

	Targed/target	Yr hyn yr wyf wedi'i wneud yn yr aseiniad hwn What I have done in this assignment...
Targed/Target 1	Make greater use of journal articles at this level of writing.	I have used more journal articles in both my report and video.
Targed/Target 2	Increase the level of critically in your use of literature.	I have aimed to be more critical when discussing literature in my essays.
Targed/Target 3		

How a school develops one aspect of its SDP: a report that critically reflects on the actions, impact and evidence base. (2,749)

This report will analyse how a school develops their priorities and will focus on a particular action point within the school development plan. The main focus will be the school's attempts to improve attendance and wellbeing through various strategies outlined in the SDP. I will refer to the school as School X, in order to maintain anonymity in accordance with BERA guidelines (BERA, 2018). Within this report I will focus on the school development plan for School X for 2019-2020, with a discussion on the second priority for the year. The second priority is centred on improving wellbeing for both staff and pupils. The success criteria for this priority mainly addresses pupil attendance, aiming for every year group to have an attendance of 93% or more; to reduce the amount of pupil exclusions; promoting and recognising excellent behaviour by both staff and pupils in order to improve morale and wellbeing. School X is an English medium 11-16 secondary school within the Swansea valleys, 50.8% of its pupils are eligible for free school meals (MyLocalSchool, 2019).

School X's school development plan (SDP) outlines pragmatic goals that they aim to attain in the 19/20 academic year. An SDP clearly outlines a school's intended steps in order to improve various aspects of the school environment and school's attainment (Welsh Government, 2014). These steps for improvement are accumulated throughout the school in self-reflection practices, these should be conducted regularly by the school in order to detect areas that require review and change (Welsh Government, 2014). The issues that are identified as needing addressing are then related to a corresponding 'priority' within the SDP, these can range from wellbeing to teaching and learning. These priorities represent the school's targets, each of the priorities are then accompanied within the SDP with a set of action points to ensure that the priorities and aims for improvement are met over the following academic year (Welsh Government, 2014). The aims of a school action plan should inherently be guided by raising standards within school as well as reducing the gap in attainment, therefore limiting the effects of poverty over pupils (Education in Wales, 2017). In accordance with the guidelines for setting out a school development plan, the Welsh Government also released a 'best practices' guide to assist with the schools' consolidation of their SDP's priorities. When writing a school development plan, there is an inherent need to ensure that the school environment is improved by the stakeholders to benefit the pupils (Hanover Research, 2014). The NSCC stated that schools need to aim to provide a good climate for pupils as school should emulate a safe environment where pupils and staff are supported, within respectful, safe relationships (NSCC in Hanover Research 2014). Thus, accentuating the need for wellbeing and the learning environment as a vital aspect of education that needs to be reviewed and improved annually. By ensuring that local authorities and schools set and meet objectives that seek to optimise the improvement of wellbeing, schools are required to consider pupil and

staff welfare when consolidating their SDP (Littlecott et al, 2018; Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, 2015).

School action plans can often outline how the learning environment will be managed by utilising behaviour management strategies. Schools that are proactive in their approaches to behaviour management are more productive in terms of bettering pupils' behaviour (Watkins, 2016). Therefore, by anticipating poor behaviour and knowing how to respond, schools are able to devise a plan outlining preventative measures that can be put in place (Watkins, 2016). This is the case within School X, as they have devised routines that all staff are to follow in an attempt to counteract bad behaviour within the school, these routines are outlined within the SDP. This concept of preventative measures works in conjunction with Pivotal, as schools anticipate behavioural issues from pupils, therefore, they are able to respond to pupils with various strategies that strive to de-escalate the situation rather than encourage further conflict (Watkins, 2016; Pivotal Education Ltd). Also outlined within the wellbeing and behaviour section of School X's action plan is its inclusion provision. This centre aims to combat the number of exclusions the school has to carry out by offering an alternative for behaviourally challenged pupils, often offering training that centres around developing life skills and employability (Education otherwise than at school, 2019; TIDE, 2018). This provision supports the EOTAS framework as it seeks to provide an alternative for pupils who would otherwise be excluded, thus serving as an improvement of wellbeing and attendance within the SDP (EOTAS, 2019). Therefore, by pre-emptively planning for behaviour management strategies and provisions within the SDP in line with Welsh Government guidance, School X is striving to improve the wellbeing and attendance of its most troubled pupils (Estyn, 2016).

The second priority encompasses a variety of aspects attributed to wellbeing, ensuring pupils are able to attend school, praising excellent behaviour to positively impact pupil and staff wellbeing, as well as a clear concern for staff welfare in the monitoring of the school's practice. I have decided to focus my analysis on the second action point for improving the school's wellbeing, aiming to reduce fixed term and permanent exclusions year upon year. As this is the aim of the action point, I feel the school should have included the number of exclusions within the SDP document so that the data is clear to the stakeholders, making any improvements clearly visible within the document.

One of the main attributes associated with managing behaviour within School X is that they are a Pivotal school (Pivotal Education Ltd). Therefore, under action point 2.2, the school aims to reduce the number of permanent and fixed term exclusions within the school through their incorporation of de-escalation strategies and restorative practices. School X's school development plan outlines the inherent need for all teachers and members of staff to maintain consistently calm, adult behaviour and emotional control. By ensuring this behaviour is adhered to by all staff within School X, the aim is that the pupils will mirror the behaviour set out by their teachers within confrontational situations. The continuation of the Pivotal training

within the school will address behaviour management strategies, focusing on Unit 4 of Pivotal. This unit was delivered in inset training and staff twilight meetings, thereby ensuring that all staff are given the same information and expectations. One of the key strategies outlined as part of action point 2.2 in accordance with Pivotal is the utilisation of de-escalation language by staff, in order to dilute the tension within pupil behaviour. One of the main criticisms upon reviewing this strategy is the incorporation of Pivotal in an attempt to reduce exclusions, however, Pivotal is a behaviour intervention initiative and therefore requires a restorative mindset from both pupils and staff. Many pupils do not interact with the restorative practices within the school, pupils often avoid restorative sessions with their class teachers labelled as 'catch-ups' as parents are not supportive of pupils staying after school for these sessions. Therefore, although in theory, private restorative sessions with class teachers outside of a lesson environment sound beneficial in terms of controlling anger and emotions, it is very difficult to ensure pupil attendance, as such the system is not working at the Senior Leadership team had hoped and entailed.

The second section of the action point 2.2, is a series of behavioural expectations and strategic processes to limit the number of fixed term and permanent exclusions within the academic year. Firstly, School X highlights the need for 'first attention to best conduct' meaning that staff focus on recognising and praising good behaviour within the classroom in order to encourage others, similarly outlining the need to reward excellent behaviour in line with school initiatives such as the 'Rewards Room'. As praising is a prominent feature of the action point, pupils may be recognised for their achievements through postcards home or 'ClassCharts'. 'Relentless routines' are integral within School X due to the behavioural issues within the school, the action point details that teachers should utilise routines such as meeting pupils at the door and greeting them, as well as incorporating non-verbal cues and countdowns so pupils have clear and consistent expectations of their teachers. As well as this, all members of staff should follow the school's 'scripting of difficult interventions' whereby teachers use language that results in the de-escalation of a situation and reduces whole class disruption. The last strategic process is the outline for the restorative conversations as the school adheres to restorative practice, therefore, teachers should have private conversations rather than public reprimands in order to build relationships with troubled pupils. This aspect worked well as it allowed staff to set pupils on a task and then have a conversation with the pupil outside, this allowed for both parties to have a 'cooling off' period before discussing the behaviour in question, whilst ensuring the least amount of disruption on a whole class basis. However, the necessity of the teacher leaving the classroom could have a detrimental effect on the class' learning if it was a regular occurrence in all lessons.

Lastly, in an attempt to combat exclusions and truancy School X uses a TIDE system within their inclusion unit, 'training, inclusion, development and engagement', in order to work with the most vulnerable and troubled pupils within the school. In terms of TIDE's role within action point 2.2, the senior leadership and wellbeing staff have identified the need for early identification of pupils who require behaviour

intervention, within key stage 3 classes. These pupils are then provided with a modified timetable that incorporates 'Nurture style' intervention groups. However, due to these groupings being across year 7 and 8, it is extremely difficult to organise the sessions meaning pupils often miss the same lessons weekly. In addition to this, pupils can be taken out of any lesson for their 'Nurture' groups and therefore, there is the potential to miss core subjects that will affect prior knowledge at key stage four. It is believed that by staging these behavioural interventions earlier within pupils' secondary education, it will make fixed term and permanent exclusions less likely. Whilst the inclusion section of TIDE allows pupils from years 9 to 11 to attend the inclusion unit on a different timetable which focuses more on attaining qualifications such as Prince's Trust, in order to keep pupils in some form of education if they are unable to participate within mainstream key stage four lessons. However, this has proven difficult as the TIDE unit was previously used primarily for behavioural incidents and restorative conversations with the staff. Therefore, many pupils with anger management issues, who are able to access mainstream education, take it upon themselves to truant and distract others within the TIDE centre for learning purposes.

The progress attributed to the TIDE provision, is assessed on a half-termly basis. The first review was conducted in October, staff in the TIDE facility considered pupils' engagement and attendance within the provision. The inclusion section aims to ensure troubled and vulnerable pupils are offered alternative provisions with the aim of keeping them within a learning environment. Pupils who would otherwise have been excluded are given reduced timetables within the TIDE facility. At the commencement of the 2019/2020 school year there were 5 pupils assigned to the inclusion provision within the TIDE centre, the sessions that these pupils undertook within the first half-term strove to ensure pupils were engaged in both learning and attainment. This meant that pupils' self-esteem was boosted as they were able to thrive within the inclusion aspect of their education, thereby positively impacting the pupils' wellbeing as outlined by the second priority of the school development plan. Proving to be successful in not only improving attendance by reducing fixed-term exclusions but also by reintroducing 60% of the pupils (within the Inclusion provision) into an increased mainstream timetable as it was deemed that they were able to cope within the learning environment (TIDE Review, 2019). As a result, the inclusion provision of the TIDE scheme was able to add three more pupils within its support sessions. These sessions are conducted within small groups so that pupils are able to manage their learning environments and stay engaged. Through utilising small group interventions within the TIDE facility, pupils' educational and emotional needs are supported. Regarding improvement, in my opinion I feel the year 7 and 8 'Nurture' intervention groups would benefit from a similar format, by extending the year-group range and expanding the inclusion provision it may result in less pupils needing to access the provision within years 10 and 11. Therefore, they would be equipped with the necessary classroom coping strategies whilst still attending mainstream GCSE education.

From the TIDE October review, it was clear that the behaviour management and attendance provisions meant that the school was developing stronger links with pupils' parents and guardians. On occasions where pupils' attendance or behaviour persistently undermined the school rules, the Key Stage manager along with Pastoral Support Officers (appointed as part of 2017-18 PDG) liaised with the pupil's family with any declines, so that they were being monitored and held accountable both at home and at school. In doing so Pupil X, had an average attendance of 82% whilst attending the previous OWLS behavioural inclusion unit, in contrast Pupil X is averaging 91% attendance within TIDE's half-termly analysis, improving drastically in-line with School X's overall aim of 93% attendance (TIDE Review, 2019). Regarding the pupils they intervened with, it was deemed successful as both parties concerned could discuss any wellbeing issues that may be attributed to the pupil's change in behaviour or attendance, thus working in unison to avoid an exclusion whilst simultaneously improving pupil wellbeing in line with action point 2.2.

There are no formal reviews of the processes outlined under action point 2.2 as the SDP is not set to be reviewed until April 2nd, 2020. This is something that I would recommend the school changes, as it is difficult to review changes with no statistics or reports being provided until the summer term. However, there are visible impacts associated with the behaviour and anger management strategies utilised within School X. It was clear that the Pivotal initiative had not been wholly bought into by staff and seemed to be ignored by older pupils. Thus, allowances were made for bad behaviour as restorative conversations were conducted with the head of year and class teacher rather than escalating issues. These conversations were often token gestures with no change in pupils' attitudes or behaviour following the conversation. Therefore, although the Pivotal behaviour management approach succeeded in reducing the number of exclusions in line with action point 2.2, it did not alter pupils' behaviour throughout the school. The system seemed to be manipulated by pupils as they knew if they partook in a restorative conversation, the issue would not be escalated further. In terms of recommendations, I would suggest maintaining the Pivotal approach but not as an alternative to fixed term and permanent exclusions as some pupils' behaviour warranted such reprimands within School X. Ultimately, through all departments solely utilising Pivotal, overtime the protocols should become innate for both staff and pupils, in doing so should develop the monitoring and motivation of good pupil behaviour.

Overall, School X has made progress addressing the strategies outlined in action point 2.2. Evidently, improvements were attributed to the TIDE provision, as many pupils who would otherwise face permanent or fixed-term exclusions are able to attend school, developing learning and social skills, thus, benefitting their wellbeing- the overarching aim. Although there is evidence for success, there is also clear opportunity to improve the development of this action point. Particularly, in terms of the anger and behaviour management strategies that seek to rectify behaviours that would ultimately lead to pupils' exclusions. The utilisation of Pivotal as a deterrent for exclusions is mis-used within the school, the restorative system

needs to be deployed for a longer time, becoming inherent in dictating acceptable behaviour to pupils before being relied upon to stop behaviours that lead to exclusions. In conclusion, School X's SDP has developed many beneficial strategies within the priority and action point 2.2, however there is clear lack termly of statistics in terms of whole school fixed-term and permanent exclusions being published. The statistics attributed to a priority that weighs heavily on improving percentages are integral within an SDP, an aspect that I will consider within my future practice. Restorative practice procedures and intervention groups are features of School X's SDP that I would utilise within my own teaching.

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