



Software Development Forum (SDF): 16 June 2022

The recorded minutes from the meeting held via Microsoft Teams

Meeting minutes

Date of issue: 8 August 2022

Version: 1.0

Audience	Members of the Software Development Forum (SDF), including the Welsh Government, software suppliers of school information management systems and limited local authority representatives.
Overview	This document is provided by the Welsh Government as an official account of the SDF meeting held on to support software suppliers in developing their school information management systems and to support local authorities ensure that they, and their schools in Wales, are able to submit data required to comply with statutory duties.
Further information	<p>Enquiries about this document should be directed to:</p> <p>Information Management Strategy Data Collections Team School Information and Improvement Branch Education Directorate Welsh Government Cathays Park Cardiff CF10 3NQ</p> <p>Tel: 0300 062 5014 E-mail: IMS@gov.wales</p> <p> @WG_Education</p> <p> Facebook/EducationWales</p>
Additional copies	This document can be accessed from the SDF pages of DEWi .
Related documents	All relevant documentation relating to the meeting and other development documents is available on the SDF pages of DEWi .

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1. Attendees

Welsh Government		
Gareth Thomas (GT) (Chair)	Head of School Workforce Statistics	Workforce Statistics Branch
Gav Elias (GE)	Senior IMS Programme Manager	Workforce Statistics Branch
Mike Maher (MM)	School Data Officer	Workforce Statistics Branch
James Gilbert (JG)	IMS Programme Manager	School Information and Improvement Branch
Alison Tang (AT)	IAO & Programme Manager for Education	School Information and Improvement Branch
Stephen Hughes (SH)	Principal Statistician - Head of School Statistics	KAS
Andrea Melvin (AM)	Head of School Information and Improvement Branch	School Information and Improvement Branch
Sarah Angel (SA)	Snr. Pupil Information Policy Manager	School Information & Improvement Branch
Nicola Richards (NR)	Senior Policy Manager Free School Meals	Support for Learning Division
Jason Rawbone (JR)	Universal Primary Free School Meals Manager	Support for Learning Division
Rachel Thomas (RT)	ALN Policy Manager	Support for Learners Divison
Geraint Jones (GJ)	ALN Policy Senior Manager	Support for Learners Divison
Pat McCarthy (PMc)	Head of Curriculum Realisation Unit	Curriculum and Assessment Division
Local authorities and other government departments		
James Boyd (JB)	Cardiff Council	
Meiwah Farrow (MWF)	Cardiff Council	
Rodel Currie (RC)	Cardiff Council	
Luke Howells (LH)	Carmarthenshire County Council	
Sarah Irvine (SI)	Ceredigion Council	
Adam Irvine (AI)	Ceredigion Council/Teacher Centre	
Mike Jones (MJ)	City and County of Swansea Council	
Kevin Price (KP)	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	
John Tratnik (JT)	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	
Software suppliers		
Marcus Le Brocq (MLB)	Caci	
Phil Jones (PJ)	Capita ONE	
Deborah Green (DG)	Capita ONE	
Ian Ashcroft (IA)	Capita ONE	
Jim Haywood (JH)	ESS	
Paul Walton (PW)	ESS	
Ruth Vincent (RV)	ESS	
Yvonne Killick (YK)	ESS	
Nandhini Sathyamurthy	ESS	

(NS)	
Heidi Partridge,(HP)	ESS
Sathishkumar Madhanagopal (SM)	ESS
Sarah Chandler (SC)	Go 4 Schools
Jake Berg (JB)	Method4
Divya Padipura (DP)	Oracle

2. Introductions and housekeeping

The Forum was introduced to the Welsh Government members of staff at the meeting and house rules were provided to all. The Forum was informed that the meeting would be recorded.

3. Minutes of 8 February 2022 meeting and actions

The minutes of the previous meeting from 8 February 2022 were agreed as an accurate record by the Forum.

GT gave updates on the open actions from previous meeting.

Actions **SDF-435, 442, 443, 446, 447, 449, 450, 451** and **452** have all been resolved and closed.

Actions **SDF-441, 444, 445, 448** and **453** are still open.

4. Performance reporting update

SA provided an update.

Future reporting arrangements are still being considered, the research into data needs for the purposes of evaluation, improvement, accountability, and transparency has been received.

School improvement guidance is due to be published in the next couple of weeks in line with the draft version that was released last year it will set out the role of data within those overarching arrangements, but with the research project ongoing, there are no specifics about what performance measures, indicators or datasets might be in place in future years.

Regarding the interim period between now and then following on from the last couple of years where sub national awards data hasn't been published due to the impact of Covid on examinations, the options available are being looked at and the impact of implementing those or potentially switching back on 2019 measures is being considered.

ACTION SDF- 445: Development and implementation of multiple syllabus codes has been delayed slightly due to a need to focus on other work for QiW

PW asked would any changes be made to the interim measures based on impacts of Covid in the short term either for this year or next year?

SA replied there would be no changes for this year but possible changes are being considered for next year.

5. 2122.3.n development update

5.1 XSLT update

The XSLTs for this development have been circulated and are currently in use. There are no further planned updates to these.

5.2 Attendance (Primary and Secondary)

There is no primary or secondary attendance collection this year.

5.3 National Data Collection (NDC)

The NDC is collecting only the Baseline Assessments (BA) (apart from Special Schools) and Key Stage 3 (KS3) elements.

MJ had a query regarding NDC next year.

GE replied BA may drop off the collection next year though this must first be discussed by policy and agreed by the Minister.

6. 2223.1.n development update

6.1 XSLT update

Initial draft version of the Post 16 and SWAC specs were released in February and have been baselined into finalised 1.0 versions,

The Validation and Modular CBDS' for the next academic year were also released earlier in the week.

The Welsh Government is hoping to be able to share the beta XSLT file sets with suppliers by the end of June/early July and will then carry out their own user testing. By mid to late July, it is hoped to release the final XSLT file set for suppliers but this may be impacted by the DEWi Technology Refresh Project and may be in early August instead.

JH requested some clarification and added the earlier the files were received the better – suggesting an incomplete specification released sooner with caveats and a complete specification released later. DfE usually share early versions of documents prior to full release – can WG do the same?

6.2 Post-16 update

Post 16 has no significant changes and is basically a rolling forward of dates with no new data elements etc.

Program and providers lookups are waiting for to be finalised.

6.3 School Workforce Annual Census (SWAC) update

Minimal changes - 6 new codes are added to the subject lookup for the curriculum element and the retention element to reflect the AOLES so schools have the flexibility to record their timetable as they see fit for their own needs.

In validation CBDS there has been a review of the validation rules and tidying up of some of those codes.

With regards to cross DEWi Validations it is intended to undertake an exercise similar to 2019 and provide local authorities with a list of discrepancies in the sex, date of birth and National Insurance numbers where records do not match across the SWACHR and SWAC school elements for schools to update ahead of the 2022 collection and enable the cross-DEWi validations to be enabled.

7. 2223.2.n development update

7.1 XSLT update

The development request for 2223.2.0 will be carried out and tested during August, with the aim of the beta XSLTs being shared with supplier by the end of August, and final XSLTs provided in September following the Welsh Government internal UAT process.

7.2 Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC)

The initial draft specification for PLASC will be released shortly.

There are no fundamental changes to PLASC for January 2023. It is primarily a basic rolling forward of the collecting. However, it is intended to remove the GLD code completely this year, and the entire SEN provision codeset may also be reviewed.

The new UPFSM data element is not intended to be collected as part of PLASC in January 2023.

7.3 Educated Other Than At School (EOTAS)

The initial draft specification for EOTAS will be released shortly.

Once our UAT of the Post 16 and SWAC collections are done, then Validation and Modular CBDS updates will be done and should be released in late July/early August.

RH asked for confirmation that the staff data from PLASC would not be removed. GE confirmed it would not though it is still intended to remove it at some point in the future.

PDJ emphasised if there were wholesale changes they would need to know before the start of the new academic year by the latest.

GJ asked for clarification on who on the policy side was involved in the review of the SEN codesets for the EOTAS collection. GE said it was people within the ALN policy area.

MJ had a query regarding how to record pupils without IDPs who received some form of additional provision on the school's MIS without causing a conflict with PLASC. GE suggested schools and/or local authorities should contact their suppliers regarding their specific needs.

GJ suggested that if a pupil is receiving any additional learning provision then they should have an IDP.

GE suggested more context might be needed and MJ agreed to provide more information in an email.

ACTION SDF- 454: MJ to share examples of low level needs needing to be recorded but are not ALN/SEN provision with WG for consideration

JH suggested it would be possible to create a solution but cautioned whether it would be desirable.

8. Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 (“the ALN Act”) implementation update and the Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021

RT gave an update.

£42k has been committed to each local authority in Wales for the next three years to support the provision of online IDP's to ensure that all the information of pupils is captured and recorded.

Welsh Government has started to receive some reports and submissions from local authorities and are in the process of reviewing them to check that the proposals are aligned with the technical specification that was produced earlier in the year - and whether any further steer on any additional evidence may be needed

Local authorities have until the end of August to send their submissions for the last financial year.

GE added that on the SDF page there is documentation related to the IDP specification and the XML layout specification and Modular CBDS was updated to include all the data elements.

A query about consistency within the spec and Modular CBDS was received from a supplier which may lead to an update to Modular CBDS,

9. Curriculum for Wales 2022

Commencement order number three was signed and made by the Minister which sets out the commencement of the provisions under the curriculum and Assessment Wales Act for primary settings and non funded, non maintained nursery settings from September and also those secondary settings who made a declaration that they would teach their year seven under the curriculum for Wales from September in the next academic year.

Alongside and following the the Act receiving Royal assent a little over a year ago, much work is happening in terms of subordinate legislation and regulations.

There will also be an updating of the legislation summary page of the curriculum for Wales framework on Hwb.

It is also intended that there will be updates to guidance on the assessment arrangements for funded non maintained nursery settings, that updated guidance will be happening probably on the 1st of September.

Also to be published in September the refined nonstatutory Welsh framework in support of Welsh and English medium settings under the Curriculum for Wales.

In the Autumn Qualifications Wales will be consulted on the the next phase of the new qualifications' development.

On the 26 May Audit Wales published their report on the new curriculum for Wales and its implementation.

MJ asked if there were any changes in the dual registration regulations?

PM advised to check the guidance on Hwb when it gets updated at the end of the month

10. Universal Primary Free School Meals

GE noted that the new UPFSM is due to be implemented from September 2022 and that engagement with school software suppliers and development work is ongoing with everything going to plan for school software systems to have solutions in place for September's implementation.

11. Attendance Temporary Codes Removals

The Welsh Government is intending to disable the temporary codes inserted for Covid related absences from September and will confirm once there is Ministerial agreement on this.

12. Any other business

The below items were discussed under AOB by the Forum.

12.1 DEWi technology refresh project update

The rollout is going well with a few things to do for September when all schools and local authority users will begin to use the new site and the older version of DEWi will cease to be used.

There will be a new domain name for accessing DEWi and this will be shared in August.

The DEWi system database will be moved to a new SQL server and an IT health check will need to be undertaken. As a result, DEWi will be taken offline and be unavailable to users for 2-3 weeks during July/August. Users will be kept updated.

JH sought confirmation that the beneficial features of the older version of DEWi would be retained and that any necessary information would be sent directly to users and suppliers whilst DEWi was offline if needed.

GE confirmed this would be the case.

12.2 SDF Terms of Reference

Some comments from users or attendees were received and incorporated into the terms of reference. The updated terms of reference were included in the meeting documents.

Attendees were asked to review the updated terms of reference and let the Welsh Government know if there were any issues.

12.3 CTF Schema Files

AI requested that the Welsh Government provide the current technical files. GE stated that these are provided by the DfE and only done via their Slack channels, different to how they historically shared them via their website. GE was aware this meant that Wales-only suppliers that were not included in DfEs Slack channel were therefore not able to access the files. GE will discuss with DfE and once obtained from the DfE, will circulate the files.

12.4 ULN files

MJ raised a possible issue with ULN files available for download on DEWi – they appear to contain Year 11 rather than Year 10 pupils. GE noted that there were issues with DEWi's LRS submitted that obtains ULNs and that this was already being explored by the Welsh Government.

12.3 UPFSM spec baseline

JH asked if the document was available on DEWi. GE said it was due to be uploaded to the UPFSM area but was already available in the SDF meetings section.

12.3 Next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to be arranged for mid-October 2022.