

	Target	What I have done in this assignment...
Target 1	Your work was a joy to mark. The method and depth to your analysis was a particular strength. If you note problems or limitations, make sure you explain how you are addressing them in the planning stage.	I have taken this target on board and have tried to be more clear on ways to address problems/limitations.
Target 2	N/A	
Target 3	N/A	

Component 2: How a school develops one aspect of its SDP: a report that critically reflects on the actions, impact and evidence base.

Throughout this assignment, it is essential that I critically reflect on one aspect of School X's School Development Plan (SDP). I will ensure I have a clear understanding of how information is shared, the importance of strategic planning and will make practical suggestions based on my knowledge of theory and practice as to how things could be done differently. School X is a large primary School in South Wales with 582 children on roll (*Estyn, 2018*). The eligibility for free school meals at School X is 6% and Estyn described the school as being a 'happy and vibrant learning community' (*Estyn, 2018: 2*). The target that I have chosen to reflect on and evaluate is target 1: To promote and improve the profile/quality of provision for Health and Wellbeing for staff and pupils throughout the school. *Estyn (2018)* commented on the feelings of pupils, stating that the majority of pupils felt safe and that attitudes and wellbeing, in regards to learning were excellent. I decided to focus on Target 1, as *Bammer et al., (2010)* suggests if a child has good health and well-being from an early age, this will lay the foundations for them to live happy and productive adult lives, and I wanted to see the impact of this in practice.

Autonomy can be negatively impacted if levels of professionalism and school policy are less developed (*Di Liberto et al., 2014., Earley and Greany, 2017., and Hanushek et al., 2012*). *Ehren et al. (2014)* indicate that there needs to be a set of targets, which stretch members of staff, give levels of accountability and have a clear assessment (*Earley and Greany, 2017., Hanushek et al., 2012*). Planning for improvement is essential and one type of planning that is used frequently in schools is strategic planning (*Robinson and Pearce, 1983., Sundnes, 2014*). A strategic plan can be described as an outline of steps that need to be followed, with a whole school approach, with the aim of achieving the set goals (*Fernandez, 2009*). *Brighouse and Woods (2005)* suggest that the three approaches to school strategic planning are appreciative enquiry, ensuring compliance and problem solving. *Preedy et al. (1997)* believes that strategic planning is now considered as a key management tool, which helps to solve problems, achieve goals and involve staff and parental engagement (*Fernandez, 2009*). *Barber and Mourshed (2015)* link the theory that to develop great teachers, you need to support development within the school. This can be done through provided rich learning environments and planning appropriately, taking the teachers opinions in to account, to try and improve standards (*Earley and Greany, 2017., Schleicher, 2011*). School Improvement plans (SIP)/School Development Plans (SDP) are implemented in to settings, with the aim of making improvements and improving school effectiveness (*Hargreaves et al., 1989., Hutchinson, 1993*). *Welsh Government (2014: 3)* state that an SDP is 'the school's strategic plan for improvement'. Many researchers suggest that to promote improvement, the SDP needs to be supported and there needs to be clear strategies in place to ensure improvements are made (*Bradley, 1991., Constable et al., 1991., Hutchinson, 1993*). Developing a SDP has become an essential area in school reform efforts, however one negative factor of this is the lack of studies examining whether or not these plans are effective (*Fernandez, 2009*). *Fernandez (2009)* states that the majority of studies have been carried out on private sectors and that there has been no consistent evidence that the SDP planning method is effective. *Shipp et al. (1999)* suggest that there may be a tension between targets and goals in the SDP, as there are usually multiple targets set in the school, that all need to be made a priority. On the other hand, *Schechter et al. (2004)* argue the importance of SDP's, as the promotion of a school's SDP allow staff to learn, be able to deal with new challenges and adapt to an ever-changing environment (*Bell, 2002., Fernandez, 2009., Hutchinson, 1993*).

The aspect I chose to focus on is health and well-being, as this is an area that has always interested me, as School X have worked hard to try and imbed this in to their every day

running of the school. *Musgrave (2017: 5)* believes that there is a link between children's health and wellbeing being beneficial 'for the individual, but also for all of society'. It was also an area of interest, as health and well-being is going to one of the six AoLE's in the new curriculum for Wales (*Donaldson, 2015*). Improving health and well-being throughout Wales is being seen as important in Welsh Government policy and in schools, will help guide children when dealing with difficult issues and decisions (*Donaldson, 2015*). *Aggleton et al. (2010)* believes that life circumstances can have a major impact on children's health and well-being. Making sure that basic needs are met help to support children's health and wellbeing, this can be done through support from their peers, professional and also their families (*Carr, 2001., Musgrave, 2017*). *Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979)* has been seen as useful, when discussing the considerations that can be made, in regards to influences that may affect children's health and well-being. *Clark (2013)* adapted Bronfenbrenner's system, in relation to children in the early year's health and well-being, and believes that children have two microsystems, that of their school setting and that of their home (*Musgrave, 2017*). *Marmot (2010)* believes that health inequalities are mainly caused by children's home lives and the amount of children living in poverty in the UK. *Underdown (2006)* agrees with *Marmot (2010)* and believes that a child is more likely to be at risk of poor health, the lower their socio-economic group (*Musgrave, 2017*). *Clark (2013)* highlights the importance of making the school setting engaging and inviting for all children, to support their emotional needs that may not be supported in their home setting. In relation to children's attitudes to learning, *Laevers (2002)* strongly believes that a child needs to have a high level of emotional well-being for their learning and development to be promoted, thus highlighting the importance of health and well-being in schools (*Carr, 2001., Musgrave, 2017., Underdown, 2006*).

As stated by the *Welsh Government (2014)*, in relation to the SDP being easily accessible, we were able to receive a copy of the SDP through email and a paper copy, on request. There were four targets on School X's SDP, and after attending the Bridging 3 share day, I found out that School X's SDP was a lot smaller than the other schools in the same network. Improving health and well-being of pupils and staff in School X is target 1 on their SDP and has been a target since September 2019. School X have regular staff meetings and as a team, discuss any areas that need to be reviewed or set as a target. *Brighouse (2013)* states the importance of practitioners, as a mark of an effective teaching culture, have an expectation of carrying out action research and having an opinion on what they feel should become a school target. One possible implication of involving teachers and providing opportunities for development is school funding (*Skidmore, 2014*). After a discussion with the head

of health and well-being, she commented on the low budget that they have, in regards to developing their SDP. The head of health and well-being attends training days, which then means having to pay a supply teacher to cover her class for the day, which is where the majority of the budget is spent.

Stakeholders are also active participants in the planning for school development are actively encouraged to engage with the school, staff and pupils, in regards to areas that affect them and to give their thoughts on ways to improve. In regards to strategic planning, *Plant (2006)* believes that there has been a transformation in the way that institutes have started to plan. In the past, it has been the head of organisations/schools that for the most part, develop the arrangements, targets and plans for their employees (top down approach), but a negative of this could be the little or no connection between the strategic plan and the everyday running of a setting (*Plant, 2006*). In comparison to this, a positive of the bottom-up approach is the link between decisions that are made, feedback from members of staff that can help the strategic planning process (*Steen, 2017*). As stated above, all staff are involved with the planning of the SDP, as *Steen (2017)* believes that a strategic plan can be strengthened through a focus on gathering real-life information from employees involved. Although everyone has an input in to the planning, the head teacher and deputy head write the SDP together. They do this, as the head teacher believes that many members of the team have different styles of writing and feels it will be beneficial for the flow of the strategic plans, in the SDP. At School X, they use both the bottom-up approach (gaining information from teachers) and the top-down approach (head teachers writing the SDP).

All data, in regards to the health and well-being target is confidential and the head of well-being and the head of the school have access to this information and make changes to planning, from the data that has been collected. The head of health and well-being is aware of the struggle in measuring the impact of strategies, in regards to children's health and well-being. *Kelly (1992)* states that education is complex, so accuracy of assessment in education can be difficult to measure (*Blenkin and Kelly, 1992., Carr 2001*). *Currie et al. (2008)* believes reviewing the impact and children's level of health and well-being, especially of school pupils is seen as difficult, as data can often be seen as unreliable. There are many areas that should be taken in account, in regards to health and well-being of children, which are age, socio-economic status, ethnicity, gender and family background (*Currie et al., 2008*). One way in which the head of health and well-being assess staff engagement with the strategies is through staff meetings and questionnaires, in regards to which activities they find useful and how they feel they could edit plans to better suit their children. There are also interviews

carried out with the children and questionnaires that are anonymous. One negative implication of carrying out interviews with children may be that the pupils give the answers that they feel the teacher wants to hear, thus making the data unreliable (*Boehm and Weinberg.,1997., White, 2009*). School X are aware of this, thus creating anonymous questionnaires for the children to complete, giving them the freedom of speech, but without the teaching staff knowing who has written it (*Green and Hogan, 2005*).

Target 1, in relation to health and well-being is on a 3year continuum and is set to be completed in 2022, which is seen as a positive according to Cuckle and Broadhead (2003) as they state school development planning is intended to have a big change in the school setting and should be seen as a long-term planning process, rather than a short-term solution. After speaking to the deputy head teacher, the school feel they are making positive progress and have abided by the set targets and 'ways forward' from their SDP. As mentioned above, there were interviews with the children and questionnaires carried out, in regards to their thoughts and feelings about the different health and well-being strategies used in their classes. I was unable to access the minutes from the interview, so carried out my own interview with 10 children from Year 5/6 (see appendix 1), as I felt it essential to find out how the children felt about the strategies and activities that had been put in place. School X listen to learners, as *The Fryer Report (1997, 25)* used the phrase 'putting learners at the centre' of the learning process (*McGivney 2000*). In the SDP, there was a target set, to ensure questionnaires were completed, but there wasn't a set amount of times throughout the year or when to complete them. I feel that this is an area of improvement, as when discussing the interviews/questionnaires, the last ones were done in October, a month after the strategies were introduced to the children. In order to make it prevalent and to have data to analyse, I feel it may be beneficial to carry these out on a more regular basis, especially as there are new activities added each Month.

I feel that the SDP at School X is very beneficial for them, and has proved to be successful so far in the promotion of health and wellbeing throughout the school. However, it is essential to remember that before the implementation of the strategies and the SDP, the children in school X had already received an excellent for wellbeing and attitudes to learning (*Estyn, 2018*). It may have been beneficial, in regards to data collection and comparison, for the staff at School X to have completed surveys/questionnaires before the implementation of the new strategies and actions that are included in the SDP (*Dewey, 1997*). Also, in School X, although there are staff and stakeholder links to the planning of the SDP, there is one head

of health and well-being, who attends all the training days, and staff meetings are once a month, for one hour. I feel it may be beneficial for School X to introduce more staff training throughout the school, in regards to health and well-being, as *Bell (2002)* believes that in order for a school's development plan to be successful, the quality of teaching and level of understanding need to be improved (*MacGilchrist and Mortimore, 1995., Xaba, 2006*).

In conclusion, throughout this assignment, the importance of strategic planning and school development plans have been shown and the way in which School X plan is a mixture of both the bottom-up approach and the top-down approach. *Brighouse (2013)* believes that it is a challenge for schools to use both approach, finding a balance that fits the school's current situation. In the future, I feel it is essential to consider the differences in pupils and their health and well-being before trying to implement any strategies that I have seen in School X and important to remember that each SDP is personal to the school that has created it (*Hutchinson, 1993*). I feel that finding out about the different strategic plans and aims of the school will help to guide me and help me to set personal targets in my own class, in the future and to become an active participant with my own views when discuss potential targets for the school I am placed in, helping me become a more knowledgeable practitioner, which will then improve my teaching (*MachGilchrist and Mortimore, 1995., Xana, 2006*).

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Appendix 1

what does wellbeing mean?

Child 1: It means being calm and not being all stressed

Child 2: Same

Child 3: There's a lot more to it. Yoga can have a big effect, that's why we do it every Tuesday.

Child 4: Same as everyone else.

Child 5: It means to have a healthy mind set, a growth mind set. It means you believe in yourself

Child 6: Taking time to listen to your thoughts and relaxing.

Child 7: Stay positive

Child 8: Staying positive

Child 9: It's when you concentrate on the present, instead of the past.

Child 10: Being mindful

Do you think wellbeing is important?

Child 1: Yes, I think it's important.

Child 2: Yes, you can become really stressed with a test and it can help.

Child 3: yes, it can help with lots of other things.

Child 4: Yes, otherwise you'll be stressed.

Child 5: Yes, you won't have a good lifestyle if you have pressure and stress.

Child 6: Yes, because if you don't relax or take time for yourself, you can build up stress.

Child 7: Yeah, it can change your personality. If you're struggling with depression or anxiety, your mind set can get you over it.

Child 8: Yes, it's very effective if you use it well. It makes you more positive, especially in school. It can change your day around.

Child 9: I think it's important because if you do enough of it, it can change your perspective on life.

Child 10: I think it's really good because it can help people change their aspect on life, and over come their mental health needs.

What would you like to do more of?

Child 1: Yoga and rugby

Child 2: Yoga and colouring

Child 3: I would like to listen to music more

Child 4: Yoga

Child 5: Peace out

Child 6: Peace out

Child 7: I think meditation and MISP, because they help me get relaxed and feel better

Child 8: Meditation – I think it's really helpful. I enjoy doing it on a Friday, it's a nice end to the week, but I would like to do it more.

Child 9: I like doing yoga and meditation.

Child 10: MISP and mindfulness

What activities have you done?

Child 1: I like the colouring the most.

Child 2: Yoga.

Child 3: Colouring and the music.

Child 4: I like doing yoga and colouring the most.

Child 5: We do peace out. It's a video where we find a space and close our eyes. A lady tells us things to picture in our mind. We have been researching mindfulness and made a mindfulness video.

Child 6: We use the maes yr haul app and do yoga.

Child 7: Misp – it's a massage in school programme. Yoga after PE on a Monday

Child 8: The well-being team demonstrate things. Yoga

Child 9: MISP. We also do exercises, we'll sit down, close our eyes and think of different things.

Child 10: Meditation

What and how do you celebrate achievements in class?

Child 1: Mindful March. Points system. Golden time.

Child 2: If we move up in Maths, she puts our name on the board, claps us and gives us a dojo.

Child 3: A certain number of points can give you activities to do. 100points = tea with the teacher. Seren yr wythnos in the hall – you get mentioned in the 'book of greatness'.

Child 4: Give out dojos.

Child 5: She would say 'well done'. Smile at you. We get dojo champions and people are chosen as prefects in Year 6.

Child 6: Certificates. Star of the week. Some people bring trophies and certificates in from activities they've done outside of school.

Child 7: Sticky notes – we get things written on them and then give them to the person. It's really nice. Dojos promote certain things, like Welsh.

Child 8: We put notes with positive comments of people on them and stuck them on photos of children in the class. It's nice to know that people think these lovely things about you. We have dojo champions announced in assembly.

Child 9: Sometimes we have achievements in class assembly on a Thursday. Dojo's, sometimes they forget to put them on though.

Child 10: In our class we have a gratitude jar and if you've done something good, it goes in the jar. On a Friday the teacher picks them out and reads to the class.