

School Teacher

National Education Workforce Survey 2021

Analysis of open text comments



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

1. Workload

Overall themes from suggestions to make work more manageable open text question:

- Less administration/paperwork/meetings;
- Extra time to be provided for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA);
- Change to teaching hours;
- Less marking;
- Recruiting to deal with workload;
- Reduce class sizes;
- Resources readily available.

Total number of responses: 3,346

Total number of open text responses: 1,471

In response to:

4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that you are able to effectively manage your existing workload within your contracted working hours? (select one) (when either disagree or strongly disagree was selected, the open text question was asked "Do you have practical suggestions on what changes would help to make your workload more manageable?")

Analysis of comments relating to how workload could be more manageable:

1.1. Less administration/paperwork/meetings (522 comments)

- School teachers felt that the administration/paperwork that is required to be completed is time consuming;
- Some felt that some of the administration/paperwork that is completed is not necessary.

Examples

Less paperwork and admin work. The sheer volume of emails that I need to respond to each day can be overwhelming, some of these are sent by managers and colleagues during weekends, evenings, late at night and during holidays.

Avoid admin tasks simply designed to check up on you e.g. completing spreadsheets to state whose parents have been contacted etc.

Non-essential admin tasks such as monitoring or evaluation tasks need to be postponed until teachers and pupils return to school.

Cut out the excessive and needless administrative tasks that do not add to the quality of teaching and learning.

The immense amount of pointless paperwork and data to justify what we do instead of being trusted professionally, if this was decreased then that would make a difference.

1.2. Extra time to be provided for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) (339 comments)

- There was a theme from the comments that the current PPA time was not fit for purpose;
- Due to the amount of PPA required, school teachers felt that more PPA time should be provided;
- Comments were also raised suggesting that certain subjects require more PPA time.

Examples

I need more PPA time. 5 hours a fortnight is nowhere near enough. Teachers need at least 20% off timetable to plan, prepare and assess. I have to work every night and weekend (at the expense of my own time and wellbeing) to cope with the amount of work I have.

Acknowledge that some subjects are much more assessment heavy such as English and make this reflect in the amount of PPA time given for formative assessment.

The amount of time available for planning, preparation and assessment is nowhere near the amount of time required to teach, monitor and assess to the level expected. An increase in PPA time is urgently needed.

Having more preparation lessons/non-contact time at work.

More time is needed during the working day to effectively prepare resources and lessons for online learning for all students. The time we have drastically involves our personal time with our families at home, spent working.

1.3. Change to teaching hours (225 comments)

- A common theme and suggestion was regarding the change to the number of teaching hours;
- In line with 1.2, a considerable number of school teachers felt there should be a reduction in teaching time in order to be given extra PPA (planning, preparation, assessment) time;
- In addition, a change to teaching hours could enable school teachers to perform other necessary tasks.

Examples

Reduce the teaching hours so that it is possible to complete more preparation of resources, planning and marking into the school day.

Reduce teaching hours to enable effective teaching planning, reflection and communicating with colleagues which are all beneficial to teaching.

Reduce contact teaching hours. It is impossible to plan, prepare and mark for all pupils and classes in the 3 hours PPA I am given.

Reduce the amount of teaching hours to enable more non-contact time or reduce responsibility for other areas to allow more time to complete tasks in working hours.

1.4. Less marking (213 comments)

- Marking also appears to be another time consuming task and with the level of detail required, many felt that marking could not be completed to the required standard in the current designated time given, therefore many school teachers have to find additional time to complete this task;

- Some suggestions from school teachers include a move towards more verbal feedback, or a reduced expectation from marking.

Examples

Reduced formal marking of work would help, verbal feedback is much better at supporting the learner. The constant expectation for marking assessments to provide data on pupil progress makes it impossible to have a work life balance.

Changes to marking policy: allowing whole class feedback or mix and match feedback. More onus on students to reflect on work. There is a lot of unnecessary writing by teachers.

A feedback policy instead of a marking policy where verbal feedback is at the forefront.

The problem at the moment is that the majority of our time (outside of the classroom) is spent marking. This reduces both the time and energy for creating lessons to engage the children. That's where the emphasis should be if we are to create curiosity and a love of learning. The danger is that tired teachers lapse into formulaic boring lessons that do not engage the pupils and that can then create classroom management issues.

1.5. Recruiting to deal with workload (137 comments)

- Recruitment (or additional assistance) of extra teaching assistants/school teachers could also help make the workload more manageable according to school teachers. It is felt that extra staff could take on some of the current work to make the workload more manageable.

Examples

Recruitment of administration to deal with non-engagement home contact as opposed to classroom teachers.

Recruiting more teachers nationwide.....Recruiting more TAs or other teachers/tutors to help me with my tuition provision within my school, so I am not the only one providing it.

Employ more teachers to give those with TLR the time to do the additional tasks without reducing time for planning.

More finances to a school to employ more teachers so that teachers get more time during the school day to complete these tasks.

1.6. Reduce class sizes (86 comments)

- A further suggestion provided by school teachers to combat workload is reducing class sizes as smaller class sizes will reduce the amount of marking and administration.

Examples

Smaller class sizes as it's difficult to give 30 children good quality attention.

...reducing class sizes, reducing number of students, and increasing free PPA time within the working day.

Make classroom sizes smaller. It would be much more manageable and specialised to each pupil if the class sizes were a maximum of 20.

Smaller, more manageable class sizes or reduce contact time to give more time for planning, preparation and marking.

1.7. Resources readily available (83 comments)

- Developing the required resources also appears to be a strain on workload;
- Suggestions have been made such as school teachers being able to centrally access approved resources to use;
- Furthermore, there were some requests from school teachers that resources are available in Welsh as time is needed to translate.

Examples

Have more resources for remote learning of practical subject, such as music, available in English and Welsh.

Cross development of a range of resources within school clusters that fit the brief with Curriculum Cymraeg supporting each other with the need for the development and easy of deployment of interesting and challenging topics within all subject areas. The support of a subject full-time lead driving the project and developing resources and coordinating input from staff is vital for accountability and the development of quality of resources that could be created for all in Wales to subject teachers to use reducing the needs to research and write from scratch new SOW and reduce this workload. These resources should allow scope to localise the content and encourage industry involvement to provide context and real-world problem solving. Creativity of these projects/resources is what teachers need help with to fully support learners and fulfil the core purposes.

Library where schools can loan high quality resources that are specific to topics and may not be used every term/year by one school but can be utilised by many schools.

The Welsh Government should collate a bank of exemplar resources, especially those in Welsh. This could be as part of the government or an affiliate. The next phase of implementation of the new curriculum should focus on this and online resources. Most of my time is spent researching what to do for lessons, how to do it and what resources I have available / have to create.

Overall themes from why workload has increased due to blended learning open text question:

Additional work reasons

- Resource development;
- Contacting or responding to parents/learners;
- Assessment and marking;
- ICT – design and reliability of IT systems/availability/training;
- Administration requirements/paperwork/meetings;
- Teaching in school and online.

Practical suggestions for improvements

- Centralised resources;
- Training for staff and students to use systems effectively;
- Technology for all;
- A nationwide approach to blended learning;
- Change to contact hours.

Total number of responses: 3,346

Total number of open text responses: 1,752

In response to:

8. How has delivering blended / remote learning during the Covid-19 pandemic affected your workload? If “it’s increased slightly” or “it’s increased significantly”, the following open text question was asked “If your workload has increased slightly or significantly, please explain what the additional work has been and any practical suggestions on how this could be improved”

Analysis of comments relating to why workload has increased:

1.8. Resource development (1,196 comments)

- Preparing resources for blended learning proved to be a strain on workload for school teachers. This is due to resources having to be digitally friendly. Resources required more time producing e.g. preparing videos, voiceovers, PowerPoints and providing instructions;
- Some teachers expressed that developing resources added to workload as they either had to be translated or adjusted for ALN students;
- Furthermore, the resources had to be compatible for devices used by students, therefore resources had to be converted into different formats. In addition, resources have to be available in paper format for those who do not have required IT access or are being taught face to face;
- For more practical based subjects more resources had to be developed which wouldn’t usually need to be required outside the COVID-19 pandemic.

Examples

Takes time to adapt our current teaching resources into meaningful versions that add value to remote learning sessions and allow pupils to demonstrate their understanding and progress.

Delivering a practical subject like chemistry remotely is far removed from doing so in the classroom, and the amount of forward planning has increased as the usual lessons cannot simply be delivered online.

Preparing for every single lesson involves amending/adapting every single resource that I use in the classroom. Nothing can be directly re-used. Pre-recording a lesson takes up additional time again, with the added work load that more work is submitted at the end of it for marking. Therefore I am planning and marking on average 1h 30 for every lesson 1h that I teach.

Many readily available resources not in Welsh so need translating. Many parents unable to understand Welsh so even the Welsh resources need translating to English. Having to ensure that the parents also understand the work (not just the children).

1.9. Contacting or responding to parents and learners (601 comments)

- School teachers felt that a significant amount of time was spent responding to queries from either parents or learners;
- Parents submitted queries after their own working day, so it was not uncommon for queries to be sent outside normal teaching hours, which school teachers felt obliged to respond to as soon as possible;
- Learners would also tend to submit queries throughout the day, including evenings and weekends;
- Teachers would contact learners and parents as part of wellbeing checks and encouraging engagement/attendance.

Examples

24/7 contact time with students, parents and school. Where is the cut off? Going digital means students, parents and sometimes the school expect immediate responses. How can we teach and be our own secretary too?

Students require more guidance individually, we are being asked to contact parents once a week but given no extra time in which to do this.

Parents and pupils email regularly outside of working hours and expect immediate responses.

1.10. Assessment and marking (471 comments)

- A further theme identified was that marking work digitally was more time consuming and that the amount of work that required marking had increased;
- Class marking or verbal feedback could no longer take place in a blended learning environment;
- Marking also needed to be done instantly.

Examples

The continual need for feedback - in the class this would be mostly verbal but remotely needs to be written or recorded. Then waiting for the work to be resubmitted before commenting again. Pupils submit work throughout the day and having to change from task to task when marking.

Marking digitally takes an enormous amount of time, it's also difficult to give precise and effective feedback.

Providing 3 tasks every day for 33 pupils and marking all pieces of work by the following Monday - that's a total of 495 pieces of work to mark a week. Under normal circumstances I would only mark around 120 pieces of work a week

1.11. ICT - design and reliability of IT systems/availability/training (413 comments)

- Some school teachers felt that the appropriate training was not given in order to prepare them for digital learning. As a result, a significant amount of time was spent trying to identify the best methods/programs for digital learning and how to make full use of each one (190 comments);
- It was also stated from school teachers that workload increased due to issues with technology. This ranged from issues with Wi-Fi, staff or learners not having the appropriate technology and fielding queries from parents and learners when they were experiencing IT issues (153 comments);

- Uploading resources also proved to be a time consuming process especially if work had to be uploaded to multiple platforms (70 comments).

Examples

Learning how to use new technology, teaching others how to use it, teaching parents and children how to use it, delivering online sessions as well as remote learning & being available to supervise in the Hub all whilst looking after and supporting your own children.

Extra workload in the creation of online resources and planning of online activities. A lot of time was taken up researching and assessing different online tools as a lot of consideration had to be given to what was available to pupils and their ability to access the content.

As teachers, we had no training at all to the remote learning platforms such as Google Classroom, Teams, HWB. We were left to 'get on with it' without any help/training at all from Local Government. We taught from each other as staff, which took a massive time-consuming effort. I still have not fully appreciated the full potential of the HWB platform and its many applications. I have no free time to familiarise myself into using all applications on HWB. Would appreciate if Welsh Government could invest some time and money in taking staff out of their working day and sending staff on a 2 day training course to further develop what we have already learnt.

We have had to adapt to a completely new way of learning pretty much overnight. I had to seek my own means of training on how to use online platforms, at personal cost. We have been expected to be experts on providing high quality blended and online learning, when those who have demanded it don't understand it themselves.

Extra workload in the creation of online resources and planning of online activities. A lot of time was taken up researching and assessing different online tools as a lot of consideration had to be given to what was available to pupils and their ability to access the content.

Figuring out the IT behind delivering effective remote learning - the technology is not there and the support isn't there either - this should have been a decided and implemented for all schools to follow.

Learning to navigate and make use of (and prepare resources on) a wide range of different platforms / apps. I feel making use of 2/3 effectively would have been better rather than have the expectations that all the different ones were used - extremely time consuming with regards to staff training / meetings and also in order to learn to use and create resources.

1.12. Administration requirements and/or paperwork/meetings (193 comments)

- Emails increased for school teachers leading to an increased workload. Emails were sent by staff and students rather than face to face communication which would be the usual method of communication if in school;
- Paperwork had to be completed for monitoring engagement and documenting lessons for evidence purposes. School teachers were asked to produce more data relating to which students were engaging;
- Staff meetings also caused an increase in workload.

Examples

Many more written tasks turned in to mark, responding to more parents individually on how their child can catch up because they have missed learning (without explanation), more detailed and more frequent

reporting to parents (eg new criteria about online learning in reporting is included but we still have to include the existing criteria which is at the moment irrelevant), emails from parents asking which tasks their children need to do as they don't believe their child has done anything, messages from many individual children asking unnecessary questions that are already covered in the original instructions anyway. I also need to make Welfare check phone calls for any vulnerable or highly vulnerable children. Also we are then expected to be 'live' and contactable by children and parents between the hours of 8:30 and 4pm - so it is tricky to get any planning and preparation done with a continuous flow of contact throughout the day

Having to respond to a huge number of messages and emails from staff, pupils and parents each day all day. Something that doesn't happen under normal non covid circumstances.

In addition, there has been a huge pressure on teachers to support pupils wellbeing etc but people forget that teachers are teachers; not therapists, pastoral care supporters, social workers etc. We have very little training in this area but have had a large amount of accountability placed on us with very little support or training. It has not been helpful either that local authorities have been monitoring data of 'engagement of pupils' online. This places further stress on teachers to perform.

Recording and monitoring attendance of live lessons was another administrative element that added to workload and communicating and calculating missed lessons.

1.13. Teaching in class and online (189 comments)

- A number of school teachers had to work online and work in the classroom which increased workload;
- Work would sometimes need to be duplicated or adapted to accommodate both teaching environments;
- Resource management and administration was affected by this.

Examples

Constant questioning from parents and children with 4 live meets a day. Since 1st March teaching online and children in the classroom. This has taken a lot of time teaching children who are in the classroom and online.

When we are in school supervising hub pupils we are still expected to provide work for all our lessons, effectively doubling the workload for that day.

Delivering online learning whilst still teaching at the school hub twice a week has been difficult to juggle.

Expected to plan differentiated lessons for home learning, teach live lessons, mark home learning and provide valuable feedback and cover Hub pupils.

From a small school perspective I have had to cover Hub supervision of key workers and deliver a full teaching programme to learners at home. Complete welfare calls and visits, manage the school and repurpose the classrooms, provide online teaching and ensure supervision of children at school throughout.

Analysis of comments relating to practical suggestions on how workload can be improved:

1.14. Centralised resources (77 comments)

- A recurring theme for the causes of additional workload related to creating resources for digital learning. School teachers felt that time could be saved if there was an approved bank of resources that could be used.

Examples

Having a bank of national blended learning resources for each key stage would be beneficial.

As well as still preparing for the curriculum changes next year (new schemes of work etc) we're having to adjust already planned lessons to make them user-friendly for online working. Could this be centralised? Could a program be developed that allows teachers to upload lessons that all students, across the country complete? The results from quizzes etc could then be analysed by their class teacher and instead of spending time planning the lessons, the teachers spend time feeding back to students on where they need to improve.

Bank of resources and lessons starters provided by the Welsh Government (not BBC bite size) that fit with curriculum. Stored in an organised ways. For example year groups and subjects.

1.15. Training for staff and students to use systems effectively (38 comments)

- A considerable amount of time is spent by school teachers dealing with IT issues from students. Suggestions from school teachers included giving students the appropriate training to use the required systems;
- School teachers felt that a large proportion of time was spent learning in their own time which systems and programs were optimal for digital learning and how they can each be used effectively. Training in the different programs and systems would be beneficial to school teachers.

Examples

Staff training on new tech platforms is essential.

Having to navigate remote learning platforms like Google Classroom, etc with no training provided whatsoever. The obvious suggestion for improvement would be for training to be provided by the school.

Further training on using online learning & how best to support pupils electronically needed.

1.16. Technology for all (34 comments)

- Due to school teachers dealing with technical issues, if students were given equipment which is known to be compatible with resources (and appropriate training was given to use the devices), this could eliminate some of the administrative queries that school teachers receive.

Examples

The way in which this could be improved is to have a Wales wide approach where WG would loan devices and maintained them rather than the school.

This whole process could have been completed more smoothly if the LEA spearheaded near paperless learning by offering learners a tablet device or chromebook specifically tailored to the school experience to reduce cost of unnecessary printing and resource reproduction.

WAG needs to invest in proper, quality IT systems and software.

1.17. A national approach to blended learning (22 comments)

- A national approach to blended learning could enable more guidelines and expectations ;
- This could encompass some of the above suggestions (e.g. centralised resources and appropriate technology).

Examples

Blended learning could become standard practice: specifically planned for rather than a reactionary measure with ridiculous expectations attached. A national framework for blended learning along with guidelines.

Ensure that there is a set criteria for all schools to follow e.g all school must provide X amount of hours blended learning/teaching the curriculum and having interaction with pupils.

Whilst unprecedented, there should have been a single, national delivery strategy and there should have been a national bank of resources available to call upon.

1.18. Change to contact hours (21 comments)

- In order to cope with additional workload from blended learning, suggestions were raised for contact hours to change so that more time can be dedicated to other tasks which need to be completed.

Examples

Offer a reduce timetable in which to deliver 'live lessons' (eg shorter than the usual school day) to allow staff a short time either side to complete purely administrative / planning or prep activities.

Trying to teach in school and teach remotely at the same time is two full time jobs. More non-contact time is needed to prepare face to face lessons and to adapt them for remote learning.

To improve maybe reduce the expectation that each lesson must reflect that of a normal school lesson of 1 hour.

1.19. Reduce or change expectations (19 comments)

- Some school teachers believed that expectations have to be reduced whilst digital learning is taking place. Due to school teachers having an increased workload from the additional work created from digital learning, the relevant bodies and parents should be aware of this additional work. Accordingly the expectations should not be as high as they were pre-COVID-19 pandemic.

Examples

Reduce parental expectations of teachers - clearly explain to parents what is expected from them and what is not expected - national guidelines about how to conduct themselves when their children are in online lessons.

Expectations would be beneficial as some schools and departments have more onerous expectations than others.

2. Professional Learning

Overall themes from open text comments professional learning:

- The new curriculum;
- ICT skills including digital/blended learning;
- Subject and/or phase knowledge;
- Additional learning needs;
- Mental health and wellbeing;
- Leadership and management;
- Improving Welsh language skills;
- Networking/shadowing/sharing information with colleagues.

Total number of responses: 3,346

Total number of open text responses: 1,715

In response to:

16. In which areas would you welcome further development to help you be a more effective education professional? (please list up to three areas)

Analysis of comments relating to the main professional learning themes

2.1. New curriculum (536 comments)

- Regarding further professional development, the most popular comments were surrounding the new curriculum.
- Many registrants felt they were not prepared and would welcome further guidance from Welsh Government. Further guidance was also recommended in relation to how it would affect school teachers and how it can be applied.

Examples

We need training on how to plan for, deliver and create resources for the new curriculum other than being directed to read the manual!

Clearer guidance on the new Curriculum for 2022 from WG instead of leaving it up to teachers to interpret and implement for their schools.

Continued understanding of new curriculum and time to embed it within planning.

2.2. ICT skills including digital/blended learning (354 comments)

- Respondents stated that further IT training would be beneficial.
- This appears to largely stem from digital learning where some registrants felt they have had to adapt to new systems/programs without the sufficient training given.
- Many respondents felt they had to learn how to use these systems/programs on their own accord.

Examples

More learning on using technologies with blended/remote learning.

Technology. There is so much that I have had to "suss out" for myself.

I would have benefitted from further blended learning approaches as had to learn on the job.

2.3. Subject and/or phase knowledge (224 comments)

- A common suggestion was professional learning in the subject specialism of the school teacher.

Examples

Greater budget for meaningful CPD. In house CPD has its place but is by no means sufficient. It can be too generic, and not subject specific enough.

Professional learning specifically linked to my subject areas.

I would like to attend more of the subject specific courses, particularly when specifications have changed, but these come at a cost.

2.4. Additional learning needs (166 comments)

- A number of comments specified ALN training was required regarding the reforms.

Examples

Also, I would like more specific training on teaching students on the autistic spectrum and children with dyslexia.

More training and practical ideas to best support pupils with challenging and complex needs.

ALN - the new bill is pushing everything to schools and class teachers who are ill equipped and lack training.

2.5. Mental health/wellbeing (158 comments)

- A further theme was in relation to mental health and wellbeing training. It was acknowledged by school teachers that there are more mental health/wellbeing issues with students and additional training in this area would be welcomed to support students;
- Some concerns were shared stating that mental health cases could increase once learners return to school.

Examples

Pastoral - to help support pupils mental wellbeing during this time.

Advice and training on identifying and dealing with mental health issues in my students.

I am really concerned about the mental health and well-being of the learners returning to school. I think all teachers should have a mandatory course to help empathise with students who have suffered from blended learning.

2.6. Leadership and management (149 comments)

- A further professional development theme identified is regarding the appropriate training in order to equip teachers with the skills to progress into leadership roles.

Examples

I would like to move into middle leadership - courses or development to help with progression.

Leadership mentoring - potential pathways for my future career.

Training/Guidance on how to progress into Leadership team.

2.7. Improving Welsh language skills (140 comments)

- There is a desire for school teachers to either start or continue with Welsh language development.

Examples

Welsh - I want to develop my Welsh language but there are no opportunities currently in my school.

Welsh language support to develop my skills- would love a scheme that allowed Welsh speaking teachers who lack confidence in their Welsh skills from English medium schools to be seconded to Welsh schools for a term or half term to immerse them in the language and develop confidence. Even part time in Welsh school part time English school split.

2.8. Networking/shadowing/sharing information with colleagues (93 comments)

- School teachers felt it would be beneficial for their professional learning to have an opportunity to share knowledge with other teaching professionals;
- Teachers new to the role would also welcome the experience to observe more senior colleagues.

Examples

As an NQT, all training and guidance is helpful. I would particularly like to observe more experience teachers working with demanding pupils/ classes.

Opportunity to speak to other teachers outside the school I work in and share experiences and ideas.

Have time to go and watch/meet teachers in other establishments (in the same learning area).

3. New Curriculum

Overall themes from curriculum open text question:

- More guidance and training to be provided;
- More time required;
- Opportunities to discuss with colleagues and other schools;
- Prepare resources;
- Delay implementation;
- Clarification on assessment.

Total number of responses: 3,346

Total number of open text responses: 979

In response to:

9. How prepared are you to deliver the new curriculum? (when either disagree or strongly disagree was selected, the open text question was asked "What would help you feel more prepared?")

Analysis of comments relating to what would help registrants feel more prepared for the new curriculum

3.1. More guidance and training to be provided (534 comments)

- Registrants felt that more guidance and training is needed. Some school teachers have stated that they have just been provided with documents to read in their own time;

- Some believed that what has been provided has not been detailed enough. Comments also suggested that information has been passed down and along the way information has been missed. There were 55 comments that queried elements of the new curriculum or stated a lack of clarity.
- Suggestions provided by registrants include more practical example and details of expectations;
- There is also a belief that school teachers are interpreting things differently due to current guidance being vague.
- Supply teachers also felt that they have not been provided with the required training.

Examples

Better documentation, guidance and support. The new curriculum needs to be worded in a friendlier easy to read language, instead of jargon. The 'what matters' statement make little sense.

We have simply been sent documents. No specific training yet. This will take a lot of co-ordination and time. Centrally conducted webinars for all subject areas would surely be crucial to ensure consistency and spread good practice across Wales.

Concrete examples of good practise. An exemplar resource to use at first so I know what is good. At the moment I don't have a clear idea as to what I am aiming for except for more independent, child influenced, outdoor learning.

Documentation about new curriculum is vague. Needs to be broken down simply into what we are doing now and specifically how we are required to change.

A more coherent dialogue from WAG on expectations. As each school has been left to interpret things themselves so there is great disparity and nobody knows what is good or not.

3.2. More time required (375 comments)

- Whilst respondents stated exactly what would help them feel more prepared (contained in this summary), a large number of respondents commented that more time was required in order to be better prepared for the new curriculum as they felt they were not prepared at present;
- Many registrants felt that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused workload to increase and therefore there has been insufficient time to fully prepare for the new curriculum. It has been suggested that school teachers should be given time outside teaching hours to fully prepare.

Examples

More information, training, time to prepare. Blended learning has taken the fore front of everything and there has not been an opportunity to develop the new curriculum.

Time has been used for blended distance learning instead of planning for new curriculum. Time needs to be given.

3.3. Opportunities to discuss with colleagues and other schools (138 comments)

- There were further suggestions that by having more opportunities to discuss the new curriculum with colleagues and other schools, this would also help school teachers be better prepared. By sharing practice and ideas, this would be develop understanding of the curriculum.
- There were also comments regarding speaking to the pilot schools to hear their feedback.

Examples

More training with colleagues and schools that are more knowledgeable and have experience in the preparation and delivery.

Sharing of good practice between schools.

3.4. Prepare resources (79 comments)

- School teachers felt that resources for the new curriculum would help them feel more prepared.

Examples

More time to create, prepare and develop the resources.

For new curriculum to be pushed back to enable time to prepare resources.

A significant block of time given to create resources and update schemes of learning. NOT lots of information and meetings about making changes. Nothing gets done in a meeting. Passive activity.

Time away from school to review the curriculum and incorporate or update my resources with the new curriculum in mind.

3.5. Delay implementation (58 comments)

- Whilst many comments stated that more time was required to conduct tasks to help them feel more prepared, a number of respondents stated that by delaying the implementation of the new curriculum this could provide school teachers with the appropriate time to fully understand and prepare for the new curriculum;
- In addition, some believed that a delay is necessary as it should be priority to bring learners up to speed once the COVID-19 pandemic subsides.

Examples

Delaying the beginning of the new curriculum to give us more time to prepare.

For implementation to be delayed. There was barely enough time to plan before and for the past year all our time has been spent dealing with adapting learning due to Covid.

I think that the new curriculum needs to be pushed back to 2023 for teachers to have time to get the children's basic skills up to standards before experimenting with a new curriculum. The restraints of COVID doesn't allow us the freedom for children to work in groups (all tables facing forward). It doesn't allow freedom for pupils to use all areas of the school (have to stick to the class bubbles) and teachers have been thrown in at the deep end when it comes to remote learning. Sometimes with 48hr notice we have been expected to move from face to face teaching to online learning when a large percentage of the education workforce don't have the ICT skills and knowledge to do this to a good standard. Teachers haven't been supported with the new curriculum. I haven't even been offered any CPD on the new curriculum yet! Give teachers the autonomy to get their pupils back on track (which will take time) and then and ONLY then should we be looking at introducing the new curriculum!

3.6. Clarification on assessment (48 comments)

- Many school teachers shared their concerns about their understanding of the assessment process, so more guidance regarding this would be beneficial;

- Some felt that assessment needed to be clarified first by starting the new curriculum.

Examples

Guidance from government or qualification bodies on how assessments for the new curriculum will look like.

Delay the implementation until assessment is finally decided upon and concrete.

More training and guidance especially on curriculum design and assessment.

We haven't had any time to prepare for this due to constantly fire-fighting issues that have presented themselves during the pandemic. Asking us to deliver a new curriculum, when we don't even know from one day to next what exams/assessment will or won't be happening in the next months, or even if we will be in school.

More guidance from Welsh government particularly on assessment. How will we report? What does "a shared understanding of assessment" mean?

4. Additional Comments

Overall themes from final open text question:

Due to the nature of the question, responses varied in length and topics. Themes identified included:

- Blended learning feedback;
- Concerns from supply teachers;
- Concerns regarding workload;
- COVID-19.

Total number of responses: 3,346

Total number of open text responses: 803

In response to:

18. Do you have any additional comments to make?

Analysis of comments relating to any additional comments

4.1. Blended learning

Registrants stated their experiences of blended/digital learning. The comments were more directed towards blended learning not being a substitute for face to face learning due to a variety of reasons, however some were positive and stating that there is a place for blended/digital learning once the COVID-19 pandemic subsides. Furthermore there were comments regarding the technology and that it was at times, not at the required standard and on occasions, registrants had to supply themselves with the suitable equipment.

4.2. Concerns from supply teachers

There were comments from supply teachers that felt that they have been undervalued during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, some have struggled to find work during the pandemic. There were also suggestions that supply staff should be employed through local authorities rather than agencies. The lack of furlough support was also mentioned for some.

4.3. Workload

Concerns were raised in the additional comments section regarding workload. Registrants felt the workload has increased since the COVID-19 pandemic. There were a number of comments that stated that they were thinking of leaving the profession due to workload issues. Furthermore, health issues were also mentioned by some registrants due to unmanageable workload.

4.4. COVID-19

Some school teachers felt their safety is potentially at risk when face to face teaching resumes. Concerns were stated regarding school teachers not being prioritised the vaccine. Of those who raised this, concerns were made by some regarding potential risks to family members who were in the vulnerable category.