



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

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	Target	What I have done in this assignment...
Target 1	Have counteracting arguments and use both sides to draw judgements.	I have tried to critically evaluate the creation and implementation of the schools SDP based on guidance from government documents and other literature, whilst acknowledging reasons for actions taken by the school.
Target 2	Expand on secondary points.	I have sought to support points made in government guidance with opinions found in literature and other statistics.

Introduction

In order for continuous improvement to occur in schools there is an expectation and desire from the Welsh Government and stakeholders, that a clear purpose of the school's journey is set out and understood by all. This journey is principally communicated through a school development plan (SDP) which should be created through an evaluative and evidence-based approach.

The school whose development plan will be looked at is in a primary setting catering for children aged 3 – 11 years old, located in Swansea. There are 383 pupils on role and the school prides itself on being a rights respecting and relationships first school. It is set in a challenging area of relatively high deprivation with 34.9% of pupils receiving free school meals, which is higher than both the local authority (20.7%) and national average for Wales (18.4%) (My Local School, 2019).

The school has set out in their SDP a number of priorities for the coming year, one of which is 'improving standards and progress in Welsh across the whole school' (Appendix 1). This area has been identified as a priority to support the Welsh Governments aim of reaching 1 million welsh speakers by 2050 (Welsh Government, 2017a) and will be the focus of this report.

School Development Plans Literature Review

A school development plan is strategic in nature, drawing attention to priorities for improvement whilst setting out actions the school will take to improve learner outcomes and address the national priorities of; raising the standards of education in relation to literacy and numeracy and reducing the impact of poverty on educational attainment (Welsh Government, 2014).

At the outset, the school development cycle needs to begin with the school's vision that clearly sets out what they want to achieve. The Center for School Change (2020) declares that a school's vision is one of the most important steps to creating success due to its ability to give 'clarity and direction for a school' as opposed to 'continuing conflicts' and 'difficulty identifying priorities'. Gabriel and Farmer (2009) are of the same mind and further explain how having a strong and clear vision helps stakeholders understand the goal, whilst motivating them to join the journey and contribute to its success.

For the correct improvement priorities to be identified an SDP must be founded on the gathering and analysis of evidence and data, such as statutory assessments and internal data, to ensure accurate judgements are made and a suitable SDP drawn up (One Education, 2017). Although all stakeholders such as staff and governors are required to

contribute to each stage of an SDP's creation, Brighouse and Woods (1999) suggest that certain stages afford school staff more insight. For example, the collection of evidence is a task more appropriate for a member of staff to carry out whilst its monitoring and evaluation can be done together as a group of stakeholders (Brighouse and Woods, 1999). On the completion of the SDP the Welsh Government (2014) stipulates that copies should be distributed 'to each member of the governing body and school staff' and be easily accessible to the wider school community.

Welsh Language Literature Review

In July 2017 the Welsh Government set out the Cymraeg 2050 strategy that aims to have one million Welsh speakers by 2050 aligning with the Welsh Language Measure (2011) that seeks to promote and facilitate the use of the language. Cymraeg 2050 has three overriding themes; increasing the number of Welsh speakers, increasing the use of Welsh and creating favourable conditions. As it is recognised that learning a language in early childhood provides a strong basis for developing competency and further skills in the future (Welsh Government, 2017b) the strategy aims to expand the early years Welsh-medium provision making it clear that education has an important role to play in achieving a million Welsh speakers (Estyn, 2019).

Latest statistics from the Welsh Government (2019a) show 386 schools in Wales are Welsh-medium, 31 dual stream and 948 English-medium. Considering the higher proportion of English-medium schools it is vital they contribute to the 2050 Welsh speaker target ensuring learners from all backgrounds have opportunities to develop strong Welsh language skills (Estyn, 2019). The recent education reform in Wales has sought to incorporate the Cymraeg 2050 vision by including Welsh in the Languages, Literacy and Communication Area of Learning and Experience (Welsh Government, 2017a). This should enable learners to become confident to use the language in everyday life, beyond the classroom and appreciate its value in a bilingual Wales (Welsh Government, 2017c), whilst laying the foundation for learning additional languages, ready to be citizens of Wales and the world (Welsh Government, 2017c).

For English-medium schools to contribute to the success of the Cymraeg 2050 strategy, Estyn (2019) highlighted the 'significant implications for the professional learning required for staff to meet the challenge of these increased expectations.' One way this challenge is being met is through the offering of a one-year sabbatical course, established in September 2017, to target teachers in English-medium primary schools (Welsh Government, 2017a). Participants reviewing the course reportedly felt more confident in using their Welsh language skills and felt it was a valuable scheme that should be continued, as generally

there remains an issue with Welsh language skills that needs ongoing attention (Welsh Government, 2017c).

Alongside language skills there is an emphasis on the importance for practitioners and leaders to have a 'wider understanding of the Welsh language in its historical and cultural context' to be able to pass this knowledge onto children and young people instigating an appreciation for the 'Welsh language, its literature and history and also its relevance to their everyday life in contemporary Wales and in future employment' (Welsh Government, 2017c)

School Development Plan Action

An SDP should be designed around 4 stages; self-evaluation, strategic planning, making improvement and reviewing impact (Welsh Government, 2014) covering a period of 3 years in a continuous cyclical process inspired throughout by the school's vision (Fennell, 2011). We will consider my placement schools development plan under these four headings with a specific focus on Welsh as one improvement priority.

Whilst on placement, the opportunity arose to attend and take part in the schools inset day which had a specific focus on the SDP. The session was attended by all members of leadership, teaching staff, teaching assistants and governors were also invited. The headteacher opened by noting the school's vision 'Dream, Believe, Achieve and be the best that you can be' (██████████, 2020) and a period of self-evaluative group discussion followed.

Self-Evaluation

During this process all stakeholders are required to reflect on their practice and performance honestly to identify areas for improvement in pupils learning and professional development (Chapman and Sammons, 2013). Estyn has highlighted the importance of schools identifying their strengths during the self-evaluation process (Welsh Government, 2014) and it was clear from discussion that staff felt positively about their pedagogy. Relationships with pupils and listening to pupil voice also stood out as resounding successes aligning with the school becoming both a relationships first and rights respecting school.

On reflection, it seemed during the self-evaluative group discussion that there was an absence of reference to weaknesses that could be improved on. If this was a true reflection on the current mindset it would prove useful to consult the schools challenge advisor which Brighouse and Woods (1999) refer to as a 'critical friend...who understands and is sympathetic to the purpose of the school and knows its circumstances very well.' That said, a more in-depth and formal discussion and analysis of data and evidence may have taken place prior to this inset day.

Strategic Planning

Robinson (2007, cited in Escobar, 2019) states that for a plan to be strategic it needs to; consider the environment and conditions it faces, establish the goals and objectives, outline the processes of their development and include a monitoring system. The Education Regulations (2014) set out minimum requirements that are to be included in an SDP in order to promote strategic planning.

Firstly, following authentic self-evaluation, school improvement priorities should be set, but must also include the national priorities; raising the standards of education in relation to literacy and numeracy along with reducing the impact of poverty on educational attainment (Welsh Government, 2014). The current SDP holds in depth targets, expected outcomes and strategy actions for five main priorities, which have been influenced by the analysis of data such as percentages of free school meals, additional learning needs, English as an additional language and predicated target levels (Appendix 2). The Welsh priority not only recognises improvements that can be made in the school but also addresses the national focus outlined in the Cymraeg 2050 strategy.

The most effective schools plan relevant actions to achieve the improvement priorities set (Estyn, 2019) and during the inset day the headteacher presented three of the five priorities for the stakeholders to generate success criteria that would lead to the accomplishment of the priorities. This task was completed in smaller groups with a member of the school's leadership team managing each, and everyone contributed to the creation of a mind map with action points to achieve the designated priority (Appendix 3).

With regards to the improvement of Welsh across the school, the key actions reordered in the SDP are driven by three sub priorities; the provision for Welsh, improving standards and progress in Welsh and achieving Siarter Iaith (Appendix 4). Actions identified to succeed in the first of these included bilingual signage throughout the school and displays reflecting children's Welsh work. To improve standards in Welsh across the whole school opportunities for reading in Welsh will be provided and a £1,000 budget was allocated for the purchase of Welsh books (Appendix 4). Another £500 has also been provided for Welsh games, topic books and digital apps to be purchased which will help maintain the status of the language as a living one (Welsh Government, 2017b). The school is also committed to achieving 'Siarter Iaith', the national framework that supports Welsh language development inline with the new curriculum (Welsh Government, 2019b).

Whilst two members of staff who are the Welsh co-ordinators hold the main responsibility for the Welsh priority actions, members of the Criw Cymraeg are heavily involved in its monitoring. These pupils are Welsh language ambassadors responsible for encouraging

learners to use more Welsh outside the classroom (Welsh Government, 2019b) and are named within the SDP as leaders in promoting the use of Welsh in the playground and conducting fortnightly Welsh assemblies (Appendix 4).

On reflection of the making of these actions, although splitting off into smaller groups can allow more detailed discussion, it can also mean not all stakeholders are afforded equal input into each priority area. Literature on school improvement also encourages the involvement of 'pupils in decisions about their work and the running of the school' (Brighouse and Woods, 1999) but despite pupils being named as facilitators in the Welsh area of the SDP it appeared that they had been appointed roles by staff members rather than participating in the process themselves.

Making Improvements

The third stage of the SDP cycle is to action all the improvement priorities set out which staff will have been consulted on and therefore know their responsibility in driving its success. However, the SDP should also include clear details of who is responsible for each action and timescales to ensure it is delivered effectively with accountability (Welsh Government, 2014). It was evident that certain members of staff were allocated to specific priority groups – the literacy co-ordinator attended Priority 1; addressing writing, oracy and boys English skills, two welsh language co-ordinators and two welsh speaking teaching assistants attended Priority 2 - Welsh, and the ICT co-ordinator attended the Priority 3 group considering ICT standards. Despite this being a logical approach due to these people being most likely to appear in the 'column for the "person responsible", it may nonetheless exclude other educators with key roles in implementation' (Stevenson, 2019).

Given the quality of teaching is recognised as 'the single most important factor in helping learners achieve' (Welsh Government, 2014) a professional development strategy is set out within each SDP priority ensuring outstanding pedagogy and the development of future leaders. School staff and resources have been considered to ensure the priorities are achievable based on current assets or that sufficient funds for resources and training could be provided in order to achieve the priority.

Knowing that teachers generally are not confident enough and lack the knowledge to teach Welsh (Welsh Government, 2013) it was surprising to see limited detail in the Welsh professional development section. The only training noted is 'TA training in Welsh games' and 'teacher training moving learners forward in Welsh' (Appendix 4). Seen as there is a renowned Welsh sabbatical course that is 'free of charge, and Welsh Government provides a grant to pay supply costs as well as traveling expenses' (Cardiff University, 2020), it may

be beneficial for this school to utilize the offering, especially as only two members of staff are confident Welsh speakers.

Reviewing Impact

In order to establish whether progress is being made it is important that the SDP is treated as a live working document where progress can be reviewed and the document updated accordingly. There is a requirement for an SDP to be formally reviewed and revised at least annually and also after an Estyn inspection, it therefore seems beneficial to keep an SDP as up to date as possible to reflect the current position of the school, thereby lessening the amount of amending needed at a later stage. This school's SDP document has specified a review of progress to take place in the Spring, Summer and Autumn terms and the latest document available for the wider community to access on the school's website has updated the three aforementioned priorities for the Spring term.

Six out of the ten actions listed have made satisfactory or strong progress, whilst four are still blank indicating limited progress despite not being colour coded red (Appendix 4). Given that the SDP should address the progress made on targets set in the previous school year, it is imperative that this priority is addressed before the annual review, where an explanation will be needed and corrective action outlined (Welsh Government, 2014). Another area that could be improved upon is the accuracy of the published SDP document. Since the actions and success criteria set were the result of the November 2019 inset day, it would seem correct that the dates for completion should be in 2020, yet all dates throughout the SDP remain in 2019 (Appendix 4).

Conclusion

A school development plan is designed to guide improvement throughout a school, encompassing all forms of planning policy in one document, with input from all stakeholders leading to full support and investment in its successful delivery. The school we have explored designed their SDP using the four stages cited in the Welsh Government (2014) guidance and have established a termly monitoring system for each of the five priorities. The school believes that their SDP is challenging, but realistic and achievable (Welsh Government, 2014) and meets national priorities. The Welsh language has been identified as one priority demonstrating how the school plans to contribute to the Cymraeg 2050 goal of one million Welsh speakers.

We have seen how the school's leadership used an inset day to introduce the SDP and outline three out of the five priorities. Although the school will surely organise the delivery of

the two remaining priorities it serves as a reminder not to 'list more priorities than we can possibly accomplish' (Stevenson, 2019).

Gaining a deeper understanding of school development plans highlights the many areas that need to be addressed on an improvement journey, not least the involvement of all stakeholders. Flett (2004) and Escobar (2019) clearly indicate this point expressing how imperative it is that the plan is actioned, as even an exceptional SDP is futile without quality staff driving its performance. The development planning processes illustrates how participation, analysis, ambition and investment in skills and resources can lead to greater collaboration from stakeholders, which is necessary in driving advancement throughout a school.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: School Development Plan Priorities 2019 – 2021

Appendix 2: Data Analysis

Appendix 3: Welsh Mind Map

Appendix 4: Welsh Priority

Appendix 1: School Development Plan Priorities 2019 – 2021



Development Plan 2019

School Development Plan Priorities 2019-2021			
	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
Inspection Area 1 - Standards	- Improving standards and progress overall and in writing and oracy skills and boys' skills and progress in English across the whole school. - Improving standards and progress in Welsh across the whole school - Improving the tracking and monitoring of ICT standards across the whole school	Improving standards and progress overall and in skills	Improving standards and progress overall and in skills
Inspection Area 2 – Well-Being	- Introduce Thrive approach - Further embed Relationships First	- Embed Thrive approach - Impact of Relationships First Policy	- Impact of Thrive approach - Attitudes to and engagement in learning
Inspection Area 3- Teaching and Learning Experiences	- New curriculum development – independent learning (pedagogy) - Expressive Arts CPD in drama	- New curriculum development – independent learning and metacognition - Expressive Arts CPD (drama, visual arts, digital media/film, music)	New curriculum development – curriculum mapping and planning, independent learning and metacognition

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Development Plan 2019

	- Provision for Welsh (AoLE plan) - Outdoor learning	Outdoor learning	
Inspection Area 4 – Care, Support and Guidance	- Preparation for ALN Bill - Provision for vulnerable learners - Pupil Voice	- Tracking and assessment of pupils' outcomes and progress in learning - Pupil voice - ALN bill	ALN bill
Inspection Area 5 - Leadership	- Teachers' involvement in self-evaluation and improvement processes – action research - Staff development in preparation for the new curriculum	- Monitor impact of curriculum and pedagogical changes - Staff development in preparation for the new curriculum	- Monitor implementation of new curriculum planning and pedagogical changes - Staff development for embedding the new curriculum

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Appendix 2: Data Analysis



Development Plan 2019

2018-2019	Nursery	Reception	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	Total
Eligible for Free School Meals		37.3%	40.6%	48.1%	50%	42.1%	33.3%	28.1%	39.9%
Children in Need	2.2% (1)	2%(1)	3.1%(1)	1.9% (1)			3.7% (2)		1.6% (6)
Looked After Children		2% (1)	3.1% (1)	1.9% (1)			1.9% (1)	1.8% (1)	1.3% (5)
Child Protection	4.4% (2)	2% (1)		2% (1)	2.1% (1)				1.3% (5)
English as an Additional Language		27.5%	19.4%	16.7%	23.4%	26.3%	25.9%	28.1%	23.9%
Number of latecomers to Welsh	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Special Educational Needs			31.3%	25.9%	41.7%	26.3%	24.1%	26.3%	
School Action			18.8% (6)	20.4% (11)	27.1% (13)	18.4% (7)	9.3% (5)	5.3% (3)	
School Action Plus			3.1% (1)	5.6% (3)	10.4% (5)	5.3% (2)	9.3% (5)	14% (8)	
Statement			9.4% (3)	(0)	4.2% (2) (2 STF)	2.6% (1) (1 STF)	5.6% (3) (1 M / 2 STF)	7% (4) (1 M / 3 STF)	
WIMD		77.5%	63.6%	69%	60%	67.3%	61.4%	72.1%	67.3%
Predicted CSI (Ambitious)		72.5%	53.1%	70.4%	80%	87%	88.9%	91.2%	

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Development Plan 2019

Target Setting: Foundation Phase Targets

		2018 Current Year 2								2019 Current Year 1							
Cohort	ERW	Boys		Girls		Pupils				Boys		Girls		Pupils			
Full Cohort	Full Cohort	21		33		54				15		18		32			
	Number of FSM	11		16		27				8		6		14			
Number achieving expected outcome		O5+	O6+	O5+	O6+	O5+	O6+	Target O5+	Target O6+	O5+	O6+	O5+	O6+	O5+	O6+	Target O5+	Target O6+
	LCE (%)	52.4	23.8	81.8	6.1			72.2	13	21.4	7.1	83.3	16.7	18	4	56.3	12.5
	LCW																
	MDI (%)	52.4	28.6	84.8	6.1			72.2	14.8	35.7	7.1	77.8	11.1	19	3	59.3	9.4
	PSD (%)	76.2	9.5	84.8	21.2			70.4	16.7	50	14.2	94.4	22.2	24	6	75	18.8
	DCS (CSI)	52.4		81.8				70.4		21.4		77.8				53.1	

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Development Plan 2019

Key Stage 2 Targets

	KS2	2018 – Current Year 6								2019 – Current Year 5								2020 – Current Year 4							
		Boys		Girls		Pupils				Boys		Girls		Pupils				Boys		Girls		Pupils			
Cohort	Full	29		28		57				27		27		54				19		20		39			
	Welsh Medium																								
		L4+	L5+	L4+	L5+	L4+	L5+	Target L4+	Target L5+	L4+	L5+	L4+	L5+	L4+	L5+	Target L4+	Target L5+	L4+	L5+	L4+	L5+	L4+	L5+	Target L4+	Target L5+
Number achieving expected level	English (%)	96.6	20.7	89.3	46.4	53	19	93	33.3	81.5	29.6	96.3	40.7	48	19	88.9	35.2	89	10	90	15	35	5	89	12
	Welsh																								
	Mathematics (%)	93.1	37.9	89.3	35.7	52	21	91.1	36.8	81.5	51.9	96.3	18.5	48	19	88.9	35.2	90	36	80	15	35	10	89	25
	Science (%)	96.6	35	89.3	46.4	53	23	93	40.4	81.5	55.6	96.3	22.2	48	21	88.9	38.9	89	10	90	15	35	5	89	12
	CSI (%)	93.1		89.3		52		91.2		81		96.3		48		88.9		89		85		34		87	

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Development Plan 2019

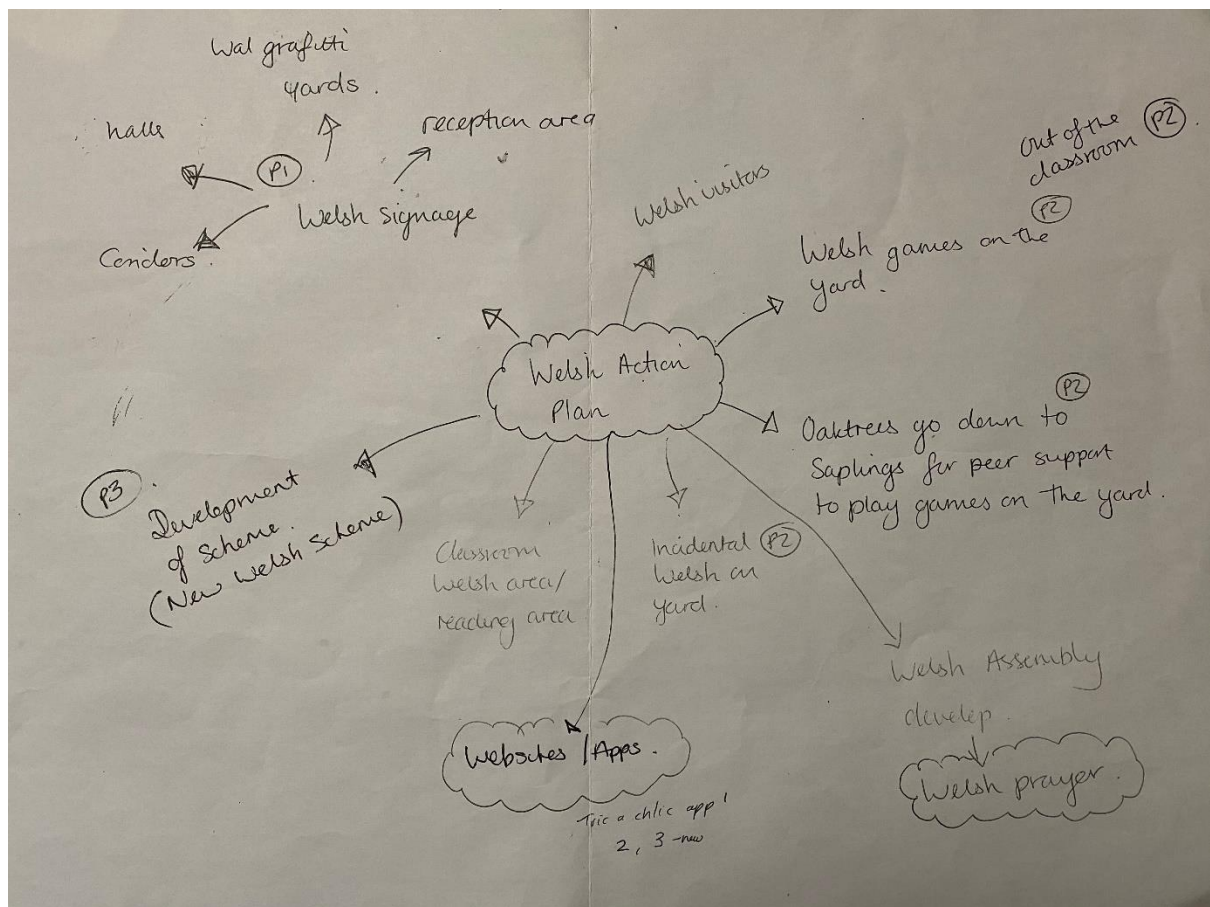
Key Stage 2 targets – pupils in receipt of Free School Meals

		2018/19- Current Year 6						2019/20 – Current Year 5						2020/21 – Current Year 4					
		FSM		Non-FSM		pupils		FSM		Non-FSM		pupils		FSM		Non-FSM		pupils	
Cohort	Full	17		40		57		16		38		54		14		25		39	
	Welsh Medium																		
		L4+	L5+	L4+	L5+	L4+ FSM	L4+ Non-FSM	L4+	L5+	L4+	L5+	L4+ FSM	L4+ Non-FSM	L4+	L5+	L4+	L5+	L4+ FSM	L4+ Non-FSM
Number achieving expected level (%)	English	94.1	29.4	92.5	35	94.1	92.5	75	18.8	94.7	42.1	75	94.7	64	0	88	8	64	88
	Welsh																		
	Mathematics	94.1	29.4	90	40	94	90	75	18.8	94.7	42.1	75	94.7	64	0	88	4	64	88
	Science	94.1	35.2	92.5	45	94.1	92.5	75	18.8	94.7	47.4	75	94.7	64	0	88	8	64	88
	CSI					91.7	90					75	94.7					64%	88%

Current Y6 – 1x STF girl FSM / Current Y5 – 1x STF boy FSM / Current Y4 – 1x STF girl FSM

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Appendix 3: Welsh Mind Map



Appendix 4: Welsh Priority



Development Plan 2019

Links: Priority 2 - Welsh	SER/CIF/Estyn IA1/IA3/IA5	UNCRC Article 3;7;8;13;23;28 ;29;30	Nat/ Local Priorities Increase the numbers of Welsh speakers in Wales – 1,000,000 Welsh Speakers by 2050	Governors Curriculum Sub Committee (LT/DH/EK)	Pupil Voice Group Cryw Cymraeg					
- Provision for Welsh (ApLE Development Plan) - Improving standards and progress in Welsh across the whole school - To achieve Starter Iaith which will impact upon standards and provision across the school										
Very Good Progress		Strong Progress		Satisfactory Progress		Limited Progress				
Actions/Milestones/Success Criteria	Who? (Named person/s)	When? (Actual Dates)	Intended Outcomes	Type of monitoring and Reporting mechanism	Who?	When?	Cost	RAYG		
								Ser	Sum	Aut
Fortnightly Welsh assembly CC to lead with Welsh coordinator	Mandy R / Natalie J	Every other Monday to start in January 2019	Welsh songs and prayer embedded Welsh language patterns Welsh culture	Welsh co to monitor every half term		Half termly	Photoco pying			



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Opportunities for reading in Welsh throughout the school. Learning areas / library / planned Guided Reading sessions.	Mandy R / Natalie J Y12 Adelle R/N Katie 34 Rachel/Steph Y56	Planned Guided Reading – April Learning areas/library – June 2019	Raised end of KS levels at L4+ and O5+ (currently 63.6%)	Monitor GR through planning and book look CC to do audit of learning area in May	End of April and end of May	Purchase books £1000			
Welsh curriculum map revisited – scheme of work in line with new curriculum	Mandy R / Natalie J Y12 Adelle R/N Katie 34 Rachel/Steph Y56	January 2019 then again in September 2019 for new school year	Raised end of KS levels at L4+ and O5+ (currently 63.6% R / 61.4% W / 79.5% O)	Welsh co to monitor through subject book looks and BB assessments. Look at planning and check against curriculum map.	Three times a year as whole school calendar				
Resources to meet the needs of curriculum map e.g. APPs, Welsh games, board games, topic books etc	Mandy R / Natalie J	Every term in readiness for next term	Raised end of KS levels at L4+ and O5+ (currently 63.6% R / 61.4% W / 79.5% O)	Welsh co to monitor through subject book looks and BB assessments. Look at planning and check against curriculum map.	Three times a year as whole school calendar	£500			
Foyer to reflect	Mandy R /	May 2019	Foyer reflects	Seen in foyer		£100			



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contemporary Wales - map using children's drawings and highlight ~~Cadfe~~	Natalie J		a contemporary vision of Wales						
Signage Welsh/ bilingual throughout school - Learning Walk CC to design Welsh signage for entrance to the school	All staff	July 2019	Raised awareness of Welsh on displays	CC to complete Learning walks three times a year	Three times a year	ELRS signage			
Welsh mascot to be taken home throughout the school and children	All staff	January 2019	Raised end of KS levels at L4+ and O5+ (currently 63.6% R / 61.4% W / 79.5% O)	CC to look at books from each class	Every term	£40			
Parent / governors (curriculum committee) / pupil workshops and after school clubs	Mandy R / Natalie J	December 2019	Raised understanding of Welsh throughout the community	Welsh co to monitor dates and events	July then December				
Playground games in Welsh with CC leading	Jamie and Tom Mandy R / Natalie J	May 2019	Raised level of incidental Welsh throughout school	Welsh co to undertake learning walks	Every term				

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Welsh week to celebrate 'Welshness'. Link with Eisteddfod.	Mandy R / Natalie J	March 2019	Raised understanding of Welsh throughout the community	Welsh co to monitor the week	Timetabled annually				
Resources Books, games, APPs		Costs £2000	Professional Development/Learning Required TA training in Welsh for games Teacher training moving learners forward in Welsh	Costs Supply costs					
Governing Body Work/ Sub Committee	Curriculum committee to work with Cymraeg on Starter laith targets								
Impact Statements from Reports and Final Evaluation of Outcomes. (Strengths/ Areas for Development/Way Forward/Impact)									

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