School Changes and Adaptations for Curriculum and Assessment Delivery

Title: School Changes and Adaptations for Curriculum and Assessment Delivery

Author(s) / Company: Dyfan Powel / Wavehill

Views expressed in this report are those of the researcher and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government

For further information please contact:

Rhian Davies

Knowledge and Analytical Services

Welsh Government

Cathays Park

Cardiff

CF10 3NQ

Tel: 0300 025 6791

Email: SchoolsResearch@gov.wales

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Glossary

Acronym/Keyword	Definition
AoLE	Area of Learning and Experience
CSC	Regional Education Consortia covering Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taff and Vale of Glamorgan Councils
EAS	Regional Education Consortia covering Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouth, Newport and Torfaen Councils
ERW	Regional Education Consortia covering Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Neath and Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, Powys and Swansea Councils
FPP	Foundation Phase Profile
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GwE	Regional Education Consortia covering Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Anglesey and Wrexham Councils
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
Foundation Phase	Reception – year 2
KS2	Key Stage 2 (years 3–6)
KS3	Key Stage 3 (years 6–9)
KS4	Key Stage 4 (GCSE or years 10–11)
Learning Partnership	The Learning Partnership Wales is a company that provides high-quality training courses and resources for early years practitioners
MFL	Modern Foreign Languages
Middle Management	Heads of Department or Heads of AoLE faculties
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Partner School	A school that is not part of the Pioneer network
Pedagogical Principles	Teaching methods, 12 of which are explicitly outlined within the Successful Futures document
Senior Leadership	School heads, deputy heads and SLT members
SF	Successful Futures
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SLT	Senior Leadership Team

1.   Introduction

Background

1.1   In 2015, the Welsh Government published 'Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales'[1]. The recommendations in Successful Futures proposed significant changes to curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales. The Welsh Government accepted all of the recommendations in the report.

1.2   The proposed new arrangements will apply to all schools and learners in Wales aged 3–16. A key principle of the new curriculum and assessment arrangements is that they must be appropriate to every learner in every classroom. The Successful Futures-inspired curriculum and assessment arrangements will look to enable teachers to use their professional skills and creativity to respond to the needs of their learners. The implications will be felt by schools at many levels and may differ depending on the setting.

1.3   Successful Futures proposed that in place of the current stages of learning and subject disciplines a single organising structure for the curriculum should apply for the entire age range from 3 to 16.

1.4   Successful Futures recommended a curriculum focused on developing children and young people in line with the following four purposes:

- ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives;

- enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work;

- ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world; and

- healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

1.5   The report recommended that the curriculum should comprise of six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLE), each of which should make distinct and strong contributions to developing the four purposes in learners. This indicates a move away from the current distinction from core and foundation subjects in the curriculum. Learning should also be developed across the curriculum through three Cross-curriculum Responsibilities (literacy, numeracy, and digital competence).

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[1] Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales

1.6   Successful Futures recommended that progression be based on a continuum of learning that flows from 3 to 16 and beyond, along which all children progress: 'Learning should be seen as akin to an expedition, with stops, detours and spurts.' The report recommends that all practitioners will understand how their input contributes to the end point in a continuum of learning rather than at the end of their phase or stage. This is manifested in the recommendations for the removal of Key Stages and the introduction of Progression Steps.

1.7   'Qualified for Life: A curriculum for Wales, a curriculum for Life' (Welsh Government, 2015) set out plans for developing and implementing the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. The document outlined the development of a network of Pioneer schools which would receive additional funding to develop key aspects of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. The Pioneer schools model focused on three work streams:

1) Curriculum and Assessment including Areas of Learning and Experience;
2) Professional Learning;
3) Digital Competence Framework (DCF).

1.8   This research focuses on the activities of a select group or 'convenience sample' of Pioneer schools, and Partner schools. These schools are examples of schools throughout Wales which have begun to adapt (e.g. through changes to curriculum delivery, management structures, timetabling, etc.) in order to reflect within their own setting, the curriculum and assessment arrangements set out in Successful Futures. Furthermore, schools not involved in the Pioneer model have also taken similar steps to develop a curriculum based around Successful Futures. Together, these schools provide an indication of the impact of delivering a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum upon structures and arrangements, as well as the benefits and challenges that the introduction of such curriculum and assessment arrangements may pose for schools. The purpose of this research is to collect this evidence on a systematic basis to support understanding of the impact of the proposed changes on schools.

Aims and objectives of the research

1.9   The research aim is to understand how schools are preparing and changing how they structure their activity to reflect curriculum and assessment arrangements laid out in Successful Futures.

1.10   More specifically, the report considers the following research questions:

- In what ways have schools adapted or are planning to adapt their structures in making steps towards the types of curriculum and assessment arrangements recommended in Successful Futures?

- In what ways have schools adapted their teaching and learning to reflect the types of curriculum and assessment arrangements recommended in Successful Futures?

- Why have schools made the changes?

- What are the challenges involved in adapting activity in these ways?

- How have these changes/approaches prepared and supported practitioners for the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum and assessment arrangements?

- Do schools have plans for making further changes to teaching and learning structures to prepare for changes to the education system in Wales?

1.11   In order to explore these questions, the research seeks to enrich the analysis of the activities by exploring the changes from a 'change management' perspective.

Limitations

1.12   The objectives of the research are relatively broad, with scope to examine a range of factors relating to schools that are developing a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. However, it is important to state the limitations of this research.

1.13   Firstly, the scope of this research and the data collected are limited to Pioneer and Partner schools that are known to have taken steps to adapt and develop structures in relation to the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum, i.e. a 'convenience sample'. These schools are, by definition, some of the most advanced and developed with regard to the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. The findings of this research should not be generalised or taken to represent other schools in Wales.

1.14   Secondly, this research was not intended to evaluate or pass judgment on the activities and changes undertaken by the schools with the vision set out in Successful Futures and associated documentation. The research was designed to document and understand the changes that have been made, as well as explore the perceptions of staff and governors of the challenges, motivations and costs of the changes.

1.15   Furthermore, this research does not seek to evaluate the Pioneer School Network and the effectiveness of the Pioneer School funding in developing the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. This model has been evaluated previously, and the report is available online.[2]

1.16   Finally, the findings represent the perceptions, views and opinions of staff interviewed and focus groups. Statements made do not necessarily reflect the reality or facts of the curriculum change process in Wales, only the perceptions of those teachers in selected schools attempting to deliver and manage such change.

Curriculum Change and Literature Review

1.17   This section offers an outline of the evidence exploring curriculum reform and implementation in schools. It presents factors that influence implementation, before exploring research that supports our understanding of previous reform efforts. The section considers some of the challenges of reviewing curriculum implementation through research, and how they could inform the approach to this research. In developing its analysis, the section draws on a range of research, including curriculum implementation, change management in schools, and the broader implementation sciences.

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[2] See Formative evaluation of the Pioneer School model

Objectives of Curriculum Reform

1.18   Curriculum reform seeks to change what goes on in the classroom. This includes both what children are taught and how they are taught.

1.19   The reforms within Successful Futures represent a shift from a relatively prescriptive culture surrounding the curriculum towards a more developmental approach that positions teachers as agents of change and professional developers of the curriculum. It promotes more overtly pupil-centred practices than previously, based around the development of skills rather than focusing on content and information. The reforms are therefore concerned with changing what children are taught — shifting the emphasis from knowledge towards skills — and how they are taught, giving teachers greater flexibility in defining their interactions with their learners.

1.20   Reforms through legislation aspire to implement change; however, they are not a precise policy lever. They operate in a complex, ever-shifting environment. Reforms are never isolated, but rather embedded into existing policy frameworks, institutional structures, and communities of practice.

Curriculum Reform in Practice

1.21   Successful Futures typifies many international trends in curricular policy, through its emphasis on generic skills and competencies, its focus on pedagogy, and its extension of autonomy to teachers as agents of change.[3] Such curricula pose challenges, wherein prevailing practices are often at odds with policy aspirations. The extent to which reforms are successfully embedded in schools may depend on a range of factors. These could be combined into three distinct, but highly interlinked categories, as outlined below.

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[3] See Biesta & Priestley (2013) 'Capacities and the curriculum' in Priestley & Biesta (Eds), Reinventing the curriculum: new trends in curriculum policy and practice, London: Bloomsbury.

1. Individual-Level Characteristics

1.22   These include factors from individual teachers and staff, including the views held by teachers towards education generally and the reforms more specifically. These are shaped by staff members' knowledge of the proposed reforms, the underlying rationale for change, and how reforms are likely to impact on them. Levels of knowledge and understanding are influenced by a number of factors, including the clarity and frequency of communications, and the time and space given to teachers to explore and consider new perspectives and developments in education. [4]

1.23   Levels of knowledge and understanding inform a teacher's perceptions and attitudes towards reform. Moreover, if the proposed reforms appear to align with a teacher's deeply held and normative understanding of the role and purpose of education, then they will be more likely to support and adopt proposals. If they do not, then teachers will be more likely to resist change or bend practice towards what they see as their own objectives or core values. [5]

1.24   The research that Wavehill undertook for the Great Debate[6] suggests that teachers, on the whole, were broadly supportive of the nature and direction of the proposed reforms contained within Successful Futures. To many respondents, the reforms presented a desirable antidote to the commonly held beliefs surrounding the problems and pitfalls of existing curriculum and assessment arrangements. Whilst there will always be considerable variation in the perceptions and attitudes of teachers towards reform, this could suggest that attitudes are not going to be a significant barrier to implementation.

1.25   Attitudes are not the only factors influencing classroom activity. A teacher may support the proposed changes, but may have insufficient resources to successfully integrate reforms into practice. Levels of peer and professional support, guidance, training, and the time given to reforms directly influence a teacher's ability to implement change. School-based curriculum development is itself resource-intensive, requiring teachers to devote time and attention to activities such as lesson planning.[7]

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[4] Nelson and Campbell (2017) Evidence-informed practice in education: meanings and applications in *Journal of Education Research*, 59: 127-135

[5] Collinson (2012) 'Sources of teachers' values and attitudes' in *Journal of Teacher Development* 16: 321-344

[6] Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales: A report on responses to the Great Debate

[7] Keiny (1993) School-based Curriculum Development as a Process of Teachers' Professional Development in Educational Action Research, 1:1, 65-93

1.26   The levels of support, guidance and information available to teachers are determined by a range of factors, including many that are not in their control. Without sufficient support, guidance and information, teachers may fall back on established practice, limiting the change to learning experiences and widening the implementation gap. The levels of support, guidance and information also serve to highlight the interlinked relationship between individual-level characteristics and broader institutional and cultural characteristics that shape curriculum reform.

1.27   The reforms in Wales seek to give teachers greater agency, including in the design and delivery of the curriculum. This represents a shift in pedagogical approach, one that places greater importance on teachers' individual capabilities. To be successfully integrated into practice, teachers may be required to develop new skills and competencies. The shift in focus towards skills development, for example, may require teachers to develop new diagnostic competencies, that is, teachers' ability to observe, analyse and support a pupil's progression.[8] School-based curriculum development itself requires a broad range of specific skills that may not be prevalent across many schools.

1.28   The reforms remove the focus on traditional subject boundaries, seeking instead greater interdisciplinary learning. Interdisciplinary approaches to learning require specific skills and abilities to be effective. Young and Muller have argued that with interdisciplinary approaches, less experienced teachers can 'fall behind without knowing it or miss out conceptual steps that may be vital later on'[9]. Linked closely to resources, the effectiveness of efforts that build teacher capacity, including through Professional Learning (PL), may therefore be critical to the success of the reforms.

1.29   Knowledge, attitudes, resources and capabilities are important because they ultimately shape what goes on in the classroom. To change behaviour, teachers and schools must interpret and operationalise the proposed curriculum reforms. As a process, this is mediated by the range of factors outlined above. Changing classroom practice is arguably one of the most important proximal outcomes of the reforms[10]

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[8] Spitzer et al (2011). Developing pre-service elementary teachers' abilities to identify evidence of student mathematical achievement. *Journal of Mathematics Teacher Education*,*14*(1), 67–87.
[9] Young and Muller (2010) Three educational scenarios for the future: lessons from the sociology of knowledge, European Journal of Education, 45(1), 11-27.
[10] Guskey, (2002). 'Professional development and teacher change', *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 8, 3/4, 381–391.

1.30 To summarise, individual-level characteristics shaping curriculum implementation in schools include:

- Knowledge of the purpose and objectives of reforms

- Attitudes and perceptions held by teachers and senior staff

- Resources including time, materials, and training and support

- Capabilities of teachers

- Behaviours of teachers in classrooms

2. Institutional Characteristics

1.31 There are broader school-level characteristics that influence the adoption of new curricula. Strategic and operational leadership at the school level, can determine the focus and operational imperatives that drive change, including how resources are utilised. Effective leadership is personality-dependent, and can encompass an interrelated mix of qualities, values and competencies.[11] Drawing on reflections made in one report prepared by the National Foundation for Education Research,[12] effective leadership can include:

- Communicating a positive vision for the school and setting out a clear rationale for change. The relative success of change management processes may be determined by the ability of school leaders to generate a broad base of support for the vision amongst teachers and staff.

- The ability of school leaders to implement different leadership styles at different points of the change process. This includes appropriate use of mandates or persuasion to effect change, as well as maintaining greater or lesser control of change processes at different points, e.g. greater control as reforms are first implemented, whilst gradually delegating change processes to teachers as the curriculum embeds.

1.32 Leadership is also a key factor in shaping and supporting a school's overall adaptive capacity. A rather nebulous concept, adaptive capacity incorporates a number of factors and resources that support a school's ability to effectively respond to changes in its operating environment. Implementing curriculum reforms

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[11] Day et al (2009). *The Impact of School Leadership on Pupil Outcomes: Final Report* (DCSF Research Report 108). London: DCSF

[12] Maughan et al (2012). *What Leads to Positive Change in Teaching Practice* (NFER Research Programme: Developing the Education Workforce)*.* Slough: NFER.

requires schools to modify and adapt structures, processes and cultures of practice. Implementation is itself a process that must be managed and resourced. The flexibility of overall organisational structures, including governance, and the school's commitment to learning and change can influence the speed and effectiveness of reform efforts.

1.33 Other factors shaping a school's responses to reform include cultures of practice and learning. Commonly referred to as communities of practice, they can be defined, in part, as a process of social learning that occurs when teachers collaborate over an extended period of time, sharing and transmitting ideas, values and practical strategies. Communities of practice can act as both a catalyst and a barrier to change. This may depend on the relative cohesion of the group, and on whether the reforms reflect the prevailing narratives and expectations of the group as a whole.

1.34 More broadly, a school's characteristics may also determine its ability to manage and implement change. This can include the communities that a school serves, particularly the parental community, and the broader circumstances and challenges that it faces. A school may also be faced with a range of other pressing priorities that can divert time and attention away from curricular reform, including staff recruitment and retention, improving behaviour management policies and practices. These will likely dominate the immediate priorities and, consequently, the school planning for the years ahead.

1.35 To summarise, institutional and cultural characteristics shaping curriculum implementation in schools include a school's:

- strategic and operational leadership
- adaptive capacity
- cultures of learning and practice
- broader characteristics and circumstances in which the school finds itself.

3. Systemic Characteristics

1.36 Schools are also influenced by broader socioeconomic and political factors that can shape the nature and direction of change. Curriculum reforms are embedded into the overall policy environment in which schools operate, including a complex mix of legislative and regulatory frameworks. The relative coherence of the policy

environment can have a bearing on the effectiveness of curriculum reforms. The systems put in place by government and education organisations and authorities to support schools are equally important aspects related to successful curriculum change.

1.37   Any apparent tensions and contradictions within and between different policies can lead to competing priorities for schools and teachers that undercut reform efforts. In Scotland, for example, the freedoms and agency afforded to teachers in some cases have been undercut by inspection regimes and the evaluative use of attainment data.[13] The apparent contradictions incentivised the continued use of pre-existing teaching practices, maintained aspects of performative cultures in schools, as well as promoted instrumental decision making by teachers.

Some Messages from Broader Research

1.38   The reforms contained within Successful Futures are reflective of broader international trends in curriculum reform. A small body of research has sought to explore the experiences of schools and teachers in implementing new curricula.[14] Scotland, for example, introduced reforms that are similar to the proposals currently being developed in Wales. Priestley and Minty (2013) conducted a number of school case studies, drawing data from 21 in-depth interviews in Scotland. Top-line findings include the following:[15]

- Data suggested positive engagement by teachers with the reforms.

- Many viewed the reforms as primarily a pedagogical innovation.

- The study found considerable variation in the practical application of curriculum reforms.

- There were also teachers and leaders who were anxious about how the reforms fitted with broader assessment arrangements and national qualifications.

- Other tensions in policy and practice, including between teachers' implicit theories about knowledge and learning and the new curriculum.

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[13] Priestley et al (2015) Teacher agency: what is it and why does it matter? In Kneyber & Evers (eds) *Flip the System: Changing Education from the Bottom Up.* London: Routledge
[14] Sinnema, S. (2011). "Monitoring and Evaluating Curriculum Implementation: Final evaluation report on the implementation of The New Zealand Curriculum 2008-2009. Report to the Ministry of Education."
[15] Priestley, Mark and Minty, Sarah (2013) Curriculum for Excellence: 'A brilliant idea, but...' Scottish Educational Review 45 (1), 39-52

This report

1.39   Chapter 2 continues the report by outlining the methodology and change management framework adopted for the research.

1.40   Chapter 3 presents the findings and analysis from interview, focus group and survey data collected during the fieldwork stage.

1.41   Chapter 4 considers and applies the change management model, assessing the successes, strengths and challenges facing schools managing change.

1.42   Chapter 5 addresses the core research questions by way of conclusions.

1.43   Case studies: While Chapter 3 draws upon the empirical findings, and frequently references examples to illustrate the points being made, full case studies are included between chapters to offer a fuller picture of activities across Wales.

2. Methodology

2.1 The methodology was agreed with the Welsh Government and based on nine scoping interviews conducted with key stakeholders. These initial interviews were with key members of the Education Department of the Welsh Government, Regional Consortia, Estyn, and other key education partners.

2.2 The focus of the research was on detailed qualitative data on the experiences of 19 schools and their staff. Consequently, in each school, the data collection methods consisted of:

- 19 x 45–60-minute interviews with headteachers
- 19 x 45–60-minute interviews with one or more members of the Senior Leadership Team
- 18 x 30-minute interviews with one or more school governors
- 19 x 30-minute focus groups with classroom teachers
- 414 responses to a survey of school staff
- Planning and Pioneer development documentation from schools
- Other school literature.

2.3 In conducting the senior-level interviews, the researchers were able to draw out multiple perspectives and experiences in respect of implementing curriculum change. The length of interviews with senior staff members allowed for the semi-structured interviews to explore specific experiences and comments beyond the discussion guide.

2.4 Focus groups with teachers allowed an exploration of the views and experiences of classroom teachers with regard to implementing curriculum change. Consequently, the analysis drew on experiences of staff involved in strategy and implementation for a more rounded perspective on the changes and adjustments that schools are undergoing in preparation for the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum.

2.5 This was a 'convenience sample', based on input from Welsh Government, Regional Consortia and Estyn, of schools that are known to have adapted their curriculum and assessment arrangements.

2.6   Schools and individuals have been anonymised. The following schools were visited:

CSC	English medium Secondary School (Professional Learning Lead Pioneer) Welsh medium Secondary School (Digital Competence Pioneer) English medium Primary School (Partner School)
EAS	English medium Primary School (Pioneer School) English medium Secondary School (Professional Learning Pioneer) English medium Primary School (Professional Learning Pioneer) English medium Primary School (Pioneer School) English medium Secondary School (Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer)
ERW	Bilingual (Type A) medium Middle (Pioneer School) English medium Secondary School (Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer) English medium Secondary School (Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer) English medium Secondary School (Partner School)
GwE	Special School (Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer) Welsh medium Secondary School (Partner School) Bilingual (Type B) Secondary School (Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer) Bilingual (Type A) Secondary School (Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer) Special School (Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer) English medium Secondary School (Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer) Welsh medium Middle School (Pioneer School)

2.7   The qualitative data from the interviews and focus groups were coded within a thematic framework. A common framework was developed for each school and related to the key aspects of the change management model adopted and the emerging themes of the interviews.

2.8   The framework comprised an analysis grid for the classification and interpretation of qualitative data. A copy of the analysis grid is available in Annex A.

2.9   Alongside the qualitative interviews and focus groups held with staff, a survey was circulated amongst the staff of the sampled schools prior to the fieldwork visits. The survey posed 12 statements related to curriculum change and change management, and respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed with those statements. A copy of the survey is provided in Annex B.

2.10   The survey sought to generate quantitative data on the views of the broader workforce within the schools sampled. The data support the in-depth and detailed qualitative data generated by the interviews. More specifically, the survey generated data concerning the workforce's understanding of the changes and alignment with the principles of Successful Futures.

2.11   The survey was distributed by the school's administration before fieldwork visits.

2.12   A total of 414 responses were received for the survey. One hundred and forty responses were received from the CSC region, 78 responses from the EAS region, 83 responses from the ERW region and 113 responses from the GwE region. The responses were broadly representative of the sample of schools in each region, with the exception of the CSC region. Fewer schools were visited in the CSC region, although more responses were received for those schools than in any of the other regions.

2.13   Forty-four responses were from senior staff (headteachers, acting heads, deputy heads), 71 responses from middle management (heads of departments, digital/literacy/numeracy framework coordinators/heads of AoLE), 256 responses from other teaching staff and 32 responses from support staff.

2.14   The sample is representative of a range of staff roles. However, the responses are from staff within Pioneer schools, and Partner schools that have engaged in curriculum change. These respondents therefore, by definition, can be expected to possess greater levels of awareness and understanding of the curriculum than those of the broader workforce within Wales.

Change Management Model

2.15   The literature review drew particular attention towards the human resources of schools: leadership, staff, skills and attitudes. Scoping interviews conducted in preparation for the research also revealed a strong belief amongst educational professionals that schools were in practice dealing with cultural change, and the management of such change amongst the workforce was key to the success of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum and its development. For these reasons, following discussions with the Welsh Government, the research adopted a change management perspective in order to appropriately analyse the data and findings of the research.

2.16   The change management perspective allows for a focus not only on the hard structures that are being adapted and changed, but also on the human resources and 'softer' structures within schools such as the people, leaders, skills and understanding of the changes. It also allows for a more focused analysis of the impact, challenges and opportunities experienced and faced by schools undertaking curriculum change.

2.17   The McKinsey 7-S[16] organisational change model is widely used by practitioners, organisations and academics as a means of supporting strategic planning. The model encourages an examination of seven key aspects of an organisation, as well as the degree to which they are aligned effectively to ensure meaningful and successful change.

2.18   The seven key aspects include Strategy, Structure and Systems, which are considered 'hard' structures representing the material resources and established practices of an organisation. Style, Staff and Skills represent the softer, human structures and resources. Finally, Shared Values represents a core aspect that influences and links to other aspects of the model.

2.19   The 7-S model is also based on the theory that each element need to be aligned and mutually reinforcing. Progress in one area is supported by progress in another, and likewise hindered by a lack of progress in another. Developing an effective strategy, is an important step in supporting effective change. That strategy requires staff who will act on that strategy to be adequately skilled, led, informed of the strategy and aligned with the core values of that strategy for it to be effective. The model can therefore be used by schools themselves to help identify what needs to be realigned or developed to support successful change.

2.20   Schools are understood as the organisations managing change in the context of this research. The model consequently prompts a number of questions with regard to the seven key aspects of schools engaging in curriculum change activities. By addressing these questions, the research offers an analytical perspective on the management of change within Welsh schools and moves the research beyond a mere documentation of activities.

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[16] [Enduring Ideas: The 7-S Framework](#)

2.21 The seven key elements in the context of Welsh schools reforming their curriculum are:

- **Strategy**: The planning of the organisation to achieve its aims. A school strategy, more specifically its School Improvement Plan (SIP), will have incorporated curriculum change and clear steps towards a vision of Successful Futures. More importantly, an effective strategy will align with other aspects, ensuring that planning and resourcing of activities, staff, systems and materials for moving the school forward are put in place.

- The questions to explore in the context of this research were:

  o What changes have the school made to their strategy with regard to the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum? School Development Plan?

  o How will the new strategy/SIP contribute to the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum?

- **Structure**: the allocation or distribution of resources and the workforce to accomplish and meet the challenges of curriculum change.

- The questions to explore in the context of the research were:

  o Has the school made any organisational changes?

  o Responsibilities of teachers/staff to accommodate the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum?

- **Systems**: Systems represent procedures and processes that are in place to support the coordination of daily activities to support the effective changes. In the context of curriculum change, good systems represent the mechanisms for the sharing of information on practices for a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. Specifically, 'systems' also represent the national systems for disseminating and sharing relevant information regarding the curriculum.

The questions to explore in the context of the research were:

- o Are there systems in place to reinforce and support effective changes that have been put or are being put in place?

- o Are there systems in place to share practice that is relevant to the implementation of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum?

- o Are there sources of support and knowledge for staff who are looking to make changes? Do these sources allow for risk and failure? This may involve management being open and supportive, and aware of doubts and concerns.

- o Have materials and/or resources been produced to support the changes to teaching or any other aspects?

- **Shared Values**: Values sit at the core of the model and relate to the attitudes, understanding and commitment of the human resources of the organisation. These values are the starting point for all change. They concern the norms, values and beliefs that underpin the entire curriculum change process in the context of this research. The questions to explore in the context of the research were:

- o Are staff aware of Successful Futures and at least its core principles such as the AoLEs and the four purposes?

- o Are staff committed to curriculum reform and the successful implementation of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum? Is there resistance to the changes — why/in what form?

- o Is the teaching culture changing towards the ideal identified in successful futures?

- **Style**: Style concerns the manner in which the change is being managed and led.

The questions to explore in the context of the research were:

- o Who is leading the changes and how active is such leadership in guiding, reinforcing and embedding the changes?

- o Is the style appreciated or resisted by broader staff?

- o Is the communication between leadership and staff effective and supportive of the changes?

- o Are individuals empowered to risk making changes?

- **Staff**: The model considers the workforce to be the key resource of the organisation.

  In this context the questions to explore were:

  - o Are staff aware of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum?

  - o Do they have the desire to successfully implement the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum?

  - o Do staff have the knowledge of the changes that they must make and implement in order to ensure the successful implementation of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum?

  - o After implementing changes, are staff maintaining the new ways of working, and avoiding reverting to older habits and methods of working?

- **Skills**: Finally, with the emphasis on the abilities of the staff to implement the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum, the questions to explore in the context of the research were:

  - o Do staff have the skills to successfully understand and implement the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum?

  - o Has the school identified any skills needs within the workforce?

  - o Do the staff and the new structures or systems have enough time to 'bed in' and establish themselves as the new 'norm' following changes?

  - o Are there practice- and knowledge-sharing systems in place within the school to positively reinforce and share the changes being implemented?

2.22 By applying the change management perspective to the findings of the research, the concluding chapter attempts to analyse the extent to which schools have successfully adapted and changed to meet the requirements of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum.

3. Findings

3.1 This chapter reports on the findings of the research conducted. The chapter is presented on themes that emerged during the analysis of the data: activities, barriers, enablers, costs, and future plans.

3.2 In order to offer a further layer of confidentiality to participants, heads and SLT interviews are all recorded as 'Senior Staff'.

3.3 The purpose of the research was not to quantify how many schools had made various types of changes nor to evaluate these changes. However, the language used during this section will refer to 'a few' (1–4), 'many' (5–10), 'most' (11–15) or 'almost all' (16–19) schools in order to suggest the number of schools implementing various forms of changes.

Activities

3.4 The activities undertaken by the schools can be placed on a spectrum ranging from superficial to comprehensive activities and structural reform. 'Light-touch' activities such as sharing information regarding the development of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum amongst staff took place in almost all schools. Meanwhile, fewer schools engaged in the most comprehensive activities such as staff, departmental or faculty reorganisation and the wholesale adoption of a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum for entire school years.

'Light-touch' activities

3.5 The majority of schools had held information-sharing activities and events with some staff. In most cases, these consisted of presentations at staff meetings and informal conversations involving the relaying of information on developments by a curriculum lead or staff member involved with the curriculum development process.

3.6 Inset days were particularly useful as structured opportunities for sharing information and experiences between senior staff and teaching staff, as well as between staff who had and had not been part of the Pioneer activities.

3.7 Staff who had been informed of changes to the curriculum in some form spoke confidently of the adoption of new curriculum over the coming years:

'The way we're doing it gradually, that works well. We're well informed by the school. By the time we get to 2022 we'll have more rolled out, but we're almost

experts already' (Teacher Focus Group, English medium Secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer School).

3.8 Many schools focused their efforts for developing an understanding of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum upon select groups of those staff members involved in the more comprehensive changes. The reasons for restricting the exposure to a few teachers were commonly related to a desire to 'get it right' with a small team first, and to avoid raising concerns or apprehension amongst staff members who would have little or no immediate practical experience of the curriculum. A few schools have also sought to ensure that all staff receive a degree of exposure to the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum.

3.9 A few schools have supported staff in visiting other schools within Wales, the UK and internationally on information-gathering missions.

3.10 Most schools stated that they have invested in training in order to develop pedagogy amongst their staff members. Training and development commonly related to developing an understanding of, and a means of, teaching according to the 12 pedagogical principles outlined in the Successful Futures Report. The training sought has also covered issues such as learner autonomy, creative teaching, and experiential learning. Senior staff in both primary and secondary schools often suggested that the pedagogical challenge was greater for staff in secondary schools.

3.11 A few schools have developed internal tools for assessing staff understanding and knowledge of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum and its principles and auditing skills.

> 'The school created an assessment tool for staff after Successful Futures came out to see where they are in relation to the 12 pedagogical principles. The staff were asked to write their own interpretations of these principles and then the head provided what he perceived as the correct interpretations' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Secondary School, Professional Learning Lead Pioneer).

3.12   Most schools have allocated cross-curricular responsibilities for digital competence, literacy or numeracy to specific staff members. These 'framework coordinators' are often also the focus of targeted support to develop their understanding of the curriculum as it develops (as noted above).

3.13   Curriculum change has increased in prominence within each school visited. This increase in prominence was reflected in the strategic and personnel changes. Almost all schools have allocated responsibility to a staff member for overseeing the curriculum development on a strategic level. These individuals are commonly members of the SLT and are consequently well positioned to coordinate curriculum development with broader school strategy and planning. Their roles involved ensuring that adequate resources were allocated to the curriculum development activities. These individuals would also act as a link between the team delivering the classroom teaching and content, and the broader curriculum developments taking place at a strategic level within the school or nationally. For example, some would inform staff delivering the classroom teaching and content of the development of the 'What Matters' statements. These individuals were also tasked with the formal evaluation of activities, though this had not taken place at the time of the visits.

3.14   In most secondary schools studied, dedicated teams of teachers led by a middle manager (Head of Department or Head of AoLE) were tasked with leading the development, planning and delivery of classroom teaching and content. The development and delivery of day-to-day aspects of the curriculum was therefore delegated. In a few secondary schools, a larger number of teachers were expected to contribute to the development, planning and delivery of classroom content and teaching.

3.15   Many schools have tailored their recruitment strategy in order to attract the most suitable personnel to key curriculum development posts.

3.16   A few secondary schools have also seconded or recruited teachers with primary school experience. Heads in these schools noted that they understood that the pedagogical approach suggested by Successful Futures was broadly similar to that of primary schools. The heads consequently sought to draw on the experiences and expertise of primary teachers while developing teaching and the curriculum in a secondary school setting.

Staff reorganisation

3.17   The nature of the reorganisation varies from school to school, with each school seeking to develop in line with their strategy for curriculum change. In some cases, teachers have been effectively seconded internally to develop and deliver week-long activities. Other schools have established one AoLE, combining existing departments. A few secondary schools, however, have established a range of AoLE and fundamentally reorganised the staffing structure to reflect this. In every instance, the reorganisation had the support and understanding of governors, and was considered by senior staff to be in line with the school's strategy to adapt to and develop the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum.

3.18   Specifically, a few schools have established a single AoLE faculty related to their Pioneer area. In these cases, teaching staff involved with the AoLE faculty are responsible for the ongoing development of the curriculum provision to pupils.

3.19   Meanwhile, a few schools were uniquely placed to reorganise staff having very recently been established by amalgamating a number of other schools. In establishing the new schools, head teachers took the opportunity to design a new staffing structure in line with a curriculum inspired by Successful Futures. AoLE faculty heads were appointed and staff were then appointed to the relevant AoLE faculties rather than to departmental responsibilities.

3.20   A few schools had started the process of reorganising into AoLE faculties over a decade ago. The school leadership noted that they were at the time concerned that pupils lacked independence in their learning. They looked at the skills curriculum in John Cabot Academy in Bristol and visited the school. They then introduced SMART for KS3, which was a skills-based curriculum wherein pupils were taught by a small team of teachers. The leadership noted that at the time they also looked at pupil learning in different ways.

3.21   Meanwhile, one English medium Primary School has developed a 'Health and well-being' curriculum throughout the school, also building on work over the past decade. This suggests that some schools were already travelling in the same direction as that of Successful Futures prior to the publication of Professor Donaldson's report in 2015.

3.22 Many schools have taken steps either to begin or to complete the reorganisation of the staffing structure. The reorganisation in each case has involved the development of AoLE faculties in the place of departments, or as a means of encouraging staff to work together.

3.23 The AoLE faculties that have been established are largely in line with the AoLEs in Successful Futures. However, a few schools have made slight adjustments. One bilingual middle and Pioneer school, for example, has split what was proposed in Successful Futures as 'Languages, literacy and communication' into two sub-faculties consisting of 'English' and 'Welsh and MFL'.

3.24 The reorganisation around AoLEs in secondary schools, due to the already established departmental structure in many cases, has led to more fundamental reorganisation and structural change. In primary schools, meanwhile, the grouping of staff into AoLE faculties is a less developed process.

> 'We've changed into teams to reflect the AoLE and they [the staff] will be accountable for planning and development of that area. But we don't know what it'll entail in detail yet. Well-being is the most difficult, unless you're used to dealing with it, so we're only focusing really on well-being. The staff work across the school, but that's always been the case here more or less with the exception of the Foundation Phase split' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Primary and Pioneer School).

3.25 A few schools have begun referring to educational phases rather than Key Stages. Most notably, these are the middle or 'through' schools (3–16 or 3–18); however, primary schools have also begun referring to phases. The foundation and primary phases lead into the secondary phase, which consists of a middle phase and the KS4 phase.

3.26 There are deliberate efforts to break the (often physical) boundaries between the latter stages of primary school education and the early years of secondary schools, leading (inadvertently or not) to a more defined 'middle school' in the understanding of teachers. The 'middle' phase encompasses years 5 and 6 of primary schools through to years 8 and 9 of secondary schools. A few middle schools have brought years 5 and 6 into the secondary building for lab-based science and MFL lessons. Other schools deliberately seek to involve year 6 pupils from feeder primaries on the secondary campus in order to break boundaries between the primary and secondary phases.

3.27   There remains, however, a clear and 'hard' barrier between the latter stages of the emerging 'middle' phase (years 8 and 9) and the KS4/GCSE phase. The lack of clarity over the future of GCSE and its very high importance to the accountability of the school and, consequently, teaching staff have led all schools sampled to avoid modifying or reforming the KS4 phase. Moreover, and as outlined in the following sections, the perceived lack of specialist and content teaching received in the subject areas under the principles of a new, skills-oriented curriculum raised concerns amongst many staff members. Specifically, some teaching staff questioned the effectiveness of teaching the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum until year 9, then jumping to subject specialism for the KS4 phase. Almost all secondary schools sampled saw year 9 as a transition period into a KS4 phase and that remained unchanged. The transition consisted essentially of beginning KS4/GCSE studies.

Curriculum delivery and content

3.28   The delivery of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum varies throughout the schools also and, to an extent, depends on the degree of structural change. Primary and secondary schools approach the issue differently. Primary schools incorporate AoLE structures into teaching in the classroom, while secondary schools have engaged in activities including developing pedagogy, week-long 'off-timetable' thematic classes, and the whole curriculum being delivered to whole year groups through AoLEs rather than the older subject approach.

3.29   Many primary schools have focused on the development and incorporation of a single AoLE into teaching at the school. One English medium Primary and Pioneer school, for example, has focused only on the development of the health and well-being curriculum throughout teaching in the post-Foundation Phase.

3.30   Most primary schools have sought to develop pedagogy, and teachers explore themes through the AoLE perspectives. A classroom will, for example, explore the Stuarts by examining the history, exploring the values of the Union Flag and setting related literacy and numeracy tasks that enable the pupil to explore other aspects of the Stuart period.

3.31   A few secondary schools plan and deliver a thematic learning week to pupils. In these cases, the weeks and months prior to the thematic week, often referred to as the 'challenge week' or '*wythnos her*', involve the development of key skills across subjects or AoLE. One bilingual secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer school's staff, for example, are deliberately mixed with staff members from other subject areas to deliver teaching during the thematic week. The period culminates in pupils being taken off timetable for the challenge week in order to apply the skills developed in previous weeks.

3.32   A few secondary schools have focused on the development of a single AoLE faculty to deliver teaching for year 7 pupils. One English medium secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer school, for example, has delivered 'Language literacy and communication' in place of English, Welsh and MFL throughout the year.

3.33   Meanwhile, a few secondary schools have delivered a full AoLE approach to entire year groups. Schools such as one English medium secondary and Professional Learning Pioneer school have used a limited number of staff to deliver the entire year's teaching for year 7 through AoLEs. In that school, AoLE teaching is confined to those teachers and the year group, while broader staff members are only informally aware of the activities. In a few other schools, meanwhile, the entire workforce are aware of the teaching where more sharing of experiences and practices has taken place within the school.

3.34   While strategic oversight is often the responsibility of an SLT member, in each case the teachers within the AoLE faculties are responsible for planning, developing and delivering the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum to pupils. With support and guidance from the SLT member, the four purposes are invariably the starting point of planning. An example of a template planning sheet is included in Annex C, illustrating the centrality of the purposes to all activities.

3.35   Planning in almost all cases incorporates an element of pupil voice and preference and is led most often by the AoLE faculty/department lead, or by a designated staff member who will lead the 'challenge week'. AoLE-delivered learning and 'challenge weeks' involve longer planning and development periods wherein teachers can coordinate and design teaching together. Placing ownership of the curriculum in the hands of teaching staff proved to be motivating and exciting to the teachers involved.

'The teachers were involved in the planning and design of topics, skills and themes. Making as much time as possible is important to allow them to engage with it. It's given them more ownership and the approach works for year 7' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer School).

3.36   Planning often begins with the four purposes as guiding statements for lessons and many schools have sought to embed the four purposes within their pupils' learning beyond the AoLE groups. In one Bilingual secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer school, the four purposes were incorporated into the pupil contact books and are a constant reference point (along with skills) when reporting the progress of pupils. Meanwhile, one English medium primary and Professional Learning Pioneer school has attempted to publicise the purposes amongst the pupils through a series of statements and examples displayed around the school.

Image 1: One of the four purposes displayed around one English medium primary and Professional Learning Pioneer School

3.37   In all secondary school cases, classroom teaching and content changes have been confined to years 7–9. Some schools are looking to roll out the provision from year 7 to year 8 (and possibly year 9) over the next two years. Key Stage 4 remains effectively untouched by curriculum change activities in all schools visited.

3.38   Finally, all schools visited had included curriculum change and their planned activities within their School Improvement Plans (SIPs). While for a few schools the activities were a means of trialling and taking early steps before incorporating broader changes into their planning for the coming years, most schools had planned several further steps. For example, one English medium secondary and Professional Learning Pioneer school, after taking year 7 through their new

Successful Futures-inspired curriculum, was planning to expand the new provision to years 7 and 8 in the following year.

3.39   In summary, a range of activities have been undertaken to adapt and develop a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum within the schools visited. These activities vary from information sharing and training to the allocation of key strategic responsibilities for framework topics. Many schools have also engaged in workforce reorganisation, moving partly or completely towards an AoLE model. Teaching and pedagogy, meanwhile, have been developed in numerous schools in a manner that incorporates the core principles and facets of Successful Futures.

Motivations

3.40   A range of motivations spur initial as well as continued engagement with the curriculum change agenda. These motivations range from simple enthusiasm towards the changes being proposed to individual leadership and support from consortia.

Need for reform, and Successful Futures as a direction of travel

3.41   Most interviewees, particularly senior staff spoke of enthusiasm towards the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum as a clear motivation for engaging with the Pioneer programme. Furthermore, many senior staff expressed the belief that the existing curriculum was not fit for purpose.

> 'I like the overarching view of it — making pupils ready for real life. A holistic approach is good, rather than a subject-specific approach. Thematic approaches look good as well. More of a skills-based approach is good' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer School).
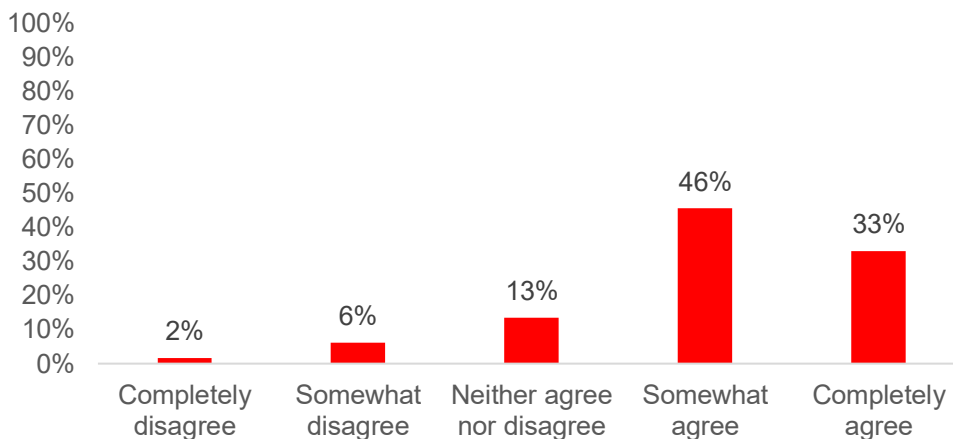
> 'There needs to be curriculum change [and to move away] from a prescribed curriculum with too many hoops. It's disjointed, FPP, outcomes, levels, GCSE — there's no continuum. The OECD report looked at the need for change because it wasn't fit for purpose. Pedagogy, teacher training, ITT, assessment — it's led from the bottom and it's fantastic. It's the way forward' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Primary and Professional Learning Pioneer School).

3.42   Responses to the staff survey reflected these views amongst the senior staff, although less so amongst teaching and support staff. Figure 3.1 below outlines responses to the first survey statement: 'I think that the current curriculum needs to

be reformed.' The statement attempts to capture the level of sympathy and support for the reasoning behind and justification for curriculum change.

3.43   The findings suggest that a significant proportion (79 per cent) of respondents agree to some extent with the need for curriculum change. This suggests that a significant proportion of teachers are aligned with the values and underlying justification for the curriculum change efforts. However, around a fifth of teachers (21 per cent) do not concur with the central argument for curriculum change.

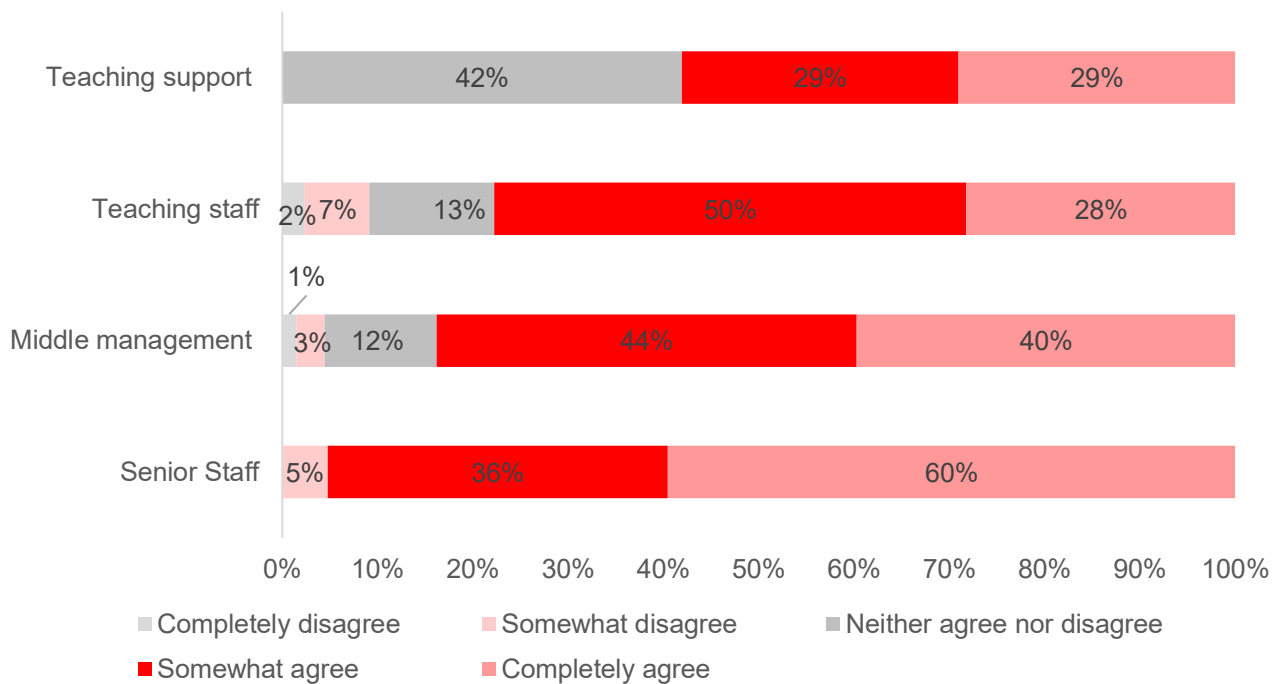**Figure 3.1: I think that the current curriculum needs to be reformed (overall)**

N = 414

3.44   Figure 3.2 below shows the responses by staff role. There is a clear trend wherein the more senior an individual is, the stronger their agreement with the following statement: 'I think that the current curriculum needs to be reformed.' Sixty per cent of senior staff (heads and deputies or members of the SLT) completely agree with the need to reform the curriculum, while 96 per cent agree to some extent. By contrast, only 29 per cent of support staff completely agree and 58 per cent agree to some extent.

3.45   Given that the majority of schools surveyed are Pioneer schools, it is expected that senior staff, who would more likely be involved in the application, design and operational management of the Pioneer activities, would be committed to the broader ethos. Middle management and teaching staff who were more likely either not to be involved with the Pioneer activities or to have become involved at the request or invitation of senior staff also agree to some extent (78–88 per cent) that the current curriculum requires reform. They are less likely to completely agree with the statement than are senior staff (only 40 per cent and 28 per cent respectively),

while support staff are least likely to agree with the statement, with only 58 per cent agreeing to some extent and only 29 per cent completely agreeing.

Figure 3.2: I think that the current curriculum needs to be reformed (by role)[17]
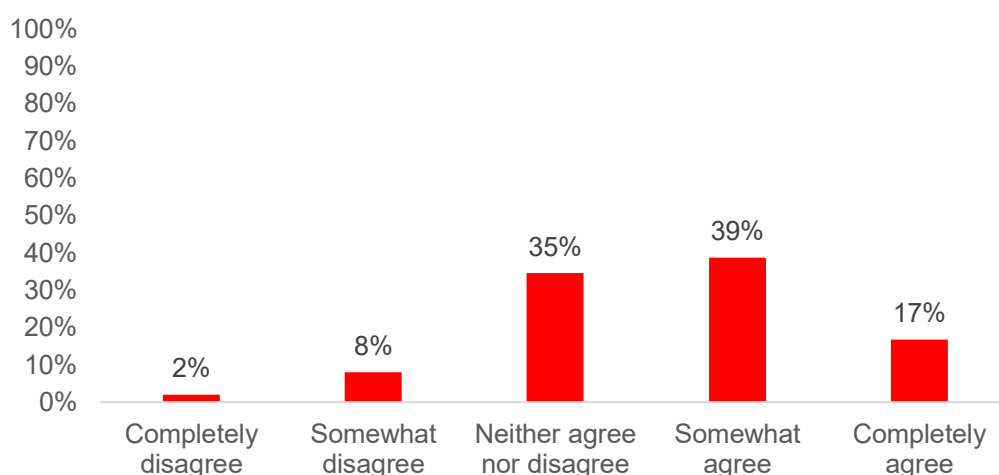

N = 414

3.46   The fourth statement within the survey was: 'I think that Successful Futures represents the best way of reforming the curriculum.' The question sought to assess the levels of support for the direction of travel within education policy in Wales and gauge the degree to which the workforce has acknowledged the need for and committed to or aligned with the core values of Successful Futures. Figure 3.3 suggests that while the majority of staff (56 per cent) agree that Successful Futures represents the best way of reforming the curriculum, a significant minority (35 per cent) are not at this stage convinced one way or another, while a further 10 per cent do not agree with the direction of travel. Forty-five per cent of teachers surveyed therefore are yet to be convinced of Successful Futures as the best way of reforming the curriculum.

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[17] It should be noted that where totals add up to more than 100% this is due to the rounding rule used. This rule is consistent across the project.

Figure 3.3: I think that Successful Futures represents the best way of reforming the curriculum

A bar chart showing the following values:
- Completely disagree: 2%
- Somewhat disagree: 8%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 35%
- Somewhat agree: 39%
- Completely agree: 17%

N = 414

3.47   However, an analysis of responses by staff role reveals a degree of nuance to the findings. Staff roles correlate with levels of agreement with the statement, with more senior roles more likely to agree with the statement. Seventy-five per cent of senior staff agree to some extent that Successful Futures represents the best way of reforming the curriculum, with 63 per cent of middle management, 52 per cent of teaching staff and only 47 per cent of teaching support staff agreeing with the direction of travel. It must be noted that there is very little disagreement with the statement — only 15 per cent of middle management and 11 per cent of teaching staff — and the only other significant category is 'neither agree nor disagree'.

3.48   Both qualitative and quantitative data suggest that the view that Successful Futures is the desirable direction of travel is widely held amongst senior staff, alongside a firm belief that the existing curriculum requires reform. However, the view of Successful Futures as the desirable direction of travel is not shared as widely amongst teaching and support staff. The qualitative data suggest that support and teaching staff may be less inclined to agree with Successful Futures as the best way of reforming the curriculum due to a lack of awareness or understanding of the document and its contents, rather than because of any disagreement with the approach.

Newly established schools

3.49   Newly established schools, meanwhile, are perceived to be 'clean slates', as well as an opportunity to approach curriculum change with fewer established barriers or difficulties. Staffing structures could be established anew, for example, rather than having to reorganise existing structures. These 'clean slates' have given opportunities for heads to lead, and for regional education consortia to support the development of new structures related to the delivery of a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum.

Leadership

3.50   Leadership emerged as a key motivating factor for engaging with the Pioneer programme as well as curriculum development more generally. Key individuals who had previous engagement with and interest in the developing curriculum assumed or were in leadership positions in many schools and were able to apply to become a Pioneer School, while leaders within other schools had personal interest and commitment to curriculum development over a number of years. Individuals in leadership positions in most schools often had a commitment to and experience with specific issues or areas related to curriculum development, such as well-being. These individuals proved key in instigating such engagement with the Pioneer programme and/or ensuring the school's early adoption of aspects of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum and initial steps towards developing its content in school and adjusting the school's structure.

3.51   Senior leadership was an important factor in most schools with regard to motivating the wider workforce and encouraging staff engagement with curriculum development and Pioneer activity. SLT members who were given responsibility and strategic oversight were in each case identified as key individuals by the broader workforce who engaged with the activities or changes.

3.52   Middle-level management also proved key in the motivation of staff engagement during the process of developing and delivering the day-to-day aspects of curriculum reform. Heads of departments (or AoLEs) led the day-to-day planning and implementation of Successful Futures-inspired curriculum activities, with support only in a few instances from a senior staff member.

Support from consortia

3.53 Finally, the support from consortia once schools had become Pioneer schools or engaged in curriculum development emerged as an important motivating factor throughout the process, particularly with senior staff.

> 'We had a lot [of information] through the consortium, which was very proactive. Cluster meetings were useful in sharing knowledge as well and as a result of that and us being an excellent school, we applied to be a new deal Pioneer school.[18] All the information needed at the time was given. Since then it's been a journey. When you do something new, it's very much been left in teachers' and headteachers' hands, but the regional consortia have been good with their support' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Primary and Professional Learning Pioneer School).

Enablers

3.54 Several factors emerged as important enablers of curriculum change. The majority of enabling factors related to the workforce.

3.55 Across schools, enthusiasm towards the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum and associated statements made through the media or at education events was a key enabling factor. Teachers or staff involved or who engaged with 'The Great Debate' in particular appeared to be enthusiastically engaged with the wider curriculum change project. This suggested that staff were generally well aligned with the core values of Successful Futures.

3.56 Leadership also emerged as a key enabling factor. This might be expected, given the nature of the sample; Pioneer schools, by definition, consist of forward-thinking staff, while Partner schools consist of staff who have engaged in curriculum change of their own initiative. The progressive and positive mentality contributes to an experimental and risk-taking culture in many schools that seems to characterise the schools that have made significant changes or applied for Pioneer status. 'The headteacher is leading the change — it's his vision. He's pushing it forward but leadership is distributive and organic' (Senior Staff Interview, Special and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer School).

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[18] Now formally called Professional Learning Pioneer Schools

3.57　There was a wide perception amongst teachers present in focus groups that the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum, while challenging to deliver, was (nonetheless) more rewarding for teachers.

> 'I like it. It's encouraged teachers to teach outside the box. We've been able to showcase creativity a lot more, especially in KS2, not just the Foundation Phase. We've talked about how schools around Wales are different and this allows us to make it personal to us' (Teacher Focus Group, English medium Primary and Professional Learning Pioneer School).

3.58　Many aspects of the delivery were deemed to be more rewarding by teachers. At one English medium secondary school, the KS3 curriculum was thought to be far more fit for purpose — staff were working collaboratively and all staff were engaged in the process. It had created more scope for cross-curricular working through an emphasis on skills. The school had seen Design Technology skills employed in science lessons and the use of maths and numeracy skills in all subjects.

3.59　In other schools such as one Special and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer school, the joint planning and moderation developed were changing the broader culture within the school and workforce. Subject specialists were supporting non-specialists: 'Staff are now more confident and putting these methods into practice in classrooms' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Primary and Partner School).

3.60　The impact upon teacher and pupil enthusiasm and engagement was a particularly notable experience that spurred further engagement and alignment with the Successful Futures-inspired approach;

> 'We're seeing a positive impact on their [pupils'] results already, also on their attitudes and their motivation and engagement. That stands for pupils and staff. Staff are more excited about teaching lessons. Skills don't change across the departments, but the way they're taught has — that's more exciting. The pupils feed on that' (Teacher Focus Group, English medium Secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer School).

3.61   The positive experiences of teachers involved with teaching the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum encouraged further engagement, leading to something of a 'virtuous cycle'. For example, the positive impact of the classroom teaching and content perceived by some teachers has led them to share their experiences and promote the potential of their practices and methods amongst other staff members in the school.

3.62   Moreover, the experience of teaching the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum helped to alleviate concerns regarding the unknown aspects of the curriculum and raised confidence in the ability to meet those challenges when they become known.

3.63   With regard to the day-to-day delivery of a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum through reformed structures or teaching practices, the collaborative planning brings teachers together. In cooperating and co-planning for delivery, teachers spoke of overcoming trepidation and concerns regarding the changes that require implementation. 'Planning stage is the key area — get that right and we can be confident we're incorporating the skills' (Teacher Focus Group, English medium Secondary and Professional Learning Pioneer School).

3.64   The freedom and support for Pioneer schools, to experiment and co-produce the new curriculum itself emerged as an important enabling factor. 'Estyn's pronouncement that they would not penalise schools that experiment with the new curriculum is to be welcomed. This has encouraged us to press on' (Senior Staff Interview, Bilingual Secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer School).

3.65   In a few secondary schools, primary school teachers either were seconded for the Pioneer activity or were appointed with the explicit aim of supporting pedagogical development and the development of teaching in line with the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. The experience and skills of the primary teacher proved very valuable in helping and enabling other secondary teachers with planning and delivering a thematic and skills-based curriculum.

> 'Give me 2–3 primary school teachers and we can change a whole lot. Primary teachers have a real input. Flexibility in the workforce is key. They're really used to delivering in this way — they are specialist. Need flexibility to recruit from primary' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Secondary and Professional Learning Pioneer School).

3.66   However, one head expressed doubt regarding other schools' willingness or even awareness of the legal possibility of appointing primary school teachers to posts in secondary schools. 'I had to ask around. I'm not sure how many other schools, especially those who haven't started yet and aren't part of the Pioneer programme, know it's possible to second a primary school teacher' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Secondary and Professional Learning Pioneer School).

3.67   With regard to more structural factors, inset days and internal sessions in respect of sharing information regarding the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum were identified as key enabling factors in most schools that had encouraged engagement with and interest in the curriculum-change-related activities.

3.68   Finally, and most notably, the Pioneer funding itself has enabled all schools engaged with the programme to invest in the development of the teaching of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum.

3.69   In summary, the enthusiasm and leadership of the workforce are key motivating but also enabling factors. The positive experiences and freedom to experiment (and freedom to fail) are further enabling factors that are considered. Primary expertise in secondary schools, meanwhile, further enriches the skillset of the workforce and acts as an enabler, supporting the delivery of teaching methods that are relatively new to secondary schools.

Barriers and concerns

3.70   A range of potential barriers and concerns were raised during interviews with staff members. The concerns and barriers, from the interview data, are based on the perceptions of teachers selected for this research. The barriers and concerns consequently may not necessarily reflect the reality of the curriculum change process across Wales. . The most common concern, particularly within secondary schools, was related to assessment and the means of evidencing attainment under the new curriculum. Other barriers can be divided into those that derive from experience and those from uncertainty or concern regarding the future development of the curriculum.

Assessment

3.71   The outstanding concern in almost every school was that of the uncertainty and apprehension surrounding assessment under the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. The lack of clarity regarding the manner in which performance was to be

assessed led, in the eyes of senior and teaching staff, to a key piece of the curriculum being omitted.

> 'Assessment is the key thing for me. 'What Matters' statements are there and we're putting flesh on the bones. But the next and important phase is assessment and how schools will be judged. Schools will 'play the game' — they will work toward the judgments and evaluation criteria. Assessment will be key to its success or failure' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer School).

> 'We're worried about assessment' (Teacher Focus Group, English medium Secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer School).

3.72   Related to this, was uncertainty regarding how the successes and impact of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum teaching could be evidenced.
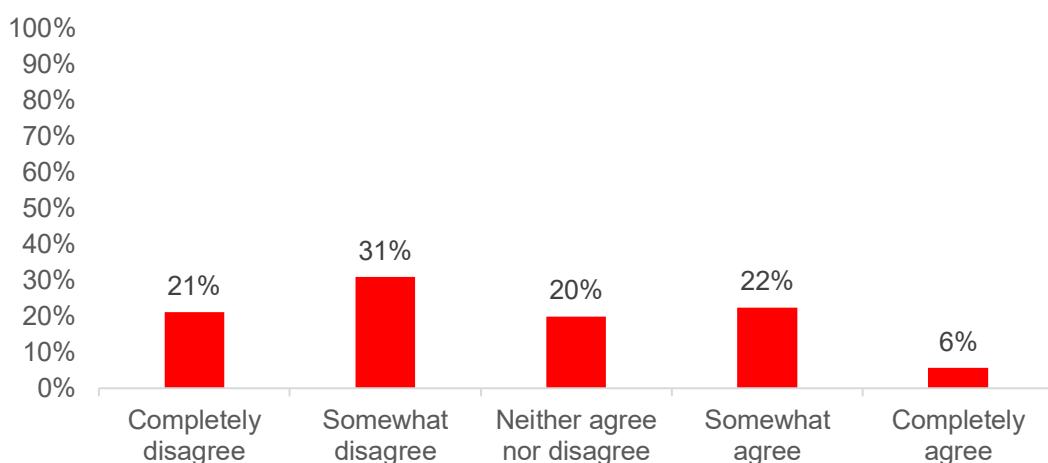
> 'Practical implementation information — it's a more fluid way of learning but they'll still want a number in a box and results. They'll still want an end product. What is it and how do we evidence it?' (Teacher Focus Group, English medium Secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer School).

Uncertainty regarding roles

3.73   While heads and senior staff spoke of being well informed by government and consortia on the whole, teaching staff were less confident of what would be expected of them and their role under a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum and were left to seek information on their own in some cases. Teaching staff were consequently more likely to be less well informed of the aims and details of curriculum change, as well as any latest developments.

3.74   Teaching staff were far more likely to state that they would receive information from the management levels of the school itself rather than seek information themselves: 'I've seen it [Successful Futures document], but I can't say I've read it thoroughly. We get the important stuff from the school…The documentation is hefty. Is there a bite-sized version of it? Because you can't always dip into hundreds of pages' (Teacher Focus Group, English medium Secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer School).

3.75   Data from the survey support these qualitative findings, as well as the notion that teaching and teaching support staff are less informed of their roles under a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. The data presented in Figure 3.4 is for all staff, suggesting a somewhat mixed picture whereby half (52 per cent) of staff disagree with the statement 'I don't know what will be required of my role under the new curriculum'.

3.76   Around a quarter (28 per cent) agreed to some extent that they do not know what will be required of their role. A further fifth (20 per cent) neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement, suggesting a degree of uncertainty. The data show that around half (48 per cent) of respondents, most of whom are within Pioneer schools, are unable to state that they are aware of the requirements of their role under the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum.

Figure 3.4: I don't know what will be required of my role under the new curriculum
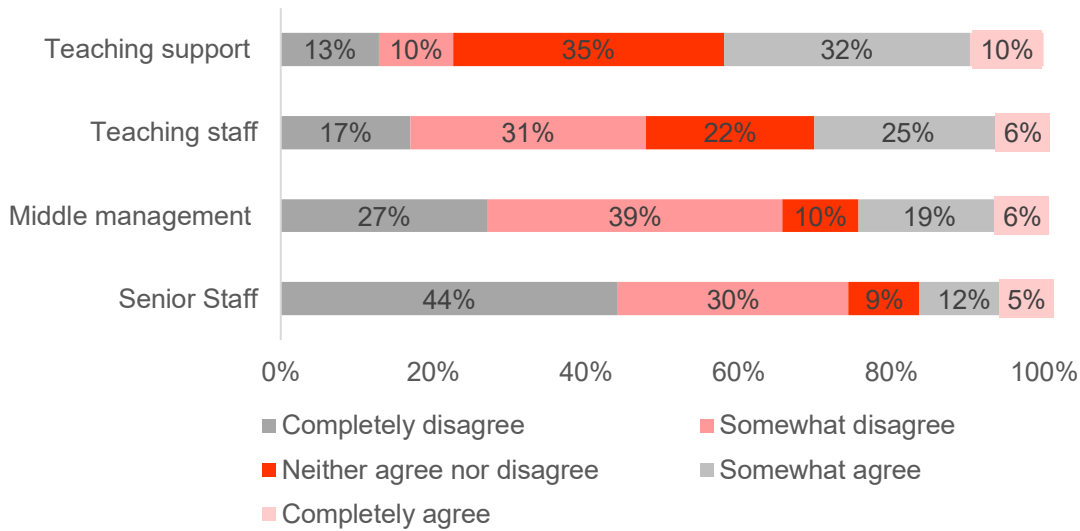

N = 414

3.77   Further analysis of the data however, explored in Figure 3.5, suggests a correlation between the seniority of a role and disagreement with the statement. While 74 per cent of senior staff disagree with the statement, suggesting a degree of confidence regarding what will be required of their role, only 48 per cent of teaching staff and

23 per cent of support staff offer a similar response. Moreover, between 25-42 per cent or more of staff up to and including the middle-management role suggest that to some extent, they do not know what will be required of their role under the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum.

Figure 3.5: I don't know what will be required of my role under the new curriculum (staff role)

N = 414

Two curricula

3.78 With regard to barriers experienced during the Pioneer activities, a key barrier was the need to adhere to the existing curriculum while simultaneously attempting to plan, develop and deliver content and teaching relevant to the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. A specific concern in schools, particularly with KS2 and KS3, was the need to assess pupils and produce data in line with levels and the existing curriculum while simultaneously moving towards progression point assessment outlined under the Successful Futures model.

'Assessment has been the most challenging part. The [consortia] will still want a level for pupils and data of those levels. [in line with the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum] We don't want to award levels. We're only going to give them a percentage of the skills they've hit. But at the end of year 8, they'll still go back into getting a level. Welsh Government may get rid of levels, but EAS will still want levels' (Teacher Focus Group, English medium Secondary and Professional Learning Pioneer School).

'The legal document for the national curriculum is slowing us down. We still have the old frameworks which we are bound by — trying to move forward but it's holding us back' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Primary and Partner School).

'The fact that they still have to teach for the… assessment[s] is a barrier because it does influence the type of projects they plan. The school are moving KS2 towards SF pedagogical principles based on holistic teaching but national tests are a conflict' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Primary and Pioneer School).

Key Stage 4

3.79   As previously mentioned, while attempts have been made to develop 'phases' (foundation – primary – middle – KS4), the continuum between the middle phase (later the KS2–KS3 period in the current curriculum) and KS4 was more difficult to develop. There remained in every secondary school a 'hard' barrier between the middle phase and KS4 due to the reluctance of schools to reform or develop any aspect of pupil experience that might impact negatively upon GCSE attainment.

Welsh language provision

3.80   In English medium schools, a common concern was the likely need to review and improve the Welsh medium provision. Heads in particular expressed concern regarding the capacity of the workforce to be able to deliver improved Welsh language provision.

'Bilingualism and Welsh medium provision will be a big challenge if we don't have the staff' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Primary and Professional Learning Pioneer School).

Digital Competency Framework

3.81   The Digital Competency Framework[19] emerged as a challenge for a number of schools. The need for training of staff members was likely to present a barrier. Staff members commented on the need for upskilling and confidence building.

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[19] The Digital Competence Framework encapsulates the skills that will help learners thrive in an increasingly digital world and was released in 2016.

Language of curriculum documentation

3.82   A key concern that was seen as a potential barrier in several Welsh medium schools was the curriculum documentation itself. Several staff members involved in AoLE development groups claimed that the language of curriculum development was English. While this was largely accepted as a practicality, there was great concern regarding the translation and ultimate meaning of the documentation and its ultimate communication with schools once prepared, which may have implications for their school at a later stage in adopting curriculum change.

> 'The biggest problem is that everything has been through the medium of English. I therefore think of the curriculum in English. They're starting to translate things now, but they're losing the meaning. We're losing the idiomatic language and it's very frustrating. As this is a curriculum for Wales, we need to consider the Welsh equally. At the moment, the curriculum for Welsh medium schools is being developed by a translator, not an education professional. The translation isn't right in terms of its meaning' (Senior Staff Interview, Bilingual Secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer School).

Further barriers and concerns

3.83   There was a broad consensus, however, that delivering the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum appears to be more challenging for secondary schools than for primary schools due to the greater pedagogical shifts and challenges that staff face. 'It's going to be easier in primary schools compared to secondary schools because of the expectations with regard to subject-specific targets' (Teacher Focus Group, Bilingual Middle and Pioneer School).

3.84   There were also a minority of teachers (both within the focus groups and referenced by senior staff in interviews) who were still sceptical of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. This is also supported by data from the survey (outlined in Figure 3.3 above) that show around 10 per cent of respondents do not see Successful Futures as the desired direction of travel.

> 'I've looked at the What Matters statements and in some respects it diluted my excitement. It sounded that the What Matters statements were a rehash of the National Curriculum statements. If I'm doing the same thing in five years' time, then what was the point' (Teacher Focus Group, English medium Secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer School).

3.85   A minority of teachers and some senior staff spoke of a preference for a more prescriptive curriculum. The certainty of levels was, in their eyes, being replaced by a more open and uncertain curriculum.

'Key Stage levels used to be published and you knew what the levels were, what we had to do and what we could do. You planned for that and you knew. With this freedom [of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum], there has to be progress checks and measurement. What are the Key Stage 3 levels now? We don't even know if they're being phased out or not. How are we meant to be measuring progress? I like the structure of the National Curriculum. Even though Key Stage 4 has been changed, and you might not agree with it, but you know what you're going to have to teach' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer School).

3.86   Senior and teaching staff also spoke of a minority of traditional subject teachers in secondary schools who are finding their school changes a challenge. The staff survey echoed these findings, suggesting also that while a majority of staff were aligned with and supportive of the changes, a minority were still opposed to them. A specific concern that emerged several times during interviews related to the teaching of a skills-based curriculum until year 8 or 9, and then a sudden shift towards teaching enough content and specialism for KS4 and GCSE examinations.

3.87   A related issue from secondary school teaching staff was a degree of apprehension regarding teaching beyond the scope of their subject speciality within AoLE: 'I'm a specialist in music — someone will need to show me how to teach art and drama' (Teacher Focus Group, English medium Secondary and Professional Learning Pioneer School).

3.88   A further barrier emerged on perceptions that parents had of the changes, particularly in secondary schools. In many secondary schools, such parents were concerned with a move to the AoLEs:

'What's happened to history [they'd ask]? Just because we don't call it history in the lessons it doesn't mean it isn't being taught' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer School).

'In contrast — the man and woman on the street have no idea. They'll be completely baffled by it. Most of the council are completely mystified by it and are convinced that it's a gimmick. Their focus is on A Levels and don't see the relevance' (Governor Interview, English medium Secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer School).

Costs

3.89   Pioneer activities and structural change to adapt to and develop the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum have incurred costs on schools. Costs could be divided into training costs, the cost of releasing and therefore covering staff, and activity costs.

3.90   Costs had been largely built into the improvement plan of the school; however, senior staff and governors in several sampled Pioneer schools suggested that it would be very difficult to dedicate the same level of staff time to curriculum development within the school without the Pioneer funding.

'Without the Pioneer funding, we wouldn't be able to release our teachers to facilitate with others outside the school. The curriculum development wouldn't happen. That would have an impact on staff and the development of the curriculum. But it would be in our time. Inset days and staff meetings would be used instead' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Primary and Pioneer School).

3.91   Training and Professional Learning was widely thought to comprise a large proportion of schools own and Pioneer spending, while Partner schools also saw the area as a key expenditure. Closely associated with the release of teachers for training was the release of teachers for observational visits to other schools. As developing pedagogy is a key aspect of curriculum change, the cost of training and cover for teachers while training or developing teaching was the main expenditure. Several heads spoke favourably of the relevance of the Professional Learning offer from consortia in particular.

3.92   It emerged that a common factor for preparing for delivery was the need to allocate sufficient planning and design time for the teachers involved. It was widely believed, particularly within most secondary schools, that planning the classroom delivery and content was more time-consuming than with the existing curriculum. Cover for those teachers to adequately plan and develop their workplans and teaching was as a key

expenditure for several Pioneer schools. Cost implications for one English medium secondary school for example, have included covering the time of teachers preparing and planning their curriculum in line with Successful Futures, with the Head of Geography leading engagement with the Pioneer school model, which required freeing up their timetable. Change Leaders, meanwhile, have a day off every fortnight to develop the curriculum. Teachers involved in the development of the curriculum and teaching also have a day off every fortnight.

3.93 'Challenge weeks' and thematic 'off-timetable' weeks incurred high costs. One English medium secondary and Partner school noted that it estimated the cost to be approximately £10,000 a year to deliver the 'Futures Weeks', as it is more resource-intensive due to the off-site visits and the additional planning time required. The use of outdoor facilities and offsite days for the weeks also incur costs. These costs were always covered by the Pioneer grant funding.

3.94 Some schools have invested in staff members either to widen the skills capacity of their workforce or to bring specialist experience to support curriculum change. One English medium secondary and Professional Learning Pioneer school has seconded a primary school teacher to support the group of teachers allocated responsibility for teaching the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum in year 7.

3.95 More comprehensive reorganisation of staff has also taken place in some schools, with long-term savings forecast in a few cases as a consequence of reducing the numbers of heads of departments to fewer heads of AoLE faculties. Some took advantage of being reorganised schools to recruit for a post-curriculum change staffing structure. While technically there were no savings made because the schools were newly reorganised, the long-term staffing costs were thought to be lower than had the school established departmental heads for each subject.

3.96 Meanwhile, other secondary schools have also reorganised their workforce, establishing six AoLE faculties with related AoLE heads in place of the board of subjects and heads of departments. While one school took advantage of a reorganisation of education in the region, both it and two others believe themselves to have proportionally reduced costs in the long term, again due to the reduction in departmental heads. One Welsh medium secondary school, however, claims that their staffing costs were higher following the reorganisation due to employing AoLE heads above the existing departmental heads.

3.97   A further cost that some schools have incurred relates to resources and hardware. A few have sought to invest in hardware. One special and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer school partnered with a technology company to establish a VR centre, an English medium secondary and Partner school invested £20,000 in laptops for pupils, while an English medium secondary and Professional Learning Pioneer school invested in Chromebooks for its year 7 pupils. The hardware investment provided resources to accompany and support the delivery of the new curriculum. At times, however, this investment was more than that specifically allocated to curriculum change through the Pioneer funding. An English medium secondary and Professional Learning Pioneer school noted for example, that they had spent more than their Pioneer funding grant on the curriculum changes when resources and broader costs were taken into account. IT resources in particular were believed by teachers to be essential to the delivery of the new curriculum. 'It cost us way more than the money we get. If it's going to work, you're going to have to invest. Technology and resources have cost implications, but there will be a time when the IT costs will level out' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Secondary and Professional Learning Pioneer School).

3.98   There are therefore a range of costs related to preparing for curriculum change. Senior staff suggested that training and 'time' costs for staff, as well as recruitment priorities could be built into school planning going forward. However, broader reorganisation of the workforce, resourcing the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum and potentially securing time for teachers to plan and develop teaching are, however, schools highlight are likely to emerge as costs that all schools will face during the transition to a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum.

Future

3.99   Senior staff and teachers were generally positive about their capacity to roll out the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum in time, providing that adequate support and information were made available. The overwhelming concern and key factor regarding the future rollout was the lack of detail and information regarding assessment and accountability criteria. Key Stage 4 was a particular concern for a number of secondary schools.

'Our concern is with Estyn and what will they come out with in terms of what they are going to be looking for. Are Estyn going to change in terms of accountability measures? What's Key Stage 4 going to look like? If it's knowledge- or content-

based, that'll influence the extent to which we can emphasise skills [in the curriculum]' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Primary and Professional Learning Pioneer School).

'GCSE [are] causing concern — we need leaders for the subject areas. It's going to be very difficult without knowing what the continuum is. The staff are ready to trial Key Stage 3, but we haven't started on Key Stage 4. Small steps across the school is what we're doing, but we don't know where to start with GCSE' (Head and Senior Staff Interview, Bilingual Secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer School).

3.100   There were concerns about the challenge of implementing a curriculum based to a significant extent on interpretation by schools. Without a clear framework or guideline regarding its implementation, there was a concern from some senior staff that curriculum change might in practice entail a 'retrofitting' of existing structures and content.

'The framework is going to be very vague because it's about interpretation for your own context. The drawback to that is that it does allow people to retrofit the current curriculum. They can just re-label departments, for example. I'm constantly stressing 'embracing the change' — don't resist it' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer School).

3.101   With regard to the future steps in the Pioneer process, some schools had begun a process of sharing their experiences with schools in the cluster. However, there was no consistency of approach to sharing experiences and practices outside of those Pioneer schools. The emerging trend was that schools were looking to the consortia to develop structures and systems for supporting the dissemination of practices and experiences.

3.102   Senior staff members were also worried about the broader political context and the will to push through with the Successful Futures vision of the curriculum. Concerns were raised regarding the government's will to pursue the Successful Futures agenda and a coproduced curriculum regardless of broader political and public debate regarding education in Wales. The key concern was interference by government in response to public or political debate surrounding results or PISA testing.

'We know what it's kind of going to look like. We know 'What Matters' statements. We know AoLE. We know progression. We know about the real life and meaningful hook. Other than that, that's it. Left to our own devices we could make a curriculum based on that over time, but we don't know what it looks like. They promised autonomy and I hope we get it' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Primary and Professional Learning Pioneer School).

3.103   Concerns were expressed by a few participants about the Pioneer process itself, as well as the likelihood that the Pioneer schools would successfully support other schools as part of the future stages of the process.

'I don't think the curriculum model of sharing information with non-Pioneer schools works. In Phase 3, we go out to work with other schools. But because it's so focused on school-level decision making, it's not that easy. I think there needs to be some kind of central message from Welsh Government, sharing information with non-Pioneer schools. A bit like the LNF or standard steps and questions to pass on to other schools — is your school ready kind of thing. Also, there might not even be enough Pioneer schools to get that message out there. What you don't want is a two-speed model [of Pioneer schools and Partner schools]' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer School).

3.104   A further concern looking to the future, particularly in secondary schools, was the understanding that parents held of the curriculum. A lack of understanding of the emphasis on skills and the move away from subjects towards the AoLE had already raised concerns amongst some parents. Some teachers reported having to alleviate parents' concerns: 'Why aren't you teaching maths anymore?' (Senior Staff Interview, English medium Secondary and Professional Learning Pioneer School). Several senior staff in secondary school thought that efforts should be made to educate and inform parents of the changes.

Case Study A

3.105   Case Study A is a Special School. Learners have complex needs and a range of different therapies are offered in the school. It is a Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer.

3.106   Staff at the school were familiar with and positive about Successful Futures' principles. While the head took a strategic lead, leadership of changes and classroom delivery was becoming more distributive and passed to middle management and teaching staff. An SLT member and two middle managers are now leading and driving the change on a day-to-day level.

3.107   Since receiving Pioneer funding, the school has reorganised its management structure to accommodate the changes to classroom delivery. The school's recruitment strategy has also been refined to place an emphasis on the knowledge of Successful Futures and the related skills.

3.108   With regard to classroom delivery, planning documents and meetings focus on the four purposes and on the AoLEs. Planning documents focus on AoLEs and four purposes, placing statements regarding the purposes at the centre of lesson planning.

3.109   The timetable and teaching day has been reorganised, focusing on literacy and numeracy in the morning and AoLE in the afternoon. Due to the complex needs that learners have, the focus is on Well-being and Health and Communication.

3.110   The school shares its practice and expertise with other schools — special and mainstream — on a regular basis and in a variety of ways. It shares through open days; conferences — local, national and international; informal sharing of documents; and therapies. Moreover, it regularly contributes to the Welsh Government's "Hwb" website.

3.111   There is a perception by some senior staff members that the changes have been rushed, and not all staff are positive about the changes. This is particularly the case for staff with more experience of working under the existing curriculum.

3.112   Furthermore, senior staff and some governors 'do not see eye to eye' with regard to the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum, with some opposition deriving from the governors regarding the changes being put in place. The view amongst the senior staff was that not all staff and governors were 'up to speed' with the implications of a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. The lack of consensus emerged some months ago as a barrier to further change at the school.

3.113   The SLT all have concerns about the deadline for publication and what the final document will look like. They also have concerns about how the school will be measured or held to account. There is further concern regarding the appropriateness of the 'Progression Steps' for their learners with complex needs as many of the school's pupils are working at developmental levels prior to those envisaged by Progression Step 1.

3.114   Nonetheless, after two years in the post, the two KS2 middle managers are now leading the changes along with a senior member of staff. At least two staff have higher degrees in SEN / Inclusion and are personally interested in research. They were firmly of the opinion that practice-informed research is the way ahead to ensure pedagogy remains excellent in the school. The staff members were therefore passionate, excited and enthusiastic about the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum.

3.115   With a new Chair of Governors, enthusiastic about Successful Futures and the school's role in its development, the staff leading the curriculum change in the school were positive with regard to the forthcoming period of development.

3.116   However, senior staff with responsibility for curriculum development felt that there should be a more measured approach to change management and a collegiate approach to leadership in the future.

Case Study B

3.117   Case Study B is an English medium primary school located in Cardiff. It is not a Pioneer school, but one of the main curriculum development activities to date has focused on pedagogy, as, in the words of one senior staff member, 'it's one of the few areas where they know for certain what to expect'.

3.118   Their first major activity involved a self-evaluation exercise focusing on the key pedagogical principles set out in Successful Futures. Staff rated their confidence level against each of the pedagogical principles and this intelligence was used to inform their training plan. It was also used to inform their Successful Futures-inspired curriculum development. This involved mapping the AoLE against the curriculum: 'We are looking at the school curriculum and asking what are we offering and how does it fit with the known pedagogical principles.'

3.119   Consequently, the initial focus has been on pedagogy rather than curriculum content. There has also been a heavy focus on professional development and knowledge transfer. One of the benefits of being such a large school is that they have their own cover team, and the school has been able to move staff out of the classroom to upskill and to develop their approaches to the cross-curricular priorities of numeracy, literacy, and digital competence.

3.120   A majority of staff attended training courses facilitated by the Learning Partnership on pedagogy and Successful Futures-inspired curriculum development. The school also has a peer development programme with all staff involved — one teaches and two observe for triangulation. Many teachers from other schools come to visit them because they are a lead school for numeracy; thus, knowledge is shared through that mechanism.

3.121   The school has also made structural changes to support the work on developing the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. A Curriculum Steering Group has been established and tasked with exploring means by which the teaching can move towards the four purposes denoted in Successful Futures. The group devised a strategy to take this forward by aligning their curriculum so that all teaching must be related to one of the four purposes. They have worked alongside two local Pioneer schools and have developed a mid-term plan to implement the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum.

3.122

3.123   More recently, the school has allocated curriculum leadership responsibilities which are linked to each AoLE. The school has assembled a group of teaching staff to organise the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum to be delivered to two school years (year 7 and 8). They have sub-phase meetings four times each term in which these issues can be discussed in detail. According to the head: 'The curriculum review is led by the Curriculum Steering Group and the teachers will have ownership in developing the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. They will be shown the overall framework and decide what they need to do within that.'

3.124   More specifically, changes have been made to the marking system, focusing on simplicity and consistency: 'All teachers now mark in the same way (two stamps: green and pink for progress/attainment).' In relation to performance management, they have moved towards a greater focus on listening to learners.

3.125   The School Improvement Plan highlights further training needs and inset sessions have been recognised as a means of ensuring that the training is received.

3.126   A key overarching barrier for the senior staff coordinating the activities at a strategic level is the lack of details regarding the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. There is an understanding of the principles, but there are not enough details. The head confessed that their activities had an element of risk:

> 'We know the grand vision but not the detail. We had to make a decision whether we would wait for further clarity or take some positive steps. We've decided to do the latter because we need to be ready, although it is a risk. We're not confident of what it will look like in 12 months' time, but I can understand why because we need to get it right. Estyn have provided no steer on the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. We know the 'What Matters' statements and the AoLE, but that's it.'

3.127   The transition from the existing curriculum to a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum has represented another key barrier. A senior staff member commented: '…the legal document for the National Curriculum is slowing us down. We still have the old frameworks which we are bound by — trying to move forward but it's holding us back.'

3.128   Staff reported that Estyn were still marking them on the old curriculum, making it difficult to have the time to ensure that they cover everything which is part of the

existing curriculum, particularly Maths, Science and English, whilst moving towards the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum at the same time: 'The shadow of Estyn is hanging over us; they want to see steps taken towards the new curriculum but they're scoring on the old one.' This is a particular barrier at KS2 where there are greater pressures related to assessment.

3.129   Finally, the school expected teaching development in relation to the Welsh language to be difficult. One senior staff member remarked: 'to achieve true bilingualism is difficult — it takes money and time. Capability in the Welsh language scored the lowest in our self-assessment.'

3.130   Ultimately, senior and teaching staff suggested that more time was needed. A senior staff member suggested:

> '[We] need more time to do this. Now we need to have everyone involved all the time and that's our challenge…It takes time in this size of school to train everyone to work on collaborative learning. The sheer size of the school also presents challenges related to making sure everyone has received the same message and there is a consistency in the new methods, despite teachers interpreting the message differently.'

3.131   Involvement in the Great Debate three years ago and a more general enthusiasm towards the changes have, however, led to staff being enthused. The leadership team arranged presentations for the staff early in the process and held many discussions regarding what it all meant. This was felt to be key to securing buy-in and a sense of ownership from staff. It is also important in ensuring consistency and that all staff are working towards the same goals.

3.132   Giving staff ownership and the opportunity to lead the change was also believed to be critically important. A senior staff member remarked:

> 'There is the opportunity to do it in the way that works for our children and lead in the way that we want. Ownership of the curriculum — it's more powerful. The steering group worked well and other staff contribute. We need more opportunities to share and develop.'

3.133   Meanwhile, a teacher remarked: 'We feel like we're all involved. We've had honest discussions. In our last inset meeting all staff were throwing out ideas and it's been a dynamic process with everyone feeding into it.'

3.134   The school have used local networks to work with local Pioneers to learn about the changes that they have made. They have looked in some detail at the changes undertaken by other schools for inspiration. However, the teachers also expressed the need to obtain further information and steer. As one senior staff member commented: 'We need access to Pioneer schools and access to what they are doing before they publish the final document.'

4.   Change Management Analysis

4.1   This chapter analyses the data of the research from the 7-S perspective. It aims to analyse the schools and the degree to which they are managing curriculum change through their activities.

Strategy

4.2   All schools visited have placed curriculum change at the heart of their development over the coming years, and their School Improvement Plans (SIPs) reflect as much.

4.3   Almost all schools stated that they saw the activities being undertaken as steps on a journey towards the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. In many cases the SIP reflected the intention to develop further over the coming years, including Pioneer schools after the termination of funding. These future activities will seek to rollout and expand the curriculum change activities throughout the school and staff (excluding KS4).

4.4   Pioneer activities play an important role within the SIP, allowing schools to develop approaches to the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum more confidently and quickly, with adequate resources and without drawing resources from other areas of the budget.

4.5   Pioneer activities are also aligned with and developed to address broader priorities within the SIP. This was often by design, and linked to the application for Pioneer status.

4.6   There remained in every secondary school sampled a 'hard' barrier between the middle phase and KS4 due to the reluctance of schools to reform or develop any aspect of pupil experience that might impact negatively upon GCSE attainment. Schools had not planned or developed their strategy to the KS4 period either and claimed that they would not until further details were made available on attainment and GCSE assessment.

4.7   Schools have incorporated curriculum change into the core of their strategy. Those new strategies will seek to ensure that the move towards the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum is resourced, proportionate and embedded in the long term. However, curriculum change in these schools is effectively limited to the period up to and including year 9 or KS3. The KS4/GCSE period is omitted from curriculum change at present.

4.8 Importantly, the strategies account for and are linked to changing structures, developing skills and gradually introducing the values of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum to staff.

Structure

4.9 The activities undertaken as Pioneer schools or with curriculum development range from relatively 'light-touch', such as training and sharing information or experiences, to school-wide reorganisation of the workforce.

4.10 Although some schools have travelled further and more quickly than others, all agreed that an incremental approach to curriculum change was most adequate. While reorganised schools took advantage of this to establish structures anew, most schools have worked with smaller groups of teachers initially, before expanding activities and incorporating more staff.

4.11 Structural change develops largely alongside the classroom provision and in line with the strategy. The only exceptions were some secondaries who had reorganised their entire workforce into AoLE faculties but had only delivered the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum to select groups of pupils.

4.12 Placing ownership of the curriculum in the hands of specific groups of teaching staff proved to be motivating and exciting to the teachers involved. Most senior staff remarked that doing so represented the most appropriate way of developing teaching in the classroom.

4.13 Primary school staff often remarked that they were more comfortable and open to the changes required, while secondary schools tended to raise more concerns, particularly regarding assessment and accountability. It was commonly remarked also that the curriculum change represented more fundamental reform of secondary school structures and teaching than primary schools.

Systems

4.14 The main concerns of staff interviewed were with the systems for disseminating information throughout the education system in Wales. There was a demand from staff for more accessible and more detailed information regarding the curriculum, its developments and its implications. This was partly because existing systems for disseminating information to senior and teaching staff were perceived by teachers to be failing to provide the relevant detailed information.

4.15   There were specific concerns amongst senior staff about the lack of details being shared regarding assessment and accountability, as well as the form that KS4/GCSE would take. The uncertainty acted as a barrier to pushing changes further than year 9 in secondary schools and represented a significant concern amongst individual teachers in secondary schools.

4.16   There was uncertainty also amongst teaching and support staff regarding their specific roles and expectations within a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. While school leaders had sought to research the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum and read the documentation available, few teaching staff would seek out such information. The latter often spoke of a desire for more accessible and concise information relating to the curriculum's impact on their role as teachers.

4.17   Further concerns were raised, particularly within secondary schools, about the understanding that parents held of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. Teachers were of the opinion that information regarding the likely changes had not been effectively communicated to parents. Parents were in some cases, however, expressing concerns regarding the changes that they had witnessed within the schools.

4.18   Systems established for sharing and disseminating emerging information from the curriculum development process and detail regarding the successful futures inspired curriculum between consortia and Pioneer leads within schools were perceived to be effective. Support from consortia for senior staff was appreciated and valued also - both in the form of information about curriculum design and the Professional Learning offer.

4.19   Some schools have established formal internal systems and means of sharing the information between staff who have been involved in curriculum change and those who have not. This was most notably done during inset days in both Pioneer and Partner schools. Informal dissemination within the schools was also taking place.

4.20   Indeed, the teachers who were involved with curriculum change activities and in teaching the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum were regarded by both themselves and others as enthusiastic proponents of the reformed curriculum. They represent a core of staff in each school who may act as a vanguard for motivating as well as supporting the curriculum change process throughout the school and beyond.

4.21   Teachers within the schools who are also members of AoLE development groups disseminate the latest developments such as the 'What Matters' statements within their schools on an informal basis. The updating of teachers on developments was always well received. Any reassurance of being 'on the right track' was well received by the staff responsible for leading and delivering the new approaches.

4.22   The sharing of information between Pioneer schools and Partner schools has begun in some cases, particularly within clusters. However, no consistency exists at this stage with regard to the form or content of such dissemination. The lack of formal structures with which to facilitate collaboration was also identified as a key issue in a formative evaluation of the Pioneer model.[20]

4.23   Consortia were understood by most teachers to be responsible for developing the external systems for sharing practices and experiences between Pioneer schools and Partner schools. Many schools and teachers were of the opinion, however, that these systems were not yet established, and a few were of the opinion that they would not prove to be adequate for disseminating practices and knowledge from Pioneer schools to other schools in Wales.

4.24   There were also concerns regarding the Welsh medium materials, specifically the language used within the documentation regarding the developing curriculum, such as the 'What Matters' statements. Senior staff members and those involved in development groups expressed concerns that the translated documentation had not received the same level of critical engagement as the English versions. There were concerns that both the official documentation for the curriculum and the associated statements would not be adequately expressed and communicated for Welsh medium schools if the documents were merely translated without critical input from education professionals.

4.25   The findings show that teachers felt the systems were not disseminating relevant information regarding assessment and accountability, as well as details regarding the roles of individuals. These systems are important in enabling senior staff to develop adequate strategies for curriculum change beyond KS3, and also in supporting the shared values and in ensuring as much support for the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum as possible throughout the workforce. There was some evidence of information dissemination between staff within the schools visited and the dissemination of practices from the Pioneer schools to Partner schools in

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[20] See Formative Evaluation of the Pioneer School model

Wales. Broader concerns were raised regarding the dissemination of curriculum information through Welsh language documentation.

Shared Values

4.26   The values sit at the core of the model and relate to the attitudes, understanding and commitment of the human resources of the organisation. These values are the starting point for all change. They comprise the norms, values and beliefs that underpin the entire curriculum change process in the context of this research. They are key to motivating and facilitating engagement with the practical implications of Successful Futures.

4.27   Both the qualitative interviews and the supporting survey indicated that there was widespread awareness of Successful Futures, as well as agreement that the current curriculum was not fit for purpose. No interviewee sought to defend the existing curriculum.

4.28   The survey data showed, that not all staff members agreed that Successful Futures was the best means of reforming the current curriculum, and an opportunity existed for further persuasion as to the appropriateness of the direction of travel.

4.29   Although not representative of the entire workforce, the lack of understanding and knowledge of the Successful Futures approach tended to derive from teaching or teaching support staff, key areas of the workforce responsible for the delivery of any curriculum. Furthermore, a more specific concern was raised in secondary schools regarding the perceived absence of a role for subject specialism within the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum, as well as the perceived need to retrain.

4.30   The existing systems for disseminating information have been addressed above, but are closely linked to the development of a consensus across the workforce to the shared values expressed within Successful Futures.

4.31   The values were prominent within the SIPs, placing the core aspects of the Successful Futures document at the heart of the school's strategy. Moreover, senior staff and middle management all saw the core purposes and aims of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum as their strategic objectives within the school.

4.32   The Professional Learning agenda of every school, guided by the SIP, was concerned primarily with upskilling and developing the workforce to deliver a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum.

4.33   Overall, the majority of staff were aware of, and in agreement with, the core principles and aims of Successful Futures. Moreover, the core principles were central to the curriculum development activities witnessed in schools. The 7-S model would suggest that broader engagement and support from staff would benefit from the broad support for and agreement with the core principles of Successful Futures and the curriculum that it inspires. The values were clear within both SIPs and the objectives and aims of senior staff and middle management. However, teaching and support staff are less confident in both Successful Futures as a direction of travel and their own roles within a curriculum inspired by that document.

Style

4.34   It was widely believed that leadership was key to driving curriculum change forward at an early stage. Coupled with the wider belief that starting early and progressing incrementally over a period of several years would likely be the most effective approach to adapting to the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum, forward-thinking leadership was understood to be a crucial element, enthusing and motivating teaching staff.

4.35   Incremental changes imposed by senior leadership were deemed to be appropriate, as each school was able to advance at their own pace, ensuring that staff were adequately informed and skilled to deliver the changes, while hard structures were put in place to support them.

4.36   Leadership of curriculum change was, as expected, driven strategically in the first instance by heads and SLT staff through the Pioneer application process or key individuals in leadership positions in both Pioneer and Partner schools. The curriculum-change related activities were often coordinated by designated members of the SLT in secondary schools, and either the SLT member or the head in primary schools.

4.37   Leadership played a role in motivating staff members to engage with the process and in enabling curriculum change through encouraging experimentation and appreciating risk taking.

4.38   However, responsibility for developing and planning activities that related to pupils (such as teaching through newly established AoLE faculties or groups of teachers) was often delegated to middle managers and specific teachers.

4.39   Ownership and involvement by all staff, as well as the formation of designated planning teams, were widely understood by school leaders to be a key aspect of successful curriculum change. Giving ownership to middle management was perceived to have generated enthusiasm amongst the staff, for its rollout was a key component of ensuring that staff moved ahead with their efforts to develop the curriculum, not dwelling on potential barriers. Delegating such details to middle management and teaching staff also enabled a more relevant impact in the classroom.

4.40   The secondment of primary teachers within a few secondary schools also had a positive impact on other teaching staff and on the capacity to plan and deliver the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum with confidence. Their experience and their ability to share their 'ways of working' and a more appropriate culture that inspired by Successful Futures were deemed to be effective by senior staff in those schools.

4.41   Schools have, independently of each other, developed a relatively common style and culture with regard to curriculum change. Moreover, this style is perceived by senior and teaching staff to be effective in encouraging engagement, ownership and enthusiasm in respect of the curriculum change process. In particular, the delegation of responsibility for the development and delivery of the new curriculum within the classroom to middle management and teaching staff is perceived to be effective. The culture of 'ownership' of the curriculum throughout the schools is accompanied, if not encouraged, by the leadership and style of the schools visited.

Staff

4.42   All staff interviewed were aware that a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum was being developed within their schools. Senior staff members were particularly well informed, while teaching staff tended to rely on information cascaded and passed from the leadership within the school.

4.43   The lack of clarity or details regarding the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum left some members of staff unsure as to whether they were skilled or knowledgeable enough to deliver the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. Specific concerns regarding the evidencing of attainment were also raised in many schools. However, the majority of staff considered themselves to have the skills and knowledge with which to successfully implement the curriculum.

4.44 The vast majority of staff engaged with curriculum change activities were enthusiastic in their support for the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. This would be expected from Pioneer school staff and teachers from schools who have, of their own initiative, engaged in the curriculum change process. Such enthusiasm facilitates the informal sharing of knowledge and practice to fellow staff on the one hand, and raises awareness of the core values amongst other staff on the other hand.

4.45 Overall, while the majority of staff in the Pioneer and Partner schools studied are supportive, capable and willing to ensure the success of curriculum change, a minority were not.

Skills

4.46 Training, upskilling and equipping teachers with the knowledge with which to deliver the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum was a key activity in all schools visited. The training was guided by the SIP and the key principles of Successful Futures.

4.47 Most school leaders were confident that were a training need identified, it could and would be addressed. Skills audits were or had been conducted in a few schools in order to evaluate training needs. Several senior staff also spoke favourably of the professional learning opportunities on offer from consortia, and of their supporting role more generally with regard to training.

4.48 The long-term planning to embed curriculum change witnessed in the schools suggested that staff would have the opportunities and time to develop their skills appropriately.

Case Study C

4.49   Case Study C is a Welsh medium secondary and Partner school.

4.50   Members of staff and the Chair of Governors interviewed were all positive about Successful Futures and the changes in place in the school. The governors and senior staff agree that the school's head has the vision to lead and is leading the changes. Middle-management staff commented that the senior leadership of the school were equally important leadership figures.

4.51   As part of its activities to adapt to and develop the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum, a new SLT has been in place since September 2016 to coincide with the move to the new school building and the introduction of Successful Futures in years 7 and 8.

4.52   The timetable has been partly reorganised at KS3 into AoLEs. The Successful Futures-inspired curriculum is in place for years 7 and 8, while the school's SIP outlines plans for year 9 to follow from September 2018.

4.53   The planning at KS3 focuses on AoLEs and the four purposes, and teaching is delivered to the pupils according to Successful Futures.

4.54   Beyond the classroom, a variety of training programmes have been in place over the last few years. These have been time-consuming and costly in terms of both the training and the 'cover time' associated with releasing teachers. However, they are considered by staff to be a worthwhile investment in professional development.

4.55   The school also works closely with the cluster. Specifically, teachers have held sessions with Partner primary schools on aspects of Successful Futures and their experiences of delivering to pupils in order to share the practices that they have developed over the period.

4.56   A tension was noted between Successful Futures and the existing National Curriculum, particularly with regard to assessment and accountability. Conforming to two curricula has proven a challenge and potential barrier for the successful development of a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum.

4.57   The investment in various training programmes over the last few years and the decision to carry out the training in evening sessions and on Saturday mornings (two per year) are helping to change the culture. The training programmes are

'ongoing' and include such training courses as 'Building Learning Power and AfL – Assessment for Learning.

4.58   The training is matched with departments and responsibilities and there is an effective mentoring system. These various training programmes have key principles underpinning that are in line with Successful Futures: learner-centred; learners taking responsibility for their own learning; experiential learning; and problem solving, reasoning, and creative thinking. The focus is on pedagogy, not on 'content'.

4.59   The change of culture at KS3 with the new provision, the new approaches to learning, and the focus on skills is believed to be having a positive impact on learners.

4.60   Looking to the future, the school aims and has planned through its SIP to continue with the training programme so that all teachers are confident with regard to their understanding and expectations of Successful Futures.

4.61   The school will continue to work closely with the cluster. They will also aim to continue with half-termly curriculum meetings relating to curriculum change and continue to share effective practice in developing appropriate experiences for their pupils.

5.   Conclusions

5.1   This final section concludes the research by summarising the key findings from the change management perspective. It then addresses the core research questions directly.

Key findings from the change management perspective

5.2   The change management model emphasises that seven elements need to be aligned and mutually reinforcing for organisations to manage change effectively. Progress in one area is supported by progress in another, and likewise hindered by the lack of progress in another. Examining the alignment allows for conclusions to be drawn regarding how effectively the schools examined are managing their curriculum change processes.

5.3   The findings and analysis outlined in the previous chapters suggest that hard structures (Strategies, Structure and Systems) are being aligned with the core purposes and values of Successful Futures.

5.4   Strategies seek to adequately resource curriculum change over the coming years. They also link the structural changes to the pace of change within the school, such as the specific allocation of responsibility for developing the curriculum and the resourcing requirements of the curriculum change activities themselves.

5.5   The structural changes are often proportionate to and aligned with individual school strategies but vary between schools. Even Pioneer schools and the most advanced in terms of curriculum development are therefore moving at a pace deemed suitable for themselves, but different to each other.

5.6   The incremental nature and pace of the changes were deemed to be appropriate by the senior staff of each school in order to ensure that other aspects of the school such as the staff and the hard structures are developed in tandem. This style and approach to curriculum change is common throughout the schools visited.

5.7   Leadership must be recognised as an important aspect of curriculum change. Leadership played a key part in motivating the staff members to engage with the changes. Both at senior or strategic and middle or day-to-day level, key individuals enable teaching staff to play their role, and develop their understanding and confidence with regard to the changes. Leadership style encouraged ownership, engagement and commitment with respect to the values of Successful Futures.

5.8   Internal systems for informing and sharing practices within schools are varied and often informal. Activities are in many cases contained to select groups of teaching staff. Progress in relation to curriculum change was therefore varied even amongst staff within the same school. Formal systems have not always been established to support the broader workforce within the school or to disseminate to other schools. Again, this was largely due to the style and culture of ensuring that the pace of change is consistent within every area of each school. For example, there was no perceived need to develop structures for external dissemination while the school itself was still developing their curriculum provision.

5.9   Senior staff members responsible for strategic planning of the changes are satisfied with the national-level systems for informing them of the implications and values of Successful Futures. However, a lack of clarity regarding assessment and accountability restricted senior staff in planning or implementing the curriculum beyond KS3.

5.10   Furthermore, the lack of clarity regarding assessment criteria and the uncertainty that some teaching and support staff have regarding their role within a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum causes concern for schools with regard to planning for and resourcing adequate and effective skills training for staff in preparation for further and future curriculum change.

5.11   Some teaching and support staff, while aware of curriculum change, are (nonetheless) unaware of their own roles and responsibilities under the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. Further support is desired by these staff members. However, broader national systems such as the communication of developments and implications of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum for teaching and staff by the government are not deemed to be effective by those staff members. Teaching staff do not access the current sources of information and systems for dissemination.

5.12   There were concerns also within secondary schools in particular that little or no information had been disseminated effectively to parents.

5.13   There was confidence, however, that organisations had the necessary systems in place, largely through consortium-run or internal training courses, to ensure that staff were adequately upskilled to deliver the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. Despite this confidence, only a few schools had formally audited the skills of the workforce in relation to the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum.

5.14   Concerns were also raised within Welsh medium schools with regard to the wording and level of critical engagement that the Welsh language curriculum documentation has received. Curriculum documentation such as the 'What Matters' statements were perceived by staff members, alongside the Successful Futures document itself, to be the core source of information regarding the curriculum and the expectations of schools, teachers and teaching. Therefore, for most Welsh medium schools there is concern with regard to the wording and communication of key information regarding the curriculum documentation and the impact this has on critical engagement with the Welsh language versions.

5.15   Meanwhile, the majority of staff, particularly the senior staff responsible for strategic planning, are aligned with and supportive of the shared values represented by Successful Futures. This was a key factor that encouraged engagement and motivation amongst staff with regard to the curriculum change process. A minority of teaching and support staff, however, were not aligned with or supportive of the values represented by Successful Futures.

5.16   In conclusion, curriculum change was moving at a pace that schools and staff deemed adequate and in tandem with the broader changes to strategies, structures, and staff's understanding and skills capacity in respect of delivering the curriculum that was inspired by the values and principles of the Successful Futures document. This style was considered both appropriate and important in ensuring the successful management of change.

5.17   The change management model would suggest, however, that ensuring that the broader systems for informing and disseminating information to both senior and teaching or support staff were effective and adequate was the emerging challenge, hindering further development of curriculum change in some cases[21]. Senior staff required clarity with regard to KS4, assessment and accountability, while teaching and support staff sought more accessible information with regard to the expectations of their roles within a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. The systems for disseminating practices from Pioneer schools to other schools were also deemed by some teachers to be in development or inadequate. This latter issue relates to curriculum change at a national level.

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[21] Enduring Ideas: The 7-S Framework

Core research questions

5.18   The schools visited are Pioneer schools or Partner schools that are known to have pushed ahead with their development of the type of curriculum and assessment arrangements recommended in Successful Futures. The findings of this research should not be considered representative of all schools in Wales. Rather, the findings refer to some of the most advanced schools in Wales with regard to curriculum change and highlight a probable direction of travel for other schools.

In what ways have schools in Wales adapted or are planning to adapt their structures to facilitate themselves in making steps towards the types of curriculum and assessment arrangements recommended in Successful Futures?

5.19   All schools had placed curriculum reform at the centre of their SIP, orienting and focusing the resources and efforts of the school and its staff towards developing and delivering a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. Placing curriculum development at the centre of school planning strongly suggests that schools are dedicating resources and effort to making changes and reforms in order to achieve the curriculum change envisioned in Successful Futures. The strategies now account for and are linked to changing structures, developing skills and gradually introducing the values of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum to staff at a pace deemed to be adequate for the individual school.

5.20   Reorganisation or reallocation of responsibilities amongst staff represented the core of the structural changes enacted. Changes are closely linked to the broader school strategy of changing and adapting in order to deliver a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum and one which is relevant to each school and their specific activities.

5.21   Beyond structural changes, schools have engaged in activities to inform and train staff members to deliver a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. Staff within the sampled schools are largely in line with and support the values of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. Information sharing and training have also sought to prepare and equip the staff with the skills required to deliver the changes.

5.22   Schools have also developed a relatively common style and culture with regard to curriculum change. The delegation of responsibility for the development and delivery of the new curriculum within the classroom to middle management and teaching staff is perceived to be effective, fostering enthusiasm and a sense of ownership over the changes.

5.23   As detailed in Chapter 3, the specific activities undertaken by the schools in question can be placed on a spectrum that ranges from relatively superficial to comprehensive structural reform.

5.24   'Light-touch' or superficial activities such as sharing information regarding the development of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum and the training of teachers took place in almost all schools.

5.25   Almost all schools have also allocated specific responsibilities for curriculum development to staff members. This varies from strategic oversight and coordination roles to senior staff and members of the SLT to leadership and membership of teams planning and delivering the 'day-to-day' teaching.

5.26   Recruitment strategies have been revisited in some schools in order to develop the skillset of the workforce over the coming years, while some secondary schools have seconded primary school teachers with positive results.

5.27   Many schools have also undertaken some form of workforce reorganisation. Such reorganisation varies from effectively seconding staff internally to develop 'challenge weeks' (involving changes to timetables and staffing) to establishing and allocating staff to one (or even all six) AoLE. Some newly established schools took advantage of their 'clean slate' to establish different structures, while others have undertaken involved school-wide reorganisation processes. Each reorganisation was developed by the school's senior staff and governors and unique to the school. The reorganisations were intended and deemed to be appropriate for the delivery of existing or future curriculum changes.

In what ways have schools in Wales adapted their teaching and learning to reflect the types of curriculum and assessment arrangements recommended in Successful Futures?

5.28   All schools had engaged in activities to inform and develop an understanding amongst staff members of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. This was commonly regarded as the first steps towards preparing teachers for changing in line with the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. Some senior staff have limited the information to teachers not involved in curriculum change activities in order to avoid creating apprehension.

5.29   Training was a core activity relating to the curriculum change process within the sampled schools. Training was focused on the development of pedagogy inspired by Successful Futures amongst staff members. Training and development

commonly related to developing an understanding and means of teaching according to the 12 pedagogical principles, but has also covered issues such as learner autonomy, creative teaching, and experiential learning. Senior staff in both primary and secondary schools often suggested that the pedagogical challenge was greater for staff members in secondary schools.

5.30   Beyond the focus on informing and training teachers in preparation for the new curriculum, schools have been delivering teaching through a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. However, delivery in the classroom varies from school to school.

5.31   Primary schools have opted to focus upon developing one AoLE or to deliver all teaching through AoLEs, incorporating pedagogical principles and new focuses relatively seamlessly into standard primary classroom teaching.

5.32   Secondary schools, meanwhile, have sought to reorganise teaching more fundamentally, moving away from traditional subject-specific lessons. Some deliver thematic 'challenge weeks' to select year groups with a mixture of teachers planning and delivering the weeks. Others have delivered teaching through a single AoLE, alongside a standard timetable. Some schools have delivered all teaching through AoLEs to entire year groups.

5.33   The four purposes and key principles of Successful Futures anchor and act as a starting point for all planning, while some schools have sought to make these statements explicit in their communication to pupils. As they are released and made known, 'What Matters' statements are also incorporated into planning.

Why have schools in Wales made the changes?

5.34   A range of motivations drive engagement with the curriculum change agenda but largely derive from personal commitment to the agenda, school leadership, the Pioneer School Model, and support from consortia.

5.35   Strategic and operational leadership is a key motivation for staff members. Importantly, while strategic leadership of the curriculum change process lay at the senior staff level, often with a member of the SLT, leadership of the day-to-day planning and delivery of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum at classroom level was frequently passed to middle managers and teaching staff. This was thought to be a particularly effective means of both delivering the change and

fostering support and engagement with the broader curriculum change process from individual staff members.

What are the challenges involved in adapting activity in these ways?

5.36   Barriers and challenges were identified and could be divided into those experienced in practice and barriers that related to uncertainty regarding the future development of the curriculum.

5.37   Crucial and most common amongst senior staff, particularly within secondary schools, was a concern regarding the form that assessment and accountability criteria would take, including how attainment would be evidenced within an assessment framework inspired by Successful Futures. This resulted in KS4 being omitted from the curriculum changes. It was also thought that the details on these issues would ultimately structure and impact on how schools would approach a new curriculum.

5.38   National systems for disseminating information and developments with regard to KS4, assessment and accountability could, it was suggested, provide more assurance to senior staff who are reluctant to plan and deliver changes to the post-Key Stage 3 phase.

5.39   A minority of staff, particularly teaching and teaching support staff were not as positive in their view of the Successful Futures vision as a direction of travel as most staff members. Moreover, the lack of understanding of personal roles and concern regarding assessment and accountability structures emerged as barriers for such staff. The change management model highlighted that national systems for disseminating such information could offer more accessible and relevant support to teaching and teaching support staff.

5.40   Systems for sharing practices and learning between schools were perceived to be in development by consortia. Some practice-sharing activities have taken place between schools, though there is little consistency in those activities.

5.41   The perception of having to adhere to both the existing and the emerging Successful Futures-inspired curriculum demands simultaneously provided a particular challenge to teaching staff. Specifically, the different assessment criteria contrast sharply at a basic, philosophical level.

5.42   Specific aspects of the Successful Futures curriculum caused concern for some schools, such as Welsh medium provision in English medium schools and the skills and training implications of the Digital Competency Framework.

5.43   Furthermore, concerns existed regarding the wording of the Welsh language curriculum, with senior staff worried that the official documentation and instruction have not received the same levels of critical development as those of the English language versions.

5.44   The barrier between primary and secondary schools was a particular challenge with regard to developing a continuum of learning. While schools were developing activities for doing so, the physical barriers are significant. This is particularly relevant to the emerging 'middle' phase that straddles the end of primary and beginning of secondary school. Middle schools (ages 3-16 or 3-19) however, have obvious advantages that allow this challenge to be more effectively addressed.

How have these changes/approaches prepared and supported practitioners for the new curriculum and assessment arrangements?

5.45   Senior and teaching staff spoke of being confident about and ready for the further development of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. Many schools had made structural changes and begun to deliver teaching through the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum and were consequently preparing to take further steps in rolling out broader aspects of the curriculum throughout the schools.

5.46   More specifically, strategies have been developed with the coming years in mind, allocating funding and resources for the continued development of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum. All schools therefore had begun but also had foreseen and sought to plan for further changes to teaching and structures in preparation for the rollout of the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum.

5.47   No schools have attempted to introduce changes to the KS4/GCSE phase. This was due to uncertainty regarding the future of KS4 assessment under a changed curriculum, as well as apprehension surrounding the notion of interfering with current KS4/GCSE teaching. There remained a barrier between teaching and structures that had been changed and the KS4/GCSE teaching and structures within secondary schools. Changes in reality, therefore, are being developed up to year 9 only.

5.48   The informing and training of staff in relation to the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum has, it was claimed by senior staff, developed enthusiasm for and engagement with the changes being implemented within the schools visited. Inset days in particular were highlighted as useful environments for sharing experience and practices, while the informal sharing of experiences between teachers was also prominent within the schools visited.

5.49   The delegation of the development of classroom delivery aspects of the curriculum to middle managers and select teams of teaching staff was deemed to be an enabler. The allocation of responsibilities was perceived to have passed ownership of the curriculum development process to those staff members. Ownership and responsibility were perceived to be key motivating factors for those staff members.

5.50   Furthermore, the teams allocated responsibility for the design and delivery of the curriculum in the classroom were perceived to lead an informal process of sharing of expertise amongst staff. Staff members were able to cooperate across subject areas in order to plan and develop the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum.

5.51   The various teams of staff being established by the staff reorganisation has ensured that a range of activities have been delivered across the sampled schools. These range from thematic teaching weeks, through primary classrooms orienting their teaching around the AoLEs, to entire year groups delivering AoLE-inspired teaching for the whole academic year.

5.52   Recruitment strategies were changed to address perceived skills and experience requirements. Most notably and successfully in the view of senior staff, a few secondary schools seconded primary teachers to join the teams of staff tasked with the development and delivery of the curriculum within the classroom. Primary experience was deemed to be relevant and valuable to other staff when approaching the pedagogical principles and teaching methodologies inspired by the Successful Futures document.

5.53   Staff reorganisation was undertaken to various degrees. In some cases, dedicated teams of staff were tasked with the development and delivery of the curriculum within the classroom. In other cases, entire staffing structures were reformed in line with AoLE as opposed to departments. The reorganisation of staff focused the delivery of teaching in the classroom upon the principles and approaches inspired by the Successful Futures document. The staff structure changes were relevant to the activities in each school but were designed in every case to ensure that

adequate staffing resources were available for the design and delivery of the teaching of the new curriculum.

5.54 While designed by schools to best support classroom delivery under a Successful Futures-inspired curriculum, reorganised staffing structures still delivered the existing curriculum alongside that of which it was designed to support the development. Whilst deemed to be desirable by many schools, staff reorganisation was not necessarily a precursor to developing and delivering the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum in the schools sampled.

5.55 Staff involved in the curriculum development and Pioneer activities were confident about and excited by the thought of further developing and rolling out the Successful Futures-inspired curriculum.

5.56 A minority of teaching and teaching support staff appear to have reservations with regard to the understanding of the expectations of teachers and whether Successful Futures represents the best way of reforming the curriculum.

Do schools in Wales have plans for making further changes to teaching and learning structures to prepare for changes to the education system in Wales?

5.57 As noted previously, the incorporation of curriculum change into the SIPs across all schools visited strongly suggests that curriculum change is planned for, resourced and emphasised in these schools over the coming years.

5.58 Many schools saw the activities supported by the Pioneer programme as initial steps on a larger journey towards successful curriculum change. The successes of the activities were already being developed and replicated throughout the schools.

5.59 A key barrier remained in the form of a lack of details on KS4/GCSE assessment and school accountability criteria. These aspects are likely to influence and structure the future efforts and the nature of the delivery of the curriculum in the classroom.

Strategy	Structure	Systems	Shared Values	Style	Staff	Skills
What changes have the school made to the strategy with regard to the new curriculum? *School Developent Plan?*	Has the school made any organisational changes?	Are there systems in place to reinforce and support effective changes that have or are being put in place?	Are all staff members, including teaching, leadership, support as well as governors…	Who is leading the change, and how active is that leadership in guiding, reinforcing and embedding the changes?	Are staff members aware of the new curriculum?	Do staff have the skills to successfully understand and implement the new curriculum?
How will the new strategy/SDP contribute to the new curriculum?	Responsibilities of teachers/staff to accommodate the new curriculum?	Are there systems in place to share the good practice that is relevant to the implementation of the new curriculum?	1) aware of Successful Futures and at least its core principles such as the AoLEs and 4 purposes?	Is the style appreciated or resisted by broader staff?	Do they have the desire to successfully implement the new curriculum?	Has the school identified any skills deficit within the workforce?
		Are there sources of support and knowledge for staff members who are looking to make changes? Do these sources allow for risk and failure? This may involve the management being open and supportive, and aware of doubts and concerns.	2) committed to curriculum reform and the successful implementation of the new curriculum? Is there resistance to the changes – why/what form?	Is the communication between leadership and staff effective and supportive of the changes?	Do staff members have the knowledge of the changes they must make and implement in order to ensure the successful implementation of the new curriculum?	Do the staff and the new structures or systems have enough time to 'bed in' and establish themselves as the new 'norm' following changes?
		Have materials and/or resources been produced to support the changes to teaching or any other aspects?	3) is the teaching culture changing, toward the ideal identified in successful futures?	Are individuals empowered to risk making changes?	Have staff members attained the skills required to successfully implement the new curriculum?	Are there good practice and knowledge sharing systems in place within the school, to positively reinforce and share the changes being implemented?
					After implementing changes, are staff members maintaining the new ways of working, and avoiding reverting to older habits and methods of working?	

Annex B

Pre-interview survey (Teachers | SLT | Heads | Governors)

School: _____

Role: _____

Is your school a Pioneer school?

Yes | No | Don't know

Please respond to each statement by placing a tick in the relevant box

Statement	Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree
I think that the current curriculum needs to be reformed					
I am aware of the Successful Futures document and the new curriculum proposed by Professor Donaldson					
I don't know what will be required of my role under the new curriculum					
I think that Successful Futures represents the best way of reforming the curriculum					
I am eager for my school to adopt the new curriculum					
I am eager to play my part in adopting the new curriculum					
What I do has no impact on the success of the new curriculum					
I know what I need to do in order to conform and adapt to the new curriculum					
I am confident that I can make the changes and conform to the new curriculum					
I currently have the skills and knowledge to adapt and conform to the new curriculum					
I understand the changes I have made in order to adapt and conform to the new curriculum					
I could support others in a similar position to adapt and conform to the new curriculum					

Annex C

Image 2: Planning Sheets from Bilingual secondary and Curriculum Design and Development Pioneer school

Y PEDWAR DIBEN

MAES DYSGU A PHROFIAD : _____

Adran : _____

	Y Diben	Y Datganiad	Gweithgaredd / Gwers / Uned	Y Tystiolaeth Arloesol a Chreadigol
1				
2				
3				

YN DDYSGWYR UCHELGEISIOL, GALLUOG SYDD YN BAROD I DDYSGU DRWY GYDOL EU HOES

Datganiad y Pedwar Diben	Tystiolaeth / enghraifft o weithgaredd	
yn gosod safonau uchel iddyn nhw eu hunain ac yn chwilio am heriau ac yn eu mwynhau		
yn datblygu corff o wybodaeth ac sydd â'r sgiliau sydd eu hangen i gysylltu'r wybodaeth honno a'i chymhwyso at wahanol gyd-destunau		
yn ymholgar ac yn mwynhau datrys problemau		
yn gallu cyfathrebu'n effeithiol mewn gwahanol ffurfiau a lleoliadau, drwy'r Gymraeg a'r Saesneg		
yn gallu egluro'r syniadau a chysyniadau y maent yn dysgu amdanynt		
yn gallu defnyddio rhif yn effeithiol mewn gwahanol gyd-destunau		
yn deall sut i ddehongli data a chymhwyso cysyniadau mathemategol		
yn defnyddio technolegau digidol yn greadigol i gyfathrebu a dod o hyd i wybodaeth a'i dadansoddi		
yn ymchwilio ac yn gwerthuso eu canfyddiadau'n feirniadol		