



Annual Report

Education Department

2018-19
2019-20



EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19, 2019-20.

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CONTEXT

THE VISION OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT: Gwynedd children and young people attaining the highest standards in order to maintain the language, culture and economy locally.

PURPOSE: *Promote the achievement and well-being of Gwynedd's children and young people by ensuring effective governance, leadership and management of our schools.*

SERVICES WE PROVIDE: Raising Standards, Support Services, School Staff Salaries and Contracts, Teachers' Pensions, School Catering, School Cleaning, School Transport, Health and Safety, School Admissions, Support for Governors, Financial Support for Schools, Information and Communication Technology, Data Unit, Human Resources Support for Schools and the Education Department, Attendance and Behaviour, Education Welfare Service, Additional Learning Needs, Child Protection, Leadership and Management, Training, the Welsh language.

WHAT DOES THE DEPARTMENT DO?

- Support children and young people to attain the highest standards.
- Ensure that pupils with Additional Learning Needs receive the most suitable support.
- Ensure that pupils with emotional and behavioural needs are fully included within Gwynedd schools.
- Ensure that pupils within Gwynedd schools are safe.
- Provide appropriate support services for the Gwynedd Education Service.
- Develop leaders and support the workforce in the schools.
- Support for school governing bodies to enable them to act as effective governors.

In 2018-20 there were 83 primary schools, 13 secondary schools, 1 All-through School, 1 Lifelong Learning School and two Special Schools in Gwynedd.

OUR PRINCIPAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
Percentage of 15 year old pupils (on 31 August of the previous year) gaining 5 GCSE grades A* to C, including Welsh or English, and Mathematics (TL2+)
Average point scores for pupils who were 15 years old on the 31 August of the previous year
Percentage of 16 year old pupils who gain 5 GCSE grades A* to C (TL2)
Percentage of 16 year old pupils who gain 5 GCSE grades A* to G (TL1)
Percentage of 16 year old pupils who achieve a Grade C or above, in Welsh or English, Mathematics and Science (CSI)
Percentage of young people aged 16-18 who are not in employment, education or training
Percentage of all pupils, who were 15 years old on the 31 August of the previous year, who leave education, training or work-based learning without a qualification
Percentage of pupils assessed at the end of year 9, and who reach the expected level, in Welsh or English, Mathematics and Science (CSI)
Percentage of pupils assessed at the end of year 6, and who reach the expected level in Welsh or English, Mathematics and Science (CSI)
Percentage of pupils assessed at the end of the Foundation Phase, and who reach the expected level (FPI)
Number of permanent exclusions in secondary schools during the academic year
Number of permanent exclusions in primary schools during the academic year
Percentage of pupil attendance at secondary schools during the academic year
Percentage of pupil attendance at primary schools during the academic year

THE WELSH LANGUAGE

- **Welsh in Education Strategic Plan**

The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act (2013) places a statutory duty on local authorities to prepare and submit a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan to Welsh Government. These plans outline the way in which local authorities intend to achieve the Welsh Government aims and targets.

- **Welsh Language Centres**

Ensure high quality Welsh language immersion provision to enable newcomers to take full advantage of the Welsh and bilingual education system in Gwynedd.

- **Language Charter & Secondary Welsh Language Strategy**

Every school in Gwynedd implements the requirements of the (primary) Language Charter and/or the Secondary Welsh Language Strategy so as to encourage more formal and informal use of the Welsh language in different contexts.

- **Additional Learning Needs**

Every pupil with additional learning needs (ALN) has access to Welsh-medium services.

Good features:

- As a result of the Language Policy, the general performance in Welsh is consistently good across Gwynedd schools.
- Every pupil with additional learning needs (ALN) has access to Welsh-medium services. Welsh-medium and bilingual provisions and services are available for all ranges and varieties of ALN.
- Corporate process for self-evaluating the Welsh language skills of the education workforce has been piloted as a baseline that will enable head teachers to complete the Welsh Language Skills of the Education Workforce Census.
- Plans to support the Welsh language skills of the education workforce have been implemented in some secondary schools in the county.
- Commission and provide training on the principles of language immersion in the Foundation Phase.

Priorities for the next period:

- Create a consultation document on the Welsh Language Education Plan in accordance with the new regulations that were published in 2020.
- Create a Welsh Language in Education Strategy for Gwynedd.
- Continue to support effective provision within the Language Centres for newcomers, including combined learning.
- Continue to support learners that need extra support to increase their confidence and skills in the Welsh language.
- Continue to support our primary and secondary schools to implement the Language Charter and Secondary Welsh Language Strategy.
- Continue to support the workforce of our secondary schools to develop their skills and confidence in the Welsh language.

ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND INCLUSION

The purpose of the ALN&I service is to:

- Support the development of ALN provision of quality in educational settings.
- Identify additional needs early on in the child's life and ensure appropriate intervention;
- Ensure early and appropriate intervention when problems emerge;
- Work in a more integrated and multi-agency manner, sharing information and undertaking joint planning provision for learners with ALN;
- Ensure that the skills and understanding of the workforce are developed continuously;
- Ensure clear communication with children, young people and families that receive provision.

The joint partnership with Anglesey Council exists since September 2017.

Good features:

- An electronic Individual Development Plan System developed by Cynnal is now being used by all schools, following a successful pilot period. The system facilitates the work of schools and the service significantly. (2018-19)
- The Nurturing Schools project is still operational and demonstrates positive results within the secondary and primary sectors. (2018-19)
- Use of TOMs (Therapy Outcome Measures) is being extended further in order to enable reporting on children's progress on a wider level, as holistic methods are required to show the progress of children and young people with ALN.
- The number of tribunals remains very low, with tribunals involving provision within Gwynedd schools leading to favourable outcomes for the Authority (i.e. confirming that appropriate provision is in place).
- Schools' inclusivity indicators continue to highlight that Gwynedd schools are especially inclusive – exclusion rates, the number of pupils who receive alternative provision and the numbers being home-schooled voluntarily, and attendance, all paint a very inclusive picture in comparison with nationwide figures. (2018-19)

During February 2020 an external evaluation was undertaken on the ALN&I Service, and the bullet points below summarise the strengths identified:

- The development of the strategy shows strong leadership, and receives full support of the directors and Cabinet Members.
- The partnership between Gwynedd and Anglesey provides clear benefits.
- The strategy states clearly the intended results, and strong progress has been made in relation to the majority of these proposed results.
- A firm training programme has had a positive impact on the ability of schools to meet the needs of learners and a variety of needs.
- The Team of Educational Psychologists and Specialist Teachers know their schools well. This is a strength of the service. Schools appreciate the support, the advice, the guidance and training that they receive from the teams of teachers and CCD.
- There are clear criteria's for accessing services – central teams and specialist centres. Schools generally have a good understanding of these.
- Gwynedd / Anglesey have made stringent progress to prepare for the ALN Transformation. The new strategy is learner centric.
- Ensuring the quality of schools is a strength within the strategy, but in a supportive way. This is appreciated by head teachers.
- Head teachers report that support for behaviour in the primary is effective overall.
- Llechan Lân provides effective support for learners in Key Stage 2.

- Everyone prefers the individual support they receive from Pecyn25 rather than large classrooms in school.
- The learners that attend Pecyn 25 that were spoken to knew what they intended to do after Pecyn25 (go to college or the army) and they were undertaking courses and qualifications that would allow them to realise their ambitions. This is a strength.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT PERIOD:

- With the change in Legislation remaining in place for September 2021 we are prioritising the following:
 - Review the way of allocating ALN funds to schools in order to ensure the best provision for learners with ALN.
 - Continue to develop the quality of Individual Learning Plans and ensure that each child is central to the process.
 - Continue to strengthen and simplify the 0-3 years and 16-25 provision route, and respond to the new requirements for these age groups.
 - Strengthen the multi-agency co-operation to ensure effective provision.
- The services will also continue to prioritise the following in order to strengthen the provision:
 - Ways of tracking progress and the effectiveness of interventions within the on-line IDP
 - Strengthen the provision model for maintaining behaviour within the secondary sector.
 - Clear communication plan for schools around the moderation panels processes and allocation of funding.
- Continue to respond effectively to the requirements in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

SAFEGUARDING

Purpose

- Safeguard the well-being of children and young people.
- Ensure that every child feels safe in the Council's schools and educational centres.
- Ensure that everyone that works in education in the county follows the Wales Safeguarding Children Procedure 2020.

Good features

- Gwynedd schools have received information about the new Wales Safeguarding Children Procedures that were published by Welsh Government in April 2020. These new procedures were presented digitally in the form of an AP. Key staff from the Department and Gwynedd schools have received a foundation level training on the procedures by NSPCC Wales via an agreement with the North Wales Safeguarding Board.
- The department has ensured attendance at every Part 4 meeting where allegations have been made against staff within Gwynedd schools. The numbers have reduced during 2019-20, with a very small number directly involving staff from the Education Department.
- The Education Department has created a new training pack in Welsh for Designated Persons in schools and educational settings in co-operation with the Safeguarding in Schools Group, Welsh Government. The course has been presented in Gwynedd in 2020 and after evaluating and receiving feedback on the suitability of the presentation it will be presented on a regular basis in 2021.
- The Education Department and the Dysgu and Datblygu service within the Council have been collaborating to develop a training pack in the field of domestic abuse. The pack 'Asking and Implementing' has been jointly developed and has been presented to TRAC staff within the Education Department during 2020.
- Training on taking positive action in response to inappropriate sexualised behaviour (Brook) was provided for primary and secondary schools during 2020 by the new Emerald service, Children's Services, Gwynedd Council.
- A high percentage of staff within the Department and staff within schools have collaborated with staff from Children's Services to receive training in the field of improving the department's practice in the context of Case Conferences.

Priorities for the next period::

- Review, pilot and present our new foundation level training package for Designated Persons in schools in response to the new guidelines on safeguarding children in education.
- Re-establish the procedure of annual quality assurance to monitor visits to every school in Gwynedd following the closure of schools and services in response to COVID-19 during 2020.
- Provide "Ask and Implement" courses for all education and school staff.
- Present a new safeguarding policy for Gwynedd schools in accordance to the new Wales Safeguarding Children Procedures document 'Keeping Learners Safe' 2020.
- Ensure that schools are better prepared to contribute effectively in case conferences, core group meetings, and Section 5 meetings in accordance with the new Wales Safeguarding Children Procedures

EARLY YEARS

The Early Years Unit plans to ensure the Authority fulfils the statutory requirement of securing a nursery place for every child from the term after his/her third birthday. From September 2019, nursery education provision is being offered at 61 settings across the county (one of which is temporarily closed at present). All settings have now enlisted with Mudiad Meithrin and are monitored regularly.

Good features:

- Foundation Phase Support Teachers have delivered training to all settings on:
 - Homelink bags – physical literacy
 - Foundation Phase principles, planning, assessment, the Profile and self-evaluation (new Leaders)
 - Foundation Phase principles, planning, assessment, the Profile and self-evaluation (Assistants – optional)
 - Senior teachers have attended Ffordd Gwynedd training.
- The Early Years ALN Coordinator has delivered training to all settings on: ALN&I (the impending code) to internal staff.
- All settings that have been subject to joint inspections (CIW/Estyn) since January 2019 have received a good report for each theme, with the content of some reports pointing to aspects of excellence.
- Settings have begun to create a One Page Profile for every child with ALN.
- Teaching Advisors took part in a workshop to present effective resources for supporting the needs of young children in all settings.
- A new childcare and nursery education setting has opened in Caban Ogwen, Bethesda with capital funds from the Childcare Offer.
- Good practice continues to be shared between Flying Start teachers and teachers in the Foundation Phase
- A Senior Foundation Phase Teacher has inspected another setting, and will inspect a further two before the end of the academic year.
- The team has shared duties and areas of expertise and this will begin to take root in the next period.
- Ten settings have committed to working on the Mudiad Meithrin Crossing the Rubicon scheme.
- Most settings now make use of the revised planning and assessment sheets.
- HWB site for Gwynedd Teaching Advisors has been established.

Priorities for the next period:

- Further developing the team's areas of expertise including holding training and sharing good practice virtually to the sector as was achieved with physical literacy.
- Nursery education providers to come back to normal following the pandemic and promoting the importance of nursery education as early firm foundation with Gwynedd families.
- Begin to prepare settings for the introduction of the Curriculum for Wales – a Curriculum for Life by introducing the terminology of the four purposes.
- Introduce the 'enabling steps' in the spring when the document will have been published.
- Continue to provide settings with updates on the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.
- Continue to support the work of the WG capital investments.

EDUCATION MODERNISATION TEAM

The work of modernising education in the County continues to successfully contribute to the education system and has attracted over £50m since 2012. The Education Modernisation Team is responsible for ensuring that planning work to provide education aligns with the County's education needs for the future.

The Programme is very ambitious in aiming to transform the way children and young people are able to access high quality schools with a learning environment which supports outstanding education. The Council is also determined to develop an education system which enriches learning experiences.

The Education Department aims to plan strategically to ensure that the appropriate type and number of schools are located in the correct locations, and to also upgrade the standard of school buildings to establish an estate which is suitable for the twenty-first century. The Programme will continue to fully commit to realising the current vision to *"offer education of the highest possible quality that will give the County's children the experiences, skills and confidence that would enable them to develop to be bilingual, successful and full citizens."*

The main aims of the Programme are to ensure that the current work programme continues to reach the agreed criteria to,

- contribute towards realising the aims of education principles which are fit for purpose to ensure a viable secondary school system, increased non-contact time for primary headteachers and that no more than two age ranges are included within the same class in the primary sector.
- implement the consultation process with parents, staff, governors and stakeholders which complies with the requirements of the statutory process, and which communicates clearly;
- implement an effective system to communicate with relevant Council departments, to monitor and evaluate activities;
- deliver the aims of the Programme to ensure a leadership environment which provides sufficient time for headteachers to lead, the best possible learning environment and quality of buildings for children, a reasonable travelling distance for children and a more effective management of educational resources, including reducing the cost per head in order to ensure the best value for money;
- ensure progress to complete the building work and establish schools which are part of the first financial Band;
- complete background work and update core data to be able to provide the necessary information to senior officers in order to respond proactively to situations as they arise.

Priorities for the next period:

- Complete the Bangor project, which includes an investment worth £12.7 million. The new building at Ysgol y Garnedd has opened since November 2020 with a capacity of 420 and able to offer a place for pupils in Coedmawr and Glanadda schools, subject to parental choice. The work to increase the capacity of Ysgol y Faenol to 315 and improve the suitability and condition of the building, whilst also taking advantage of the opportunity to improve community resources will continue. It is expected that the work will be completed by January 2022.
- Yn dilyn penderfyniad Cabinet ar 10 Mawrth 2020, cychwyn y broses ymgysylltu a chynnal y 'sgwrs fawr' ar y gyfundrefn addysg ôl-16 yn Arfon, er mwyn sicrhau tegwch a chefnogaeth gref i bob person ifanc yn y sir i lwyddo a gwireddu eu potensial.

- Following the decision to adopt education principles, which are fit for purpose, assist the work of the Education Department to realise the vision to develop the system to ensure a high quality education for the children and young people of Gwynedd for the twenty first century.
- Following the Cabinet's decision on 10 March 2020, begin discussions and 'the big conversation' about the post-16 provision in Arfon, so as to ensure fairness and strong support for all young people in the county to enable them to succeed and realise their potential.
- Following the Cabinet's decision in April 2019 to open discussions on the future of education in the Cricieth area, a series of local meetings have been held to explore the building of a new school in Cricieth.
- Continue to progress a Band B project to improve the condition and suitability of 30 school buildings in the County, with the first and second tranche of the project now operational, and continue to develop future annual proposals.
- Ensure the submission of successful business cases to the Welsh Government to attract matched funding for projects included in Band B.
- Collaborate with relevant departments to prepare additional applications to attract money for early years and community elements.
- Undertake processes to monitor that the project benefits have been realised and to assess whether they have been completed successfully. There will be a need to ensure that all necessary procedures are in place to monitor benefits and that they are monitored continuously.

GWYNEDD AND ANGLESEY POST-16 EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

Gwynedd Council is a strategic partner in a Consortium framework which has a complete overview of the post-16 education field across the counties of Gwynedd and Anglesey. Together with Gwynedd, which is the lead partner, there are three other full strategic partners, namely the Isle of Anglesey County Council, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and the secondary schools in the area that have sixth forms. This partnership enables high-level strategic decisions to be made on all aspects affecting post-16 education.

The work of the Consortium encompasses:

- Facilitating a network of good quality post-16 provision and courses at learning settings throughout the Consortium area
- Facilitating transport for the courses
- Managing and co-ordinating the 14-19 network for Gwynedd and Anglesey
- Leading on the Seren scheme to extend experiences for the most able and talented learners in the post-16 cohort and also KS3 on behalf of both Authorities
- Facilitating a professional group of sixth form heads
- Promoting and contributing strategically to the work of STEM Gogledd
- Collaborating with the North Wales Economic Ambition Board in order to identify career paths both locally and throughout the region.

As well as ensuring consistency, clear pathways and excellent quality for the learners while avoiding any duplication in terms of provision and systems, the framework also enables the cost of employing staff to lead on and administrate all relevant elements to be shared.

The work of the Consortium is monitored by a Lead Board which consists of representatives of the Chief Officers of the Partner Organisations.

TRAC SCHEME

Purpose

TRAC is a project across the six counties of North Wales. It aims to prevent vulnerable children and young people from disengaging in education and by doing so reduce the likelihood that they will be inactive and unemployed in the future. It is a European-funded project with a total value of £39.6m across the region. The project has been in operation since September 2015 and will end on 31 July 2022.

The total value of the project in Gwynedd is £4.6m (£3.3m of which is European funding, with the Council contributing officer time equivalent to £1.3m) and we aim to support at least 1,340 children and young people during the lifetime of the project.

Good features:

- 14 members of staff employed (through grant funding) to support vulnerable pupils by providing a range of interventions which complement, *but do not duplicate*, the mainstream education provision, focusing on raising the aspirations of children and young people referred to the project and supporting them to reconnect with their education.
- Being creative in our provision and 'thinking outside the box' in terms of how barriers which prevent all pupils from engaging with their education may be overcome.
- Developing a provision that is unique to the individual and is pupil-focused.
- Able to develop and build effective relationships with the pupils.
- Being consistent, transparent and patient; usually the children and young people we work with have a range of complex challenges in their lives that may impair our ability to succeed.
- Support the provision pupils receive from various agencies (such as the Children's Department, Children and Young People Mental Health Service etc.)
- Intensive support over a specific period to support vulnerable pupils in Year 6 for successful transition to Secondary (in operation since Autumn 2019).
- Working with others to identify the support required by TRAC (and others) to make a real difference to a pupil's future prospects.

Results:

- As of the end of August 2020, over 854 pupils have been supported by TRAC Gwynedd. A range of results have been achieved, such as moving on to work or training, improving attendance and behaviour, and support for young people with severe mental health problems.
- During the 2018-19 academic year:
 - Pupils supported (Years 7 to 11): 222
 - Pupils leaving the project with reduced likelihood of being inactive (not in education, employment or training): 98
 - Year 11 pupils moving on to further education: 64
 - Pupils progressing to further education still in need of support: 8
- During the 2019-20 academic year:
 - Pupils supported (Years 7 to 11): 140
 - Pupils supported (Year 6 / transition period): 43
 - Pupils leaving the project with reduced likelihood of being inactive (not in education, employment or training): 103
 - Pupils gaining BTEC Level 1/2 qualifications: 12

Priorities for the next period:

- Continue to provide for and support the vulnerable pupils identified by the project
- Co-ordinate and implement the period poverty scheme on behalf of the Education Department.

- Develop further the alternative curriculum offer by means of accredited units by Agored Cymru.
- To be proactive in terms of promoting the work being accomplished.
- Plan for an exit strategy for the project, (which ends in July 2022) by establishing a sustainable model for transferring the provision to other services within the Education Department.
- Undertake mapping of the TRAC legacy and how the Department may continue to implement this model by mainstreaming into established services.
- Identify a methodology to evaluate the project's local impact as a basis for preparing a business case for a possible successor scheme.

LEADERSHIP

Purpose

The aim of the leadership plan is to ensure that all Gwynedd leaders have the ability to ensure that each child under their care is able to reach his or her full potential. The Authority has identified the need *"to work jointly to create a culture that enables leaders to thrive; and can inspire and influence children on all levels"*.

Positive features

- A particular emphasis is being placed on securing a system which is planned and developed to ensure appropriate leaders at all levels.
- A particular emphasis is being placed on ensuring a consistency in the best experiences and opportunities for Gwynedd pupils.
- A particular emphasis is being placed on ensuring that existing leaders are developed using effective methods.
- A particular emphasis is being placed on ensuring that specific conditions enable leaders to thrive.

Middle Leadership Programme

In 2018-19, a one-year development programme provided professional learning opportunities for middle leaders throughout Wales. It was a national programme that was provided by regional consortia, and was endorsed by the National Academy for Educational Leadership, with the opportunity for accreditation in partnership with the University of Wales Trinity St David and Bangor University.

The programme promotes highly effective leadership by way of self-evaluation and reflection, and by investigating the relationship between leadership, successful schools and the wider community. Through this programme and as part of the professional learning continuum, participants will:

- develop their understanding of the role;
- further develop their understanding of the national reform agenda;
- develop their practice in accordance with formal leadership standards;
- prepare for effective engagement with bespoke elements of specialist knowledge and skills; AOLES, ALN, Welsh, faith schools, small schools etc.

NPQH Programme (National Professional Qualification for Headship)

All future NPQH candidates will be expected to complete this programme.

This national programme is provided by the regional consortia and their partners, including Local Authorities and Higher Education establishments. The programme has been endorsed by the National Academy for Educational Leadership, with the opportunity for accreditation in partnership with the University of Wales Trinity St David and Bangor University. All future NPQH candidates will be expected to complete this programme.

The programme promotes highly effective leadership by way of self-evaluation and reflection, and by investigating the relationship between leadership, successful schools and the wider community. It will ensure equity of access for practitioners throughout Wales, and increase the number of high-quality candidates for headship positions in schools.

Participants will undertake enrichment activities which will build on their experiences, in order to foster:

- their understanding of an effective head teacher's role;

- their skills and attributes by self-evaluating against the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership;
- their understanding and ability to apply a range of leadership skills in an effective manner;
- their collaboration skills by way of effective participation in peer networks;
- their knowledge and skills for developing their schools as learning organisations and ensure the success of the national reform agenda.

The Authority, in collaboration with GwE, is also planning to implement relevant training arrangements to support the career development of future leaders, and to promote the professional development of existing leaders in our schools. As part of the work of this project, a commission will be agreed to ensure that the delivery of GwE's offer is specifically tailored to meet Gwynedd's needs. This will allow individuals to have all the support needed to enable them to become successful leaders and to establish a robust basis for the education system to the future.

Priorities for the next period:

- Ensure that there is appropriate integration between this leadership development plan and the principles adopted by the Cabinet, to ensure that we have suitable arrangements which develop and identify leaders for our existing system and for the future.

EDUCATION DATA UNIT

Purpose

The purpose of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Education Data Unit is to support the Education Department through the provision of high-quality education data infrastructure.

Good features:

- Input a new process of working to ensure that the data on Children in Care in ONE is consistent with the data kept by the Childrens Services Information Systems.
- Validate the Children in Care data.
- Demonstrate and sell the IDP System to other Local Authorities in Wales.
- Further developments to the IDP System to include PEP's for Children in Care
- Complete the PLASC requirement within the timescale provided.
- Complete the analysis of GCSE results for children in vulnerable groups.
- Investigate the increase in transport costs following submitting a bid for extra funds.
- Analyse the GCSE and A level results yearly.
- Schools now receive more timely and regular updates on admission applications.
- Complete and submit GIS work for the Modernaistaion Team
- Continue to support and develop processes with the Early Years Team.

Priorities over the next period:

- Further work to ensure that our data is current and of a high standard.
- Ensure better use of 'Transport ONE' so that the information that is extracted reduces the need to use worksheets all of the time.
- Work with the Education Business Centre to present SIMS data collecting forms that can effectively be transferred on-line by September 2021.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE SUPPORT SERVICE

The purpose of the School Governance Support Service is to:

- Provide support and guidance for headteachers, governors, clerks of governors and Gwynedd schools
- Deliver a training programme for governors
- Prepare training materials/good practices and correspondence for governors and headteachers
- Support Shadow Governing Bodies of new schools

Good features:

- The ability to offer regular mandatory courses throughout the year and courses that encourage good practices for governors, e.g, courses to deal with excess, along with the development of on-line mandatory courses on a joint basis with other north Wales counties.
- Offering assistance and support to Governing Bodies and their schools as required.
- Upgrading the Governors' Database continuously so that an up to date record can be kept of every governor in all schools along with their details, roles, DBS and courses.
- Continue to improve the quality of governors' work to challenge headteachers so that they understand the meaning of data and understand the real situation of standards in a school.
- Developing the role of governors to take on a more strategic role in meetings, encouraging governors to self-evaluate their work and promoting the use of the national self-evaluation procedure.

Priorities for the next period:

- Implement the findings of the consultation regarding Governors training held in 2020, specifically increasing the number of courses that can be held virtually, develop digital training (videos etc) for some topics, increase the range of training available.
- Assisting Governing Bodies in the performance of their statutory functions, and advise and serve as a helpline on governance matters for head teachers and governors, including the excess process, complaints etc.
- Upgrading the Governors' Database system and collaborating with IT to promote self-service for the Database so that the Authority's governing clerks can directly input information.
- Collaborating with the ICT department in establishing a section for Governors on HWB (WG)
- Rationalising the list of School Policies and ensure that updated templates are available on HWB (WG).

CONTRACTS AND PERSONNEL UNIT

Purpose

The Unit provides a range of support to all schools in the county. This varies from providing advice and guidance regarding the terms and conditions of school staff employment to head teachers, governors and the county's officers, processing timesheets for payments, creating contracts, verifying the criminal background of every staff member, advising teachers about their pensions and processing redundancy payments.

Good features:

- Staff in our schools continue to receive their wages correctly and on time every month.
- As a department, we continue to adhere to the level of service for schools fairly and consistently for every school, by following the work schedule throughout the academic year.
- All school staff contracts are issued in accordance with statutory requirements, namely within eight weeks of commencing in post.

Priorities for the next period:

- Update and revise the list of supply teachers on the ONE system in order to devise an app through which schools may 'hire' supply teachers.
- Move to an electronic method of storing staff members' personal files.
- Continue to encourage head teachers to ensure that all teaching staff and Learning Support Assistants are registered with the Education Workforce Council and have completed the DBS process prior to commencing their posts in school.
- Collaborate with the Human Resources unit on creating an electronic statement for Teachers.

CATERING AND CLEANING SERVICE

Purpose

To provide nutritious and healthy food for the pupils of Gwynedd Schools and to keep educational establishments clean and safe to assist pupils to reach their potential.

Good features:

- The lunchtime menu for primary and special schools complies with the 'Healthy Eating in Schools (Nutritional Standards and Requirements) (Wales) Regulations 2013'.
- The lunchtime menu of Secondary schools is being worked up towards compliance with the 'Healthy Eating in Schools (Nutritional Standards and Requirements) (Wales) Regulations 2013'.
- Tasting/nutrition sessions are held in schools to encourage more pupils to eat school dinners.
- Parents who provide lunchboxes for their children are asked if they would like a school dinner on some days of the week.
- Thematic lunches are offered to schools on a regular basis.
- An on-line payment system for parents makes it easier to pay for different school services such as school dinners, trips, instrument lessons etc.
- Every school which has a nursery group implementing the 30 hour childcare plan can offer a school dinner as part of the provision.
- Keeping schools clean and safe.
- Support secondary schools to become cashless by implementing a school dinners cashless system.

Priorities for the next period:

- Cooperate with schools to enable them to become completely cashless
- Continue to encourage parents to choose school dinners for their children
- Assist schools to reduce the school dinners debt levels of parents
- Act on providing packed lunches for school trips
- Review the demand for breakfast club provision in primary schools

TRANSPORT

To arrange transport for Gwynedd pupils to educational establishments, thereby providing them with access to education in order to fulfil their potential.

Good features:

- Transport is arranged for all qualifying pupils
- The ability to purchase a post-16 travel pass by direct debit
- The ability to purchase a post-16 travel e-ticket
- The post-16 user forum meets twice a year
- The Gwynedd Transport Policy complies with the 'Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008'Extend the post-16 travel ticket to include learners over 19 years old.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT PERIOD

- Look at the transport retendering process.
- To seek clarification from the ALN & Inclusion Service as to who is entitled to transport under the existing transport policy.

EDUCATION BUSINESS CENTRE

The purpose of the Education Business Centre is to support the effective management of schools in Gwynedd.

The Centre supports 83 primary schools by providing services in accordance with the Service Level Agreement that exists between the schools and the Centre.

Support is provided for a variety of areas of school management.

Positive features:

- The Service Level Agreement between the Business Centre and the primary schools was reviewed in the Autumn Term of 2019, with the result that new services could be offered to the schools in 2020-21.
- Regular work is undertaken in close collaboration with the Procurement Team in taking schools out of expensive photocopying agreements.
- Through the small and rural schools grant 2019/20 it was possible to increase the additional administrative support provided to head teachers out in schools.
- The Education Business Centre has had a credit card available since May 2020 which enables the Centre to order goods and services for schools which contribute to a more efficient and modern ordering and payment of goods.

Priorities for the upcoming period:

- Review and introduce a more effective process for appointing primary school staff.
- Continue to roll out credit cards to large secondary and primary schools with school administrators to support the system.
- Continue to work closely with the Procurement Team to provide schools with the best value on Procurement contracts.
- Establish a College of Administration to share good practice and encourage effective administration among Gwynedd primary school administrators.
- Continue to identify and improve services that will contribute to reducing the workload of head teachers.
- Introduce a suitable and convenient system for communication, sharing guidance and good practice with schools in the future.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Purpose

Although there is no dedicated unit within the Department that deals with information technology issues, significant work has been completed in this key area in conjunction with the Corporate Information Technology Service and Cwmni Cynnal. The work in the field is based on our Digital Education Strategy with the clear purpose of supporting education through technology.

Positive features:

- Digital Education Strategy is in place, highlighting how we will respond to the challenge of supporting education through technology.
- Gwynedd school networks upgraded to meet national standards.
- Over 3,500 devices provided during the summer holidays.
- Over 3,500 devices ordered as part of next wave of investment (reaching Spring 2021).

Priorities for the next period:

- Agree on future durable maintenance arrangements.
- Agree on a plan to fund and update the devices at the end of its life.
- Ensure full and consistent use of the devices across our schools.