



Software Development Forum (SDF): 11 October 2022

The recorded minutes of the meeting held via Microsoft Teams

Meeting minutes

Date of issue: 1 February 2023
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
Sam Fallick	Statistical Officer	Workforce Statistics Branch
James Gilbert (JG)	IMS Programme Manager	Workforce Statistics Branch
Mike Maher (MM)	School Data Officer	Workforce Statistics Branch
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
Catrin Morris (CMo)	Senior Welsh in Education planning Officer	Welsh in Education Planning Branch
Jon Ackland (JA)	Principal Statistician-Head of Cross-cutting Education Stats	KAS
Catherine Singleton	Statistical Officer	KAS
Bethan Milton (BM)	Head of Post-16 Quality	Post-16 Quality
Larissa Nixon	Senior Policy Manager Children's Rights	SJ, Comms & Poverty Research & Evidence
Nicola Richards (NR)	Senior Policy Manager Free School Meals	Support for Learning Division
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	
Rhian Rickard-Frost	Cardiff Council	
Justin Denney	Ceredigion Council	
Claire Denney	Ceredigion Council	
Sarah Irvine	Ceredigion Council	
Adam Irvine (AI)	Ceredigion Council/Teacher Centre	
Kevin Price (KP)	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	
John Tratnik (JT)	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	
Aled Rees	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	
Mike Jones (MJ)	City and County of Swansea Council	
Sara Herbert	Vale of Glamorgan Council	
Software suppliers		
Zarina Khan	Bromcom	
Marcus Le Brocq (MLB)	Caci	
Phil Jones (PJ)	Capita ONE	
Deborah Green (DG)	Capita ONE	
Ian Ashcroft (IA)	Capita ONE	

Niranjan Yedamakanti	Capita ONE
Sarah Chandler (SC)	Go4Schools
James Hornby (JHo)	Method4
Divya Padipura (DP)	Oracle
Jim Haywood (JH)	ParentPay
Paul Walton (PW)	ParentPay
Ruth Vincent (RV)	ParentPay
Yvonne Killick (YK)	ParentPay

2. Introductions and apologies

GT gave apologies for Gav Elias and Steve Hughes.

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 16 June 2022 meeting and actions

The minutes of the previous meeting from 16 June 2022 were agreed as an accurate record by the Forum.

GT gave updates on the open actions from previous meeting:

Actions **SDF- 441**, **444**, **445***, **448**** and **454** are still open.

*see item 6. Performance Reporting update.

** may be included as agenda item in future meeting.

4. Post-16 data collection

BM and JA provided an update:

BM - Post 16 Data Collection currently taking place. There were a few software issues and bugs that are believed to have been resolved.

Validation rule 1543 pupils being in the incorrect year group for their age.

12814Q learning activity or programme of study expected end date.

Some issues with QWADS that appear to be eligible on QiW but not being accepted on software and also an issue with the Provider Table update.

Fixes are believed to have been issued for all of these.

The deadline for the collection was extended to 21 October 2022.

JA – 22 clean files accepted by Welsh Government out of 137 expected – large number of outstanding submissions related to 12814Q.

JHo confirmed that changes made for Post 16 collection will be carried forward to PLASC and EOTAS

MJ one school still has a problem with a QWAD - Health Social Care with Child Care A2 – may be only school in LA running this course – SIMS patch 2204 due to be released which may fix issue.

RV preparing new fileset 2204 due to be released the following week that include latest Welsh Government changes including QWADS update. RV also raised two further QWAD queries C0001031 and C0001306

JH had a query on miscommunication and coordination with Welsh Government regarding QWAD files. JA agreed this should be addressed.

JHo confirmed there is an issue with C0001031 and C0001306 and will investigate further.

JB had issues with additional QWADS and would forward them to JHo.

SA asked for further details to investigate.

ACTION SDF- 455: JA to investigate QWAD codes which are triggering errors (C0001031 & C0001306)

ACTION SDF- 456: coordinate file lists and provide to ESS to input into schools' MIS in future.

5. Welsh language categorisation

SA and CMo Shared a paper (Appendix A) prior to meeting and gave an update on changes to school categorisation according to Welsh medium provision.

SA stated that the intention is for implementation of new Welsh medium categories in MIS systems by September 2023 ready for PLASC collection 2024.

JH need for further details of the dynamics of what will be required – how it is intended to work included in CBDS.

PJ asked for clarification on pupil or school level data collection in PLASC.

SA confirmed school level data only and isn't currently looking to introduce pupil level data collection for PLASC though will be reviewed in the future.

JH queried whether a pupil could fit in more than one category? SA confirmed that this would not be possible although schools could have multiple categories.

Currently Welsh medium categories only apply to primary, middle and secondary schools. Members agreed this could be an opportunity to consider

recording Welsh medium categories against other types of schools (nursery, special and PRU's). Also need to consider how the new codes will apply to middle schools where it may be different for different parts of the school (primary / secondary element).

ACTION SDF- 457: Further discussions with policy on timeline of feasible implementation.

ACTION SDF- 458: engage with schools and LAs on how they may record Welsh medium information against individual pupils where the school provides through multiple mediums.

6. Performance reporting update

SA no significant update, still awaiting confirmation what performance reporting requirements will be and if there will be changes to current arrangements - hopeful for confirmation imminently.

PW Are you expecting any of the measures to change fundamentally for next summer? If so, details would need to be provided by early/mid-January to be included in summer build.

SA Either 2019 measures will be switched back on, a pause or something that does not involve complex new measures being implemented.

PW Avoid complex changes and notification of any changes the sooner the better.

SA Asked to be informed of any different timeframes for other suppliers.

SA There is an added complication in Wales around how we look at performance in schools and their evaluation and improvement arrangements. Schools have been able to move in their approach to self-evaluation and broaden the range of evidence that they use as part of that process in the Curriculum for Wales ecosystem - We want to avoid undoing that work by returning to the previous mindset of focus on results.

ACTION SDF- 459: To confirm outline performance reporting requirements with group as soon as possible. Confirmation needed by mid-January to build for summer release.

7. 2223.2.n development update

UAT currently being undertake and filesets to be released once completed – little change, GLD to be removed as code in SEN provision codeset for PLASC and EOTAS.

8. 2223.3.n development update

8.1 Attendance data collections

Ongoing discussions on whether attendance collections will be going ahead.

8.2 National data collection (NDC)

No baseline assessments to be collected, KS3 to continue until rollout of new curriculum completed.

PW queried if this was subject to consultation? GT did not believe so.

ACTION SDF- 460: GT will seek formal confirmation if details of collection are subject to consultation

JH emphasised that in moving to having a variable to hold academic year care should be taken to do it properly. However, having this variable does make life easier.

PW Clarified that NDC spec was imminent and asked when Validation CBDS 2223.3 & XSLT would be available?

ACTION SDF- 461: GT will seek confirmation when Validation CBDS 2223.3 and XSLT would be available.

9. 2324.1.n development update

9.1 Post-16 update

No major changes envisaged Post-16 collection for next year.

9.2 School Workforce Annual Census (SWAC) update

For next month's collection minor changes to validation rules on pay HR side, decision to be made on cross-DEWi validation after testing - does not impact school MIS side of XSLT files.

No major changes envisaged for next year – review of a few data elements and supply element of collection, no intention to add new files or modules.

10. Curriculum for Wales

PMc gave apologies for Maxine Chichester and provided an update

Now taught in all maintained nursery settings and primary schools across Wales as of September and 104 Secondary and PRUs. Will be rolled out to all Year 7s and 8s by September 2023 as part of an evolving process within a broad national framework.

In September ESTYN published key messages in advance of full annual reporting process later in the year.

Secondary legislation process has been completed and regulations have been introduced.

Guidance has been updated and an annual cycle is being developed for updating guidance - to be published annually at the end of January.

A review of related resources on hwb is taking place and a new landing page is being developed expected to continue until end of current academic year.

A guide has been published on developing new resources and supporting material - available on hwb landing page.

National network conversations in support of thinking around curriculum implementation and evolution are ongoing – also a broader programme of support engaging with HE institutions.

The middle tier – local authorities and regions are also supporting schools in development and publication of curriculum summaries.

MJ Any updates on requirements for sharing assessment data? This needs to be considered carefully.

PMc Separate to external examinations where the data is publicly available there is a lot of thinking going on around the practical implications of the broad principles that have been accepted for Curriculum for Wales and how it affects what data is collected and what it is used for and how to avoid the potential negative and unintended consequences of rigid performance measures.

There will be a process of evolution and co-construction with many discussions within the curriculum for Wales ecosystem.

11. Universal primary Free School Meals

NR provided an update:

UPFSM part of cooperation agreement between Plaid Cymru and Labour – with the intention to deliver free school meals to all primary age pupils by September 2024.

All 22 local authorities from September this year were able to deliver the UPFSM offer to all Reception pupils

The Minister gave all local authorities the ability to move faster because of cost of living crisis if they could to accelerate offer and deliver to KS1 if they were able – 8 local authorities now also delivering to year 1 and year 2.

Minister aspiration that all local authorities will be delivering to all years 1 & 2 by April next year.

From September this year an additional 45,000 pupils became immediately eligible for offer – it is hoped to be 66,000 pupils by end of academic year.

Another round of one-to-one meetings with local authorities has recently begun.

There is no current intention to collect UPFSM data on PLASC, the roll-out will continue until September 2024 whilst funding continues to be provided via grant there is no intention to change this.

There was a significant media campaign over the summer to encourage eligible families to continue to apply for EPFSM that would be recorded separately.

ParentPay are offering to register pupils and run them through ECS checker (eligibility checker used by DWP and HMRC) for local authorities – feedback from LAs would be welcome.

MJ There is some evidence that parents of reception pupils are not applying for eFSM due to uFSM - implications for PDG, uniform grant, etc (from a meeting with headteachers).

GT asked for WG to be informed if there was any evidence of this happening elsewhere.

NR Is due to meet with Swansea local authority and will raise this.

JH Asked for an update on take up amongst nursery pupils.

NR Confirmed whilst not as much as in other eligible age groups there had been some take up of the offer.

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

A brief written update was provided by Louise Brown:

Not anticipating any changes to the PLASC ALN data collection until January 2025, to maintain consistency during implementation. Work will commence around spring to initiate policy thinking and later engagement with the group on any potential changes.

13. Any other business

GT provided a few short updates concerning DEWi:

There was an issue where schools could not access their ULN files for pupils entering year 10 – issue now resolved all schools should have received their ULN files apart from schools that have not registered with LRS.

It is intended to link Schools Portal into DEWi so that schools can access it via DEWi rather than a separate website.

There is an issue with resetting passwords and email notifications from DEWi – work is being done to address this.

There was an issue for a few local authorities related to unauthorised IP addresses related to home working – all LAs should now be able to access DEWi. GT requested that WG be notified of any changes to IP addresses within local authorities in order to update user accounts on DEWi and to minimise disruption to data collections.

GT also requested that WG is notified of any changes to email addresses for SDF members and if there are any that should be removed from SDF or DEWi.

MJ raised a query related to IDPs, PEPs for LAC pupils and ALN and asked if there was guidance on how IDPs should be transferred in these circumstances.

ACTION SDF- 462: GT will raise matter with policy colleagues and respond.

13.1 Next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to be arranged for 7 February 2023. and will take place between 13:30 and 15:00.