

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

Targets from last assignment

1. Explain and evaluate findings and expand on them.

I have included more detail and explanation when discussing the findings.

Introduction

Throughout this report the researcher aims to critically evaluate a specific aspect of a Schools Development Plan. This will provide an insight into its contribution to the school whilst also evaluating the benefits and any subsequent improvements to give the children the best possible learning experience. The specific aspect chosen to highlight in detail from the School Development Plan is under the Well-being section in particular how to update the school's behaviour policy. Following BERA ethical guidelines for educational research (BERA, 2018) the school in question is a English medium school located in South Wales. The percentage of free school meals at the school is six percent compared to the national average of nineteen percent placing it what is deemed an affluent school bracket. Under the schools last inspection Well-being was judged as excellent (ESTYN, 2019) subsequently post pandemic the Schools Development Plan has highlighted that some children need continued support to enhance their wellbeing.

Literature review

A School Development Plan is a tool used in all school environments as a means for creating strategies from improvement within a school.

The underlying intention of School Development Plans is to raise standards of education and subsequently achieve a higher level of learning outcomes (Welsh Government, 2014). Guidance was issued under section ten of the education act 1996 detailing intentions expected of schools in regard to school improvement. The expectation of a School Development Plan is to enable children to experience learning in the most advantageous environment. This will in turn allow the children to attain high standards and nurture ambitions for the future regardless of their socio-economic background (Welsh Government, 2022). Bronfenbrenner's theory states that every part of a child's life and development is influenced by the social environment they grow up in (Bronfenbrenner, 1996). This is a key strategy in enabling all educational establishments to ensure that children are making improvements.

The Government framework sets out three parameters for creating a School Development Plan. These are evaluation and improvement, accountability and transparency. The process of evaluation and improvement is key to the success of a School Development Plan as it encourages a school to assess what is working well and what needs to be improved and subsequently how this can be addressed within a School Development Plan. This process is a continual one whereby teachers and leadership teams should have the confidence to improve their practise. Once priorities have been generated within the school then it is important to ascertain whether or not these are feasible in both an environmental and financial way (Welsh Government, 2022). Schools should be encouraged to consistently evaluate for school

improvement, it is important that this becomes an integral part of the school culture not only completed prior to any form of inspection (MacBeath, 2005).

Accountability is their to ensure that evaluation and improvement are being undertaken in the correct format. Schools are accountable to both their governing bodies, local authorities and their regional consortia. This would help to ensure that a School Development Plan has been generated and implemented in the correct way (Leithwood et al., 1999).

Transparency is a process of providing information to the public, this can be provided by the schools, local authorities, the Welsh Government and Estyn. The Welsh government publishes generic information about every school this could include percentage of Free School Meals, Additional Learning Needs, number of teachers and some budgeting and financial information. The process of evaluation results in the qualities and improvement opportunities of the school to become transparent, these are then subsequently included in a School Development Plan. As a result of this the public will be able to view standard government provided information about all schools and specific detail of their own summarised School Development Plan (Welsh Government, 2022).

Fullen states there are four steps to be applied when looking at change. These are "Initiation, Implementation, Continuation and Outcome" In the first of these stages a school must assess its strengths and areas for improvement. Next it should involve all stakeholders in discussions regarding the priorities to be included in the School Development Plan. Subsequently any new aims and actions become part of the new structure and it may be necessary to ensure that all staff have the appropriate training to carry these out. As the School Development Plan evolves it should be continuously reviewed and changes when appropriate (Fullen, 2019).

The researcher has chosen to focus their study on the area of Well-being and behaviour policies within the specified School Development Plan. The school environment has a key part to play when considering the well-being of children and the impact it has on their behaviour. Spratt states there is a need for continual evaluation of procedures and routines in a school in order to address emotional well-being. They go on to identify the need for a review of values, policies and procedures when attempting to make a change within the school environment (SPRATT et al., 2006).

As stated in the Government guidelines the outcomes of a child's cognitive development is structured around a strong emotional health and wellbeing. The most advantageous way of achieving this is through a whole school approach (Government, 2021).

Developing an action

When drawing up a School Development Plan the evaluation process begins by looking at a school's vision and the overall aims they are hoping to achieve (Chapman & Sammons, 2012). All members of staff, governing body, parents/carers and pupils are involved in the process of looking at strengths and areas for improvement within the school environment. The school in question has referred back to their most recent Estyn inspection report and highlighted any areas in which improvement could be made. When creating a School Development Plan it is necessary to initially review the three year strategic overview which will generate the basis for the key objectives. Also, it is advantageous to review the previous year's plan to see what actions have been completed and if any priorities have changed. This has highlighted an aim for the school to update the school behaviour policy in order to improve pupil/staff well-being and behaviour (appendix 1). Any financial implications must also be considered when creating a

School Development Plan. It is expected that the resources and cost for this aim should be nil as suggested in the School Development Plan(appendix 1).

The strategies used in order to achieve the specific aim within the School Development Plan have several actions required. For example, when reviewing a school behaviour policy it is imperative that staff review existing behaviour strategies and the effectiveness of these. All stakeholders should be canvased for their opinions on current effectiveness of strategies before generating a new behaviour policy.

A key aspect of generating a School Development Plan is a schools self-evaluation process. This involves gathering qualitative and quantitative data on different aspects of a schools performance (Reynolds, 1988). This would include data regarding children's reading ages, National test data, Free school meal percentages and the attainment gaps between different children together with any factors affecting these. It is also important to take into account post pandemic data that may have been obtained during lockdown from parents and children on their experience of learning at home. This has generated qualitative data about children's well-being following the pandemic and how children have resumed normal school life. The results of this data have indicated that although most children have successfully resumed normal school life some children still require some additional support in the areas of well-being and behaviour. It has been necessary to include an action in the School Development Plan to help the children return to pre lockdown targets and outcomes. Further testing may be required to compare children's pre and post covid attainment. An important issue to be born in mind is the effect of school closures on children's learning and well-being and all stakeholders need to be aware of this when drawing up a School Development Plan. When analysing the data regarding the performance of a school it is beneficial to review similar schools within the same consortia and nationally. Hopkins states that in order to facilitate an improvement in the learning outcomes of children and to ensure the school has embedded strategies for ongoing improvement there are two factors to be considered. The first of these being school management, planning and continual professional development. The second is more classroom based and focuses on teaching and learning and pupil voice(Hopkins, 1995) .

In accordance with the Welsh Government guidelines the next stage in the process of creating a School Development plan is strategic planning (Welsh Government , 2014) In order to ensure all areas of a schools performance have been evaluated effectively meetings are held with all stakeholders this would provide a wide variety of information when identifying and evaluating school priorities. The schools process of involving every stakeholder in creating the School Development Plan would encourage them to take ownership of and adhere to the plan wherever possible in order to attain the aims and actions agreed. Having prioritised a need to update the schools behaviour policy an agreed set of actions has been generated (appendix 1).

Stage three of the process is making improvements/action. The responsibility for carrying out these actions has been given to the Deputy Head teacher who must ensure that all resources are available to all staff so that these actions can be achieved. As staff have already been included in the process of creating the School Development Plan they are aware of the actions required and how they are expected to achieve this. A timescale is set for each action on a termly basis.

The final process of reviewing impact is undertaken by gaining feedback from staff and stakeholders highlighting the need for a revised behaviour policy to reflect the schools new vision and values(appendix 1).It is hoped that once the new policy is implemented this will in turn have appositve effect on children/staff well-being and behaviour. In accordance with Government guidelines this document will be reviewed annually (Welsh Government, 2014).

Reflection and evaluation

As part of the School Development Plan the school has created a new set of values these are based around the four qualities of kindness, collaboration, resilience and responsibility. The school has elaborated on each of these qualities giving examples of each for the children to gain a deeper understanding. All staff are required to model and encourage children to develop each of these values. Modelling behaviour expectations shows the children an example of how they are expected to behave thus reinforcing a positive outcome (McAuliffe et al., 2009).

The school has carried out a review of communication and expectations regarding these new values and is proposing to draw up a new behaviour policy in line with these.

The values highlighted are a comprehensive base for children to develop both inside and outside of the school environment. Though it could be suggested that there is a focus on negative emotions for example sad or upset and a possible improvement could be to encourage sharing positive emotions as well. Stein states that feelings have a link to “cognition and social behaviour” therefore emotions greatly effect the way in which human beings behave (Stein et al., 1990).

It has been identified that the schools approach to rewards is not currently consistent throughout the school. Many different forms of rewarding behaviour or attainment are used these include, a whole class reward, individual rewards, or no reward.

The behaviourist paradigm discussed by Hart suggests that children’s behaviour should be taught via a series of giving and removing rewards dependent upon their actions (Hart, 2010). This suggest that behaviour has a positive response to rewards and these systems could be beneficial in the classroom.

Reeve suggests that although “extrinsic rewards” increase children’s motivation to carry out the desired task this analogy might not always be effective. Therefore it may be difficult to predict the effectiveness of rewards as a motivation to children and how this may impinge upon their well-being (Reeve, 2006).

A whole school consistent approach to rewards could be advantageous to both behaviour and well-being within a school environment. If children are aware of what is expected of them then rewards may motivate them to achieve the schools standards of behaviour which may in turn improve the well-being throughout the school. Rodgers states that having a whole school approach is consistent with improvement in behaviour management subsequently leading to an a more beneficial learning environment. When all staff are working in a collaborative manner then consistency will occur (Rogers, 2007). In order to ensure a clear understanding of the new behaviour policy it is important that all staff are consulted on and agree to the contents of the policy.

Conclusion

To conclude this report, it has provided an insight into the methodology and requirements to be taken into consideration when generating a School Development Plan. When creating a School Development Plan it is imperative that all stakeholders are involved in the gathering of data and subsequently agreeing the priorities. In order for the plan to be successful all staff need to adhere to the professional teaching standards of Leadership and collaboration. The ongoing

self-evaluation process and accountability required to implement a School Development Plan leads to improving the quality of teaching and learning. This will in turn have a positive effect on the role of a teacher in the classroom. Due to the continual changes that take place a school environment and the world as a whole it is necessary to ensure that a School Development Plan should be reviewed regularly to ascertain what is working and what may need to change (Kilminster, 2021).

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Target 2: Wellbeing - To review and update approaches to pupil / staff wellbeing and behaviour.

Inspection Areas: 2.1, 2.2, 4.1, 4.2

@teb References:

Context: Pupil behaviour across the school is generally excellent and most pupils have successfully resumed 'normal' school life with positive wellbeing and behaviour. Pupil/staff wellbeing was a SIP priority before and during the pandemic, but some pupils continue to need additional support. Given changes to whole school vision and values, the language of our behaviour strategies and policy needs to be updated, even if main actions and approaches remain unchanged. Work has recently been carried out to review and communicate clearly, expectations of staff and pupils in terms of upholding our school values, but this has yet to be aligned to behaviour / staff code of conduct policies.

Aims / Success Criteria:	Actions:	Responsible:	Timescales:	Resources & Cost:	Review, Evaluation & Support:	Update / Progress Report:
1. To update school behaviour policy.	a. Staff to review existing behaviour strategies and propose / discuss changes, including reflecting revised school values. b. Consult with stakeholders over any proposed changes. c. Update behaviour policy to reflect any agreed changes and to align to new school vision / values.	DHT	Autumn 22 Spring 23 Summer 23	NIL	- Feedback from staff consultation - Feedback from stakeholder consultation - Revised behaviour policy	
2. To develop whole-school approach to monitoring, evaluating and reporting pupil wellbeing.	a. Compare, consider (and trial?) available strategies / products to support pupil wellbeing. b. Evaluate (expected) impact of any strategies proposed or trialled. c. AoLE team to develop progression mapping within H&WB (see action 1.1.a)	H&WB AoLE	Autumn 22 – Spring 23 Spring 23 – Summer 23 Throughout Year	Release time (½ day per fortnight) SISO	- Feedback to SLT and link Governor. - Feedback from staff - Feedback from relevant AoLE teams	
3. To review existing strategies and continue to promote positive staff wellbeing.	a. Review suitability / impact of existing staff wellbeing toolkit (from pre-covid). b. Renew / revise measures and consider any alternative strategies.	SLT	Spring 23	Staff meetings	Feedback to HT / DHT	
4. To update safeguarding training and procedures throughout the school.	a. All staff to attend BCBC staff training b. Review arrangements for DBS for volunteers / parents / trips. c. Review & Update Safeguarding Policy	HT / DHT (DSL) & SG Governor	Autumn 22 Spring 23 Summer 23	Staff meetings	- Staff training records - Volunteers Policy - Safeguarding Policy	