

Teachers' Professional Learning: Country Background Report of Wales for the OECD TPL study

Final report

Presented to **Welsh Government** by **Arad Research** October 2020

This report was produced by Arad Research for the Welsh Government as an input to the OECD Teachers' Professional Learning Study. The document was prepared in response to guidelines the OECD provided to all countries. The opinions expressed are not those of the OECD or its Member countries. Further information about the OECD Study is available at www.oecd.org/education/teachers-professional-learning-study

This report was drafted October 2020 and as such does not reflect recent publications such as our updated **National Mission plan - Moving towards a new Curriculum for Wales**

<https://gov.wales/moving-towards-new-curriculum-wales>

<https://gov.wales/our-national-mission-0>

Programme for Government 2021 to 2026

<https://gov.wales/programme-for-government-2021-to-2026>

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Acronyms and abbreviations

AB	Appropriate body
ACE	Adverse childhood experiences
ALN	Additional learning needs
ALNCos	Additional Learning Needs coordinators
ALNET	Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal
AoLE	Area of Learning and Experience
Cadair	Open resource repositories for academic journals and research
CBR	Country background report
CPL	Continuing professional learning
CQFW	Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales
Cronfa	Open resource repositories for academic journals and research
DSpace	Open resource repositories for academic journals and research
EBS	Employment-based scheme
EBSCO	Online portal providing access to academic journals and research
EOTAS	Education otherwise than at school
EV	External verifier
EWC	Education Workforce Council
HE	Higher education
HEI	Higher education institutions
HLTA	High Level Teaching Assistant
Hwb	An online learning platform for teaching practitioners
IAY	Iaith Athrawon Yfory (Welsh-medium incentive for student teachers)
ICT	Information and communications technology
IM	Induction Mentor
INSET	In-service Training
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
LA	Local authority
LHB	Local health board
MEP	Masters in Educational Practice
NAEL	National Academy for Education Leadership
NAPL	National Approach to Professional Learning
NEIR	National Evaluation and Improvement Resource
NPEP	National Professional Enquiry Project
NPQH	National Professional Qualification for Headship
NQT	Newly qualified teacher
NSERE	National strategy for educational research and enquiry
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
PLJ	Professional Learning Journey
PLP	Professional Learning Passport
PPA	Planning, preparation and assessment
PRD	Practice, review and development
PRU	Pupil referral unit

QALL	Quality Assured Lifelong Learning
QTS	Qualified teacher status
REC	Regional education consortium / consortia
RPL	Recognition of prior learning
SDP	School Development Plans
SEN	Special educational needs
SLO	Schools as Learning Organisations
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics
STPCD	School Teachers Pay and Conditions' Document
TA	Teaching assistant
TALP	Teaching Assistant Learning Pathway
TPL	Teachers' Professional Learning
TPSM	Teacher Planning and Supply Model
UWTSD	University of Wales Trinity St David

1. Introduction

Welsh Government's Pedagogy, Leadership and Professional Learning division are participating in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Teachers' Professional Learning (TPL) Study. Arad Research have been commissioned to co-ordinate the drafting of a country background report (CBR) for Wales to support this study.

The TPL study seeks to examine the policy environments that support the professional growth of teachers by exploring common challenges, strengths and innovations in participating countries / economies. In an effort to improve the evidence base, the study examines policy, research and practice related to each stage of the teacher's career path and is wide enough in scope to capture all forms of professional learning including emerging practice.

1.1 Methodology

Arad used a mixed-methods approach for the research. This approach included the following:

- Desk research, which involved a review of:
 - key policy documents relating to education and teachers' professional learning in Wales;
 - the most recent statistical releases relating to the education system in Wales e.g. Schools' census results¹; and
 - key findings from Stats Wales and the National Education Workforce Survey² undertaken by the Education and Workforce Council. It should be noted that this survey is based on a sample of views from individuals working in the education sector.

- Interviews with stakeholders, including Welsh Government officials and members of the TPL study National Coordination Board, which include representatives from higher education institutions, regional education consortia, Estyn and other organisations from the education sector in Wales. Board members also provided input to the final reporting stage.

¹ <https://gov.wales/schools-census-results-january-2020>

² Education Workforce Council (April 2017). National Education Workforce Survey: Research Report. <https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/documents/research-and-statistics/625-national-education-workforce-survey-april-2017.html>

2. Contextual information

The purpose of this section is to provide general contextual information related to the structure of the school system, the teaching community and teachers' continuing professional learning (CPL). The section also serves to identify key authorities and stakeholders involved in continuing professional learning at different levels of the system and to elaborate on their strategic goals and the main objectives they try to achieve in CPL.

2.1 Key features of the school system and the teacher workforce

2.1.1 School system in Wales

In Wales, education is compulsory from the age of 5 to 16 years old, although almost all children begin their education at the age of 4 years old. The compulsory education period consists of four stages, as outlined below:

- Foundation Phase (Early years/primary) – Ages 3-7 years
- Key stage 2 (Primary) – Ages 7-11 years
- Key stage 3 (Secondary) – Ages 11-14 years
- Key stage 4 (Secondary) – Ages 14-16 years

Some schools also offer education to learners post 16 (post compulsory) in what is commonly referred to as “Sixth form” provision (also known as Key Stage 5 in school years 12 and 13). This is however not universal across all secondary schools with some local authorities offering post 16 provision via further education colleges in a tertiary setting.

Education is delivered in Welsh-medium, English-medium and/or bilingual settings across Wales. All pupils are required to learn Welsh throughout their compulsory education period regardless of the medium of the setting.³

In January 2020, there were 1,480 local authority maintained (i.e. public) schools in Wales. This included 9 nurseries, 1,225 primary, 22 middle (which include primary and secondary), 183 secondary and 41 special schools. Of these maintained schools, 455 were Welsh Medium schools.⁴

There were 469,176 pupils in local authority maintained schools across Wales in January 2020, 778 more than 2019. Of these, 68,886 were aged under 5, 211,812 were 5-10 years old, 166,001 were 11-15 years and 22,477 were aged 16 and over.⁵

2.1.2 Curriculum reform

In March 2014, Professor Graham Donaldson was asked to conduct a fundamental Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4. His 2015 report, *Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales*, considered the fundamental purposes of education

³ Jones (2016). Research Briefing: Welsh-medium education and Welsh as a subject. National Assembly for Wales. <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/27029/1/16-048-english-web.pdf>

⁴ Welsh Government (July 2020). Schools' Census Results: as at January 2020 <https://gov.wales/schools-census-results>

⁵ *ibid*

and recommended curriculum and assessment arrangements that can best fulfil those purposes.⁶ Professor Donaldson's report also made a series of recommendations on changes to curriculum structure and assessment arrangements. All recommendations were accepted by the then-Minister for Education and Skills and in October 2015, the Welsh Government published *Qualified for Life*,⁷ setting out plans for developing and implementing a new curriculum.⁸

Qualified for Life also defined four enablers that would underpin the development of the new curriculum, namely: working in partnership (between schools, experts, Estyn, regional education consortia and Welsh Government); school-to-school working; inspiring leadership; and inclusivity (ensuring that the curriculum developed is a curriculum for all).

Successful Futures also recommended Wales adopt the principle of subsidiarity to encourage local ownership and responsibility of curriculum development. The Pioneer School Model was developed in response to this recommendation, and curriculum reform has thus been a collaborative process between Welsh Government, regional education consortia and practitioners from a network of Pioneer Schools. Their work involved:

- Development of the new Curriculum and Assessment and Areas of Learning and Experience.
- Development of effective professional learning
- Development of a Digital Competence Framework.

In particular, Pioneer Schools trialled and evaluated different curriculum, assessment and professional learning approaches as part of the development process.⁹ The Pioneer Schools have become standard bearers in all of the regional education consortia of developing and integrating whole school approaches to quality professional learning. In 2018, these Pioneer Schools became Lead Enquiry Schools for the National Professional Enquiry Project (NPEP). NPEP is further explained in section 4.3.

The latest national strategy for the sector, Education in Wales: Our National Mission 2017-21¹⁰, has been designed and implemented in light of these reviews. The strategy envisions that the teaching profession will be 'high-quality, collaborative and driven by a deep understanding of pedagogy and subject knowledge'.

The strategy also proposes career-long engagement with professional learning to support practitioners being 'research-engaged, well informed and learning from excellence at local, national and international levels.' School leaders are required to take a central role in this process and 'ensure that every teacher can improve through effective collaboration, innovation, professional learning and opportunities to provide professional leadership to others.'

⁶ Donaldson, G. (2015) *Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales* <http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150225-successful-futures-en.pdf>

⁷ Welsh Government (2015) *Qualified for Life: A Curriculum for Wales, A Curriculum for Life*

⁸ Welsh Government (2015) *A curriculum for Wales – a curriculum for life* <http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/151021-a-curriculum-for-wales-a-curriculum-for-life-en.pdf>

⁹ Welsh Government (2018) Formative evaluation of the Pioneer School model: <https://gov.wales/formative-evaluation-pioneer-school-model>

¹⁰ Welsh Government (2017a) 'Education in Wales: Our national mission Action plan 2017-21'

The new Curriculum for Wales – and associated guidance – was published in January 2020.¹¹ Amongst other curriculum and assessment requirements, it sets out the Areas of Learning and Experience (and associated ‘what matters’ statements for each AoLE), which are:

- Expressive Arts;
- Health and Well-being;
- Humanities;
- Languages, Literacy and Communication;
- Mathematics and Numeracy; and
- Science and Technology.

The new curriculum also centres on the four purposes of the new curriculum, identified in *Successful Futures*. The purposes set out the vision that all children and young people in Wales will be:

- Ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives
- Enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work
- Ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world
- Healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

Schools will be required to implement their curriculum from September 2022 for learners up to and including Year 7. Secondary schools will then be expected to roll out their curricula on a year-by-year basis, with Year 8 in September 2023 through to Year 11 in September 2026.

Stakeholders from across the education sector consulted for this study are generally very positive about the recent reform agenda in Wales, which is seen as having been underpinned by evidence, research and international good practice. Welsh Government is considered to have encouraged an approach that gives all education stakeholders and practitioners buy-in to the programme of change, and organisations report that the national mission is becoming integrated into their own business and strategic plans. Consistency, coherence and partnerships are reported to have led to good levels of understanding of roles and responsibilities that the changes have brought.

“The key document was Furlong’s ITE Review with its linking of CPL to curriculum design and making the classroom teacher a researcher who is engaged in continual learning.” Stakeholder

2.1.3 Teacher workforce

In January 2020, there were 25,844 qualified teachers in maintained schools across Wales.¹² The average pupil teacher ratio was 22.0 in primary schools, 17.7 in middle schools, 17.2 in secondary and 6.9 in special schools.¹³

¹¹ <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/introduction/>

¹² Welsh Government (July 2020). Schools’ Census Results: as at January 2020
<https://gov.wales/schools-census-results>

¹³ *ibid*

The teacher workforce in Wales is made up of a predominately female workforce, with Education Workforce Council (EWC) data on registrant numbers in 2020 showing that three quarters of teachers registered with EWC were female. Furthermore, EWC 2020 registrant data shows the broad range in age of the teacher workforce in Wales and the number of years since gaining QTS.

Age of school teachers registered with EWC

Age	Number of school teachers	Percentage of school teachers
Under 25	1,265	3.6
25 to 29	4,349	12.4
30 to 34	5,059	14.4
35 to 39	5,331	15.2
40 to 44	5,205	14.8
45 to 49	5,254	14.9
50 to 54	4,005	11.4
55 to 59	2,667	7.6
60 to 64	1,424	4.0
65 +	612	1.7
Total	35,171	100

Source: EWC Annual education workforce statistics for Wales 2020

Number of school teachers registered with EWC by years since QTS

Years since QTS	Number of school teachers	Percentage of school teachers
0 to 5	6,809	19.4
6 to 10	5,498	15.6
11 to 15	5,968	17.0
16 to 20	5,665	16.1
21 to 25	4,988	14.2
26+	6,243	17.8
Total	35,171	100

Source: EWC Annual education workforce statistics for Wales 2020

In January 2020 there were 3,504 school leaders working in maintained schools. Of these, 1,300 were head teachers, 121 were acting head teachers, 1,127 were deputy head teachers and 956 were assistant head teachers.¹⁴

In early 2020, there were 23,796 full-time equivalent support staff in maintained schools in Wales, up from 23,251 in 2019 (Schools' Census Results, 2020). Support staff are not required to hold specific qualifications but are required to be registered with the EWC (since April 2016). Support staff represent about half the school workforce. Around half of support staff are general teaching assistants (TAs), around two-in-ten are teaching assistants who

¹⁴ StatsWales (2020). Full-time equivalent teachers by Assembly constituency and category. Welsh Government. <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Education-and-Skills/Schools-and-Teachers/teachers-and-support-staff/School-Staff/fteteachers-by-assemblyconstituency-category>

support pupils with special educational needs, and the rest are employed in a variety of roles such as special needs support staff, higher level TAs and administrative staff.¹⁵

2.1.4 ITE enrolment, teacher recruitment, retention and shortages

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) course enrolment has generally decreased in recent years from 2,695 students on ITE courses in 2010/11 to 1,530 students in 2018/19. The number of ITE students training at secondary level has seen the largest decrease since 2010/11 (down from 1,115 in 2010/11 to 515 in 2018/19) compared with numbers training at primary level (down from 1,580 in 2010/11 to 1,015 in 2017/18).¹⁶

Across all schools in Wales, the percentage of advertised teaching posts filled has slightly decreased over recent years, from 96.5% of advertised positions filled in 2007 to 91.7% filled in 2019. This decrease in filled posts has been more significant for secondary teaching (90.0% of positions were filled in 2019) posted compared with primary (94.0% of positions were filled in 2019).¹⁷

Teacher retention has stabilised in recent years, with the number of teachers leaving the profession generally reducing. In 2019, 612 teachers left the profession (351 primary and 261 secondary teachers).¹⁸

A range of new incentives to aid teacher recruitment and further improve teacher retention rates have been introduced through *Investing in Excellence*, Welsh Government's Workforce Development Plan 2019 – 21¹⁹, which contains a range of commitments including:

- establishing a new digital platform promoting teaching by May 2020 and to have the enhanced Discover Teaching platform fully operational by February 2021;
- developing a strategic approach in partnership with EWC to teacher trainee recruitment including a review of - Teacher Planning and Supply Model (TPSM), the targets, and capped levels of recruitment;

¹⁵ StatsWales (2020) Support staff by local authority, region and category <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Education-and-Skills/Schools-and-Teachers/teachers-and-support-staff/School-Staff/supportstaff-by-localauthorityregion-category>

¹⁶ StatsWales (2020), Students on ITE courses in Wales, as at 1 December, by degree type and year: <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Education-and-Skills/Post-16-Education-and-Training/Higher-Education/Initial-Teacher-Training-ITT/students-in-Wales/studentsonitecoursesinwalesasat1december-by-degreetype-year>

¹⁷ StatsWales (2020). Teacher recruitment: number of posts advertised by subject and year. Welsh Government. <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Education-and-Skills/Schools-and-Teachers/teachers-and-support-staff/pupil-Level-annual-school-census/Teacher-Recruitment-and-Retention/teacherrecruitmentposts-by-subject-year> and StatsWales (2020), Teacher recruitment: number of posts where an appointment was made by subject and year. Welsh Government. <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Education-and-Skills/Schools-and-Teachers/teachers-and-support-staff/pupil-Level-annual-school-census/Teacher-Recruitment-and-Retention/teacherrecruitmentappointments-by-subject-year>

¹⁸ StatsWales (2020). Teacher retention: teachers who left the profession by subject and number of years experience. Welsh Government. <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Education-and-Skills/Schools-and-Teachers/teachers-and-support-staff/pupil-Level-annual-school-census/Teacher-Recruitment-and-Retention/teacherretentionyears-by-subject-destination>

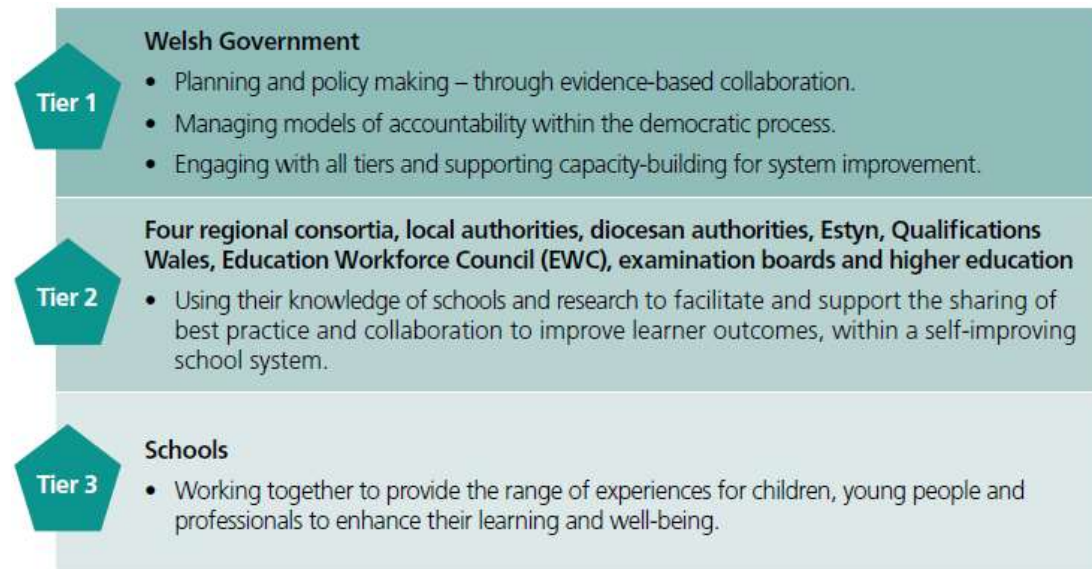
¹⁹ Investing in Excellence, our national workforce development plan 2019-21 (2019) <https://gov.wales/workforce-development-plan-2019-to-2021>

- introducing revised incentives schemes to be in place by January 2020 for use in academic year 2020–21, and monitoring their impact; (NB the introduction of revised incentives has been delayed for a year and guidance on incentives for 2021/22 will be issued soon);
- working with partners to submit accreditation documentation to the EWC for the employment-based scheme (EBS) in secondary science by October 2019, with the first cohort in place by spring 2020;
- working with partners to deliver the first cohorts of part-time PGCE. This will be launched and piloted by the Open University from October 2020 and is made up of two elements – the EBS and the part-time PGCE programme. These aim to provide alternative routes into teaching and promote diversity and inclusivity within the teaching profession and are targeted areas to help address teaching shortages.

2.2 Stakeholders and responsibilities for CPL

The Welsh education system comprises a three-tier model and a range of key stakeholders take responsibility for the design, delivery and monitoring of education in Wales. Figure 1 presents an overview of this model.

Figure 1. Overview of the Welsh education system three-tier model



Source: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/education-in-wales-our-national-mission.pdf>

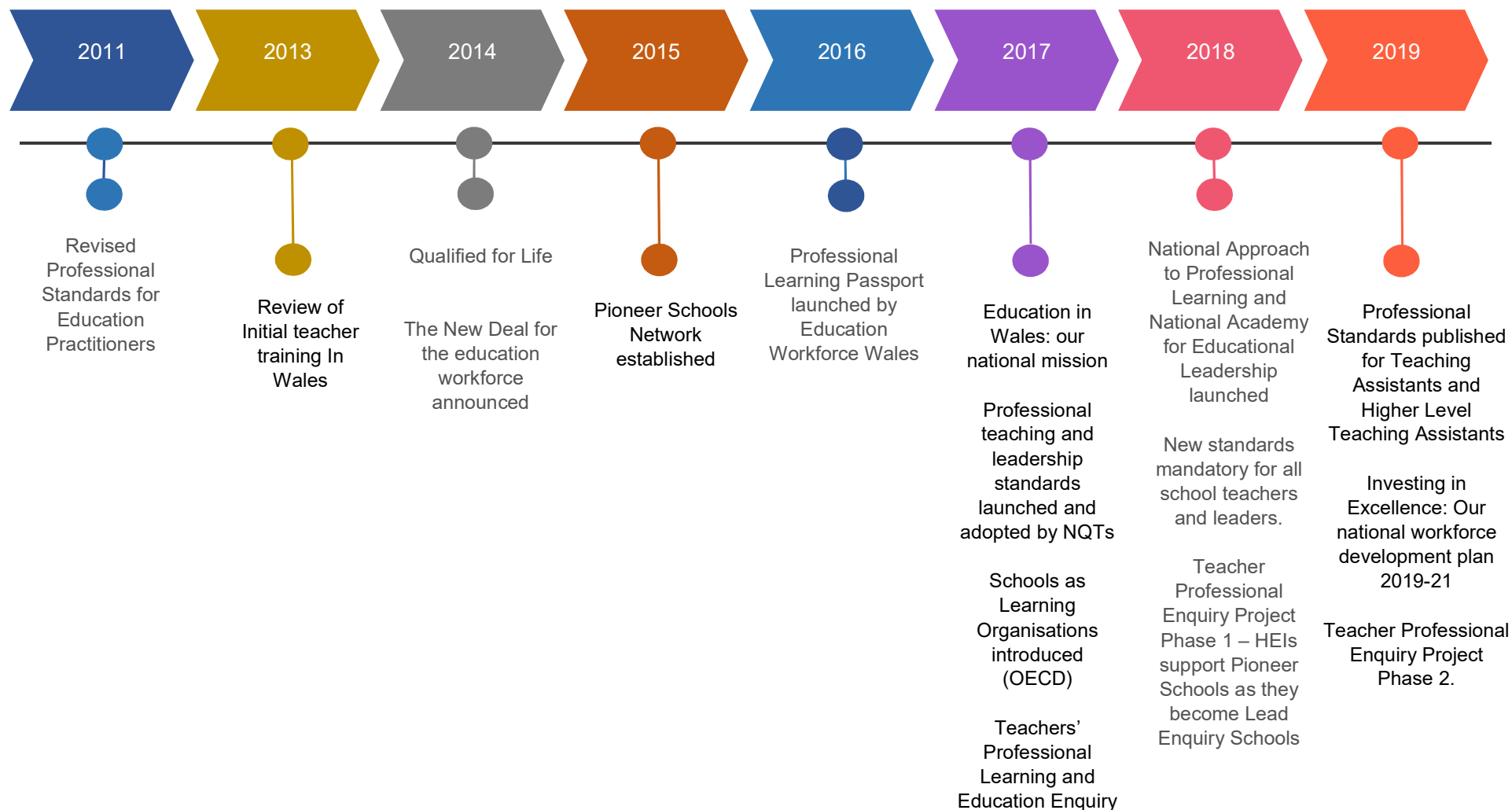
Tier 1 comprises Welsh Government, responsible for planning and policy making; **Tier 2** comprises the four regional education consortia (REC), local authorities, diocesan authorities, Estyn, Qualifications Wales, the National Academy for Educational Leadership, the Education Workforce Council (EWC), examination boards and higher education institutions. Their role is to use their knowledge of schools and research to facilitate and support the sharing of best practice and collaboration to improve learner outcomes, within a self-improving school system. **Tier 3** consists of schools, primary and secondary, working together to provide the range of experiences for children, young people and professionals to enhance their learning and well-being.

2.3 Key objectives and initiatives related to teachers' CPL

Current reforms within the education system in Wales represent a fundamental shift in the expectations of the teaching workforce. A number of policy initiatives have been introduced to support schools to develop a culture centred around professional learning, including the National Approach to Professional Learning (NAPL, see section 3.2 for more details), Schools as Learning Organisations (SLOs, more details presented later in this section), the new professional standards (further detailed in section 6.1) and performance management arrangements (also section 6.1).

These policy initiatives aim to support new approaches to professional learning and to widen access to CPL opportunities. Figure 2 provides an overview of key developments and milestones that are relevant to teachers' professional learning in Wales. More detail relating to key developments is presented in the table in the Annex.

Figure 2. Teachers' Professional Learning in Wales: Key developments and milestones



The strategic education plan, Education in Wales: Our National Mission (2017–2021)²⁰, presents Wales’ national vision for education, building in four key enabling objectives required to successfully implement the new transformational curriculum:

- Developing a high-quality education profession.
- Inspirational leaders working collaboratively to raise standards.
- Strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being.
- Robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements supporting a self-improving system.

Recognising that professional learning is imperative to developing a high-quality education profession, the plan outlines the key priorities for professional learning.

Ensuring that teachers are better able to plan around the new curriculum being introduced from 2020 onwards has been a key objective that Welsh Government and all other stakeholders have been aiming to achieve through CPL. Progress to date associated with CPL includes:

- establishing the Education Workforce Council (EWC), the independent regulator for the education workforce in Wales;
- establish the new National Academy for Educational Leadership, which aims to identify, support and inspire leaders across the entire system;
- launching the National Approach to Professional Learning (NAPL);
- introducing of the new Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership;
- working within higher education partners and schools to plan for transformation of ITE;
- establishing the four regional consortia, which focus on school improvement through collaborative working; and
- creating Hwb, an online learning platform for teaching practitioners across Wales.

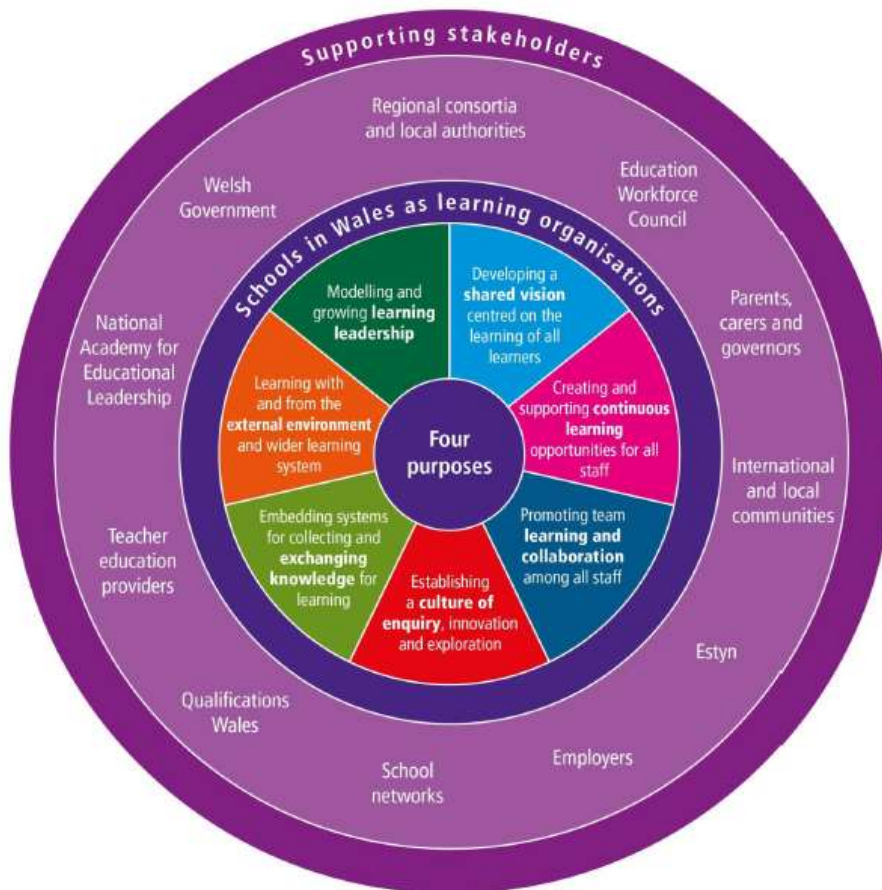
A key element of Welsh Government’s strategic focus has been to develop all schools as learning organisations (SLOs) in support of the ongoing curriculum reform. Schools as Learning Organisations²¹ sets out the aspirations for the future of CPL as part of this process and envisaged a system where each teacher has career-long support with their professional development, the aim being to improve learning and teaching.

The SLO model in Wales focuses its efforts on the seven dimensions proposed by the OECD guidelines for making schools a learning organisation. This model includes the promotion of mentoring, continuous professional development and a culture of enquiry, exploration and innovation.

Figure 3. Schools and Learning Organisations

²⁰ Welsh Government (2017b) ‘Education in Wales: Our national mission Action plan 2017-21’

²¹ <https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/schools-as-learning-organisations/>



Source: <https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/f87e720f-8568-4a60-9383-55e20b9a1bb7/schools-in-wales-as-learning-organisations.pdf>

A 2018 rapid assessment undertaken by the OECD²² outlined that the ‘majority of schools in Wales seem well on their way towards developing as learning organisations’ however it is also noted a considerable proportion of schools were still ‘far removed from realising this objective.’ The assessment noted that schools appear to be progressing well on the SLO dimensions “promoting team learning and collaboration among all staff” and “embedding systems for collecting and exchanging knowledge and learning”.

Two dimensions were nonetheless highlighted by OECD as being less well developed, namely ‘developing a shared vision centred on the learning of all students’ and ‘establishing a culture of enquiry, innovation and exploration.’ Secondary schools were reported as finding it more challenging to develop as learning organisations – with structures, leadership practices and limited collaboration within subject areas and departments believed to be factors in this - and it was considered therefore that ‘more critical reflections are needed for deep learning and sustained progress to take place.’

To address these challenges Welsh Government has introduced a range of initiatives such as ‘Talk Pedagogy, Think Learning’, the National strategy for educational research and enquiry (NSERE) and the National Professional Enquiry Project (NPEP), all of which are outlined in section 4.3. Alongside encouraging schools to adopt the SLO model, there have

²² <https://www.oecd.org/education/Developing-Schools-as-Learning-Organisations-in-Wales-Highlights.pdf>

been further developments across the education system concerning the model. The Regional Education Consortia, other middle tier partners, and the Welsh Government Education Directorate have been working with the Learning Organisation model (and specifically developed LO surveys) towards becoming better learning organisations.

CPL is considered by stakeholders consulted for this study to be '*a crucial and integral part*' of ensuring sustained progress to implementing the reforms and delivering the quality of education envisaged through the reform process. Stakeholders noted a level of consistency across new Welsh Government policy initiatives and good levels of partnership between government, RECs, local authorities and schools along with other stakeholders such as Estyn. One stakeholder commented, '*there is a lot more connectivity and a more coherent understanding of the reforms now – everyone has clear roles and responsibilities.*'

Stakeholders also noted that the reforms and new programmes have been defined by a collaborative, co-construction approach involving all levels of the education sector. This has taken place through reviews and consultations to influence policy design with the goal of promoting a more holistic approach to education in Wales. For stakeholders it has been important that this process of reform has been based on evidence and research, thereby further underpinning policy development. Curriculum change is acknowledged as a key driver in this reform and CPL as a vital part of enabling this change, linking to the school improvement agenda, equity of opportunity and long-term planning.

3. Motivations: What shapes teachers' motivations to engage in CPL

This section focuses on the factors that shape teachers' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to engage in CPL. It examines the requirements for teachers to engage in CPL and who sets and monitors them alongside systems of incentives for teachers and the stakeholders that support these. It also looks at some of the challenges and concerns regarding teachers' awareness of, and engagement with, CPL.

3.1 Requirements for teachers' engagement in CPL

In order to meet the demands that the forthcoming curriculum changes will bring, Welsh Government considers it essential that the teaching workforce receives professional learning opportunities while creating a culture of personal development. In order to achieve this commitment, the national strategy states that the Welsh Government will *'support teachers in Wales to be lifelong professional learners that reflect on and enhance their own practice to motivate and inspire children and young people'*.²³ It also commits to developing professional standards for *'support staff that can enable them to improve their skills, commit to professional learning and facilitate clearer pathways to the role of higher-level teaching assistant'*.²⁴

All teachers currently have a professional duty to participate in arrangements for their continuing professional learning throughout their careers. This requirement has most recently been codified through the introduction of the new Professional Standards (2017)²⁵ (further detailed in section 6.1). The standards were developed in partnership with the profession and cover essential elements of pedagogy, collaboration, leadership, innovation and professional learning, outlining that *'the teacher is a professional learner and commits to continuous engagement in career long development, collaboration and innovation.'*

The School Teachers Pay and Conditions' Document (STPCD) 2018²⁶ sets out a number of specific professional duties which teachers may be required to undertake, including professional development. In-service Training (INSET) days are one such example in Wales and five days annually are set aside for training and professional development - with teachers in schools and pupils absent – focusing on elements such numeracy and literacy work.

The statutory conditions of service for teachers was changed in July 2019²⁷ when Welsh Government announced an additional in-service training (INSET) day for schools in Wales for each of the next three years, with the first additional day planned for summer 2020. The additional day is intended to support schools and provide them with further resources,

²³ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/education-in-wales-our-national-mission.pdf>

²⁴ Ibid. p.25

²⁵ <https://hwb.gov.wales/storage/19bc948b-8a3f-41e0-944a-7bf2cadf7d18/professional-standards-for-teaching-and-leadership-interactive-pdf-for-pc.pdf>

²⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-teachers-pay-and-conditions>

²⁷ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-10/school-teachers-pay-and-conditions-wales-document-2019-and-guidance-on-school-teachers-pay-and-conditions.pdf>

information and guidance as they prepare for the new curriculum. INSET days will now form part of the National Approach to Professional Learning (NAPL), which is explained in more detail in section 3.2 below.

Professional conduct is governed by the EWC's Code of Professional Conduct and Practice (2019), a revised version of which came into force in September 2019²⁸. This followed a consultation with stakeholders across the education sector with regards to its purpose, scope and status and which highlighted ongoing concerns about limited access to CPL and the costs associated with it.²⁹ The Code sets out the standards expected of those registered with EWC and is intended to support and guide their behaviours and judgements as professionals working in education and training roles in Wales.

In following the Code, registrants commit to upholding the five key principles:

- Personal and Professional Responsibility
- Professional Integrity
- Collaborative Working
- Professional Knowledge and Understanding
- Professional Learning

With regards to professional learning, registrants are required demonstrate a shared commitment to their continuing professional learning by reflecting upon and evaluating their practice, keeping their professional knowledge and skills up to date and taking steps to improve their practice where necessary.

In Education in Wales: Our National Mission 2017-21, Welsh Government committed to '*develop a new made-in-Wales pay and conditions framework, enshrining a national approach to professional learning and standards, and the freedom for teachers to use their professionalism and knowledge*'. Welsh Government subsequently took responsibility for teachers' pay and conditions in September 2018 and Welsh Ministers determined changes to teachers' pay and conditions for Wales for the first time from September 2019 as part of increased devolution of powers through the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions (Wales) Document 2019³⁰.

This document outlines the potential for payment for teachers who undertake professional learning outside the school day. It also outlines the expectation for head teachers to '*promote the participation of staff in relevant continuing professional development*' and '*participate in arrangements for their own further training and professional development*'. Similarly, teachers are expected to contribute to '*the professional development of other teachers and support staff*' and '*participate in arrangements for their own further training and professional development*'.

²⁸ Code of professional conduct and practice for registrants with the Education Workforce Council (EWC) 2019 <https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/fitness-to-practise/code-of-professional-conduct-and-practice-pdf>

²⁹ A revised Code of Professional Conduct and Practice for Registrants with the Education Workforce Council (EWC) Consultation Report 2019. <https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/fitness-to-practise/code-of-professional-conduct-and-practice-pdf>

³⁰ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-10/school-teachers-pay-and-conditions-wales-document-2019-and-guidance-on-school-teachers-pay-and-conditions.pdf>

3.2 Incentives for teachers' engagement in CPL

Welsh Government's *'Investing in an excellent workforce'*³¹ provided an initial £24 million investment in CPL (rising to £31 million by the end of 2021) which aims to give schools *'the time and resources they need for professional learning and to help them plan for the new curriculum.'* This investment is the largest in CPL since devolution and is targeted to support the development of a robust approach to professional learning, ensuring cover for staff to be released to engage in professional learning and seeking to minimise disruption to learners.

This reiterates the commitment contained within Welsh Government guidance³², which recommends that *'in determining a school's approach to the professional development of its staff, consideration should be given to adopting strategies that minimise the negative impact of teachers' absence from the classroom on learner progress.'*

Regional consortia, higher education institutions (particularly through their provision of ITE and the new masters in educational practice for early career practitioners), local authorities and the National Academy for Education Leadership (NAEL) are all considered to have important roles to play in developing and promoting the professional learning offer. These stakeholders are also integral to helping to incentivise practitioners to engage and sustain their professional learning through their career.

'Leadership is key to access and investing in a culture of CPL so upskilling head teachers is crucial. They are the leaders of learning and their job is to help empower other staff to engage.' **Stakeholder**

At an individual school level, head teachers and leadership teams are the drivers of embedding the national approach through establishing professional learning cultures within their schools and supporting staff engagement. The aim is to provide teachers with the opportunities and confidence to direct more of their own learning to suit their needs, lifestyles and preferred ways of learning. At an individual school level, schools decide for themselves how much of their own budgets to allocate to CPL. This is based on their specific areas for development as set out in their School Development Plan (SDP).

The national approach to professional learning (NAPL)³³ was launched in 2018, creating a professional learning vision to complement and integrate with the evolving education system in Wales. It sets out the entitlement of all educational practitioners to professional learning provision and support and aligns with other key features of the reform process such as the new professional standards, the SLO approach and the professional learning model. This is designed to support an inter-connected approach to CPL and outlines a range of elements grouped into 3 different contexts; the school context, the regional context and the national context, all detailed below.

³¹ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-02/investing-in-an-excellent-workforce.pdf>

³² Welsh Government School Development Plans (2014). <https://gov.wales/school-development-plans>

³³ National Approach to Professional Learning (2018) <https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/national-approach-to-professional-learning>

Figure 4. National approach to professional learning (NAPL)



Source: <https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/f61fe491-7dc6-42ec-8247-d176ea4aea96/8-inter-connected-elements-of-the-national-approach.pdf>

The **School context** includes the nature of the school cohort and community; the challenges each school faces; and school-level skills and expertise. It includes three elements:

1. individual professional learning journey
2. schools as learning organisations (SLOs - see section 2.3)
3. professional learning blend. The professional learning blend looks at a balance of four approaches to maximise and incentivise practitioner CPL, namely instructional or collaborative learning, online learning, practice-based learning and working with a coach

The **National context** includes the requirements of the new curriculum and assessment, evaluation and accountability. This is in the wider policy context of the drive towards equity and equality in the Welsh education system, addressing the different educational needs of specific groups along with their wellbeing. It also links to wider Welsh Government strategies relating to tackling poverty and the Welsh language. It includes two elements:

1. collaborative networks
2. Professional Teaching and Leadership Standards.

The **Regional context** includes priorities defined by the regional education consortia and their local authorities (LAs). It includes three elements:

1. pedagogy for professional learning
2. professional learning offer
3. accreditation / recognition.

The NAPL is funded at school level via a professional learning grant which can be used flexibly to allow, and thus incentivise, schools to work together in ways that suit their own circumstances and needs regarding developing professional learning opportunities for their staff. Examples of how the funding can be used include the following:

- Releasing staff to be involved in collaborative professional learning and collaborative planning, whilst providing cover.
- Releasing staff to undertake critical enquiry to investigate the implications of the new curriculum for their own teaching and assessment practice.
- Creating roles and posts dedicated to supporting teaching staff, departments and whole schools through critical enquiry, change management and SLO activities.
- Developing the role of professional learning coach at a school or cluster level.

Another incentive for schools to continually evaluate and improve the quality of their teachers' professional development is that this is one of the key aspects of the Estyn school inspection process. Within the 'Leadership and management' inspection area in the Common Inspection Framework³⁴, professional learning is assessed. This area considers the extent to which staff are encouraged and effectively participate in professional learning opportunities and the appraisal and performance management process.

Teacher engagement in professional learning is also encouraged at a school level through School Development Plans (SDP). The Education (School Development Plans) (Wales) Regulations 2014³⁵ stipulates that all maintained schools must have a three-year, rolling development plan. Plans must set out how schools will achieve their targets in relation to their priorities, how they will use the resources available and how they intend to develop their staff in order to meet these priorities and targets. Consequently, teachers' professional development is planned for, and monitored, in the context of the school's SDP.

In addition to SDPs, schools are encouraged to support the professional development of their teachers through the requirements of the School Teacher Appraisal (Wales) Regulations 2011³⁶, which state that schools must have a performance management policy, outlining how individual teachers' progress towards their development targets is monitored.

Under the regulations teachers must keep a practice, review and development (PRD) record which is regularly updated to inform the performance management cycle. Teachers must use this record to evidence their professional development experiences and evaluate the impact of these experiences on their teaching practice and the outcomes for learners. The required performance management/appraisal process is further detailed in section 6.1.

³⁴ <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/inspection/inspection-explained/common-inspection-framework>

³⁵ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2014/2677/contents/made>

³⁶ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2011/2940/contents/made>

In addition to PRD records, all teachers with qualified teacher status (QTS) who are registered with the Education Workforce Council (EWC) also have a Professional Learning Passport (PLP), which they can use to record their professional learning. Though the PLP, users are given access to EBSCO³⁷, an online portal which provides access to academic journals and research relating to education and pedagogy.

A range of other open source repositories such as Cadair, DSpace and Cronfa, administered by individual Welsh HE institutions are also promoted. These resources aim to encourage teachers to access other learning materials and to undertake research led professional enquiry. The PLP is further explained in section 6.1.

3.3 Awareness of CPL opportunities

CPL is considered key to enabling teachers to develop their practice throughout their teaching career. However, according to the National Education Workforce Survey³⁸ undertaken by the Education and Workforce Council, when asked how they thought their career would change in the next three years, only 47.3% of teachers indicated that they would continue to develop their practice. This suggests either a lack of awareness of opportunities to undertake CPL or that there are barriers to teachers accessing CPL, thus preventing teachers from developing their practice. These barriers to accessing CPL opportunities are discussed further in section 4.2.

Not all teachers may recognise the importance of CPL in supporting and improving teaching practice. Again, according to the 2017 Workforce Survey when asked what would benefit them most in their role as a professional if they had more time to spend on it, only 16.3% of teachers selected undertaking professional development. However, 41.8% of teachers also noted that having more time to spend on curriculum review, developing schemes of work and researching new topics would benefit them most in their role. These themes are closely linked to the development of CPL opportunities, namely the additional INSET day outlined previously and the focus on research enquiry as a foundation of professional learning.

For stakeholders, the reform process and the necessity to prepare for the introduction of the new curriculum means there is now more of a focus on accountability and encouraging teachers to embrace their right to CPL that suits their individual professional needs. Stakeholders considered that incentivising teachers through linking enhanced professional skills and knowledge to career progression, additional qualifications (e.g. further postgraduate study) and pay grades. It was felt that this could further encourage teachers to take responsibility for identifying their own CPL and mapping out their professional learning journeys.

Stakeholders also noted that teachers at different stages of their professional development have different skills needs and different motivations to engage with professional learning. They considered that CPL provision should therefore be flexible and relevant to reflect these specific needs, for example newly qualified teachers, mid-career and those looking to move into leadership positions.

³⁷ <https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/professional-development/research-library.html>

³⁸ Education Workforce Council (April 2017). National Education Workforce Survey: Research Report. <https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/documents/research-and-statistics/625-national-education-workforce-survey-april-2017.html>

“If CPL is seen as an add on then teachers won’t engage, it has to become part and parcel of a teacher’s professional life. Teachers need to have confidence about the learning and the teaching that is required for the new curriculum and CPL is essential for this.” **Stakeholder**

4. Access: How accessible is CPL for teachers?

This section focuses on teachers' entitlements and the funding of CPL activities as well as barriers and constraints that prevent teachers and schools from accessing diverse and high-quality professional learning opportunities. It also considers the policies and support aimed at addressing these barriers and widening participation in CPL.

4.1 Access, entitlements and funding of CPL activities

In 2015, the 'New Deal for the Education Workforce'³⁹ was launched, under which the Welsh Government committed to offering all teachers a '*structured entitlement to world class professional learning opportunities*.' The New Deal focused specifically on enabling schools and practitioners to identify priorities for professional learning and leadership development, target resources and plan effective implementation, with the aim of enhancing CPL engagement and helping the teaching profession prepare for the delivery of a new curriculum for Wales.

The New Deal committed Welsh Government to work in partnership with the four regional education consortia, schools and other providers and stakeholders to ensure that 'there are high quality programmes, development opportunities and support available for schools and practitioners to enable the career long development of pedagogy and leadership.'⁴⁰ The New Deal proposed career long development pathways to provide greater ownership and responsibility for individual professional learning and opportunities for school to school and peer to peer professional learning. The New Deal was subsequently absorbed within the new National Approach to Professional Learning.

Welsh Government also subsequently published its workforce development plan 2019–21⁴¹. The plan aims to support more effective workforce planning systems to ensure sufficient numbers of highly skilled teachers and a profession that is '*high-quality, collaborative, research-engaged, and learning from excellence at local, regional, national and international levels*.' The plan envisages that schools will be led by leaders who will ensure that teachers can improve through '*effective collaboration, innovation, professional learning and opportunities to provide professional leadership to others*.'

As with other recent policy, the national plan and the actions arising from it have been co-constructed with schools, Estyn, local government and regional consortia, and has been based on international research and OECD recommendations. The new arrangements for workforce development aim to align with, and help support the realisation of, the new Curriculum for Wales 2022 and the associated reforms around leadership, professional learning, ALN, and aspirations in the Cymraeg 2050 Strategy⁴² to develop a million Welsh speakers.

³⁹ New Deal for the education workforce (2015). <https://gov.wales/written-statement-new-deal-education-workforce>

⁴⁰ <https://gov.wales/written-statement-new-deal-education-workforce>

⁴¹ Investing in Excellence: Our national workforce development plan 2019–21 (2019) <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-11/investing-in-excellence-our-national-workforce-development-plan-2019-21.pdf>

⁴² <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-12/cymraeg-2050-welsh-language-strategy.pdf>

As part of its approach to ensure a system-wide engagement with preparation and awareness of the implications of the new curriculum, Welsh Government conducted a consultation with regards to the development of Additional National Professional Learning INSET days⁴³. Consultation respondents emphasised that additional INSET days should be considered *'as part of a wider Professional Learning journey' and that teachers will need a 'comprehensive programme of professional learning and planning opportunities, which will necessitate further changes to existing INSET days, PPA time, cluster working and regional support.'*

This consultation followed on from a report on Teachers' Professional Learning and Education by the Children, Young People and Education (CYPE) Committee⁴⁴. The report found that the *'education workforce is not currently prepared for the implementation of the new curriculum.'* The committee recommended that Welsh Government should explore how to better use INSET days, with time embedded for professional reflection for teachers; along with promoting greater use of peer to peer learning and establishing a recognised accreditation system that ensures the quality of professional development on offer. These recommendations were all accepted by the Cabinet Secretary.

Welsh Government subsequently invited the National Academy for Educational Leadership to develop guidance to support schools to make the most effective use of INSET as part of their approach to professional learning. NAEL are currently developing the guidance, which will be launched in 2020 and entitled Leading Professional Learning⁴⁵. It is being developed by an editorial group, which includes school leaders and regional consortia representatives. The guidance will identify the key principles of effective approaches to leading professional learning and link these to examples of good practice that will inform how schools plan to lead and evaluate professional learning.

Welsh Government has funded a number of national initiatives to support teacher CPL. An enhanced £24m funding allocation for professional learning was made available over two years (2018/19 – 2019/20) to allow schools to prepare for the new curriculum. An additional £7m allocation will also be available during 20/21 to further support curriculum implementation. This £31 million is the largest investment in CPL since devolution and illustrates the commitment Welsh Government is making to support the education workforce to deliver the new curriculum.

These initiatives include Lead Enquiry Schools, the lead practitioner model and the Professional Learning Passport (PLP), detailed further in sections 5 and 6 of this report. Previously, Welsh Government funded a masters in Educational Practice (MEP) for NQTs⁴⁶ and further funding will be provided in 2021 to introduce a new masters for early career practitioners in partnership with Welsh HEIs, with the aim of addressing reported gaps in CPL at this stage of practitioners' career development.

⁴³ Welsh Government Consultation – summary of response Additional National Professional Learning INSET days 2019- 22 (2019) <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-07/summary-of-responses-additional-national-professional-learning-inset-days-2019-to-2022.pdf>

⁴⁴ <https://senedd.wales/laid%20documents/cr-ld11338/cr-ld11338-e.pdf>

⁴⁵ <https://nael.cymru/leading-professional-learning/>

⁴⁶ The MEP was a three-year masters programme, which covered areas of professional learning identified as key priorities for NQTs by the Welsh Government. The last cohort that entered the programme graduated in July 2018.

Much of the CPL funding from Welsh Government is distributed to the four regional consortia. The consortia use this funding to design and deliver their own local CPL support according to practitioner and school needs, as well as working together, and with other relevant stakeholders, to develop a cross-regional programme of professional learning. They also deliver a number of key national programmes such as the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) and the Higher Level Teaching Assistants programme (HLTA). This CPL is free for practitioners and more details relating to provision organised through the four regional consortia is presented in section 5.1.

4.2 Barriers to accessing CPL opportunities

The National Education Workforce Survey (April 2017)⁴⁷, asked teachers what they considered the main barriers stopping them accessing professional development were. The table below summarises the responses.

Barrier to CPL	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Conflict with your work / not enough time	2,888	56.5
Cost	3,516	68.7
Home, family, personal commitments	882	17.2
Lack of support from your employer/manager	831	16.2
The relevant professional development is not available or of sufficient quality	1,034	20.2
You do not have the required pre-requisites (e.g. qualifications, experience, seniority)	127	2.5
Your professional development does not form part of the school's current development plan (SDP)	782	15.3
No response	230	4.5
Other (please state)	213	4.2
Total	10,503	
Base - total number of respondents		5,115

Source: National Education Workforce Survey: Research Report (April 2017)

Access to CPL appears to be a barrier for many teachers in Wales. For example, when asked if they have had access to the professional development they needed in the last 12 months, 25.8% of school teaching responding to the National Education Workforce Survey (April 2017) said they had full access, a further 58.9% said they were partly able to access the professional development they needed and 13.9% said not at all.

As noted in the previous section, the Teachers' Professional Learning and Education inquiry led by the Children, Young People and Education Committee of the National

⁴⁷ Education Workforce Council (April 2017). National Education Workforce Survey: Research Report. <https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/documents/research-and-statistics/625-national-education-workforce-survey-april-2017.html>

Assembly for Wales⁴⁸ identified similar challenges and access to professional development was a recurring theme. The lack of such access was seen to be a factor in a number of issues facing the education sector, including the preparedness of teachers for the forthcoming changes to the curriculum and perceptions that high-quality professional development was not consistently available across the whole of Wales.

The Committee's own survey of education professionals indicated that a range of issues restricted teachers' ability to take up CPL opportunities. These included workload; costs; availability of supply teachers to cover; lack of awareness of training opportunities and accessibility of training locations.⁴⁹ Other issues identified by the inquiry include the links between performance management and professional learning. The report highlighted the importance of identifying professional learning opportunities in the performance management process, but also called *'to see teacher professional development valued in its own right and a tool for supporting teacher growth.'*

Stakeholders highlighted that teachers and schools in Wales experience a number of barriers which prevent them from accessing CPL opportunities. Two of the most enduring barriers for teachers and schools were considered to be *'time constraints'* and *'costs associated with undertaking CPL'*, with the financial situations in some schools seen to be affecting the development of sustainable provision. Stakeholders also outlined challenges around access to CPL with variations reported in the quality and availability of provision across Wales including concerns about a lack of Welsh medium provision and equitable access to CPL for teaching support staff and supply teachers. This is further examined in section 6.2.

'Time and money are always the key questions and always difficult. There is still a lack of clarity about how much is available to support professional learning and what element of funding is set aside for it.' **Stakeholder**

While welcoming the focus and scale of reform in the Welsh education system stakeholders nevertheless highlighted that the levels of change were potentially 'overwhelming' for some teachers and schools and that there were dangers of some disengaging from the process. This was particularly felt to be the case for 'struggling' schools, which may lack leadership to support their staff's engagement with CPL and may have other priorities with regards to meeting Estyn and regional consortia demands.

Stakeholders also expressed concern that this lack of leadership may lead to a widening of the divide between those who are focusing and currently leading on CPL and those who are not, leading to a lack of equity in terms of access to quality CPL. The importance of good leadership was again highlighted as being crucial to support school improvement agendas, making time for CPL to reflect new curriculum design and pedagogy, which is then disseminated to all staff. Without this top down influence within schools it was considered

⁴⁸ National Assembly for Wales Children, Young People and Education Committee (Dec 2017). Report on the Teachers' Professional Learning and Education inquiry <https://senedd.wales/laid%20documents/cr-ld11338/cr-ld11338-e.pdf>

⁴⁹ Ibid. p22

that the change required is less likely to follow and that these inequities will continue to grow.

“There needs to be that realisation that some schools are barely starting on their CPL journey, whereas others are fairly well advanced. And I think that’s a real challenge for providers; it’s where and how you it to ensure that over the next 18 months everybody is going to be prepared to deliver quality education from 2022.” Stakeholder

4.3 Policies and support to widen access to CPL opportunities

In *Improving Schools in Wales: An OECD Perspective (2018)*⁵⁰, the OECD noted the lack of options for career progression and professional development for the teaching workforce. It recommended that the Welsh Government ‘*raise the status of the profession and ensure quality continuous professional development at all career stages.*’ In response, Welsh Government has developed and formalised a national professional learning approach (NAPL) with a range of grants to support the release of practitioners (and provision of covering staff) to be involved in collaborative professional learning and collaborative planning – at a school level, and across clusters and networks.⁵¹

Further funding (over and above the £31 million outlined in section 3.2) has been made available by Welsh Government to incentivise staff to investigate the implications of the new curriculum for their own teaching and assessment practice through release for critical enquiry. NAPL funding is also creating new roles to supporting schools through critical enquiry, change management and schools as learning organisations (SLO) activities including development of school or cluster level professional learning coaches.

Examples have included schools using the grants to develop a whole school professional learning ethos, improve staff understanding of the new requirements around learning, teaching and assessment in the new curriculum, introduce new technologies and create Welsh language professional learning materials.

Recommendations from *Teaching: A valued profession*⁵² suggested that the professional learning of early career stage practitioners should be closely supported until the end of the fourth year of practitioners’ careers. In response to this, Welsh Government, through the National workforce development plan⁵³, proposes the development of an Early Career Support Package that prepares teachers to be lifelong learners and creates an understanding that professional learning is a career-long process and expectation.

⁵⁰ <http://www.oecd.org/education/Improving-schools-in-Wales.pdf>

⁵¹ <https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/national-approach-to-professional-learning#funding>

⁵² <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-09/teaching-a-valued-profession-report-of-the-independent-review.pdf>

⁵³ Investing in excellence: Our national workforce development plan 2019–21 (Welsh Government, 2019) <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-11/investing-in-excellence-our-national-workforce-development-plan-2019-21.pdf>

This again involves a partnership approach with regional consortia and HEIs to support teachers from induction to career year five through the development of a 'national induction pathway', of which the new early career masters programme outlined in section 4.1 is a key element.

Supply teachers are viewed as a key component of the education workforce and the national workforce development plan commits to sustaining '*a well-qualified, knowledgeable, professionally updated and respected temporary teaching workforce through professional learning.*'⁵⁴

A number of measures have been adopted to better support supply teachers, for example producing guidance to clarify roles and responsibilities for those involved in employing supply teachers. These measures have also included better access to professional learning and introducing personal Hwb accounts for supply teachers to support access to quality and relevant professional learning. Stakeholders highlighted, however, that there is still further work required to ensure that all supply staff across Wales can access CPL opportunities.

The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 (ALNET Act)⁵⁵ will be implemented from September 2021. The ALNET Act is part of the wider ALN transformation programme; a key component of which is knowledge and skills development for the education workforce through the ALN professional learning offer. This will enable teachers to provide effective support to learners with ALN in the classroom, as well as have easier access to specialist support, information and advice.

The ALN professional learning offer will comprise recognised and accredited learning. The recognised learning will be a discrete learning package available to practitioners via Hwb. The accredited learning will provide more in-depth assessed, supported and research-based learning with a focus on excellence in practice. This aims to address the issues regarding a lack of professional development opportunities for support staff and specialist teachers and ensure a sufficiently skilled workforce will contribute to the overall objectives of the ALN transformation programme.

A key challenge identified by previous reviews and stakeholders is that the current workload of the school workforce in Wales is one of the factors that prevents sustained engagement with professional learning. One initiative brought forward to consider workload issues impacting is the *Managing Workload and Reducing Bureaucracy Group* established in 2019. Amongst the four priority areas for the group are developing a 'Workload and Well-being Charter' including workload and well-being toolkits and training materials for the school workforce and carrying out an impact assessment with regards to addressing workload in policy development.

In terms of more locally-based activities across Wales £2.7m of additional funding has been allocated to support school-based cluster pilots within 15 local authorities to assist supply teachers (50 in over 100 schools) in their early years of teaching. This approach has focused on encouraging more flexible and innovative approaches to covering teacher absence when engaging in professional learning. Supply teachers are being supported in the same way as teachers while also ensuring that there is sufficient cover within schools to

⁵⁴ Ibid. p18

⁵⁵ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2018/2/contents/enacted>

help meet demands in areas such as ALN and Welsh-medium provision, again aiming to address gaps in access to professional learning.

As outlined in previous stakeholder comments, there are concerns that access to quality professional learning in rural areas is varied and not targeted to some of the specific challenges schools in these areas face. In response, Welsh Government published the Rural education Action Plan⁵⁶ in 2018, which includes a new Small and Rural Schools Grant for local authorities to encourage innovation, raise standards and support collaborative working, including stronger cluster-based working and pooling resources to employ specialist professional development activities.

In terms of addressing concerns about access, quality and availability of Welsh Language professional learning provision, Welsh Government is working with the regional consortia to build the baseline for the implementation of the action plan Welsh in education: Action plan 2017–21⁵⁷ and the Welsh Government's strategic priorities for the Welsh Language, as set out in Cymraeg 2050⁵⁸.

An example is the Sabbatical scheme, which offers periods of intensive study for teachers and teaching assistants to develop Welsh-language skills and to build confidence in bilingual and Welsh-medium teaching methodologies. An investment of £3.4m saw 233 practitioners receiving training through the scheme during 2018/19 including 104 practitioners who participated in the newly introduced yearlong sabbatical course. A Welsh-medium incentive Iaith Athrawon Yfory (IAY) is available for secondary PGCE student teachers who are training to teach all subject specialisms through the medium of Welsh or bilingually was launched in autumn 2018.

Alongside targeting support staff within mainstream and special schools, Welsh Government launched a Framework for action to support teachers and other support staff that are working in education otherwise than at school (EOTAS) settings and pupil referral units (PRUs). This was developed in response to feedback from those working in the sector which indicated that the lack of requirements on qualifications and curriculum can lead to missed opportunities for CPL similar to those offered to peers working in mainstream or special education.

As noted in section 2.2. Welsh Government has developed a range of initiatives to address challenges relating to supporting schools to develop as SLOs and establish a culture of enquiry, innovation and exploration. Talk Pedagogy, Think Learning⁵⁹. This initiative is developing as a space to support collaboration within and across schools in order to develop a shared understanding of learning within the context of the four purposes and the new curriculum. It aims to provide further opportunities for schools to progress on the SLO dimensions and for individuals in line with the Professional Standards and focus on '*sharing*

⁵⁶ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-10/rural-education-action-plan-1.pdf>

⁵⁷ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-02/welsh-in-education-action-plan-2017%E2%80%9321.pdf>

⁵⁸ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-12/cymraeg-2050-welsh-language-strategy.pdf>

⁵⁹ <https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/national-pedagogy-project>

thinking and reflection through discussion’ and ‘deepening understanding through research engagement and professional enquiry.

A further example of a specific project is The National Professional Enquiry Project (NPEP)⁶⁰. This is a partnership established in 2018 between Welsh Government, Regional Consortia, Cardiff Metropolitan University, the University of Wales Trinity St David (UWTSD), Bangor University and a national network of Lead Enquiry Schools (formerly Professional Learning Pioneer schools). Professional learning Pioneer Schools were renamed Lead Enquiry Schools as they are being supported by the HEIs to begin to develop their skills as professional enquirers across the six areas of learning and experience, curriculum making, pedagogy and professional learning. The project is now moving into phase 3, with scaling up of support and engagement across the system.

The Welsh Government’s national strategy for educational research and enquiry (NSERE)⁶¹ aims to ensure that research, enquiry and evidence play a meaningful role in the development of practice in all aspects of the education system. Participating practitioners are developing their ‘Teacher as Enquirer’ capacity, refining their enquiry skills as they become ‘teachers as close to practice researchers,’ and sharing enquiry outputs with the wider education system to support moves to the national approach to professional enquiry.

In addressing potential gaps and concerns regarding progress towards developing a culture of research enquiry within schools a pilot programme was launched by National Academy for Educational Leadership (NAEL) to further complement the NPEP approach. This pilot has been designed to support school leaders in Wales to encourage the effective use of research and enquiry within their organisations. NAEL is working with HEIs and regional consortia to refine the professional enquiry skills of participants through a consolidation and enrichment programme in advance of moving towards full curriculum implementation in 2022.

⁶⁰ <https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/national-professional-enquiry-project/>

⁶¹ <https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/national-professional-enquiry-project/national-strategy-for-educational-research-and-enquiry-nsere>

5. Provision: How and by whom is CPL provided

This section concerns the different formats in which professional learning opportunities are provided by a diverse range of actors and the way teachers engage in them. In addition to being recipients, teachers can be providers of CPL, both individually (e.g. as coaches, mentors and team teachers) and collectively (e.g. via networks, professional associations and unions).

5.1 Formats and providers of CPL activities

CPL activities for teachers in Wales are organised and offered by a range of providers including organisations such as the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC examining body), the regional education consortia, professional associations, Trade Unions and the commercial sector. Individual schools provide internal training sessions which leaders have a responsibility to organise, based around School Development Plans and identified needs of teachers through individual appraisals (see section 6.1). Other senior members of staff are also responsible for providing professional development guidance for their colleagues, which are usually identified during performance reviews.

In some cases, schools have appointed teachers as 'lead practitioners' with the responsibility of leading on the improvement of teachers teaching skills. These individuals may also provide support to other schools arranged through the school's regional consortium and, as outlined in section 4.3, specialist coaches and mentors have also been employed across Wales. School Business Managers also have a role in sourcing the CPL from the range of providers outlined above, including the commercial sector.

The four regional consortia are key providers of CPL, working with other relevant stakeholders such as local authorities to provide local CPL support, such as Professional Learning Hubs and Curriculum Hubs. Since 2016, the four regions have been working more collaboratively to establish a cross-regional programme of professional learning. Key aims for the consortia in this respect have been to establish a common definition for professional learning and a resulting framework and offer; working closely with stakeholders such as NAEL and EWC; and developing and delivering common provision for teachers and teaching assistants across the four regions.

Individual RECs also continue with their own provision of professional learning. Most activity has so far focused on supporting schools to understand the curriculum reform process by engaging with the development of the draft curriculum and on supporting senior school leaders in managing change. Estyn's 2018-19 annual report⁶² noted that each region has provided support for schools to prepare for curriculum reform by designing its own tools to measure and support engagement with curriculum reform. These tools are used to identify strengths in practice and priority areas for development.

Examples of one individual REC's approach includes provision such as Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) qualification, an Aspiring Leader Development Programme, a Middle Leadership Development Programme and participation in the National Professional

⁶²The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales 2018-2019 https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/Annual_Report_2018_2019_en.pdf

Qualification for Headship (NPQH). It also includes professional learning opportunities in literacy and numeracy in the primary, core subjects in the secondary, curriculum planning and well-being. Another REC has provided CPL sessions on understanding what career and learning progression looks like; principles, purposes and methodologies; and making meaningful connections with prior learning and with personal experiences.

WJEC offers a mix of free and paid for face to face and online training sessions and resources and opportunities for practitioners to meet and work with its team of teachers, subject officers, examiners or moderators. Examples of topics for CPL include understanding content and its assessment, reviewing of exemplar materials and marking practice, acquiring practical teaching and learning strategies, developing new resources, sharing practice and networking

Continuous professional learning is also based on the principles of schools as learning institutions (SLOs), responding to local needs and the most recent national strategies outlined in section 2.2. This allows for a range of approaches including specific off-site and distance-based professional learning, mentoring, and school-to-school collaboration within clusters or other types of networks.

A key online platform for CPL is the Professional Learning Passport (PLP). Hosted by the Education Workforce Council (EWC), the PLP is a digital tool to be used to support reflective practice and record active CPL engagement in line with the new Professional Standards (see section 6.1 for further details). A new visualisation tool, launched by EWC in September 2020, aims to help practitioners measure their progress and identify areas where further professional development is required. Another online platform is the Hwb website, which provides a range of resources relating to CPL for practitioners.

CPL opportunities are also provided by higher and further education institutions, as well as private companies and third sector organisations. Some of these more formal CPL opportunities, mainly those offered by academic institutions, are accredited programmes which lead to higher level awards including postgraduate certificate, postgraduate diploma, a master's or doctorate. As noted in section 3.2 these institutions also provide a range of online resources to support aspects of professional learning such as research enquiry and work closely with schools in partnerships such as NPEP.

The National Education Workforce Survey (April 2017)⁶³, asked teachers what professional development activities they had undertaken in the last 12 months. The table below summarises the responses. The most common types of CPL undertaken by school teachers were attending courses, workshops, conferences or seminars (undertaken by 76.8% of survey respondents); having colleagues observe respondent's teaching and giving feedback (73.1% of respondents); and respondents' demonstrating/sharing their best practice with others (59.1% of respondents).

⁶³ Education Workforce Council (April 2017). National Education Workforce Survey: Research Report. <https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/documents/research-and-statistics/625-national-education-workforce-survey-april-2017.html>

Type of CPL activities	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Acquired additional skills and knowledge as part of a new post or role	1,954	38.2
Attended courses, workshops, conferences, seminars (including e-learning)	3,929	76.8
Demonstrated/shared your best practice with others	3,023	59.1
Followed a national programme (e.g. Induction or NPQH)	446	8.7
Had colleagues observe your teaching and give you feedback	3,738	73.1
Made use of new technologies	2,490	48.7
Mentored or coached others	2,010	39.3
Observed colleagues' teaching or work shadowed them	2,364	46.2
Read publications, books, journals, articles (hard copy or online) or researched new developments	2,369	46.3
Received support from a mentor or coach	980	19.2
Studied for academic qualifications (e.g. a Masters degree)	536	10.5
Undertaken action research / enquiry	821	16.1
Undertaken collaborative learning outside of your school (including online such as Hwb networks)	1,263	24.7
Undertaken collaborative learning with colleagues in your school	1,678	32.8
Worked on something new (e.g. an initiative, project, activity, teaching a new subject/year group)	2,538	49.6
I have not undertaken any professional development in the last 12 months	211	4.1
No response	51	1.0
Other (please state)	82	1.6
Total	30,483	
Base - total number of respondents		5,115

Source: National Education Workforce Survey: Research Report (April 2017)

Since 2005 it has been a statutory requirement for all practitioners moving into headship in Wales to hold the Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). It is currently being revised to meet the new leadership standards and the changing needs of schools. This qualification forms part of approaches to develop innovative leadership development provision and is endorsed through National Academy for Educational Leadership. This includes work to consider the role of executive head teachers and new models of school leadership linked to the changing shape of school organisation including addressing the needs of small and rural schools and supporting leaders in federations and all-age schools.

5.2 Regulations concerning the market for and provision of CPL

The Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW)⁶⁴ is a national umbrella framework, which supports the recognition of qualifications across all levels of the

⁶⁴ <https://gov.wales/credit-and-qualifications-framework-cqfw>

education system. It comprises three pillars of learning: higher education (HE), regulated qualifications which include general and vocational qualifications, and Quality Assured Lifelong Learning (QALL).

The focus of the QALL pillar is to acknowledge learning provision from outside the HE and regulated qualifications pillar. It includes non-formal learning provision but does not include informal learning (learning by experience). The CQFW also allows for regulated qualifications to be obtained, in full or in part, through recognition of prior learning (RPL).

Qualifications Wales' *Standard Conditions of Recognition* set out the rules and regulations which awarding organisations and their qualifications must meet. Awarding bodies recognised by Qualifications Wales are able to offer regulated qualifications if they successfully meet these conditions.

6. Content: How are CPL contents selected and developed?

This section focuses on the process by which the contents of CPL are selected and developed and how various stakeholders are involved in this process. In particular, it considers how CPL contents are aligned to respond to needs identified or forecast at different levels of the system. This includes system-wide training needs (e.g. arising from curriculum reforms or changes in teacher standards), training needs identified by schools, as well as the personal learning needs identified by teachers themselves.

6.1 Identification of needs and development of CPL contents

Supporting teaching professionals to prepare for the introduction of the new curriculum in 2022 and ensure the readiness and engagement of all practitioners to engage with it will be a key feature of CPL going forward. The National Approach to Professional Learning (NAPL) and the associated investments outlined in previous sections are intended to create time within schools for professionals to develop and up-skill themselves, work collaboratively within and across schools and identify their CPL needs for the future.

There are currently a range of mechanisms used to support the identification of teachers' professional learning needs. For example, performance management and appraisals are a key tool to help address teachers' professional learning needs. Appraisals are expected to be conducted annually for all teachers and school leaders in Wales. The *School Teacher Appraisal (Wales) Regulations 2011*⁶⁵ stipulates the requirements, procedures and purpose of teachers' appraisals. An annual appraisal is a formal opportunity for both the teacher and appraiser to discuss performance, areas for improvement, support and professional development.⁶⁶

Of those teachers that responded to the National Education Workforce Survey (April 2017)⁶⁷, 62.7% said that their last performance management review included agreeing their professional development objectives for the next year; and 36% said it included reviewing and reflecting on the professional development they had undertaken. When asked how regularly they discuss the performance and professional development objectives set in their last performance management review with their appraiser, the largest proportion of teachers (45.9%) said they discussed these objectives annually. The second largest proportion of teachers (32.2%) noted they discuss their objectives termly.

34.9% of teachers who responded to the National Education Workforce Survey (April 2017) said they have used the Welsh Government "Practising Teacher" standards or "Leadership"

⁶⁵ The School Teacher Appraisal (Wales) Regulations 2011:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2011/2940/regulation/22/made>

⁶⁶ Welsh Government (2012). Performance management for teachers.

<https://hwb.gov.wales/storage/068248bb-698a-46a9-b120-5520268f6762/performance-management-for-teachers.pdf>

⁶⁷ Education Workforce Council (April 2017). National Education Workforce Survey: Research Report. <https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/documents/research-and-statistics/625-national-education-workforce-survey-april-2017.html>

standards (2011) in setting their objectives, planning their professional development or reviewing their performance in the last 12 months.

Since this survey was conducted the new *Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership*⁶⁸ have been introduced. The new standards were published in 2017 and replace the previously existing Qualified Teacher Status standards (2009), Practising Teacher Standards (2011) and Leadership standards (2011).

Publication of the new standards followed the recommendation to review the existing standards outlined in a number of independent reviews of Wales' education system detailed in section 2.1.2. Initially, all Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) were required to work to the new standards when commencing their induction on or after September 2017. By September 2018, all practicing teachers were required to work to the new standards and, from September 2019, the new standards have been applied to all ITE programmes in Wales and thus been integrated as part of their accreditation arrangements.

The standards are linked to the requirements of teachers entering the profession; they align with the education reform process being undertaken in Wales; and they focus on the range of skills and behaviours required to support teachers to prepare for their teaching role.

There are five professional standards for teaching and leadership:

- Pedagogy
- Leadership
- Professional Learning
- Innovation
- Collaboration

Acting as a personal reference point to enable teachers to take responsibility for their professional development, the standards can be used to enable teacher to identify areas of development and to select appropriate professional learning opportunities.

The standards are integrated into the Professional Learning Passport (PLP)⁶⁹. Hosted by the EWC and offered to EWC registered practitioners, the PLP is a digital tool to be used to support reflective practice and record active CPL engagement in line with the new Professional Standards. The PLP is funded by Welsh Government, and registrants can access it using their own online account or app. Each user's PLP includes professional learning templates and a Professional Standards workbook in which practitioners can map their professional learning experiences and upload evidence against each of the Professional Standards.

The recent developments of a national self-evaluation toolkit for schools is an example of a mechanism which aims to support school level improvement. In moving towards a system of schools as learning organisations, a greater emphasis is being placed on schools' self-evaluation. Self-evaluation is a strong feature of the new evaluation and improvement

⁶⁸ <https://hwb.gov.wales/storage/19bc948b-8a3f-41e0-944a-7bf2cadf7d18/professional-standards-for-teaching-and-leadership-interactive-pdf-for-pc.pdf>

⁶⁹ Professional Learning Passport: <https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/professional-development/professional-learning-passport.html#capturing-your-experiences>

arrangements for schools in Wales⁷⁰ and this process is required to focus on areas of strength and priorities for improvement.

This process is also intended to focus on the four purposes of the new curriculum (outlined in section 2.1.2) and assess the school's progress in realising the new curriculum. The new national self-evaluation toolkit, developed by Estyn, the OECD and the profession, aims to support this process. This toolkit, re-named the National Evaluation and Improvement Resource (NEIR), is currently in the second phase of development. This second phase is focusing on piloting, testing and further developing the resource. As part of this phase, 22 schools and their regional consortia have been piloting aspects of the resource from the autumn term of 2019 onwards.

6.2 Matching learning contents to teachers', schools' and system-wide needs

The NEIR aligns with the Professional Learning Journey (PLJ)⁷¹, which aims to help guide schools through the professional learning aspects of preparing for the new curriculum. At its core, PLJ incorporates the SLO model, the NAPL approach and the cross regional support programme delivered through the regional consortia.

To begin to plan their journey, schools are encouraged to undertake the SLO survey. The purpose of the survey is to establish how individual schools are currently performing as learning organisations and identify areas for improvement. Schools can use their survey results to facilitate discussions among staff and inform school improvement planning and whole school and individual approaches to professional learning. These results can also be shared with cluster partners to facilitate partnership working to address common areas for improvement.

'There has been a massive shift in quality and focus on CPL. Schools are becoming learning organisations and there has been a cultural shift towards more school to school learning and teacher agency in developing CPL approaches.' **Stakeholder**

A range of initiatives have been developed to support main content areas of teachers' professional learning regarding specialist knowledge, pedagogical competencies and teaching a range of students.

From September 2021, the Welsh Government will be rolling out a new additional learning needs (ALN) system to replace the existing special educational needs (SEN) system in Wales. Central to the programme of ALN reform is professional development for the workforce. A significant proportion of the announced £20 million ALN Transformation Programme funding will be used to develop the skills of the education workforce to ensure that practitioners will be able to effectively operate the new system and improve outcomes for learners with ALN.

⁷⁰ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-02/draft-evaluation-and-improvement-accountability-arrangements-for-wales.pdf>

⁷¹ <https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/professional-learning-journey/>

ALNCos (Additional Learning Needs coordinators) are considered to be fundamental to the success of the new system as they will provide a strategic leadership role and professional advice and guidance on ALN e.g. promoting a pupil with ALN's inclusion in the school and access to the school's curriculum, facilities and extra-curricular activities. The ALNCo role will be made statutory in all mainstream schools and colleges from January 2021 in order that they are properly prepared for the new system and that its implementation proceeds as smoothly as possible. Welsh Government is therefore working with local authorities and regional consortia to develop a specific professional learning offer for ALNCos.

The Welsh in education: action plan 2017–21⁷² includes a range of actions for increasing the number of Welsh-language and Welsh-medium teachers and for improving delivery of Welsh in the curriculum through supporting the language skills development of all teachers. Amongst ongoing activity supporting professional development under this scheme is continuous development of practitioners' Welsh language and teaching skills, e.g. through the Sabbatical Scheme; supporting professional learning and leadership to strengthen Welsh-medium practice and improving data on Welsh-medium skills as part of enhancing ongoing, strategic workforce planning

Welsh Government has worked with the regional consortia to develop a learning pathway for all teaching assistants to support them identify and access a development programme appropriate to their current skills needs. The Teaching Assistant Learning Pathway (TALP) ranges from support for newly appointed teaching assistants (TAs), through HLTA and to specialist teaching assistants, ensuring every teaching assistant has the opportunity to develop their skills and experience through professional learning.

As highlighted in section 4.2 there are a range of barriers to accessing CPL and stakeholders highlight that support staff experience challenges in accessing professional learning and are often not provided with the same level of opportunities and time out of the classroom as teachers. The recent support for teaching assistants outlined above does, however, provide an expectation that this group will be included in the new National Professional Learning INSET days as the system prepares for the introduction of the Curriculum for Wales in 2022.

The National Education Workforce Survey (April 2017)⁷³, asked teachers what areas they would welcome further development. The table below summarises the responses. The most common areas were ICT and digital skills (requested by 45.9% of survey respondents); and curriculum content and design (35.2% of respondents), indicating the importance of linking teachers' CPL needs to the introduction of the new curriculum. Teaching learners with additional needs (25.6% of respondents) and leadership (26.3) were also areas identified for CPL, linking to some of the initiatives outlined above in this section.

⁷² Welsh in education: action plan 2017–21 <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-02/welsh-in-education-action-plan-2017%E2%80%9321.pdf>

⁷³ Education Workforce Council (April 2017). National Education Workforce Survey: Research Report. <https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/documents/research-and-statistics/625-national-education-workforce-survey-april-2017.html>

Area for further development	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Action research/enquiry	511	10.0
Behaviour and classroom management	1,190	23.3
Coaching and mentoring	681	13.3
Curriculum content and design	1,800	35.2
Data analysis	1,147	22.4
Equality and diversity	227	4.4
ICT and digital skills	2,350	45.9
Learner evaluation and assessment for learning	862	16.9
Learner well-being	1,000	19.6
Literacy and/or numeracy	959	18.7
Pedagogy	919	18.0
Reflecting on and evaluating your practice	628	12.3
Safeguarding	408	8.0
School leadership	1,345	26.3
School management and administration	703	13.7
Subject and/or phase knowledge	1,050	20.5
Teaching learners with additional needs	1,311	25.6
Welsh language skills	916	17.9
No response	160	3.1
Other (please state)	132	2.6
Total	18,299	
Base - total number of respondents		5,115

Source: National Education Workforce Survey: Research Report (April 2017)

To further support teacher engagement with professional learning, the Education Workforce Council (EWC) has developed the Learning Exchange⁷⁴ on behalf of the Welsh Government. The Learning Exchange provides practitioners with access to a searchable database of regional, national and international learning opportunities for the STEM, ICT and computer science subjects. The Learning Exchange is designed to support practitioners with supporting, refreshing and enhancing their subject expertise.

⁷⁴ The Learning Exchange <https://www.ewc.wales/learningexchange/index.php/en/>

7. Quality: How is the quality of CPL ensured?

This section describes how different actors involved in CPL define, measure and seek to improve the quality and effectiveness of teachers' professional learning practices. This includes monitoring and evaluation procedures, accountability structures and support strategies at different levels of the system.

7.1 Quality assurance systems for CPL

There is currently a mixed picture with regards to quality assurance for CPL. The OECD noted in its 2018 Rapid Assessment⁷⁵ that *'little is known about the quality of induction programmes in Wales.'* Stakeholders consider that this element of CPL needs further work prior to the introduction of the new curriculum, noting that the progress that has been made with regards to developing a common understanding and a shared vision for CPL at a strategic level but there has been less of a focus of quality assurance.

With this in mind, a range of initiatives and programmes relating to monitoring the progress of professional development and its impact on the workforce are now under way in Wales. This is part of a more systemic approach to quality assurance in preparation for the new curriculum, including innovative approaches at a regional level, research and development and more consistent and recognised QA mechanisms.

"There is not currently a strong body of Wales-specific research to support professional learning."

"There hasn't been a strong culture of self-reflection and measurement (of CPL), nor of innovation and collaboration." **Stakeholders**

All schools in Wales are expected to have effective evaluation arrangements in place to identify their strengths and priorities for improvement - including professional learning - using a range of qualitative and quantitative data. Outcomes of these self-evaluation arrangements will inform individual SDP improvement priorities, which are required to be shared with stakeholders every three years. Schools are therefore being encouraged and supported to research their own priorities, for example the specific learning needs of their staff and identify their CPL own solutions, working in partnership with other schools and their respective regional consortia, to deliver and assess its quality and effectiveness.

This process of placing more focus on schools to assess the quality and effectiveness of their CPL relates to recommendations that arose from Teaching: A valued profession (Welsh Government, 2018)⁷⁶ which proposed an end to performance management systems and the introduction of 'Professional Development Reviews'. The report instead puts a focus on school leadership 'to set high expectations' and enable every professional colleague to grow through a formal process of 'Professional Development Review'

⁷⁵ <https://www.oecd.org/education/Developing-Schools-as-Learning-Organisations-in-Wales-Highlights.pdf>

⁷⁶ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-09/teaching-a-valued-profession-report-of-the-independent-review.pdf>

'CPL can be a powerful tool so it should be more linked to performance drivers otherwise this can impact on awareness and access to opportunities. In terms of quality it is about how to ensure the best possible CPL and making sure it is linked to stages in teacher competency and career milestones.' **Stakeholder**

Several of the regional consortia reported updating their evaluation strategies by moving to the Kirkpatrick model of evaluation⁷⁷. The model uses a blend of questionnaires and focus groups with immediate and longitudinal data capture to ensure efficacy of CPL. Regional consortia are also working with HEI partners in regard to evaluation. As an example, the Education Achievement Service (the regional consortia for SE Wales) developed a project including colleagues from the School of Education, Early Years and Social Work (SEEYSW) at the University of South Wales (USW), colleagues from the EAS, and teachers and school leaders from the local region. The project was instigated by the EAS as it sought to develop a methodology for capturing the impact of professional learning and to produce a set of professional learning quality assurance statements.

Schools are being encouraged to share their annual SLO survey results with their local consortium so that they can support them towards the resources they need in order to address their CPL needs. Several RECs reported effective data being provided by some schools in terms of what CPL is most effective, the scale of teacher engagement and identifying future needs however this is not a uniform approach at present.

Welsh Government has reformed the way initial teacher education is accredited. From September 2019, all ITE programmes offered by higher education institutions in Wales are being assessed, evaluated, and monitored by EWC's ITE accreditation board, using Welsh Government criteria. EWC's role is thus also assessing how the programmes will raise the quality of provision, and attract candidates with the right skills, qualifications and aptitude to enter a career in teaching. The accreditation of ITE programmes through these new criteria is seen as a method to introduce quality assurance processes at the earliest point in a teacher's career.

As noted in previous sections the Professional Learning Passport is a key element for teachers to capture their own professional learning in a standardised manner. All teachers and student teachers now have the opportunity to plan, record, reflect on their learning, share it with others and use it as a repository for evidence. This process is supporting them on their professional journey and allowing them to take ownership for their own professional learning.

Investing in excellence: Our national workforce development plan 2019–21 (Welsh Government, 2019) highlights the professional standards as a key component of '*retention and career progression*' alongside performance management, professional learning and '*leadership including succession planning*'. The plan sets out the requirements for NQTs to 'reflect on their practice and gather evidence' to show they are meeting the required professional standards and relevant descriptors during their induction year, thereby creating a base to monitor their professional learning and career progression from the outset of their teaching careers.

⁷⁷ <https://www.kirkpatrickpartners.com/Our-Philosophy/The-Kirkpatrick-Model>

'There is consistency of professional standards from ITE through NQT and beyond, which supports shared and consolidated understanding of the standards. (It is) much more aligned, holistic and effective in that students are developing professional learning habits from the outset.'

Stakeholder

All newly qualified teachers (NQTs) are required to serve an induction period of one academic year on appointment, as set out in The Education (Induction Arrangements for School Teachers) Regulations 2015. During this induction period, an NQT is employed in a paid post, with a reduced teaching timetable (90% of that of other full-time teachers in the school).

These individuals receive support in the form of a personalised programme of professional development, involving professional dialogue, which includes monitoring and an assessment of performance against the professional standards. Additional support for NQTs is provided through the framework of the statutory induction period⁷⁸. Statutory induction guidance recommends that all NQTs should have a school-based Induction Mentor (IM) and an external verifier (EV). The EV provides additional tailored support to that provided by the school-based mentor during the induction period.

The statutory induction period aims to ensure that NQTs focus their professional learning on the most effective methods and approaches, including reflective practice, effective collaboration, coaching and mentoring, and effective use of data and research evidence. This approach encompasses all aspects of ITE programmes as laid down by accreditation criteria – laying the foundations to support student teachers to develop their teaching identity in-line with Wales' vision for teachers

NQTs are also required to take responsibility for their own professional learning and provide evidence of how their practice meets these standards. This evidence is recorded in their induction profile, which forms a focus for self-review and regular discussion with the IM and EV to ensure NQTs are aware of areas they should prioritise for further professional learning. This approach aims to build on some of the key skills and attributes covered within ITE, for example developing independence, self-efficacy and becoming a reflective practitioner and inquirer.

The appropriate body (AB) has overall responsibility to ensure that induction meets the statutory requirements and uses assessment evidence to make the final decision on the induction outcome. The AB must ensure that effective and robust quality-assurance systems are put in place on a national level so that all NQTs receive the highest quality induction support. For maintained schools and non-maintained special schools, the school's local authority (LA) must serve as the AB. However, a local authority may agree to delegate its role to the relevant regional consortium, which is responsible for the recruitment, training and deployment of EVs.

⁷⁸ Induction for newly qualified teachers in Wales (revised July 2017)
<file:///C:/Users/Martin/Downloads/Induction%20Guidance-English.pdf>

The Education Workforce Council (EWC) has responsibility for collecting, collating and maintaining a central source of data for NQTs undertaking induction and for administering induction funding to schools, working closely with regional consortia. EWC also hosts and provides access to the online statutory induction profile via the Professional Learning Passport (PLP) to enable practitioners at all levels e.g. mid-career, NQTs and students to reflect against the relevant professional standards and record their professional experiences.

Findings for recent research on teachers' statutory induction for Welsh Government⁷⁹ indicates that professional learning opportunities provided as part of the induction are considered '*a strength of the approach and there are opportunities to build upon this provision*'. Recommendations include financially reimbursing supply NQTs for attending professional learning sessions to address ongoing challenges regarding their access to CPL, and that Welsh Government commission a quality-assured single, national programme of professional learning for NQTs, which could be made available in a flexible manner over the first years of teaching.

7.2 Improvement initiatives for CPL

In its strategy, *Education in Wales: Our National Mission 2017-21*, Welsh Government has proposed a range of new initiatives to help monitor the progress of teachers' professional learning, with particular regard to its quality and reach and how effectively it is preparing teachers for the introduction of the new national curriculum in 2022.

The strategy proposes to use workforce surveys to '*evaluate the confidence of the profession*' in delivering the new curriculum. It also proposes that Welsh Government work in partnership with Estyn as they evaluate the quality of ITE and professional learning at the various tiers and respond as required. Monitoring the match of supply and demand for staff in specialist areas including Welsh-medium provision is another key element of improving planning to support professional learning and wider strategies relating to Cymraeg 2050.

A review of the effectiveness of in-service training days for teachers undertaken by the University of South Wales for Welsh Government⁸⁰ examined the potential for wider strategic planning and evaluation process for all INSET days and other professional development. The report recommended that Welsh Government consider establishing a range of evaluative programmes of research commissioned on a systematic basis both to support and measure the impact of the National Approach to Professional Learning.

⁷⁹ Research on Teachers' Statutory Induction (2020) https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2020-04/research-on-teachers-statutory-induction_0.pdf

⁸⁰ Evidence base for the National Approach to Professional Learning: Review of the number and effectiveness of in-service training days for teachers in OECD countries with high performing education systems. University of South Wales 2019

“As we move away from the idea of INSET to the continuous element of professional learning, trialling, reflection and refinement all become more essential.” Stakeholder

Estyn’s 2018-19 Annual report⁸¹ highlights a range of findings with regard to examples of effective leadership of professional learning. These include having a clear focus on improving teaching and its impact on pupil progress; creating the right culture and conditions for professional learning; building collaborative and supportive professional relationships within and between schools; having an ‘open classroom’ policy that encourages peer observation and creating dedicated time for staff to engage with research evidence and carry out their own action research.

Estyn’s report also highlights the importance of *‘using data and new technologies as catalysts for improvement and innovation.’* As with Welsh Government’s current national strategy, evaluating impact and effectiveness of the professional learning provision regularly as part of school improvement planning is considered to be an essential aspect of supporting professional learning. Estyn also recommend schools using professional development days as opportunities to *‘explore further innovation in teaching and learning’* and, for senior leaders, learning how to lead professional learning and staff development.

In 2018, Estyn was invited by the Welsh Government to work with school practitioners, regional consortia, the OECD and other partners to support the co-creation of a National Evaluation and Improvement Resource (NEIR)⁸² for use in primary, secondary and special schools.

The first stage of this project took the form of a wide-ranging sector consultation, focused on identifying the factors that foster effective self-evaluation and improvement processes or limit them. Findings from the consultation included that in successful schools, self-evaluation and improvement processes are, *‘consistently focused on achieving the best standards and wellbeing for all pupils; ‘linked closely with professional learning and an aspect of the school’s work that involves all staff, not just senior leaders.’*

CPL is all part of the national mission, promoting equitable access and training for high quality professional staff and for learners to have the right to the best workforce. It’s about transparency and common messages as well as promoting a culture of longer-term investment and thinking.’
Stakeholder

⁸¹ The Annual Report of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales 2018-2019

https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/Annual_Report_2018_2019_en.pdf

⁸² Estyn, A national evaluation and improvement resource for schools, 2018

<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/inspection/national-evaluation-and-improvement-resource-schools>

8. Annex

Key developments relevant to Teachers' Professional Learning in Wales

Year	Document / Link	Description
2011	Revised professional standards for education practitioners in Wales	Standards for – Higher Level Teaching Assistants, Practising teachers and Leadership. The standards focused on – Professional values and attributes; Knowledge and understanding; Skills.
2013	Review of Initial Teacher Training in Wales	15 recommendations proposed to raise the quality in the sector as initial teacher training in Wales was found to need improvement in many areas. The Welsh Government responded to the recommendations including 'an integrated system of professional standards'.
2014	Qualified for Life: An Education Improvement Plan for Learners aged 3-19 in Wales	Strategic Objective 1 - An excellent professional workforce with strong pedagogy based on an understanding of what works, with the strengthening of the standards and revision of leadership standards noted, and assurance that the standards will remain fit for purpose.
2014	The 'New deal for the education workforce' announced, with further detail published March 2015	Career long development pathways to be established and renewed professional standards.
2015	Establishment of Pioneer Schools Network	including professional learning (previously called 'New Deal') pioneers
2016	Education Workforce Wales	Professional Learning Passport launched
2017	Education in Wales: our national mission: action plan 2017-21	includes 'developing a high quality teaching profession' 'new professional standards for teachers and others in the education workforce that will focus on the essential elements of successful teaching'.
2017	Professional teaching and leaderships standards	standards launched and adopted by NQTs during induction.
2017	Schools as Learning Organisations	introduced in Wales.

2017	Teachers' Professional Learning and Education inquiry	
2018	National Approach to Professional Learning	launched with elements for schools, regions and the nation presented.
2018	National Academy for Educational Leadership	launched, aiming to ensure all practitioners are able to engage with professional learning.
2018	New standards	mandatory for all school teachers and leaders, and Leadership standards used to form basis of the NPQH
2018	National professional enquiry project Phase 1	<p>Piloting and early development launched. The National Professional Enquiry Project (NPEP) is a central part of Wales' new approach to Professional Learning that will help practitioners fully develop and realise the new curriculum.</p> <p>The Project is a partnership between Welsh Government, Regional Consortia, Cardiff Metropolitan University, the University of Wales Trinity St David(UWTSD), Bangor University and a national network of Lead Enquiry Schools (formerly Professional Learning Pioneer schools).</p> <p>The schools involved are currently undertaking a range of enquiries exploring the professional implications of the new curriculum, supported by a partner higher education institution (HEI).</p>
2019	Professional standards for assisting teaching	available for all teaching assistants and higher level teaching assistants.
2019	Investing in excellence: Our national workforce development plan 2019-21	includes a development of an early Career Support Package, statutory induction is emphasised, and the plan to develop professional standards for regional Challenge Advisors.
2019	Teacher Professional Enquiry Programme Phase 2	Consolidation and Enrichment launched.