



Estyn

Rhagoriaeth i bawb - Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

Management information in local authority youth services



BUDDSODDWR MEWN POBL
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



JUNE 2009

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- ▲ secondary schools;
- ▲ special schools;
- ▲ pupil referral units;
- ▲ independent schools;
- ▲ further education;
- ▲ adult community-based learning;
- ▲ youth support services;
- ▲ youth and community work training;
- ▲ local authority education services;
- ▲ teacher education and training;
- ▲ work-based learning;
- ▲ careers companies;
- ▲ offender learning; and
- ▲ the education, guidance and training elements of the Department for Work and Pensions funded training programmes.

Estyn also:

- ▲ provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the National Assembly for Wales and others; and
- ▲ makes public good practice based on inspection evidence.

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Introduction

The purpose and scope of this survey

- 1 The purpose of this survey is:
 - to provide a position paper on 'Management information in local authority youth services'; and
 - to highlight good practice in the provision, use and impact of this information.
- 2 The Welsh Assembly Government asked Estyn to look at:
 - the extent to which local authority youth services collect outcome data on the skills that young people learn and develop, including the use of national awarding body accreditation, and how that data is used as part of management information;
 - the extent to which there are links to performance management and service improvement;
 - arrangements that local authorities and principal youth officers have made for the management of information, at the levels at which it is collected;
 - the outcome data identified so far through Demonstrating Success;
 - the use of Welsh Local Government Association data for analysis; and
 - examples of good practice that lead to positive service improvements and outcomes for young people aged 11-25.

Background

Context

- 3 Extending Entitlement is the Welsh Assembly Government's flagship policy for the provision of youth support services in Wales. This is a comprehensive, long-term strategy for the improvement of young people's access to support, services and opportunities for education, training, employment and citizenship activities.
- 4 The policy confirms that local authority youth services should have a strong role in the corporate responsibility for leading, supporting and delivering this improvement. The responsibility includes pulling together data on outcomes for all young people in their area, including data on participation, health, housing, attainment, offending and substance misuse.
- 5 When Extending Entitlement was drafted, there was a lack of detailed information about the quality of the services available and how many young people were being missed and why. These data problems reflected the low priority attached to youth work services by local authorities. Although almost a decade has passed, the Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector 2007-2008 still concluded that:
"Partnerships do not gather enough data about the young people who make use of youth support services. They also do not evaluate the difference services make to the young people who use them."
- 6 These problems have not made it easy to carry out the detailed audit of provision needed to establish the extent of gaps or duplication across Wales. However, it is clear that both exist.
- 7 The Youth Service Strategy for Wales 2007, 'Youth work, young people, Youth Service', sets out a vision for the development of services which contribute fully to the development of young people. As well as identifying core values for youth work, it also outlines the need to improve monitoring and evaluation of impact. This is in line with Extending Entitlement and the Assembly's response to the Beecham Report 2006. The Strategy asks for the introduction of systems that meet the national standard for benchmarking performance and provision in order to secure and maintain equality of opportunity for young people.
- 8 'Research into the Impact and Benefits of Youth Services in Wales' (People and Work Unit 2008) also recommends improved tracking and evaluation of youth work.
- 9 The Welsh Assembly Government's Demonstrating Success initiative sets out to develop ways to measure, among other things, the important contribution made by the Youth Service to the development of young people. It proposes a range of performance indicators which could be used at local authority and national levels to demonstrate impact. This includes, for example, data on the percentage of young people who feel that their education meets their learning needs, are in education, employment or training and are involved as volunteers in their communities. These measures would provide robust evidence of the impact of Welsh Assembly Government policy.

- 10 The 'Audit of the Maintained Youth Services in Wales', (Wales Youth Agency, 2005) and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) data unit audit of 2006 have also contributed to the identification of the need for guidance in developing systems as outlined above. This identification is in line with the wider challenges set by the Assembly to those delivering public services in Wales in 'Making the Connections – Delivering Beyond the Boundaries: Transforming public services in Wales, 2006'.

Evidence base for the study

- 11 During the study, inspectors met with or spoke to principal youth officers, local authority officers, and youth workers. They collated and analysed information about existing practice in the collection, management, analysis and use of data. They also reviewed youth support services inspection reports as well as annual reports on the performance of local authority youth services.

Main findings

- 12 Most local authority youth services do not use robust management information systems (MIS). This means that planning at all levels is hindered by the lack of information. In addition there is often only limited evaluation of how effective the youth service is in meeting young people's needs.
- 13 There is little common practice in the use of MIS across Wales, although there is increasing use of two commercially available systems, 'Quality Education Solutions Youth Services' and 'Cognisoft Insight and Outreach'.
- 14 Although there has been some progress in the collection of management data by local authority youth services in Wales, there has only been limited use made of this.
- 15 Data on outcomes for young people has not been fully developed and there has been limited use of data to inform more effective planning and service improvement.
- 16 In all local authorities where youth support services had been inspected, the local authority youth services had undertaken at least one self-evaluation. Most of the self-evaluation reports are based on first hand evidence and identified priorities for improvement. However, the reports focus too much on descriptions of the activities offered, rather than evaluating their quality or outcomes.
- 17 There are a small number of exceptions to this generally negative picture. The outstanding work of one youth service, for example, is subject to the same stringent performance management systems, including data collection and analysis to inform service improvement, as the rest of the provision of the local authority.

Recommendations

The Welsh Assembly Government should:

- R1 ensure that all local authority youth services use a consistent MIS or one set of agreed standards against which they all report.

Local authority youth services should:

- R2 develop effective management information systems to collect data on take up, attainment, drop-out rates and progress of young people in formal and non-formal education;
- R3 further develop systems for measuring the personal development of young people;
- R4 improve the collection and analysis of relevant data and information including that which relates to social inclusion;
- R5 use the management information collected to evaluate outcomes for, and impact of youth service practice on, young people;
- R6 use the management information collected to improve planning and co-ordination of provision to meet the needs of young people; and
- R7 use the management information collected to inform decision-making by elected members.

Local partnerships should:

- R8 analyse the data available that relates to social inclusion in order to identify local challenges and local solutions; and
- R9 support the roll out of effective use of MIS to partner agencies that contribute to local youth support services.

Evidence from Estyn annual reports on the performance of local authority youth services since 2004

- 18 The following examples are drawn from reports of local authority youth support services in each reporting year. Four inspections are completed, on average, each year.

Youth service use of management information 2004-2005

- 19 There was little evidence of managers focusing on evaluation and quality improvement in this period. Self-assessment had not yet become embedded in the culture of the local authority youth services. As a consequence the services were unable to identify poor practice and make appropriate interventions.
- 20 The local authority youth services did not identify and use data to demonstrate what worked and what did not work. There had been no changes in traditional funding strategies or budget headings and a lack of evidence of prioritising.
- 21 Most local authority youth services were not able to identify effectively what was working well and what was not. This prevented them from reviewing how best to plan and fund service improvements. There was not enough use made of available data to identify strengths and weaknesses at operational levels. Planning for improvement was needed.

Youth service use of management information 2005-2006

- 22 Similarly, there was little focus on evaluation and quality improvement in this period. As a consequence local authority youth services were often unable to identify poor practice and make appropriate interventions. There was a growing understanding of the need for service improvement. Only half the authorities visited showed commitment to quality. However, self-assessment was not yet embedded in the local authority youth services although one local authority youth service had developed regular self-assessment processes and a quality handbook.
- 23 There was inexperience and, in some cases, a lack of expertise in middle management in local authority youth services. This meant that managers could not always fulfil their aims. These included strategic planning, decision making, performance management, influencing decision making in the local authority, quality assurance and monitoring outcomes for young people.
- 24 The local authority youth services did not identify and use evidence based data to demonstrate what worked and what did not work.

Youth service use of management information 2006-2007

- 25 By this time, all the local authority youth services inspected had undertaken at least one self-assessment. Most of the self-assessment reports were based on first hand evidence and identified priorities for improvement. However, the reports focused too much on descriptions of the activities offered, rather than evaluating the quality of these. Often there was no focus on outcomes when planning.

- 26 Most local authority youth services did not use robust management information systems. This meant that managers could not develop their services based on accurate management data and evidence of need.
- 27 Planning at all levels was hindered by a lack of robust management information and there was often only limited evaluation of how effective the local authority youth services were in meeting young people's needs.

Youth service use of management information 2007-2008
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- 28 Recently there has been some progress in the collection of management data by the local authority youth services inspected, although there has only been limited use made of this data. Data on outcomes for young people has not been fully developed. Quantitative outputs are generally the focus of data collection. Analysis is often limited to description rather than the measurement of quality, impact and performance of service.
- 29 There is one clear exception to this general picture. The outstanding work of one youth service is subject to the same stringent performance management systems, including data collection and analysis as the rest of the provision of the local authority. There is good practice in quality assurance, data collection and analysis. Managers make good use of their detailed management information.

The impacts and benefits of youth services in Wales

People and Work Unit, February 2008 – measuring the impact of youth services

- 30 The National Youth Service Strategy for Wales suggests a range of measurements that together will inform the evaluation of the contribution made by youth services to the impact on young people. Suggestions for measurement include:
- personal achievement;
 - changes in emotional competence;
 - outcomes such as qualifications, entering education, training or employment, or becoming a better citizen; and
 - inputs like resources, staff time, types of activities and participation rates.
- 31 The measurement of progress in developing soft skills is not scientific. Objective assessment is clouded by subjectivity and practical issues. Establishing causal links between youth work and corresponding outcomes for young people is difficult.
- 32 Reliable evidence of behavioural change needs to be recorded by youth workers who have limited time and training to master sophisticated systems.
- 33 There are useful comparisons to be made with the parallel study of 'Education and Youth Services in England' (Ofsted 2005) where a distinction is drawn between primary changes in attitudes and behaviour and consequential changes in situation, such as entering employment. The former may be seen to have value but they do not guarantee change. Impact can only really be identified by hard outcomes like improved attainment and achievement, a fall in the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), improved attendance at school, a fall in exclusion rates, fewer references to social services and falling youth annoyance and youth crime statistics.

Commercial MIS used by local authority youth services

Quality education solutions (QES): youth services

- 34 Quality Education Service (QES) Youth Service was designed by youth workers to support the planning, delivery and evaluation of their work in England. The system enables services to manage project and session planning whilst capturing attendance records as work is delivered. Planning processes cross reference with the English policy document Every Child Matters and any local curriculum frameworks. Impact of work can be recorded both through evaluation processes and by logging outcomes achieved by young people.
- 35 The system collates information and is able to report in a variety of ways in order to demonstrate performance. It can also produce data for regular monitoring or provide information to support strategic management decisions. The system is web-based and designed to be able to exchange data with other systems.

Cognisoft – Insight and Outreach (IO)

- 36 This web-based database helps capture information surrounding all aspects of service delivery. It is an operational tool for youth workers enabling them to compile online files. These personal details, assessments, individual development plans, participation and hard and soft outcomes are assigned to the Welsh entitlements. The files help service planning and delivery with statistical returns and management information generated from day-to-day tracking.
- 37 The system covers all youth service activities and provides easy access to key information. It requires data entry, produces statistical returns and information for management teams and funding bodies whilst helping front line staff to prioritise their work.
- 38 Once data is collected it can be shared with any database. This enables joined up service delivery. Action plans, notes and electronic evidence can all be recorded by youth workers to create a full picture of all interventions.

Appendix 1: Current practice in six sample local authority youth services

Local authority 1

Background

The youth service has a close working relationship with QES and has extensive use of this MIS for planning, recording and evaluating its work. It replaced paper based systems which had been introduced following criticism of a lack of consistent evidence to support evaluation of the work of the service.

The benefits of the effective use of QES are now being recognised by other youth support services in the area and management practice is being influenced positively. The youth service is a licence holder with QES and is allowed to sub-licence to partner agencies. Four projects in the voluntary sector that are wholly or joint funded through Cymorth or the youth service budget are now signed up to QES. It has been offered free of charge to partners. This offer includes the training support needed for successful implementation. This offer has already been taken up by the Young Farmers Club.

Relevant data is filed according to inputs, outputs and outcomes. The system can be picked up wherever there is online access. It offers confidentiality with restricted access and security defined by each user group.

Information is entered via a location or venue home page and then to a specific project or session. Information recorded includes staffing, attendance, curriculum delivery, accreditation and evidence of young people's personal development, for example the Demonstrating Success criteria. Analysis can be secured from the perspective of a service user or a member of staff, or in the form of a report in Word or Excel. Referrals from Careers Wales are automatically recorded and it is possible to link with the national pupil database.

Benefits to the youth service include the improvement in the quality of service action planning and in performance management. With access to QES data, effective and ineffective practice is clearly evidenced. Consequently, the quality of professional supervision of staff has been improved. Good practice is celebrated and shared and work which is having little or no impact is identified and challenged.

Lessons learned

There was little understanding of the capacity or the relevance of MIS prior to the implementation of QES.

Time has been needed for set up in order to match the system to local circumstances and to allow for early inputting errors to be corrected.

No early or quick outcomes can be achieved. There has to be time for enough data to be collated before meaningful analysis is possible.

Realistic targets for training and for implementation must be set.

ICT confidence together with an understanding of the context and purpose of youth work is necessary to lead the implementation of MIS. In addition, senior management need to understand and support the strategic importance of this development.

Consistency in implementation across the service is essential. This means that training must take place if a service is to benefit fully from MIS.

Judgements

Good features:

- the database is used by staff to plan and evaluate their work effectively;
- the database helps to make supervision meetings with staff at all levels purposeful and focused on improving outcomes for young people;
- data is routinely used in order to monitor individual and business plan targets;
- the service makes good use of the database for quality assurance, curriculum planning and for monitoring outcomes for young people;
- the use of MIS is well embedded and further developments are ongoing;
- managers monitor data well in order to comply with business planning and scrutiny protocols; and
- the service is leading the effective use of MIS by local and regional partners.

Shortcomings:

- there are no shortcomings identified in this example of very good practice.

Local authority 2

Background

The youth service developed a comprehensive paper-based system to record management information over a number of years.

Corporate support allowed this to be transferred to an on-line system to enable more effective management and analysis of data.

Following consultation with staff it was agreed that the commercial MIS for the service had to be user friendly, cost effective, secure, had the capacity to track individuals and be responsive to the youth work curriculum. Staff also wanted the system to help share good practice.

The Cognisoft online system was implemented and is used to review individual participation, progress, accreditation, curriculum coverage, staff performance and service effectiveness.

There has been a clear move from general youth club activity to project based youth work as a result of the evidence base informing service evaluation.

All staff in the service and some partner agencies in the voluntary sector use the database for recording and reporting.

Lessons learned

The system must be flexible and capable of adjustment as the reporting demands to the Welsh Assembly Government and external agencies change.

ICT expertise and access to additional specialist support is essential in order to maximise the benefits of the MIS.

In-house training capacity must be identified in order to ensure all staff use the system effectively.

An internet based system allows access from any online computer.

As partners become involved, it is important to agree a common language and definitions in order that reports contain all relevant data.

The use of the MIS has helped to support the professional recognition of the value of youth work in the local authority and to target professional development of its staff.

Judgements

Good features:

- youth workers systematically use the system to report both quantitative and qualitative information to track the development of young people efficiently;
- the use of the system to inform performance management is well embedded;
- there are good examples of service remodelling on the basis of evaluations informed by database analysis and reports; and
- the database has helped to secure additional resources from a range of sources.

Shortcomings:

- changing data and information requirements from the Welsh Assembly Government cannot be managed at short notice; and
- inputting of data is time consuming.

Local authority 3

Background

The youth service had developed and used its own in-house database for capturing a range of information about youth work over the last three years. Recently, the service took the decision, following the availability of capital funding and the loss of technical support from within the directorate, to buy into the QES database.

The youth service and QES are working together to develop the system. For example, QES have agreed to make modifications to the system so as not to lose useful data which is already collected.

The service uses its database for:

- recording outcomes, including accreditation and other criteria such as financial management, inter-personal skills and enjoyment;
- tracking young people's participation;
- curriculum planning against five local curriculum areas, national curriculum and the entitlements. These are linked to a planning calendar, which allows gaps to be picked up by youth workers and managers;
- managing and training staff; and
- reporting and providing evidence for elected members, funding bodies and others.

Lessons learned

For an in-house MIS to be effective there has to be good quality support from technical officers. Without that support it is necessary to invest in a commercial package like QES.

The database has the potential to provide a useful tool for staff to track participation and progress for young people as well as manage, evaluate and improve service provision.

The youth service ICT infrastructure needs to be developed in order that all youth workers and managers will be able to access the online database.

Judgements

Good features:

- the service uses the system well in supervision meetings when staff discuss data in relation to individual and business plan targets;

- the database is used effectively to monitor young people's achievements, to capture safeguarding information and for curriculum planning; and
- staff are committed to the system as it is already providing evidence to inform service improvements.

Shortcomings:

- the database is dependent on users having good access to the internet; and
- there is no Welsh language interface.

Local authority 4

Background

The youth service has commissioned a database from QES for capturing a range of information about youth work.

Information can be recorded about:

- project and programme planning;
- participation; and
- outcomes for young people, mapped against the youth work curriculum for Wales.

All staff in the service use the database for recording and reporting.

Lessons learned

The service has been using the database for three years. It has had to deal with a number of issues including:

- a lack of ICT infrastructure and staff expertise;
- time taken to input data;
- the limited facility for reporting headline data in the system; and
- cost. This includes £25,000 set up fee, £3,500 annual subscription and £5,000 for an extra reporting facility.

Managers reported some frustration with the operation of the database because of the fine tuning that was necessary before it met their needs.

Manual entry of data is inefficient and barcode readers are used in outlying clubs to enable part-time staff in particular to use the database.

Judgements

Good features: the database is a useful tool for:

- monitoring how young people gain credit and recognition for their achievements;
- reporting on outcomes;
- reporting key performance indicators; and
- supporting staff to manage and reflect on their work.

Shortcomings:

- the database is dependent on good access to the internet;
- there is no Welsh language interface; and
- staff still need to visit the central office to download data from barcode readers to the database.

Local authority 5

Background

Manual data collection is used to track attendance and involvement in order to respond to WLGA and WAG data collections. Responding to these requirements has been a complex challenge.

Efforts have been made to record and manage data and to analyse that data to improve performance and effectiveness. Quality assurance practices are embedded and have revealed the need for better data.

The local authority is striving to create a sophisticated business culture and the chief executive and director want services to focus on efficient use of management information to evaluate impact and drive service improvement.

At present all officers have some responsibility for inputting data but there is corporate capacity which is beginning to be used. The introduction of the QES database will take place in April 2009 following training and trialling.

Staff want to develop core data sets and to include the tracking of young people's personal development. They have piloted online and paper systems for the collection of this data.

QES is working to respond to the additional needs already identified in order to meet local and national requirements.

Lessons learned

Existing management information relates only to individual projects and practice.

The ICT infrastructure needs to be upgraded to include PDAs and barcode readers.

Structured implementation is essential including consultation and training prior to the launch if there is to be common practice.

This development cannot be rushed as implementation is taking place at a time of rapid progress for youth work in Wales. Good understanding of change management practice will help to achieve success.

The better use of management information is helping to raise the professional status of youth work in the local authority.

Judgements

Good features:

- the collection of management information is nothing new to youth workers and managers;
- implementation plans are structured and systematic; and
- quality assurance is embedded, as is service improvement on the basis of evaluations informed by evidence.

Shortcomings:

- until access to ICT is consistent, there will continue to be paper and online entry of data;
- the issue of access for Welsh speakers has yet to be addressed; and
- while plans are clear for the implementation, it is still too early to judge the impact of the adoption of QES.

Local authority 6

Background

The Youth Service has been slow to improve its data collection through the implementation of MIS in the past. Performance management and planning for service development have proceeded without essential supporting information. There is now evidence of change in a number of areas.

MIS used currently include:

- the Maytas system (see glossary), which supports adult education, work-based learning and the youth service;
- officer designed data bases and spread sheets which are used to record activities;

- area profiles where trends on school attainment, attendance, all exclusions, social services referrals, youth annoyance, teenage pregnancies and crime are used to assess the impact of provision; and
- the schools' information management system (SIMS).

The Detached Team uses a paper system to gather information about inclusion, health, wellbeing and personal development. A limited amount of management information is transferred manually to the Maytas system. There is no facility for analysis and it is not able to deliver trend data. The quantitative information recorded is used to support evaluation of impact and effectiveness of staff and staffing arrangements.

Current data from consultation with young people and from attendance figures is used to provide evidence for the Council's evaluation and development of out of school hours activity for young people. The data does not relate to individuals and does not allow good linkage to post-code data or to SIMS. The authority has been working with commercial providers who currently support different aspects of local authority MIS to identify a way forward which would also meet the youth service MIS needs.

Lessons learned

The youth service should analyse its data against post code data, school attendance, drug and alcohol data. However, that would require the adoption of Cognissoft or QES. Officers are not confident that they are able to make an informed choice or that costs could be met.

A universal system which is flexible and robust would help the tracking of young people's development, staff management and service improvement.

In the interim, the use of personal digital assistants (PDA) and barcode readers would lessen the administrative burden of transferring data to the Maytas MIS.

Judgements

Good features:

- there is evidence of a developing focus on the use of relevant data to support performance management and service development;
- quantitative information is recorded, entered on systems and used to inform evaluation of impact and effectiveness of staff and staffing arrangements in some parts of the service; and
- consultation with young people has produced data which, along with quantitative data about attendance at activities, has impacted positively on service development.

Shortcomings:

- there is a need to rationalise the use of MIS;
- there is existing management information which is quantitative but not qualitative;
- there is no facility for analysis or for the delivery of trend data;
- current data does not relate to individuals and does not allow good linkage to post-code data or to Capita's schools' information management system (SIMS);
and
- paper based systems are impractical in detached settings.

Appendix 2: Mapping of youth service use of MIS in Wales in 2008

Work completed by Tim Opie, WLGA

Local authority	System used	Notes
Blaenau Gwent	In-house – SNAP	Questionnaire analysis – data can be exported into Microsoft packages
Bridgend	QES	
Caerphilly	None	Proposal submitted for WAG capital funding for QES
Cardiff	Cognisoft	March 2009 roll out
Carmarthenshire	QES	
Ceredigion	In-house	Proposal submitted for WAG capital funding for QES
Conwy	QES	
Denbighshire	In-house	
Flintshire	QES	
Gwynedd	In-house	
Merthyr Tydfil	QES	
Monmouthshire	None	
Neath Port Talbot	Cognisoft	Piloting but also using paper based
Newport	Cognisoft	
Pembrokeshire	QES	Used across whole service, rolling out to the voluntary sector
Powys	In-house	Recently agreed contract to migrate data to QES
Rhondda Cynon Taff	MAYTAS	Adult Education & Youth joint system
Swansea	Cognisoft	
Torfaen	None	
Vale of Glamorgan	None	Considering WAG capital bid
Wrexham	None	Considering WAG capital bid
Ynys Môn	None	Basic in-house system used for basic data

Glossary

Beecham Report 2006 – Sir Jeremy Beecham's Review of Local Service Delivery in Wales

Cymorth – a WAG funding stream administered through local Children and Young People's Partnerships within each local authority. It is meant to support a network of targeted support for children and young people.

Demonstrating Success (www.demonstratingsuccess.co.uk) – a new approach to measuring the progress and outcomes of children and young people in Wales. It is based on recognition that young people achieve far more through their involvement with programmes and policies than is currently measured.

Detached youth work – is free from the constraints of centre-based work. It aims to develop learning opportunities with those who are not using or failing to access other youth provision.

Every Child Matters – an approach to the wellbeing of children and young people in England. Organisations providing services to children team up in new ways, share information and work together to protect children and young people from harm and help them achieve what they want in life. The Welsh approach is outlined in the document 'Children and Young People; Rights to Action'.

Extending Entitlement – the policy for youth support services in Wales. It includes all services, support and opportunities for young people between 11 and 25, wherever they happen, whoever is delivering them and wherever the funding originates. It defines the 10 basic entitlements of young people in Wales.

Making the Connections – the policy for public service reform in Wales. It sets out the WAG's vision for a prosperous, sustainable, bilingual, healthier and better-educated Wales.

Maytas – a customisable MIS developed by the Tribal Group. It is designed for work based learning but can be adapted to suit the needs of different providers.

National Youth Service Strategy for Wales – the Welsh strategy for youth services. It is a continuation of the policies and concerns outlined in 'Extending Entitlement'.

SIMS – a MIS designed specifically for schools to manage information needed to make the right decisions about pupils' learning

Soft skills – the cluster of personality traits, social graces, communication, language, personal habits, friendliness, and optimism that complement hard skills which are the technical requirements of a job

Youth support services – local partnerships of voluntary and statutory organisations delivering services to young people in support of the Extending Entitlement agenda

The remit author and survey team

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This remit work supports Estyn's vision and values:

- overcoming barriers to improvement and aiming for continuous improvement;
- consulting widely with partners and stakeholders, promoting and disseminating best practice and influencing policy-making;
- contributing to raising standards and quality in education and training in Wales through inspection and advice; and
- providing specific advice to the Welsh Assembly Government in support of its commitment to the continuous improvement of education and training in Wales.

Summary of existing evidence / work already completed

There has been limited work in this area although there are occasional references to MIS in YSS inspection reports.