**Minutes of the Software Development Forum meeting**

**11 November 2014**

**Cathays Park, Cardiff**

**Present:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Kenny Barker (KB) | Advanced Learning |  | Lindsay Lewis (LL) | WG - Chair |
| Andrew Ferguson (AF) | RM |  | Claire Horton (Cho)  | WG |
| Tim Jarvis (TJ) | AT Summit |  | Rhiannon Evans (RE) | WG |
| Jon Ashworth (JA) | Capita |  | Gareth Thomas (GTh) | WG |
| Caryl Harding (Cha) | Capita SIMS |  | Arfon Owen (AO) | WG |
| Jim Haywood (JH) | Capita SIMS |  | Natalie Hughes-Owen (NH) | WG |
| James Boyd (JB) | Cardiff  |  | Sian James (SJ) | WG - pm |
| Glyn Thomas (GT) | Cardiff  |  | Graham Davies (GD) | WG - am |
| Ceri Davies (CD) | Cardiff / Sims user group  |  | Andy Milne (AM) | WG - pm |
| Mike Jones (MJ) | Swansea / ONE user group |  | Jayne Dunn (JD) | WG - pm |
|  |  |  | Scott Clifford (SC) | WG - pm |

# Apologies

## Alex Harris AT Summit

## Phil Jones Capita

## Luke Howell Carmarthenshire / RM user group

## Yvonne Davies Flintshire

## Eileen Baxandall Wrexham / SIMS user group

## Steve Hughes WG

## Jenna Arnold WG

## Rebecca Olney WG

## LL welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

# Minutes, actions and matters arising from the meeting on 4 June, 2014

## It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting on 4 June 2014 were a true record of the meeting.

## LL then reviewed the action list. The status for each item had been updated where appropriate. In addition, the following information was provided at the meeting for those items not on the agenda:

Action 100: Will be actioned later this year.

Action 104: Will be actioned later this year.

Action 121: CHo is meeting with Method 4 on 13 November 2014 to hopefully resolve the issue of using commas within pupil names.

Action 137: JH identified the need for WG to supply guidance for suppliers to issue to schools regarding the year taught data item. LL confirmed this will be clarified in the guidance notes.

**Action 147: WG to amend guidance notes to include year taught definition**

Action 139: LL updated everyone on SH’s behalf, which stated “at SDF in June we assumed that the DfE would use their Wolff list and would not maintain the list we had used previously. However, they have maintained the list for 2014, which is essentially the same list that suppliers would have used for 2013 and earlier years. We can put a copy of this list on DEWi if suppliers do not already have it.” CHa noted that the lists are not the same and that they differ each year.

 SH has clarified this updated with the following; WG is not using the Wolff list, but is continuing to use the 2013 list as the basis for discounting, updated for new quals as necessary. We will share the latest (2014) list with suppliers as soon as the 2014 exercise is closed. This list may not cover all approved qualifications available to schools in summer 2015.

Action 140: SH provided the following update after the meeting held on 11 November.

 There is a timeline of changes to reporting for Wales online: <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/qualificationsinwales/revofqualen/?lang=en> The changes to reporting that would affect MIS do not come into force until summer 2017.

Action 141: CHo confirmed that the draft EOTAS 2016 specification will be ready in February and will consider the double counting issue.

Action 144: Will be actioned later this year. CHo confirmed it is not clear yet if penalty notices will have an impact on systems.

# EYDAF and Curriculum Review

## GD confirmed that the Early Years Development and Assessment Framework (EYDAF) will focus on children aged 0-7 and that the on entry at statutory school age assessment and end of Foundation Phase assessment are the bits of interest for the school software suppliers. These are teacher assessments and will be collected every year. The on-entry assessment should take place six weeks after the child starts school and the end of phase assessment takes place as normal towards the end spring term. These teacher assessments will become statutory in September 2015 and will be collected by Welsh Government in summer 2016 with NDC.

## Pilots of both the data entry and process will take place with 200 schools and settings in January 2015 and this will highlight any issues with data or with burden in schools. Further trials will take place in the summer.

## Following on from the pilot it is anticipated that the final profile will not be ready until the end of the summer term which is just before it is due to go live in September 2015. It is anticipated that it will be similar to what is used for the pilot but this could not be guaranteed.

## CHa asked when the spec would be available for suppliers and GD confirmed this wouldn’t be until September. He also stated that a provisional spec would be ready in January for the pilot and asked if it would be useful for that to be shared. All suppliers then discussed and agreed that the more information provided as early as possible is better. Work can then be factored into business plans and amendments can more easily be slotted in to systems.

## MJ suggested that mark sheets could be inputted to school MIS systems rather than blank spreadsheets to avoid errors. MJ then asked about the assessments for pre-school children, GD said this was unknown at this point. LL explained that anything which supports the process can be used and that WG wouldn’t want to buy a new product. GD asked if WG knows which schools don’t have MIS systems in place, LL confirmed we didn’t.

## GD confirmed that the assessment tool would be used to capture data for all four years however WG is only interested in collecting the data from years 1 and 2. Scoping work is going to be conducted over the next few weeks.

## MJ asked if the scale had been developed for the four elements. GD confirmed it had and that this would be tested during the pilot in January.

# NDC & National Test Update

## Please see Appendix A for a detailed test update.

##  The 2015 statutory tests will take place between:

• 29 April and Tuesday 12 May for Secondary schools

• 6 May and Tuesday 12 May for Primary Schools

##  The 2016 statutory tests will take place between:

• 27 April and 10 May for Secondary Schools

• 4 May and 10 May for Primary Schools

## The reason for giving Secondary schools an additional week in both 2015 and 2016 is to give them the opportunity to avoid test sittings during the busiest period of the examination timetable.

## Secondary schools would be free to sit both procedural and reasoning numeracy tests for each year group along with the year 8 and 9 reading tests at any point in the window. However, because the year 7 reading test paper is the same as the paper taken by year 6, they will be instructed to conduct this test during the period common to both windows.

## Tests guidance and a timetable will be available soon on the Learning Wales website. Schools will also receive guidance from NFER on how to order the test papers within the next few weeks.

# Post-16

*Post-16 2016*

## LL welcomed NH, SJ, AO and SC to present the Post-16 2016 specification. AO confirmed that the only differences between the 2016 and 2015 specifications were that the dates had been rolled forward for 2016.

## JH raised that users expressed a need for the key skills within the Welsh Baccalaureate to be able to be entered more easily. A discussion then took place regarding what action schools take regarding entering their key skills data and whether they need to enter each key skill for each pupil.

**Action 148: AO to clarify what key skills data is needed from schools.**

## JH asked which look-ups suppliers should be using for the 2014/15 academic year and if the specs could specify where to look in DEWi for the latest version of the XSLT that should be used.

**Action 149: Spec to be updated to show which look-ups go with which collection.**

**AO pointed out that sometimes the suppliers look-ups change at the last minute due to new post-16 provision becoming available. If the latest look-ups are not used in MIS this can cause problems for the post-16 collection.**

**Action 150: WG to amend spec to state suppliers are to make it easier to add providers.**

## CHo noted that V 0.2 of the spec was released this morning to amend the LA code to LEA code as it is a data item so should remain as LEA.

## JH asked if schools know the differences between the 2014 and 2015 collection. AO confirmed that Geoff Hicks is holding meetings with all headteachers to highlight the differences.

*Post-16 2014*

## AO confirmed the closing date for the Post-16 collection was 10 November and, despite the extended deadline, some schools still had not submitted their data however they are aware of all the remaining schools and the issues they are having. CD asked if schools will be penalised on funding if subjects weren’t in the system by the deadline. AO confirmed that the 2014 collection isn’t being used for funding but next year schools will be compared on what they say they are going to deliver and what they actually deliver and that will impact on funding.

## MJ raised a query regarding same subjects being split within the school timetable; he asked if DEWi recognised this as an error and if so can there be a note to say it’s a duplication not an error. A discussion then took place regarding the definition of learning activities and developing a best practice for all schools submitting learning activities which are split in a schools timetable but are for one subject.

**Action 151: AO to confirm how duplicate learning activities should be dealt with.**

**Action 152: SJ to update spec and completion notes with a definition of a learning activity.**

## JH asked if there was anything stopping schools in Wales doing a two-year A level course rather than one year AS level and one year A2. Attendees then discussed the possibilities for schools regarding the above.

**Action 153: AO to confirm if Welsh schools can choose to deliver the two-year A-levels and to check funding arrangements for these courses**

## Action 137: SJ asked if the spec needs to be amended to show schools aren’t changing their year taught data until September. GT questioned if year taught data is amended would this have an impact on attendance data collection. Attendees then discussed possible solutions and JH suggested building something into the system where schools could detail reasoning for the errors rather than LA’s trying to interpret them.

## MJ raised the issue with dual and triple registered pupils, explaining it is very difficult to validate especially if pupils are dual registered in different counties. AO explained that it is clearly instructed in the completion notes that the pupil’s main school should submit the data. Discussions then took place around the issue of main providers and how this is decided and if the main provider is a college. LL confirmed guidance on dual registration hasn’t changed. JB raised the issue of multiple dual subsidiaries and GT confirmed the guest does not record attendance.

**Action 154: WG to follow up on new attendance guidance and ensure it covers dual registration.**

## Action 112: AO confirmed meetings had been held with schools and that the completion notes also cover the post-16 changes.

## GT asked if schools were issuing mature UPNs. AO confirmed they were not expecting this information from schools and that 20 + learners should not be included in the collection.

**Action 117: AO to inform schools that UPNs do not need to be issued to mature students and update the post-16 spec and completion notes to reflect this.**

# Interventions monitoring

## LL welcomed JD to present the interventions monitoring plan. JD explained that in May 2014, a White Paper on Legislative Proposals for Additional Learning Needs in Wales was published. A summary of responses to the consultation on the White Paper proposals was then published in October 2014.

## JD noted that pilot projects within schools monitoring interventions for individual pupils identified two good practices, however within a year several diverging practices are being used. Current school MIS do not hold certain pupil information, for example if a pupil is attending physiotherapy sessions. WG is therefore looking to develop a system where all information on individual pupils can be held, which will hopefully identify school interventions and pupil results.

## JD confirmed that keeping in line with the legislative proposals details of the model will be published in February 2015. JH asked if this new model will blend into the current SEN framework. JD explained that some schools have already started using the model within the current SEN framework but interpreting it in different ways so they want to make the use of it consistent across all schools.

## AM questioned what the model will look like and JD stated guidance will be published next year dependant on what is passed within the Bill. The Bill is being implemented in 2015 meaning the changes to ALN are likely to be implemented in September 2017 but there will be no collection of data.

# Issues arising during the collection

## CHo explained that during this collection validation rules were turned off and questioned whether this was the best way to deal with them. JH said he thought communications were poor between suppliers and WG and that points of contact need to be confirmed. CHo said all WG directed queries should be sent to the IMS mailbox.

**Action 155: Suppliers to update points of contact.**

## SJ raised that during the collection a number of errors were just accepted and asked if this was the best way to deal with them. AF said a revised XSLT should be issued and that when an issue is raised it should be shared with all contacts so everyone is aware of it. CD agreed with this and asked if an updated error list or FAQ could be circulated so that everyone knows at which level the error is at.

## WG agreed to ensure that known issues are circulated to all suppliers and LAs and new versions of XSLT are circulated to all suppliers when fixes are required during future collections.

# AOB

## None

# Date of next meeting

## 10 February 2015 - Cathays Park, Cardiff.

10 March 2015 - Cathays Park, Cardiff.

**Annex A – National Tests**

A discussion was held on data from 2013 and 2014:

* There was some concern that, given the amount of time passed since the 2013 tests, that schools will not find the information valuable or useful.
* It was confirmed that schools should not hold incorrect data, so the exercise is necessary.
* Data will be sent to LAs by the end of autumn term, but this will not be in an import file format.
* It was agreed that it would most likely be easiest to delete the incorrect standardised scores from 2013 reading tests and then import the correct scores, rather than expect an import file to overwrite.
* It was also agreed that the cost of this exercise would need to be considered before a final decision is reached.

**Action 156: CHo to get consensus across all LAs for the best format for import files in 2015.**

**Action 157: Suppliers to consider the deletion of 2013 data and feedback on any issues.**

A discussion then took place about the importance of the <DateTestTaken> field:

* CHo explained that the age standardised score uses a combination of the DOB and the date test taken to calculate.
* The issues that occurred in 2013 and 2014 with this field appear to be down to the block-filling of dates in some systems.
* It was confirmed that if this was made clear in the spec, this would be worked on for 2015. CHo confirmed that this has been clarified in the spec.

MJ asked about how certain scores have been aggregated in school comparative reports and asked for advice on how best to attribute <, >, X, D scores at an LA level.

**Action 158: CHo to provide clear guidance on how <, >, X and D scores are to be included when aggregating results.**