

# Leadership

## Strategic leadership and subject leadership

In most primary schools contacted, senior and middle leaders identify the importance of using the local area to teach pupils about Welsh history and identity in a meaningful context. These leaders recognise that the new Curriculum for Wales provides a significant opportunity to enhance and improve the teaching of local and Welsh history.

In primary schools, very few subject leaders have formal qualifications in history, although most have a suitable knowledge and understanding of how to plan for the teaching of history. Where provision for teaching Welsh and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history is strongest, subject leaders for history or humanities have a strong passion for the subject. In the best practice, they:

- inspire and collaborate with other members of staff to research their local area and Wales
- make links with community groups and historical sites to deliver professional learning for staff and deliver valuable experiences for pupils
- provide effective support and expertise, for example to help teachers make meaningful links between local history, Welsh and international contexts
- select source material including primary and secondary sources to inspire pupils' learning
- evaluate standards and provision regularly to identify where improvements can be made

Senior leaders in many primary schools are aware of diversity as a cross-cutting theme as they design the Curriculum for Wales. They recognise the need to plan how pupils develop their understanding of how Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities have contributed to the development of Wales and the wider world. Many are aware of the importance of seeing positive representations of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people within the curriculum and how diverse role models can positively influence the school community. A minority of schools are beginning to incorporate these aspects into their provision although, in some cases, this is limited to stand-alone topics such as Black History Month.

Pillgwenlly Primary School engaged with locally born Yemeni boxer Mo Nasir to

raise pupils' aspirations and explore the concept of identity. Mo Nasir won a Commonwealth Games Bronze medal in 2006. Mo Nasir visited the school to lead physical education sessions and talk about the importance of working hard and engaging with education. Pupils were inspired by his success story and engaged with new experiences to promote their health and wellbeing.

## Case study: Mount Stuart Primary School

### Context and background to the practice

Following discussions with pupils and staff, the school recognised that pupils are proud of their own heritage and the diversity of the school community. However, many pupils were not aware of the reasons why the community is so diverse, including the background and history of the local area. The school noted that children identify that they come from a particular ethnic background for example Somali, Yemini or Arab, most children do not feel or identify as being Welsh, despite being born and raised in Cardiff Bay.

The school has worked with the local community to develop a vision which states that 'You will understand your heritage and be proud of who you are as part of our diverse Mount Stuart community'. The vision is central to the development of the Curriculum for Wales within the school.

### Action

The school launched 'The Mount Stuart Melting Pot' heritage project in 2019-2020. Staff and pupils research the heritage and history of the school community. The school provides pupils with opportunities to celebrate how the blend of different cultures within the community, including Welsh culture, contribute to a sense of belonging and 'Welshness'.

The school held a Heritage Day to launch the project and celebrate the school's diversity. Children dressed in the traditional dress of the country they identify with most and brought in food to celebrate the school's diversity.

Using the humanities and expressive arts areas of learning and experience (AOLE) as the context for planning, each class investigated a period of local history from the industrial revolution to the current day. This included the history of Tiger Bay, Butetown and the development of modern day Cardiff Bay. Pupils investigated how and why people of different cultures settled in Cardiff Bay during each of these periods. The school also invited members of the local

community to share their personal experiences and cultures. Teachers planned opportunities for pupils to present their findings through the medium of art, dance, drama and music using local artists to support the work. The school planned an exhibition of the pupils' work, including live performances at a local hotel in Cardiff Bay, but were unable to hold the event due to the pandemic.

### **Impact on provision and standards**

- Pupils recognise and celebrate their own heritage and the multi-ethnic heritage of their community within Wales.
- Pupils have an increased awareness of the positive contribution their families and community have made to local and Welsh history.
- Pupils have an improved understanding of the significance of Cardiff Bay and the dock area during the industrial revolution, the world wars and the post war period.
- Pupils enjoy the experience of working with a range of high-quality artists and medium within the expressive arts.

## **Case study: Pembroke Dock Primary School**

### **Context and background to the practice**

Leaders at Pembroke Dock Primary School recognised that many of their pupils had little experience of multi-culturalism within society. In addition, the aims of the school's strategic equality plan include the elimination of racist language and incidents within the school and the local community.

### **Action**

Staff at the school planned and delivered a whole school topic entitled 'Don't Hate, Educate'. Staff were provided with a bank of resources as a starting point and allocated time to research, resource, plan and prepare an unit of work. The school also provided training from a third sector organisation specifically about diversity, differences and similarities across religions, refugees and asylum seekers.

Staff chose specific elements of the topic for each year group to ensure that learning was meaningful and appropriate for pupils. Pupils were included in the planning process with input on what they wanted to know and learn about. Pupils'

knowledge and understanding of the chosen topic were assessed at the beginning of the unit and again at the end.

Pupils in nursery and reception began by looking at the book 'Tusk' by David McKee which tells a story about black and white elephants and how the two groups are at war. The story concludes with the peaceful black and white elephants going into the jungle together and the birth of the grey elephant. The text allowed pupils to discuss racism and prejudice through story.

Year 4 chose to focus on refugees and asylum seekers in response to the opening of the Penally refugee camp. Pupils were asking questions and sharing both positive and negative comments and views that they had heard within the community. Staff decided to focus on developing pupils' empathy towards refugees and asylum seekers, encouraging discussion and questions.

Year 6 chose to look at black history having watched reports featured on BBC Newsround during Black History Month. Lessons focused on the triangular trade and middle passage to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the slave trade. Links were made with the pulling down of Edwards Colston's statue in Bristol. In addition, staff used the novel 'Ghost' by Jason Reynolds to discuss and reflect on the issues raised.

### **Impact on provision and standards**

- Pupils have an increased awareness of Antiracism and diversity including how to use language appropriately when discussing topics.
- Pupils have an improved knowledge of the impact of the slave trade and its connections to Welsh and British history.

Senior and middle leaders in most secondary schools contacted identify that the Curriculum for Wales provides a significant opportunity to enhance and improve the teaching of local and Welsh history. In a few schools this underpins the vision for the curriculum alongside teaching and learning. In a very few instances, leaders do not recognise the importance of local and Welsh history. These leaders believe that the curriculum is crowded and find the inclusion of local and Welsh history and culture difficult to plan. Although many leaders recognise the importance of diversity, antiracism and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history and culture, this is not reflected well enough in their strategic planning for curriculum. A minority of schools have not developed a vision for curriculum and have not considered how they can develop pupils' understanding of local, national and international dimensions and diversity.

In the secondary schools contacted, nearly all history subject leaders are subject

specialists, as are many staff within the department. In many schools, teachers within history or humanities departments collaborate to plan teaching and learning and prepare resources to support learning. In a minority of schools, this is strategically planned to take advantage of staff expertise and interests. In most schools, subject leaders' knowledge, understanding and passion for local, Welsh and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history directly influence the topics included within the history curriculum.

In a few schools, leaders prioritise opportunities for staff to develop their knowledge and understanding of the local area when they join the school. These schools provide opportunities for staff to take part in tours of the local area and share information on local and Welsh history through booklets and briefing papers.

## **Self-evaluation and improvement planning**

Many senior leaders note that their staff are knowledgeable about the history and culture of the local area and Wales. However, there is little evidence to show how schools use their self-evaluation processes to evaluate the standards and progress of pupils' in these aspects. In a very few schools, leaders survey teachers' knowledge and understanding of local, Welsh and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history and culture to plan professional learning opportunities in these areas.

## **Case study: Leadership and the Story of Wales - Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr**

### **Context and background to the practice**

The school is part of the national teacher professional enquiry project working with the Welsh Government and ERW. The school's ethos and vision for the Curriculum for Wales are centred around promoting and deepening pupils' sense of belonging and Welshness. The school developed an enquiry to look at its current provision of Welsh history, tradition and culture and the importance of Wales' role and place within Europe and the wider world. This included the development of 'cynefin' while making connections between the local area, Wales as a whole and a global context.

### **Description of activity/strategy**

The school used a survey for staff to discover their knowledge, experience, skills

and confidence when planning to introduce a local curriculum. Pupils were invited to participate in a focus group to describe their experience of how 'cynefin' and the story of Wales was currently included in the curriculum. Although the school is a Welsh-medium school, both staff and pupils felt that Wales, its people and traditions had been neglected within its current curriculum. Pupils felt that they have more knowledge of British and international history than the history of Wales. They felt that they lacked knowledge about the scientific, mathematical and technological contribution of Welsh people to national and global developments and they knew more about the geography of other countries than their own local area. Staff felt that their own education and the lack of professional learning around the story of Wales was a barrier to the development of cynefin, the story of Wales and its place in a global context. They identified that professional learning is key to understanding how to make meaningful links between the local area, Wales and the world.

The school provided opportunities for staff to undertake professional learning on the story of Wales. Leaders of Areas of Learning and Experience conducted research on cynefin and the story of Wales to identify opportunities to incorporate these aspects within their subject area. Staff identified lines of enquiry to research the concepts of 'cynefin' and the story of Wales within their subjects.

### **Impact on provision and standards**

- All Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLE) have developed enquiries stemming from the local area. For example, science and technology has developed an enquiry on pollution in Port Talbot and the history of copper mining in the local area. The mathematics department researched notable buildings in Wales when looking at angles and bearings. The humanities AoLE has introduced enquiries on the 1849 cholera outbreak in Swansea and the experiences of Gowerton and South Wales soldiers in the First World War. Languages, literacy and communication used the story of the Beasley family of Llangennech to discuss the legal status of the Welsh language.
- The research undertaken by staff as part of the project has informed the school's vision for the Curriculum for Wales. All AoLEs have developed a specific vision for teaching and learning that encompasses Welsh identity and cynefin within an interconnected world. The context of learning within each AoLE is strongly influenced by this vision.
- The school has trialled units of study for the Curriculum for Wales across some AoLEs.
- Pupil focus groups are used to monitor and evaluate how well the units of study are engaging pupils. Initial feedback from these groups indicate that pupils' interest and engagement is improved by making links between local examples, Wales and the world. Pupils feel that they have a deeper understanding and empathy towards the context of lessons and their

enjoyment of learning is increased.

Most schools contacted undertook an audit of their provision for local, Welsh and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history in preparation for our visit. A very few of these schools evaluate the quality of pupils' work and the effectiveness of their provision for Welsh and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history and culture to plan for improvement.

In many primary schools, the history subject leader undertakes some form of regular monitoring in line with the school's policy. This is usually annually or part of a two- or three-year cycle. In most schools, subject leaders only evaluate the school's provision for history. They do not evaluate the standards that pupils achieve in history or the progress that they are making. In nearly all schools, standards in local and Welsh history and culture and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history are not considered as part of whole-school self-evaluation processes or the monitoring of history.

In nearly all secondary schools, history departments self-evaluate standards and provision within the subject area. In general, history departments use a range of suitable evaluation and improvement processes to identify specific areas needing improvement. A minority of schools audit the opportunities pupils receive to look at topics within a Welsh context as part of their provision for Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig. In a very few schools, Welsh history and culture are included as a priority area within the school's improvement plan and are linked to the development of curriculum across all areas of learning and experience. In a minority of schools, Welsh history and culture are viewed as a specific priority area for Welsh and history departments and not as a whole-school priority.

A very few schools consider Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history and culture, diversity and Antiracism when evaluating their provision. Of those surveyed, only a very few secondary schools identify diversity, Antiracism education and the contributions of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities as key priority areas in improvement plans. These schools are beginning to plan how best to develop professional learning and teaching to address these aspects.

## **Professional learning**

Of the primary and secondary teachers contacted who undertook their initial teacher training in Wales, only a few report that they had any significant training on Welsh history when completing their initial teacher education (ITE) courses. Only a very few teachers received training on the teaching of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history and

culture.

All history tutors within ITE partnerships audit students' specialisms to identify which historical periods and topics they are confident to teach. Knowledge of both Welsh history and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history varies considerably due in part to the varied academic background of students. Within the university-based programmes, students are set tasks for self-study and tutors link students in small groups to address gaps in knowledge. Generally, university-based provision references Welsh history within its teaching and is increasingly including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history. ITE partnerships' provision for Welsh and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history when students are placed on school placement is dependent on the topics chosen by individual schools within their curriculum and, at secondary level, the GCSE and A level topics chosen. A few ITE partnerships are beginning to audit students' opportunities to teach Welsh and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history when placed in schools to identify how they can develop practice in these areas.

All ITE partnerships contacted report that they provide training for staff and students on antiracism and diversity including training from a prominent educational charity. Plans to develop provision for the teaching of antiracism and diversity within core and subject elements in ITE courses are at an early stage of development.

In most primary schools contacted, staff report that local authorities or regional consortia offer few professional development opportunities to develop the teaching of local and Welsh history. In line with other non-core subjects, advisers from the local authority or regional consortia do not focus on standards and provision for history. Nearly all primary schools note that there is very little support to develop the teaching of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history and culture. As a result, nearly all schools rely on organising their own internal training for school staff. The quality of training depends on the knowledge, skills and passion shown by the subject leader towards local, Welsh and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history.

Most secondary schools note that professional development opportunities for history teachers are mainly focused on training provided by the examination board. In a majority of secondary schools, staff note that they benefit from meetings facilitated by the local authority or regional consortia to discuss the development of resources and schemes of work for GCSE and A level classes. In a few instances, staff attend meetings to discuss the subject area at key stage 3 within the humanities area of learning and experience and to share best practice. However, very few training events and meetings include professional learning opportunities for local, Welsh and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history. In a few schools, where staff are given the freedom to choose topics for professional learning, teachers refer to websites, webinars and twitter accounts produced in England as useful resources to develop their teaching of Black, Asian and Minority

Ethnic history.

In a few schools contacted, staff have recently engaged with an educational charity or organisations that promote racial equality to provide staff with professional learning on antiracism and racial diversity in Wales and the United Kingdom. In these schools, staff note that they feel more confident when challenging misconceptions and the way they use language to discuss race when teaching about racism and diversity.

## Resources

Most primary schools surveyed refer to a lack of suitable resources for the teaching of local, Welsh and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history. Many teachers report that they struggle to find first-hand sources that are suitable for primary aged pupils when planning authentic and meaningful learning experiences for local or Welsh history. Many teachers note that they often struggle to find books and resources that reflect Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history and the diversity of communities in modern Wales. In a very few instances, this has led schools to write and publish books to reflect their school community.

## Case study: Cogan Primary School

### **Context and background to the practice**

In 2019, staff at Cogan Primary School in the Vale of Glamorgan were concerned that pupils at the school didn't see characters in the school's picture books that were representative of the ethnic backgrounds of the pupils.

### **Description of activity/strategy**

Teachers decided to run their own National Book Award to promote diversity and inclusion. In conjunction with a local book shop, the school selected books using the following criteria:

- suitable for mainly three to seven-year-olds
- published between 1 March 2017 and 30 September 2018
- a strong theme of tolerance and inclusion or positive representation of minorities, ethnically diverse culture, diverse or non-stereotypical characters
- characters with disabilities
- Teachers promoted the competition using social media platforms which

drew the attention of the Children's Commissioner for Wales and prominent authors. Teachers also contacted publishers who submitted eligible titles to the competition. Pupils read the books to select a shortlist, before voting for the winner.

### **Impact**

- Pupils enjoyed reading the picture books and engagement with reading improved.
- Pupils developed an awareness of diversity in their reading materials.
- Positive engagement with the school community including parents, the local library and local business owners.

Generally in secondary schools, teachers use a combination of commercially produced textbooks, digital resources and booklets teachers have produced themselves to teach Welsh and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history. Most history departments depend on an informal network of links with other schools to develop and share resources. When departments rely completely on commercially produced resources, opportunities to teach pupils about local and Welsh history are often missed. In a minority of schools, teachers use resources produced for GCSE courses as teaching resources for key stage 3 pupils. As a result, in a few schools, pupils do not study a broad and varied curriculum in history as topics are repeated at key stage 3 and 4.

Teachers report that finding suitable primary and secondary source material for the teaching of local and Welsh history is difficult. Researching and adapting materials add to teachers' work load. Most Welsh-medium and bilingual schools struggle to find suitable Welsh language resources, particularly for key stage 3 pupils. Often when resources are translated, the average reading age of pupils is not taken into account.

# Glossary

## **antiracism**

The policy of challenging racism and promoting racial equality