

Targets from previous assignment:

	Targed/target	Yr hyn yr wyf wedi'i wneud yn yr aseiniad hwn What I have done in this assignment...
Targed/Target 1	Ensure you synthesise and reflect- you have done this in a few places but in other places it could be further extended.	I have tried to reflect on the literature surrounding SDP, referring back to what the particular school is doing.
Targed/Target 2	You need to link your findings with some of the points made in your lit review.	I have tried to link the action point and reflection back to the literature review, to support my points.
Targed/Target 3	Proof read your work and revise your use of apostrophe.	I have proof read my report, to ensure clarity for the reader.

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

Introduction

This report aims to reflect the School Development Plan (SDP) of an English medium focused school which serves the area of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. There are currently 216 pupils on roll including a 3 and 4 year old provision (my local school, 2019). In the schools last Estyn report they achieved good in both current performance and prospects for improvement ([REDACTED] Estyn Report, 2015). There are around 30% of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, which is well above both the local authority average (11%) and Welsh average (19%) (my local school, 2019). There are 29% of children on the ALN register which is above the national average of 25%. Nearly all pupils are of White British ethnicity and speak English as their home language ([REDACTED] Estyn Report, 2015).

The purpose of this report is to synthesise and critically reflect on the school's SDP with particular focus on the attainment of children eligible for free school meals (eFSM). The

report will evaluate what strategies the school have currently in place and offer practical suggestions to move forward.

For reasons regarding autonomy and confidentiality the school's name and any sensitive information will be concealed throughout the report in line with Bera Ethical Guidelines for Education (2018).

Literature review

An SDP is the school's strategic plan for improvement. It serves to provide direction and guidance that the school will take to improve the outcomes of its learners (Welsh Government, 2014a). The process undertakes a collaborative approach by the school, community and all stakeholders to establish a high quality education for all learners to develop and achieve (Brighouse, 2013). According to the Welsh Government (2014a), the SDP framework process should revolve around the core vision of the school. The cycle comprises of 4 stages, self-evaluation, strategic planning, creating an action plan and reviewing its impact.

Empirical research suggest that there is a positive relationship between the quality of a schools improvement planning and its performance outcomes (Mandinach & Schildkamp, 2020). Moreover, in order to realise the full potential of planning and impact on performance, a literature review revealed a confounding factor, that could be linked with the quality of planning and the improvement outcome, might be the problem being faced (Fernandez, 2011). For example, if a problem is easily identified schools can articulate strategies to resolve these problems and therefore, it may be more difficult to strategically plan for a problem which is harder to define.

Student outcomes in regards to achievement and learning, are of course essential data which drives school decision making. However, researchers recognise that students backgrounds and circumstances are complex and the reliance solely on test results and performance indicators is not enough (Datnow & Park, 2018). Schools need to delve deeper into data, like demographics, attendance, health, cultural linguistics and socio-economic factors surrounding progress and achievement to gain a complete understanding of their learners (Mandinach & Schildkamp, 2020).

There is evidence to show that socio-economic disadvantage is a major barrier to achievement in education (Estyn, 2013). At the age of three, there is an apparent gap

between children of poorer backgrounds and their peers in cognitive performance (Estyn, 2014). The eligibility for FSM is widely used as the best available proxy measure of economic disadvantage amongst academic research and within Government Policy in Wales (Taylor, 2018). In Wales, children who are eFSM perform significantly less than those children who are not eligible and the gap expands at secondary school. In 2019 Welsh Government data revealed that 75.4% of eFSM gained their Core Subject Indicator (CSI) at the end of Key Stage 2 compared to 90.9% of non-entitled children (Stats Wales, 2019). Demonstrating that this attainment gap is still evident in education today.

Research undertaken by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (Goodman & Gregg, 2010) found that, early home experience and aspirations of themselves were the main factors explaining the perpetuation of the attainment gap. A possible reason could be the lack of resources available at home to stimulate a positive learning environment (Neven et al, 2019).

Therefore, schools need to engage with parents and carers to support these children's learning. Breaking the cycle of low aspirations and deprivation within school is a crucial step in narrowing the attainment gap and to prevent children jeopardising their own future (EAS, 2017). Without this support these are the children who are most likely to leave school at sixteen, and more likely to become 'NEET' (not in education, employment or training) (Estyn, 2012).

The quality of a child's education can strongly influence their life chances, and what they go on to do. Therefore, schools should provide children with the knowledge and interpersonal skills required to lead fulfilling lives and are ready to play a full part in life and work (Estyn, 2012). In comparison to their peers, disadvantaged children rarely travel beyond the area in which they live, and often have not explored the opportunities for learning within their community (Estyn, 2012). Welsh Government (2013), have demonstrated the impact of learning experiences and the benefit it has had on these children. These experiences have given children the aspirations to believe in their own ability and their willing to want to succeed to further education, resulting to a positive effect on attainment (Egan, 2013).

However, being eFSM does not mean that a child is inevitably going to underachieve, nor is destined to. Evidence of effective schools have demonstrated practice that can and has reduced the underachievement of pupil eFSM (EAS, 2017). The impact of poverty is not inevitable, schools in Wales have succeeded in overcoming the barriers to learning despite being in challenging circumstances (examples can be found in Estyn, 2014). Schools play a crucial role in improving these attainment outcomes for children who face deprivation. To support schools, the Welsh Government have drawn together policies and initiatives

targeted at pupils from deprived backgrounds with specific strategies to improve their attainment and progress through education in the Tackling Poverty Action Plan (2012) and the Pupil Deprivation Grant (2015a).

Developing an action point

Upon the self-evaluation process the school aim to continue to improve the attainment of pupils in receipt of FSM in order to narrow the gap in attainment (see Appendix 1- for SDP). Addressing the impact of poverty on educational attainment is a National priority. The Welsh Government (2015a) argue that tackling the underachievement of learners from deprived backgrounds should be at the heart of the SDP.

The Welsh Government (2014a) suggest collecting a range of both qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate. One source of data suggested is the Estyn inspection report. Upon reviewing the schools report a recommendation was made, to improve the attainment of pupils who are eFSM. The main findings from the report suggest that pupils who are eFSM do not attain as well as others, although the difference was reducing over time. The Foundation Phase Indicator reveals that the school is in the highest quartile within its family for achieving outcome 5. Demonstrating, that the levels of attainment in the school are higher than other schools with a similar level of pupils living in deprivation. However, the school fell to the lowest benchmark quartile for the Year 6 cohort achieving the CSI at level 4+ (■■■■■■■■■■ Estyn Report, 2015). It must be noted that the last inspection took place in 2015 and the school has had time to combat these issues.

Since the inspection the school has put planning in place to overcome the attainment gap. The school have shown great improvements, with 95% of FSM pupils showing progress in all three core areas throughout the year at Foundation Phase. At Key Stage 2 all mainstream FSM pupils achieved CSI (see Appendix 2- Impact Assessments 18/19). Highlighting an improvement in attainment from the Estyn inspection in 2015. Here we can see that the school have decided to build upon a strength, as suggested by Welsh Government (2014a), the SDP is not only a process of identifying areas of improvements it can also build upon strengths within teaching and learning.

While considering the cultural linguistics and socio-economic factors surrounding progress and achievement. The school is located in a Communities First Area with high level of deprivation. The school is situated in the higher quartile of deprivation in relation to its

postcode (Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2019). Due to the high percentage of children eFSM, there is always a PDG priority to clearly state how the grant is being used to benefit the outcomes of these learners (suggested by Welsh Government, 2015a). The school may also wish to use informal data, collected from everyday practice and action research to evaluate best strategies when constructing the action points (Schildkamp, 2019).

As suggested by (Welsh Government, 2014a) for an SDP to be most effective it should involve all stakeholders both internally and externally. Teachers and staff express their opinions through annual surveys in regards to areas of improvement within the school, areas which have positive impacts and all round ethos of the school. Pupils also contribute to the school improvement process through pupil voice along with the Pupil Attitudes to Self and School Survey (PASS) linking to Article 12 of the Rights of the Child (The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989). Parents too, are involved they are asked to complete surveys regarding school improvement. Estyn (2020) have praised the school for its effective links with family engagement and sense of community, which can often be challenging in socially deprived areas.

When tackling poverty the school takes a whole school approach to planning (suggested by Estyn, 2014). The priority has 5 action points, which relate to interventions, supporting families and enriching experiences for these targeted children (all strategies supported to raise attainment; Estyn, 2014). The action points sets out strategically how the school intend to achieve the priority, in relation to timescales and responsibilities, to ensure it is achievable and realistic (Welsh Government, 2014a). A success criteria needs to be identified at the same time of target setting in order to measure the impact the priority has had on teaching and learning. Once the SDP has been written and reviewed by the Senior Management Team and teachers. The school council have the opportunity to read over it and give their feedback. Estyn (2017) believe that students a crucial stakeholders allowing them to make decisions upon areas which need further improvement. The school may benefit from publishing their SDP on their website, this would allow the local businesses and residents and other schools within the cluster to offer expertise and a wider perspective.

To measure the impact of the priority throughout the year, children's attainment levels are monitored and analysed through an-online subscription to incerts (supported by Estyn, 2014). The Senior Leadership Team hold book scrutiny to see whether there is an improvement within the work of those children eFSM. Lesson observations are used to share best practice and to generate performance management targets relating to raising achievement of these targeted pupils. Towards the end of the academic year an impact

report is written reviewing the impact of the priority, upon teaching and learning, the target group and what has been learnt moving forward. The priority is colour coded depending upon the impact it has had in relation to the success criteria (red, amber and green). Self-evaluation and targets for the following year are created from the outcomes of the impact reports. The school may benefit from using a researcher to assist in the SDP process in the evaluating and synthesising evidence, which has demonstrated positive results (Schildkamp, 2019).

Reflection and evaluation

To improve and maintain standardized scores in literacy and numeracy teaching assistants (TA) have received additional training to support targeted learners. Pupils are grouped according to their performance and needs, which allows TA's to undertake the relevant intervention programme to support their learning. This intervention strategy has been shown to increase levels of attainment (as seen in Estyn, 2014). Moving forward the school may want to introduce ICT-based interventions, these have shown to have positive effects in reducing the poverty gap and raising attainment levels in pupils with literacy difficulties (Welsh Government, 2013). By using online software like 'HWB' will allow children to share their work with parents at home, engaging them within their learning (Estyn, 2012).

A second intervention implemented is the nurture sessions with the additional provision at breakfast and lunch time. A TA provides support for pupils who are referred into the service. She liaises with the class teachers to ensure that pupils are emotionally and practically able to manage classroom expectations. However, the children receiving interventions in the afternoon miss out on the same lessons each week, and could be argued that these children are at a further attainment disadvantage. However, the school believe this provision is essential and is supported by Estyn (2012): regarding social and emotional support as being just as important as focusing on academic elements to learning. The schools nurture provision has been praised by Estyn (2017).

The 'School home aiming to reach excellence' (SHARE) group is the school's provision for disadvantaged pupils which encourages parental engagement. The school provide learning packs which include resources and learning materials to support pupils learning at home. In line with Resource and Investment theory, children living in poverty fall behind more economically advantaged peers (cited in, Neven et al, 2019). Parents on low income lack the resources to provide stimulating home learning environments such as books and equipment

(Neven et al, 2019). Therefore, these packs are used as tools to providing the resources. Pupils return their packs and activities weekly with parental comments. A trained TA renews the materials and activities, then works with the pupils who have been unable to complete these at home. Activities mirror classroom practice and allow parents to become parents in learning. Currently, the packs are used at Foundation Phase and KS2 the school could extend the project to pupils in the 3/4 year old setting as baseline levels entering the school are low. Early provision may target the attainment gap which has been evidenced throughout academia (supported in Welsh Government, 2015b).

Another action point in place is to improve and enrich the learning experiences through arranging visits to places of interest including residential visits. The school aims to organise opportunities for pupils to receive music tuition and swimming lessons. Across, many reports a key factor among underachievement of pupils from low socio-economic backgrounds is the lack of aspiration within their own beliefs (Estyn, 2012). There is evidence to suggest that these experiences can have a positive effect on attainment and increase in aspirations (Welsh Government, 2013).

A possible suggestion to continue to improve the attainment gap could be to collaboratively work with other schools within the catchment area. In order to, compare and track pupils progress and results, resources could be shared to address these potential issues through joint Continuous Professional Development (as suggested within Welsh Government, 2013). The school could work with the secondary school within the cluster to ease the transition moving up to Year 7. This strategy could be particularly beneficial for children from deprived backgrounds who lack the emotional support and resilience that come with change, which may hinder their attainment in education (support by Welsh Government, 2014b). This additional support moving into Key Stage 3 may continue to help break the cycle of deprivation and to prevent these children becoming poor adults (HM Government, 2014).

Conclusion

The Welsh Government (2014) sets out a common framework to assist schools in their SDP process. Schools where effective improvement planning is demonstrated underpins the culture of the school, and therefore priorities are specific to cultural linguistics and socio-economic of its learners. It is essential all key holders are involved and collaboratively work towards continuous improvement and try to address the needs of all individuals.

This report has demonstrated how all staff need to be aware of the targets they are working towards. to ensure all staff are motivated and contribute positively. Resulting, in an improvement upon the quality of teaching and learning, and standards that the children attain. Personally, for my own development moving into my teaching career I will make sure I engage with SDP before job interviews to ensure I can express how my qualities could help develop any priorities within the school, and the contribution I can make to these.

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Appendices**Appendix 1- SDP**

Priority

Success
Criteria

Priority: To continue to improve the attainment of pupils in receipt of FSM in order to narrow the gap in attainment Key Question and Quality Indicator:				WHY? To maintain the performance of eFSM pupils in comparison to non FSM pupils.			
Internal Accountability: 		Accountability to the Governing Body: 		Success criteria in terms of standards or quality: - Improved social emotional literacy as measured by Boxhall. 80% of learners undertaking BESD interventions to show improved scores. - Improved or maintained standardized scores in Literacy and Numeracy tests for 80% of FSM learners. - Progress shown for 90% of FSM learners through INCERTS teacher assessments. - Increased family engagement and knowledge and understanding of what their children are learning and how they can best support them.			
Very good progress		Strong progress		Satisfactory progress		Limited progress	

Action
Points

Actions		Who?	Milestone Term 1	Milestone Term 2	Milestone Term 3	Professional Development Needs	Source of Finance and Cost
1	SHARE Prepare SHARE learning packs for pupils in receipt of FSM to include resources and learning materials to support pupils learning at home. Hold parents information session to explain purpose of packs and to engage parents to take joint responsibility for use of materials. Monitor use and impact of project.	 	Materials prepared Oct 19 Parent meeting held. Oct 19 Setting Leader and to prepare appropriate	New materials prepared Nov 19 Evidence of use of materials and parental engagement Through parental questionnaires and pupil interviews. Jan 20 SC New packs distributed and brief evaluation	New topic packs produced fortnightly throughout year Overall evaluation of impact and engagement June 20	Work with to develop suitable and relevant materials.	PDG funding £500 LSA time – cost accounted for in LSA time below

2.	LSA SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION ADDITIONAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT TIME FOR MONITORING and ASSESSING IMPACT. Group children according to performance and need. Undertake relevant intervention programmes to support learning e.g EasiMaths, Numicon, RWI intervention Fresh Start, Rapid Maths, Socially Speaking, Time to Talk. Introduce Rapid Maths programme for specific pupils		Children receiving appropriate interventions –check up by SMT Nov 19	Monitoring of Language –Jan 20	Monitoring of provision maps April 20	LSA training with SENCO	PDG – LSA hours – 15,000 Resources £4000
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	Nominated LSA staff to undertake further training in programmes Track pupils' achievement and progress bi annually. Monitor teaching and learning including work scrutiny, lesson observations, talking to learners. Purchase additional resources for intervention in Abacus Maths and RWI Fresh Start. Where children have ALN provision maps ensure inclusion of measurable data and focused targets for improvement. INCERTS subscription for tracking of pupils		Tracking undertaken And feedback given to relevant staff. Provision maps out to parents with appropriate targets for improvement	Check up on LSA interventions SMT Feb 20 Monitoring of provision maps January 20	Tracking undertaken by SMT and evaluation of progress made. June 20		Management time for monitoring and tracking and planning for way forward – PDG – £3,000 Resources - £1500 PDG £1000
3.	NURTURE Screen pupils and scrutinize referrals for Nurture group		Nurture group set up, planning undertaken made.	As term 1 involving F Ph Pupils.	As term 2 Overall impact assessment	Training of staff already undertaken	Resources for Nurture provision – £ 500 – PDG

4.	FAMILY ENGAGEMENT Prepare and recruit parents for the IY School Readiness Programme. Undertake programme. Improve communication with parents via subscription to Parent Mail. Undertake "meet the teacher" sessions to encourage parents to become familiar with parents and expectations of class for year. Community Manager to undertake Parental engagement activities e.g big book club, savings club, coffee morning, signposting, food and fitness etc		Parents recruited Nov 19 Parent mail established all data available to run system – Oct 19	Digital learning project undertaken with families engaging Regular communication with parents. Analysis of impact through questionnaire.	Impact assessment of projects undertaken. July 20 IY programme attended by at least 8 families	Training already undertaken	Supply time for staff to lead and resources PDG - £2000 Supply time and purchase of further hardware to use with parents. PDG - £3000 Cost of Parentmail - £1000 Community manager post £6500
5.	Improve and enrich learning experiences through: Arranging visits to places of interest including residential visits e.g Llangrannog, Abernant and visitors into school such as historians, musicians and sports personalities and to allow pupils to participate in events both sporting and cultural.		Programme of visits and visitors organized. Nov 19	Greater engagement evident – check through Lesson observations		None	£3000

Appendix 2- Impact Assessments 18/19**Impact Assessment Summary Sheet****Priority: PUPIL DEPRIVATION 2018 - 2019****Success criteria:**

1. **Improvements in the Boxall Profile & Strengths and Difficulties Assessments.**
2. **Improvements in Welsh Assembly Government Test scores for Literacy and Numeracy for all FSM pupils in Key Stage 2.**
3. **Progress for 90% of FSM pupils as shown by INCERTS tracking system.**

**Evaluation on planning for and securing improvements****R A G****Did the action plan address the issue and meet the success criteria?**

1. of FSM pupils undertaking the Nurture programme all pupils had made significant progress both emotionally and socially. This was evidence via SDQ and Boxall as well as through teacher assessment and observation. There have been [REDACTED] pupils accessing Nurture provision this academic year. 80% of pupils have made good or better progress on the SDQ assessment. 20% of pupil scores have either remained the same or regressed. Those of whom have regressed have a back story and have experienced significant challenges and or upset during the year. A pleasing years impact on children wellbeing has been noted and both pupils and staff comment have been positive. Staff are beginning to see the improvements and differences that Nurture makes to children in helping them to get into the right place to learn. Many staff have commented on how children also have made improvements in their ability to focus and attend, attempt tasks which previously they may have shied away from, increased levels of confidence and self-esteem have also been noted. Nurture is an integral and vital part of the intervention and support offered by the school which the children benefit from greatly.
2. At FP 92% of FSM pupils mad progress in at least one area throughout the year.
3. At FP 95% of FSM pupils made progress in all three core areas throughout the year.
4. 100% of all FSM pupils showed progress in at least one area throughout the year.
5. At KS2 all mainstream FSM pupils achieved CSi.
6. All FSM pupils accessing the STF made progress in both literacy and numeracy according to teacher assessment.