

Guidance for Headteachers:  
The Impact of Staff Misconduct &  
Incompetence on Children and Young  
People

Issue 4: Health & Well-Being



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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## Guidance

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## The Impact of Staff Misconduct & Incompetence on Children and Young People

### Issue 4: Health & Well-Being

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| <b>Audience</b>            | Governing bodies and headteachers of maintained schools in Wales; proprietors and headteachers of independent schools in Wales; teachers in charge of pupil referral units; local authorities; teaching and other unions; diocesan authorities.                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Overview</b>            | This document provides an insight into the impact that staff behaviour and performance can have on the health and well-being of learners in primary and secondary schools and why it is important to monitor and maintain educational workplace standards.                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Action required</b>     | There is no legal duty for governing bodies, headteachers and local required authorities to have regard to this document, but they may find the guidance that it offers helpful in understanding their duties and in deciding how they can meet their statutory responsibilities regarding the monitoring and management of school staff.                                                                                                |
| <b>Further information</b> | Enquiries about this guidance should be directed to:<br>Carwyn Davies<br>Minister for Teaching Standards<br>Department for Education and Skills<br>Welsh Government<br>Cathays Park<br>Cardiff<br>CF10 3NQ<br>Email: <a href="mailto:carwyn.davies@wales.gsi.gov.uk">carwyn.davies@wales.gsi.gov.uk</a>                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Related documents</b>   | <i>An introduction to the professional standards for teaching and leadership</i> (Welsh Government, 2018); <i>Procedures for reporting misconduct and incompetence in the education workforce in Wales</i> (DfES, 2015); <i>Capability of school teaching staff</i> (Department for Education & Skills (DfES), 2013); <i>Performance management for headteachers</i> (Learning, Improvement and Professional Development Division, 2012) |
| <b>Additional copies</b>   | This document is also available on Welsh Government's website at <a href="http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills">www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

This document is also available in Welsh.

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## Ministerial foreword

At Welsh Government, we are aware of the increasing strain and pressure that those teaching in Wales are under. With this acknowledgment, it may be toe-curling and almost in bad taste for Welsh Government to release documents regarding teacher ‘malpractice’ and ‘incompetence’. However, professionals in educational settings have a responsibility to ensure learners are delivered a suitable education in accordance with their statutory (Education Act, 1996) but also inherent rights as children or young people (Article 28, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (United Nations, 1989)). We at Welsh Government do not want to take anything away from professionals in schools who are a credit to themselves and to their learners by frequently engaging in excellent practice and displaying a dedication to continued professional development (please find countless examples of these using Estyn’s ‘Effective practice’ search tool at <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/effective-practice> (Estyn, 2020a)). We encourage these schools to continue doing so. However, as school leaders you must be prepared but also *able* to identify behaviours that would be detrimental to your learners and their development; this document has been produced to support schools in understanding why performance management is so important and the impact it can have in schools. Our hope is that it would motivate, inform and empower school leaders, enabling them to manage their staff more effectively.

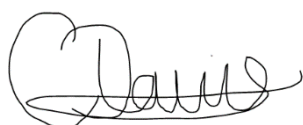
This document is one of six that I have released in regard to the impacts of negligent and uninformed behaviours of school staff in Wales. This issue focuses on how educational professionals have a responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner that is most beneficial to their learners’ health and well-being. This expectation is reflected in inspectorate ‘Estyn’ including ‘Well-being’ as a focus during their school visits (Estyn, 2019) and Professor Graham Donaldson asserting that ‘Health and Well-Being’ should be an Area of Learning Experience in the future Curriculum for Wales (Donaldson, 2015). It is also a statutory obligation for teachers in Wales to dedicate themselves to learner growth, development and well-being, taking the necessary actions to ensure learners get the most out of their experiences, as seen under the QTS (Qualified Teaching Standards) ‘Pedagogy’ descriptor (Welsh Government, 2019a). This document will outline observed and recorded unhelpful staff behaviours, the impact they may have on the health and well-being of children and young people as well as procedures and approaches you can implement in schools to combat these behaviours.

This document is not a substitute for any other government guidance in relation to the appropriate disciplinary measures for school staff, nor official teaching standards and expectations; you will find this material in the following related documents:

- Procedures for reporting misconduct and incompetence in the education workforce in Wales (DfES, 2015)  
<https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/23182/1/150608-reporting-misconduct-en.pdf>
- Capability of school teaching staff (Department for Education & Skills (DfES), 2013)  
<https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/18843/1/131121-capability-of-school-teaching-staff-en.pdf>

School leaders are reminded that following the discovery of staff incompetence or misconduct, the most suitable approach is one of a restorative and supportive nature, senior staff have a duty of care to their staff members and suitable (yet *fair*) plans of action must be drawn up, accordingly.

From our own school days, we as professionals may remember those ‘bad’ teachers who couldn’t control their class, had a vendetta against us, did not meet our expectations of teachers or just ‘failed’ to teach us anything; these sorts of experiences can be damaging. Now, as professionals, we have an opportunity and responsibility to uncover and adjust these behaviours, so this generation have the opportunity for a ‘stainless’ school experience.



**Carwyn Davies**  
**Minister for Teaching Standards**

Welsh Government would like to thank Mr. Carwyn Davies for his help in constructing and publishing this document and for offering his supporting personal commentary within each chapter. We hope this may support readers in contextualising the guidance.

# **Introduction**

This guidance offers examples of practices and staff behaviours that can have a detrimental impact to the physical and mental health and well-being of learners in primary and secondary schools.

It has been written to provide support in identifying and dealing with these behaviours, but mainly to aid Headteachers in understanding *how* these actions impact children and young people.

# **Background**

## **Improvement for health and well-being**

### **Context**

Following the emergence of new research and troubling statistics, it has been identified that Wales is developing a population that is facing challenges with its health and well-being. In 2019, research by the Public Health Wales Observatory (2019) identified that 60% of adults in Wales are overweight, with 24% of those adults being classed as 'obese'. The research also unearthed that a quarter of children in Wales are overweight, with 12.4% of that quarter being categorised as 'obese' and 3.3% as 'severely obese' (Clarke, 2019); experts have posited that obesity-levels in Wales have taken an upward trend, predicting that by 2030, 64% of adults could be identified as obese. Further, in a survey conducted by the Mental Health Foundation (2016), it was found that in 2015, 13% of adults (those aged 16 and over) have received treatment for a mental health issue. As for our children and young people, between 2010 and 2014, there was a 100% increase in the number of children in Wales referred to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAHMS) (Mental Health Foundation, 2016). These figures coincide with the average number of suicides in Wales being between 300 and 350 people per year (Welsh Government 2015b). Notably, these trends are to the detriment of the Welsh economy as treating people who were overweight/obese cost the government £86 million in 2011 (James, 2016) and in 2009 it was estimated that mental health problems cost the government £7 billion a year (Welsh Government, 2019b).

With this, our government has published and is enforcing documentation that proves our commitment to tackling the above and providing experiences for children and young people that support them in establishing and maintaining their health and well-being. For example, taking note of the Well-Being of Future Generations Act (which cites a

‘healthy’ and ‘resilient’ Wales as two of its goals (Welsh Government, 2015a)) and utilising advice from Professor Graham Donaldson who, in his Independent Review of the National Curriculum, has suggested ‘Health and Well-Being’ become one of the Area of Learning Experiences (Donaldson, 2015), we have made health and well-being a key part of our curriculum, actively providing input to learners on how they can maintain and improve their mental and physical health and well-being and become ‘healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society’ (Donaldson, 2015, p.31).

With this, we must recognise and act on the impact that unhelpful adult behaviours and school cultures can have on the health and well-being of children and young people (World Health Organisation (WHO), 2003). This document is not accusing school staff of actively harming learners, but suggesting that a holistic approach is more appropriate for something as organic as health and well-being and that our efforts in actively providing children and young people input on health and well-being are futile, if school staff are then to conduct themselves in a way that could be harmful to children and young-people. Should staff be conducting themselves in a manner that aligns with Government guidelines (as these practices have been approved by both Welsh Government and educational professionals alike), we would guarantee that any harm to learners would be optimally minimised. It is possible that we need to review the systems that we use to identify misconduct, as it has been acknowledged that there are instances where this misconduct can slip through the cracks.

### **Estyn and the case for change**

All providers of education and training in Wales are subject to scrutiny by inspectorate Estyn (Estyn, 2020b). These inspections have five core areas that are observed and reviewed by inspectors over a 1-5-day period (Estyn, 2020c). The areas are as follows:

- Standards
- Wellbeing and attitudes to learning
- Teaching and learning experiences
- Care, support and guidance
- Leadership and management

(Estyn, 2020b)

Estyn inspectors engage in a holistic process, observing every area and aspect of the school (including Free-School Meals (FSM), EAL/ALN pupils, economy of local area etc.), working with school leaders, teachers,

parents/guardians and learners alike, to identify and collate school strengths and weaknesses. The methods of inspection used may include questionnaires, interviews, lesson observations, school self-evaluation data, analysis of school results/data, learner work and learning walks (Estyn, 2015). Each core area will be assessed against a four-point scale judgement system:

- Excellent: many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
- Good: many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
- Adequate and needs improvement: strengths outweigh areas for improvement
- Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement: important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

(Estyn, 2015)

Following the completion of the inspection, Estyn has 35 working days to produce a comprehensive inspection report (Estyn, 2013) outlining the performance of the provider in each of the five core areas and reasons for the allocation of judgements.

Though part of Estyn's mission continues to be the achievement of excellence for all learners and public accountability for educational providers (Estyn, 2019a), Estyn and Welsh Government have been criticised for implementing systems that render them unable to capture a fair and accurate representation of provider performance. For example, their decision to only inspect providers once every 7 years (Estyn, 2020b) (6 years before September 2016 (Estyn, 2015)) means that should provider standards decline in this time, schools would be able to persist in not meeting required standards, causing detriment to learners in all five core areas and far from the achievement of excellence. Though Estyn have not commented on this, we would assume they rely on the professional courtesy of school staff or concerned parents to highlight these issues before their next visit; not to mention that this would reflect in the school data that inspectors would look at in their next inspection.



**Minister Comment:**

"This is too little, too late! It would seem unlikely to me that school staff would be eager to report their own school to Estyn for failing to meet standards, and it is remiss of any inspectorate to rely on parents to identify school failings. 7 (or even 6) years gives schools far too much time to allow standards to drop and if/when they do, it is ultimately to the detriment of learners. A child can go from Nursery to Year 5 in 7 years... that is almost their entire primary education at risk if schools are allowed to go unchecked and unaccountable for that long.

There are numerous cases of schools achieving lower judgements than they did in their previous inspections (Estyn, 2019b), this time frame allows for blatant learner disenfranchising."

Further, an identified criticism of Estyn's system in relation to the information in this guidance would be the predictability of when Estyn will visit schools and the 20 days' notice schools receive before the inspection. It has been inferred by external bodies that this structure and pre-warning of inspection allows school staff to 'prepare' for visits in a way that would not present realistic, day-to-day running of the school setting to inspectors (Taylor, Power & Powell, 2018; DfES, 2014). Though this time should be used by schools to begin collating evidence such as learner data, school policies and all other relevant documentation asked for by inspectors upon their arrival, this time has the potential to be used inappropriately. For example, school staff may consider using this time to enhance or polish their learning environments, construct faux lesson plans for observations, coach learners/staff, introduce new routines, assess previously unassessed work or update databases/policies etc. Though enhancing learning environments and updating databases/policies are examples of good practice, there is an expectation that these happen regularly and unprompted by inspections; malpractice such as coaching learners, planning lessons for inspections that you would not undertake usually and marking pupil work in time for inspections is naturally discouraged and is unhelpful to schools. Nevertheless, there is no denying this sort of practice is present in schools in Wales and is concerning, as it allows for schools to continue not meeting standards at a detriment to learners.



#### **Minister Comment:**

"Having spent time in schools, I have seen this sort of malpractice undertaken by other professionals. I have seen the fancy boarding and the new displays go up as well as 'excellent' lesson plans come out of the cupboard, having the dust blown off them that has accumulated from the last inspection. I have even seen trips being booked for 'challenging' students or learners with Additional Needs. There is absolutely no doubt that there are schools out there who, on a 'normal' school day, are 'adequate' or even 'unsatisfactory', but having had the opportunity to 'prepare' for their visit, they scraped a 'Good'.

I have previously voiced my opinion that Estyn should arrive and begin their inspection unannounced, schools that are operating under expected standards would have nothing to fear from this implementation and I'm sure 'excellent' teachers would welcome feedback on their day-to-day practice, rather than what they can concoct especially for inspectors. These very practices are not fair on learners who are apparently only deserving of 'good' or 'excellent' learning experiences when Estyn are at the door, and it further proves that there are practitioners and school staff out there who are not being held to account for not meeting standards, to the detriment of learners.

Having said that, I recognise the pressure on schools in Wales to perform, and the frustration of teachers on being subject to such scrutiny. I know the profession is difficult and teachers in Wales are struggling (Busby, 2019; Whitewick, 2019). As a result, we have seen that on average, 3% of teachers leave the profession each year (StatsWales, 2019a) and over the past 5 years there has been a decline in the number of teachers in Wales (StatsWales, 2019b). Although, if there are professionals and practitioners out there that are engaging in practices that are harmful or to the detriment of learners, they need to be identified and their energies redirected, I doubt any teacher would disagree with me!"

# Planning with learners in mind

## Acceptable conduct

Welsh Government relies on the professional initiative of teachers on how they choose to do this; practitioners may choose to conduct 'Getting to Know You' sessions during which they collect learner interests and contexts to incorporate into future planning or learning environments. It may be that practitioners spur interest in and excitement for a particular topic or subject by offering a 'hook' or stimulus during the school day, this would also be acceptable.

Some schools incorporate 'Me2You' or 'News' sessions into their classroom timetable, so learners can share their experiences outside of school, demonstrating proof of planning with learners in mind and showing an interest in their pupils.

Schools have begun developing 'Enquiry-Based Learning' projects (Hutchinson, 2010) which focus on a 'learner-led' approach and others allow children to pick the topic of study for that term through means of a class vote.

## Proof of staff obligation

The QTS standards in place both now (Welsh Government, 2019a) and from 2009-2017 (DiscoverTeaching, 2009) both specify that it is an expectation of all teachers in Wales to consider the personalities, interests, hobbies, needs and abilities of learners while constructing lessons. This correlates with the Articles 12 and 29 of the UNCRC which stipulate children and young people's right to be heard and right to an education that develops and utilises their personality and interests, respectively (United Nations, 1989).

## Theory and literature

There is a breadth of literature ranging from Dewey (1913) to Barrable (2019) who, although they lived in different centuries, posit that children should be subject to experiences that 'excite' and engage with their needs and that doing so will make them more motivated to learn. The best way to procure engagement and motivate learners is to present them with something that interests or is relevant to them (Mathewson, 2019; Harackiewicz, Smith, & Priniski, 2016; McCarthy, 2014).

## Malpractice and misconduct

- Dismissing learner personalities and interests
- Ignoring learner contributions
- Demonstrating hostility towards learners for their personality or interests
- Treating learners differently because of their personality or interests
- Presenting material or behaving in a manner that insensitively conflicts with learners' personality or interests (e.g. 'you are cheeky', 'you are too confident', 'you have rubbish taste in music', 'Pink is a girl's colour, pick a different favourite')

## Health and well-being

Incorporating pupil voice into day-to-day classroom experiences can enhance children's involvement, motivation and self-esteem (Health Education Partnership, 2012). Ignoring children can have a negative impact on their self-esteem and sense of worth, having the potential to shatter their confidence and make them reclusive and disengaged (Clark, 2014; Mooney & Blackburn, 2002), this develops as they do, resulting in a diagnosis of anxiety and depression as adults; low-self esteem starts during childhood (National Health Service, 2020).

## Appropriate methods and topics

### Acceptable conduct

Teachers are to present materials to pupils that are age-appropriate and linked in some way to the curriculum imposed in that school setting. Ideally, the materials, schemes of work or topics were either picked by the children or relevant to the children, incorporating personalities, achievements, hobbies or interests (see above).

It is not suitable to present material that may offend, upset or cause distress to any learner in the classroom, even if other children are interested, it is to be **discreetly** and **sensitively** dismissed, as to avoid detriment to either party.

If unsure, it may benefit schools to notify parents of potential topics that may be covered next term and a breakdown of the material, doing so would allow parents the opportunity to notify teachers of any concerns.

Schools must not expose children or young people to material that is not part of the curriculum and may upset parents/carers (e.g. subjecting a Jehovah's Witness to The Lord's Prayer during a school assembly).

Schools must not present learners' material that would be in violation of the law (e.g. show a Year 4 class a '12' rated film).

### **Proof of staff obligation**

The QTS standards in place both now (Welsh Government, 2019a) and from 2009-2017 (DiscoverTeaching, 2009) both specify that teachers are required to follow and cover the government-set curriculum but have a duty to consider the personality and background of learners before presenting them to learners.

### **Theory and literature**

Learners may have had particular experiences that have them sensitive to certain content (e.g. a child attacked by a dog may have a fear of dogs and become upset when presented with an image of one etc.). Should learners be repeatedly subject to this material, they may experience 'toxic stress' (Franke, 2014). This phenomenon is the result of the repeated activation of the adrenal gland which produces copious amounts of cortisol in response to a shocking or upsetting stimulus, the amygdala responds to this hormone and induces a 'fight or flight' response. If this reaction happens too frequently, there is a high-risk of a change in brain chemistry, resulting in physical and mental illness in later life (Levitt, 2015).

Further, the psychological concept of 'modelling' (Bandura, 1971) dictates that children are likely to imitate behaviours that they observe, particularly those of adults. Exposing children to material that is not appropriate could result in them attempting to replicate or imitate it, resulting in the potential for harm or upset to other learners. As well, young people have been identified as more susceptible to influence (Knoll, *et al.*, 2018), teachers are in a position of power and have increased capacity to inspire and influence learners, this should be through the use of positive and appropriate behaviour and materials.

The QTS standards in place both now (Welsh Government, 2018) and from 2009-2017 (DiscoverTeaching, 2009) require teachers to develop positive, professional relationships with parents/guardians and respect the spiritual and cultural background of both learners and their parents/guardians; acting against their wishes can cause conflict not just between parent and teacher, but parent and learner, damaging the prevalent quality of the homelife and the impact it has on the development of children and young

people (Bhoje, 2015; Department for Schools, Children and Families, 2008; Malaguzzi, cited in Pound, 2006, p. 52; Edwards, Gandini & Forman, 1998).

### **Malpractice and misconduct**

- Incorporating non-age-appropriate material into lessons (e.g. 'Fortnite', 'Grand Theft Auto', 'Call of Duty' etc.).
- Encouraging or condoning violence, sexual activity, theft, bullying, harassment etc.
- Presenting learners with material that is not in the curriculum or statutory requirement to provide, that parents have objected to.
- Presenting any material that is homophobic, racist, sexist, xenophobic or any way discriminatory in nature.
- Confronting learners about their objection to learning material during class time or in front of other learners.
- Using harsh or inappropriate language near or in the presence of learners.

### **Health and well-being**

As above, the exposure to inappropriate or potentially harmful material can result in 'toxic stress' (particularly in young learners) which can negatively impact health and well-being during childhood and adolescence.

Damaging the parent-school relationship can cause distress for children and young people as it can result in tension at home and in school; also, subjecting learners to material that they know their parents would disapprove of also has the potential to cause 'toxic-stress'.

Exposing children and young people to inappropriate materials or behaviour (violence, theft etc.) may result in their attempting to imitate it, should this be the case there is potential for harm to the health and well-being of themselves or others.



### Minister Comment:

"This one can be controversial. A lot of professionals have their own ideas about what 'can' and 'can't' be harmful to children and young people and this sort of dialogue is often attributed to the 'PC' or 'Snowflake' generation.

I remember a debate with a colleague following a news article that mentioned a parent in America who had complained to a school about the topic that term being 'Harry Potter'. The parent argued that this piece of literature contained themes and concepts that conflicted with her Christian beliefs and did not want her child to be subjected to it.

Me, personally? I was on the side of the parent. I absolutely do not think Harry Potter is any way harmful to children or young people, being an avid fan of the series myself, I think it contains themes and concepts that children and young people need to be introduced to, doing it in an exciting and magical way. However, I feel the parent had every right to complain, if she does not want her child to be subjected to these themes either at the time or never at all, that is her right as a parent to decide that (providing the child is under 16).

As a person? I think it's a shame that this parent is depriving her child of that experience and is now putting her child in the position where his/her class has to change their topic, and he/she has to sit there every day, look their teacher in the eye knowing exactly why. Considering the parent went public, it wouldn't surprise me if their classmates knew as well, that's a serious red-light regarding relationships with their peers and their class teacher.

As a professional, I think the school should have notified all parents before submitting the topic to children, so all of this could have been avoided, and if certain Christian doctrine dictates that association with demons, witches, magic etc. has potential to corrupt the soul (which certain Christian doctrine it does), then that parent has spiritual grounds to request that her child not be subject to it."

## Opportunities for learner consultation, feedback and staff reflection

### Acceptable conduct

Schools should have systems in place to ensure that learners have opportunities to comment on the quality of teaching and experiences and schools and teachers should act on this feedback accordingly.

Schools have a duty to ensure learners are aware of these systems and procedures in accordance with their rights. Schools should not put themselves in a position where learners become upset or frustrated and voice their thoughts in a crude or inappropriate manner, this can be avoided if procedures are emphasised thoroughly enough.

Particularly in secondary schools, if learners do not feel they are being subject to input, experiences or support that allows them to meet certain criteria or judgements (e.g. GCSE, A-Level etc.), they must be given a medium in which to express this, either to the teacher or a senior member of staff.

Schools should ensure that staff are aware of these systems and that if a learner has a concern, they immediately remind learners of these systems and alert a senior member of staff.

Both senior and teaching staff **should in no way** guilt or reprimand the learner for raising their concerns and should conduct all proceedings respectfully and (if the learner accepts) with a parent present. During proceedings, opportunity must be given for the learner to speak and relevant suggestions made to the way forward.

An action plan should be drawn up, signed by the learner, the member of staff concerned and a member of the senior leadership team.

Following this, the classroom situation should be monitored closely, with a follow-up meeting 3-4 weeks later.

### **Proof of staff obligation**

The QTS standards in place both now (Welsh Government, 2019a) and from 2009-2017 (DiscoverTeaching, 2009) specify that teachers must be competent, having the subject and pedagogical knowledge to deliver the curriculum or syllabus in a way that is accessible to all learners (with expert support if required) and apply a range of teaching approaches and strategies that work to draw the best out of learners. The standards require practitioners to be reflective and committed to improving their practice.

The UNCRC dictates that schools have a responsibility to make children and young people aware of their rights; following that, a right to be heard and the right to an education that allows them to flourish. All school staff have a responsibility to allow children and young people to utilise these rights and see that they are met.

The QTS standards in place both now (Welsh Government, 2019a) and from 2009-2017 (DiscoverTeaching, 2009) dictate that teachers must work to construct positive relationships with learners, based on respect.

### **Theory and literature**

Recently, professionals and academic have spoken out about the impact academic pressure has on children and young people. There has been an increase in the numbers of students in both primary (SATS/National Tests) and secondary schools (GCSEs/A-Levels) becoming anxious and stressed, especially during exam time (Whitewick, 2018; Weale, 2017). Therefore, if learners feel that there is something wrong with either the subject matter or the approach used to deliver it, it is crucial that they have the opportunity to share these anxieties and have them properly dealt with, without being reprimanded or punished.

Further, educational theorists and professionals have written at length about the benefits that positive teacher-student relationships have on attainment and health and well-being (Moya, Moreno & Brooks, 2019; Claessens, 2016; Roffey, 2012; Rimm-Kaufman & Sandilos, 2010). Also, Estyn (2019c) have identified that overall, schools in Wales that were reported as having positive relationships with staff were the same ones that had high levels of well-being, as well as having the most significant improvements to learning and results. The report also expanded that the most important factor in introducing any strategy or initiative to improve health and well-being was positive teacher-student relationships. Banerjee

*et al.* (2016) and McLaughlin & Clarke (2010) both found in separate studies that there is a correlation between good teacher-student relationships, effective teaching and learning strategies and increased levels of health and well-being.

### **Malpractice and misconduct**

- Ignoring concerns raised by learners
- Not making learners aware of procedures in place for raising feedback
- Punishing learners for offering feedback on teaching
- Not acting on feedback raised by learners
- Treating learners differently for offering feedback
- Confronting the learner in front of the class for offering feedback
- Acting in a way that suggests the learner has broken school rules for offering feedback
- Not allowing the learner the freedom to elaborate on the feedback
- Taking the feedback personally and seeing it as negative
- Slandering the learner to members of staff or other learners for raising the feedback

### **Health and well-being**

Not giving children and young people opportunities to voice their concerns about the quality of teaching (particularly during exam periods) is not only an infringement of their rights, it means they are left in a position where they are unable to do anything about something that is causing them additional stress and anxiety. With this, the stress and anxiety can worsen and lead to a range of new physical/mental symptoms such as headaches, diarrhoea, vomiting, dizziness, school absences, insomnia etc. (Beyond Blue Support Service, 2020; Anxiety UK, 2018). Schools must empower learners and encourage them to voice their concerns if they wish to support children and young people with their health and well-being.

Prevalently, if staff members do not maintain their professionalism and allow learner feedback to damage their relationship with the learner, there are significant implications for that learner's health and well-being. It has been proposed by academics that should a negative teacher-student relationship develop, there is a chance of a student internalising anxiety caused by the relationship breakdown, leading to a disengagement from the educational setting and potentially a withdrawal from the setting altogether (The Educator, 2019; Varga, 2017; Bergeron, Chouinard & Janosz, 2011). This would not only mean learners are at risk of experiencing additional anxiety, but it may result in a serious decline in effort and attainment.

## **Closing remarks**



"We hope that you find this guidance useful in understanding the impact of malpractice and misconduct in schools and that our examples may be useful in identifying these practices should they occur in your schools.

You'll notice that a recurrent theme throughout this document is that of 'pupil voice', it would seem that a lot of good practice in relation to education for health and well-being comes from listening to learners and allowing them to lead the learning.

I criticised the teaching style of my A-Level Music teaching when I was in school and was told I was not qualified to make that judgement. It would not surprise you to learn that I disagreed then, and I would certainly disagree now, if schools truly want to improve any aspect of their institution, they'll start with learners."

Diolch.

Word Count (exc. Headings/subheadings): 5185

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