

Listening, Learning and Changing Together: Our Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 2020-2023

Updated
April 2022

Information sheet

Information box

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| 3.1 | Stakeholder Engagement and Communications working group | May 2020 | Reviewed to reflect the pandemic situation |
| 3.2 | Stakeholder Engagement and Communications working group | April 2022 | Updated to reflect the rapid changes over the past year |

Equality impact assessment

- A business rationale assessment has been carried out and this policy contributes to Estyn's strategic objectives and delivery principles.
- An equality impact assessment has been carried out and this policy is not deemed to adversely impact on any people on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

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Foreword

Over the last two years, we've seen remarkable and courageous contributions from those working in education and training in Wales. There's been enormous effort to minimise the pandemic's impact on children, young people and learners of all ages.

As we emerge from the pandemic, we're very aware of its continued effect on families, professionals and everyone involved in education and training. As we return to inspection, learners will be our priority as they always have been. We'll be doing what's best for them – making sure that they get the education they deserve.

We're committed to making our work a positive experience. Our engagement activity over the last two years was widely welcomed by leaders across all sectors. They appreciated professional conversations with our inspectors, and we were able to share emerging practice across all sectors through our termly publications.

Now, continuing with this engagement work, we are looking ahead with schools and other providers at new priorities, building on our insights from the last year.

This year also sees us rolling out our revised inspection arrangements, piloting with schools and PRUs.

Other steps we've taken to build our stakeholder engagement since the start of the pandemic include rolling out our Parent and Carers Reference Group, setting up a Teachers' Forum and looking at ways to further involve learners and support staff.

This updated strategy reflects how we've adapted and continue to grow, helping us to listen to, inform and involve all our stakeholders.

My best wishes and thanks go to all of you, staff working in education and training, parents and carers, and learners and everyone involved in keeping Wales learning.

Owen Evans, HMCI, April 2022

Introduction

We worked closely with learners, parents, education professionals and inspectors to support learning to continue during the pandemic. The valuable and honest discussions we had with you helped us to adapt how we work with education providers.

We now want to build on these closer relationships to make sure our work supports improvement. The pandemic will likely continue to affect education permanently and profoundly. We need to have a flexible strategy to engage with you, our stakeholders, and make sure our work fits your needs in education and training.

As our work changes over the next few years we will continue to work with you to shape our plans. We will consult widely, using different methods of communication to reach new and different groups of stakeholders and use your views to help plan our activities and improve our work.

Throughout, we will continue to ensure that learners are at the heart of inspection and our work reflects your expectations. Your confidence and trust in our work is a high priority for us. Building this confidence and trust relies on our clear strategic vision about how our work helps to improve education and training in Wales.

While we work in partnership with others, we will always be an independent voice. This stakeholder engagement strategy helps us to nurture our relationship with you and to listen to your ideas. We use your feedback and information to improve the way we communicate and deliver our strategic objectives. Read on to see how we **listen to**, **involve** and **inform** you in our work.

Our strategic overview

We've aligned our communication and engagement activities with our strategic objectives and delivery principles.

Our **vision** is to improve the quality of education and training, and outcomes for all learners in Wales.

Making it happen

Our **mission** is to support education and training providers to develop a self-improving and learning culture through our advice, inspection and capacity building.

Our strategic objectives are to:

- Provide public accountability to service users on the quality and standards of education and training
- Inform the development of national policy by the Welsh Government
- Build capacity for improvement of the education and training system

Our delivery principle is:

- Delivery of our work: Building a better organisation - living our values

Our **values** are to:

- Place learners at the heart of our work
- Listen, learn and work with others
- Act openly, fairly and with integrity
- Show effective leadership and teamwork
- Promote health, wellbeing and equality in all we do
- Value and respect people and their work
- Encourage responsibility, initiative and innovation

Through listening to and learning from our stakeholders we shape how and what we do to deliver each of our strategic objectives.

We will:

- **Listen to you:** make best use of your time by seeking your views, engage you in decisions and sharing information; encourage feedback through compliments and concerns to help inform our decision-making processes; and help us build better relationships.
- **Involve you:** involve providers in planning their inspection; involve stakeholders directly in our inspections; work together on shared projects; and encourage conversation through different communication channels.
- **Inform you:** provide you with clear, coherent and consistent messages; keep you up to date with developments in inspection, the latest effective practice and recommendations from our thematic and inspection work.

Strategic objective 1: Providing public accountability

It's important that you trust our work and see it as transparent. That's why we use a wide range of communication channels to involve you. We provide public accountability through these key areas:

Listen

- **Feedback channels** – inspection questionnaires, local government education services pre-inspection surveys, meetings with parents, governors and staff.

Involve

- **Consultation** – to share proposals and invite stakeholders to shape the future of our work.
- **Forums and reference groups** – both sector-specific and project-based groups to involve education professions and inform what we do

Inform

- **Inspection findings** – individual reports on our website; our searchable database of outcomes; social media, and email inspection reports to local politicians and the Welsh Government.
- **The Chief Inspector's Annual Report on education and training** – wide dissemination amongst all key stakeholders, both online and offline, through the media and through stakeholder presentations.
- **National thematic reviews** – reports on our website; resources (film and presentations); the media; blogs.
- **Effective practice** – online case studies and film; advice and guidance to providers during inspection.
- **Corporate publications** – our Annual Plan and Annual Report and Accounts together outline our direction and highlight our performance.

Strategic objective 2: Informing the development of national policy

The Minister for Education asks us for advice and guidance about specific areas of education and training, through an annual remit letter. This work helps the Welsh Government to develop and review national education policy.

Listen

- Parents and carers' views of children's experiences of education are very important to us. Listening to their perspective away from the inspection process will give us a clearer picture. Our new Parent and Carers Reference Group will offer views and ideas that will influence our decisions and help us shape the way forward.

Involve

Our support to develop and embed the Curriculum for Wales continues through:

- Conversations with schools and PRUs. Being flexible and sensitive to providers' individual circumstance is important to us. Our discussions with schools and PRUs will allow us to understand how they have responded to the challenges of Covid-19. This will help us to see the progress schools are making with national priorities, including evaluation and improvement processes and curriculum development. This work will build a national picture of what's working well and identify the challenges.
- Regional Consortia and Local Authorities: sharing the main messages from our work about early developments in schools.
- Representation at steering groups and committees
- Sharing effective practice and interesting approaches as they emerge in schools

Inform

- Publishing and promoting thematic reports containing broad recommendations for providers, policy officials and government.

Strategic objective 3: Building capacity

Our stakeholder engagement supports our strategic objective to build capacity in education and training.

Listen

- Supporting education and training providers in the improvement process. During an inspection, our professional conversations and recommendations help to inspire and support improvement.
- Dedicated Link Inspectors informally visit each further education and work-based learning provider annually. Link Inspectors develop our relationship with these sectors, monitor performance and progress, evaluate against agreed common themes, and identify and share effective practice.
- Local Authority Link Inspectors (LALIs) monitor and challenge local authorities about the performance and progress of their schools and education services. LALIs work constructively with the authority and share effective practice where relevant. We also have link inspectors to oversee the work of the four regional educational consortia in challenging and supporting schools to improve. Audit Wales are involved in all our LGES inspections.

Involve

- Using Peer Inspectors, enabling senior leaders to gain experience from other providers and to train with us annually. Peer Inspectors are invaluable to us – they help create shared understanding and expectations across education. With around 1,000 Peer Inspectors across all providers, they have an opportunity to see practice different from their own – honing their analytical skills and understanding to help them build capacity across their sector. We also train them to take part in our thematic inspection reviews. As part of developing our inspection framework, we will also carry out an evaluation and review of the contribution that being a Peer Inspector makes to personal and professional learning, and its role in supporting a self-improving system.
- Challenge Advisors who were introduced in 2014 whom we will continue to deploy on certain primary and secondary inspections
- Involving current practitioners (senior leaders) as nominees on inspections. They are the link between the provider and the inspection team. Our headteacher reference groups across each sector play an important role in informing and influencing our inspection arrangements and help us to engage with senior leaders regularly.

Inform

- Identifying effective practice from our inspection and thematic work and sharing this online and at conferences.
- Publishing inspection outcomes data which providers can use to search, export, analyse and benchmark their own performance
- Inspection Wales – a commitment of joint working between us and the other three main inspection, audit and regulatory bodies in Wales. Our shared aim is to support better outcomes for people, protecting their interests by reporting

impartially on public services.

Our plan of action

Clear communication is central to our stakeholder engagement. We aim to share information that is useful and accessible to all, from learners and parents/carers, to education professionals and government officials. Our Welsh language policy helps us to ensure that we approach everything bilingually and our communication meets stakeholders' language preferences..

Since the pandemic began we have prioritised our activities.. The action plan below is being reshaped continually as we continue to consider the immediate impact of the pandemic and its long-term effect on delivering our objectives.

- During 2020-21, as schools and PRUs began to re-open, we visited them to:
 - understand and learn from how they have responded to the challenges of Covid-19
 - provide more feedback on progress with reform across Wales and share emerging effective practice to support improvement
- Implement our revised inspection arrangements.
- Build on the methods of communication we have used during the pandemic to reach new and different groups of stakeholders and use their views to help plan our activities and improve our work.
- Consult with post-16 sectors about changes to our inspection arrangements.
- Continue to strengthen how we inspect post-16 education and training based on feedback from our stakeholders.
- Before an inspection, continue to survey parents, pupils, governors, teachers and other education professionals, as well as the wider community for inspections of local government education services.
- Engage annually with all sectors through our stakeholder forums and regular meetings, steering groups and committees.
- Continue to inform local and regional stakeholders about the publication of our inspection reports.
- Review and improve our website to make it fully accessible and provide a better user experience.
- Further develop our blog, sharing new insights about our work to support improvement in learning.
- Continue to share thematic reports and effective practice, in particular in relation to the emerging new curriculum.
- Share cameos of interesting practice from our engagement work.
- Publish an Annual Report outlining the state of the nation view on the performance of education and training in Wales.
- Use our new Parent and Carer Reference group to engage more deeply with parents on specific issues.
- Continue to strengthen our relationships in the post-16 sectors through our link inspector work.

- Harness opportunities to work jointly with other inspectorates under ‘Inspection Wales’.
- Build on the success of our pilot Teacher Forum by continuing to ask them for views and to listen and understand their experiences.
- Explore options to strengthen our links with learners – to hear their voice more regularly and away from the inspection process.

Our channels

Listen

- Regular sector-specific Stakeholder Fora, held at least once a year. Since the pandemic began, these have been online. They are run by a Sector Lead Inspector, with membership from senior leaders, such as headteachers, practitioners, principals, advisory teachers and relevant national bodies. Each sector approaches membership differently, but aims to achieve the best engagement possible. The role of forum representatives is to:
 - share feedback with us about inspection issues from their sector or organisation
 - share and advocate with their own networks information about our revised approach and key issues in inspection

See Annex 3 for each sector’s arrangements.

Involve

- An annual National Stakeholder Forum, where we will share information, ideas and views about improving education and training. We invite one representative from each organisation on our stakeholder list which we review regularly.

Inform

- Inspectors, Assistant Directors and Strategic Directors attend and speak at a range of conferences, workshops and other events held by sectors.
- An annual programme of recruitment, training and updates for external inspectors, such as Peer Inspectors, Additional Inspectors and Challenge Advisors.
- Regular meetings with Welsh Government to provide advice as set out in the annual Remit from the Minister for Education to the Chief Inspector.
- Our website is our main online communication channel, offering sign-up services for RSS feeds and email news. We evaluate its performance to ensure that users can find what they need and that our inspection reports, effective practice, thematic reports and corporate publications are accessible to all.
- Our blogs offer insights into topical matters about education and training. Each

post is written by one of our inspectors.

- Our monthly stakeholder e-shot ('*Estyn update*') rounds up recently published effective practice and thematic reports, and keeps you up to date on new developments. We send it to:
 - Additional Inspectors
 - Peer Inspectors
 - Lay Inspectors
 - All education and training providers
 - Stakeholders registered through our website
- Our social media channels, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn help to amplify our messages and facilitate informal feedback.

Monitoring and evaluation

We will evaluate regularly how good we are at engaging with you by:

- Proactively seeking your feedback from our events and training
- Reviewing response rates to our consultations
- Analysing user behaviour and preferences through our digital channels
- Our formal feedback and complaints process
- User surveys

More generally, we evaluate and deliver feedback on inspection:

- Reporting Inspectors will monitor and evaluate the work of each inspector (Additional Inspector, Peer Inspector, Lay Inspector), feedback to them and record this in our quality assurance database.
- At the end of every inspection, we offer the head of the provision the chance to share their views in a questionnaire. We ask them to evaluate and comment on the quality of our inspection and the report which we record in our quality assurance database. This feedback helps us to identify concerns and to inform our training and development plan.

Annex 1: External stakeholder analysis

This analysis broadly groups stakeholders which share a similar interest in education and/or training. This helps us to target and prioritise our messages.

| Interest | Type of stakeholder (a few examples) |
|---|--|
| Directly influenced by our work | Headteachers, principals, directors of education, teachers, lecturers, support staff |
| Directly benefits from our work | Schools, post-16 providers, local authorities, regional consortia, education services in prisons, adult learning, Welsh Government, Education Workforce Council (EWC) |
| Indirectly benefits from our work | Learners, parents/carers, general public, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) and Qualifications Wales |
| Directly contributes to our work | Inspectors, Audit Wales, Care Inspectorate Wales, Healthcare Inspectorate Wales, HM Inspectorate Probation, HM Inspectorate Constabulary, HM Inspectorate Prisons, Welsh Government |
| Indirectly contributes to our work | The Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Education Scotland, The Education and Training Inspectorate (Northern Ireland) and Ofsted |
| Interested in our work but is not directly or indirectly affected | The media, education commentators, research companies, education consultants and academic bodies |

Annex 2: Stakeholder groups

We regularly review the organisations and people that we engage with.

Individuals

- Headteachers
- Principals
- Senior leaders
- Newly qualified teachers
- Learners (all ages)
- Lecturers
- Teachers
- Classroom assistants
- Inspectors – peer, additional, challenge advisors
- Parents and carers

- Governors

Providers

- Nursery schools and settings that are maintained by, or receive funding from, local authorities;
- Primary schools
- Secondary schools
- Special schools
- Pupil referral units
- Independent schools
- Further education
- Independent specialist colleges
- Adult learning
- Local government education services
- Teacher education and training
- Welsh for adults
- Work-based learning
- Learning in the justice sector

Organisations

- Action for Children
- Adult learning in the community partnerships network
- Agored Cymru
- Association of Directors of Education in Wales (ADEW)
- Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Wales
- Canolfan Dysgu Cymraeg Genedlaethol
- Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

- Careers Wales
- Central South Consortium
- Children, young people and education committee
- Children in Wales
- Children's Commissioner for Wales
- The Catholic Education Service
- Church in Wales Advisory Council for Education
- Church in Wales and Catholic Diocesan Directors of Education in Wales
- Chwarae Teg
- Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol
- Colegau Cymru
- Confederation for British Industry (CBI)
- CYDAG
- Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
- Early Years Wales
- Education Workforce Council (EWC)
- Educational Achievement Service (EAS)
- English as an Additional Language Association of Wales (EALAW)
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Field Studies Council
- Future Generations Commissioner for Wales
- Girlguiding Cymru
- GwE
- Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW)
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary Fire and Rescue Services
- Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service
- Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW)
- HMI Prisons
- HMI Probation
- Learning and Work Institute
- The Learned Society of Wales
- Mid Wales Education Partnership
- Minister for Education
- Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales
- Minister for International Relations and the Welsh Language
- Mudiad Meithrin
- National Association for Able Children in Education
- National Society of Apprentices
- National Academy of Educational Leadership
- National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)
- National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT)
- National Day Nurseries Association
- National Training Federation for Wales (NTfW)
- National Education Union
- Neath Port Talbot Council

- NUS Cymru
- North Wales Association of Special Schools Headteachers
- Ofsted
- Older People's Commissioner for Wales
- Principal Youth Officers (PYO)
- Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years Cymru (PACEY)
- Prospect
- Parentkind Cymru
- Qualifications Wales
- Regional Skills Partnerships
- Scouts Cymru
- Senedd Research
- Sector Skills Council
- Shadow Minister for Education
- SNAP Cymru
- Social Care Wales
- South West Wales Education Partnership
- The Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE Wales)
- South Wales Association of Special Schools Headteachers
- Stonewall Cymru
- Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)
- UK Ministry of Justice Inspectorates
- Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (UCAC)
- Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET)
- University and College Union (UCU)
- Voice Cymru
- Audit Wales
- Wales Centre for Public Policy
- Wales Primary Schools Association
- Welsh Government – the Health and Social Services Group
- Welsh Government – the Education, Social Justice and Welsh Language Group
- Welsh Independent Schools Council (WISC)
- Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC)
- Welsh Language Commissioner
- Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA)
- Wiserd
- Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)
- Young Women's Trust
- Youth Justice Board

Annex 3: Forum frequency and membership

We hold individual sector network events annually to ensure that senior leaders in the teaching profession across Wales are able to share best practice and discuss any issues and developments pertinent to each sector.

All events are now hosted online and Headteachers and senior leaders across each of the sectors listed below are invited to attend:

- Primary
- Secondary
- Non-maintained settings
- Independent Schools and Colleges
- Maintained Special Schools & PRUs
- All-age schools
- Federated schools
- Further Education
- Work-based Learning
- Adult Learning in the Community
- Welsh for Adults
- Initial Teacher Education
- Youth Work Services