the wider community, especially through the use of external agencies. However, the school did not include parents as stakeholders in this process. Although it was mentioned through a conversation with the Assistant Head Teacher that parents would be informed about the new approach, (Thomas, 2023) this was not highlighted in the SDP, and it was not mentioned as to whether parents would be able to give input or ideas about any interventions or strategies that would take place concerning the wellbeing of pupils. The use of stakeholders in this process was vital as it ensured that everyone was involved when prioritising issues, and all involved were aware of the measures needed to ensure the successful implementation of the holistic wellbeing approach within the school.

Once the issues regarding wellbeing were found, School X started the strategic planning aspect of the SDP. They deemed it necessary for the Assistant Headteacher to attend training days regarding the Welsh Government (2021) framework about wellbeing, which would then be reiterated to all staff during inset days, furthering the implementation of a whole school approach. Once the training had been given, School X completed a relevant action plan to achieve the targets proposed. This included wellbeing days amongst pupils, the continuation of the use of the wellbeing room within the school, interventions for the pupils most in need and designated support staff for each pupil. This gives consistency amongst staff and pupils, as the pupils would know who to approach if they had an issue.

As this is an ongoing target which is not yet completed, measuring impact at this stage is difficult. However, School X suggested within their SDP that the questionnaires completed by pupils at the beginning of this process would be completed again after the implementation of the new approach, and the results from the previous would be compared to the new results. By doing this the school would be able to see whether implementation has been successful. A limitation here would be that the school would only have two sets of results to compare, by completing the questionnaire numerous times throughout the year, staff would be able to see discrepancies within the data and have a better overall understanding of pupil

wellbeing by having a sufficient amount of data to compare, not just from the start of the year and end of the year.

Reflection and evaluation

The implementation of the target within the SDP of a whole school approach to wellbeing was given a timeframe of less than one academic year, it is stated within the SDP that the timescale was from September 2022 to June 2023. As mentioned previously, the Welsh Government (2021) suggest that one academic year is not sufficient time to successfully implement practice and measure success. Moreover, referring to the argument of Demetriou and Kyriakides (2012) that long-term planning could maximise impact, it could be suggested that School X should prolong their timescale to ensure the proper and thorough implementation of methods needed to achieve their end goal.

Regarding the collection of data, School X stated that two questionnaires would be completed to compare pupil wellbeing from the start of the academic year before the implementation of the new wholistic approach to wellbeing, to the end of the academic year after the approach was implemented after June 2023. They also mentioned that other factors such as pupil attendance, internal and external exclusions would be used. Although there is a lot of data to analyse here, the school did not mention how this data would affect the next steps. It was said that it would help guide which interventions needed to take place, however it was not specified what these interventions would be and how they would target specific pupils from the data collected. By including this information within the SDP, it would ensure all members of staff were able to see progression and the steps needed to be taken.

The school included pupils as stakeholders in the process, however, parents were not. The school's FaCE would have increased if parents had been involved in the decision-making process. This would have given parents a forum to discuss removing obstacles from the way their children are nurtured. Moreover, if all staff were given access to the data, it would ensure that everyone would have a greater understanding of the pupils they are encountering, and how to support their needs. Furthermore, even though training would be given to staff during inset days, teacher development that Busher, Harries and Wise (2000) stated would aid school development, could improve by having access to the data it could provide teachers with relevant information to ensure improvement.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this report has looked at the target of implementing a whole school approach to wellbeing within the SDP by creating a wellbeing document to clearly see where intervention was needed. The literature mentioned has focussed on the process of creating an SDP including self-evaluation and the inclusion of stakeholders in the process. Although the school was successful and thorough in many aspects of this process, including self-evaluation, it is evident that there is room for improvement regarding the involvement of parents in the process and strengthening FaCE, and also setting long-term targets in line with the Welsh Government (2021) guidance. By setting the timescale for such a short period, the implications in terms of the effectiveness of embedding the target are great.

This report has highlighted the importance of engaging with SDPs, which is something I will continue to do throughout my professional career. The report has also highlighted the importance of a holistic approach to wellbeing, and how everyone having access to the same information and training is vital within a school setting, especially regarding pupil wellbeing.

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