Ysgol Gyfun Porthcawl / Porthcawl Comprehensive School

Diweddariad Tymor yr Haf 2021/ Update Summer Term 2021

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Cymraeg

Cwestiwn yr ymholiad

Beth yw'r ffordd orau i ni gefnogi ein myfyrwyr Blwyddyn 7 i wneud cynnydd ym mhrosiect trawsgwricwlaidd 'Ein Byd' a thu hwnt?

Trosolwg o'r ymholiad

Ein prosiect trawsgwricwlaidd cyntaf, 'Ein Byd', oedd testun ein hymholiad arweiniol yn 2019-21. Ymchwiliwyd i ymatebion dysgwyr i'r prosiect drwy linell sylfaen y dysgwr, holiaduron interim a therfynol a grŵp ffocws, ynghyd â holiadur staff. Roedd natur ysgol gyfan y prosiect yn cynnig pwnc da ar gyfer ymchwilio i gysyniadau newydd o gynnydd gyda charfan Blwyddyn 7 2020-21. Yn ogystal, mae'r data a gasglwyd cyn COVID-19 wedi profi'n feincnod diddorol wrth fesur effaith y pandemig ar gynnydd o ddydd i ddydd a'r cynnydd dros amser.

Gan ddefnyddio dull ailadroddol, cam cyntaf y Grŵp Ymholi oedd edrych eto ar ganlyniadau ymchwiliad y flwyddyn flaenorol i'r prosiect. Daethom i'r casgliad ein bod yn awyddus i wella metawybyddiaeth dysgwyr, gan roi mwy o amser tuag at addysgu'r dibenion yn benodol: roeddem yn teimlo bod dysgwyr wedi cael cyfle i ddysgu llawer o sgiliau nad oeddent wedi'u nodi yn yr holiadur. Gan ddefnyddio 'Cefnogi cynnydd dysgwyr: canllawiau asesu', aethpwyd ati i roi dulliau ar waith a oedd yn enghreifftio'r ddwy agwedd gyntaf ar asesu: 'Cefnogi dysgwyr unigol yn barhaus o ddydd i ddydd' a 'Pennu cynnydd dysgwyr unigol dros amser, llunio darlun ohono, a myfyrio arno', gan fod y rhain yn effeithio'n uniongyrchol ar addysgeg.

Er mwyn mynd i'r afael â nod yr ymholiad, defnyddiwyd dull meintiol fel rhan o'n hymchwil weithredu, gan osod yr un holiaduron sylfaenol a therfynol ar yr un adegau â'r llynedd (mis Hydref a mis Mawrth). Roedd craidd yr holiadur, a luniwyd ar y cyd â'r Grŵp Ymholi ac a ddilyswyd gan grŵp ffocws dysgwyr, yn gofyn i'r dysgwyr hunanasesu eu sgiliau a'u cymwysedda yn erbyn deuddeg datganiad ar raddfa Likert o 1-10, tri o bob un o'r pedwar diben, a gofynnwyd tri chwestiwn ansoddol am gynnydd i bob un hefyd.

Wrth ddod allan o'r cyfnod clo, rydym wedi cynnal dau grŵp ffocws staff ac rydym wedi cyfweld pob aelod o'r Grŵp Ymholi i geisio gwneud synnwyr o sut mae ein hasesiadau wedi newid a lle mae cynnydd wedi digwydd, os o gwbl. Mae holiadur olaf Blwyddyn 7 wedi cael ei gynnal, ac mae data o ddwy garfan olynol o ddysgwyr Blwyddyn 7 wedi'i goladu.

Bron drwyddi draw, gwelwyd sgoriau uwch o fis Tachwedd 2019 i fis Mawrth 2020, pan oedd dysgwyr yn yr ysgol, a sgoriau'n gostwng o fis Tachwedd 2020 i fis Mawrth 2021 pan oedd y dysgwyr gartref ar y cyfan.

Er gwaethaf tystiolaeth bod ein rhaglenni e-ddysgu wedi bod yn llwyddiannus iawn mewn rhai ffyrdd, fel y mae staff a phrofion yn seiliedig ar bynciau yn tystio, mae'r canlyniadau hyn yn awgrymu nad oedd ein rhaglenni e-ddysgu mor llwyddiannus â'n rhaglenni ysgol wrth hyrwyddo'r pedwar diben. Fodd bynnag, mae'n caniatáu i ni ddefnyddio'r data o 2020-21 fel rheolydd: mae'n dangos bod y gwelliannau ymddangosiadol a wnaed o ran y pedwar diben rhwng mis Hydref 2019 a mis Mawrth 2020 wedi'u hwyluso gan brofiad y dysgwyr o'r ysgol, yn hytrach nag aeddfedrwydd cynyddol y dysgwyr a dim byd arall.

Yn ogystal, er bod 29% o ymatebwyr i holiadur Mawrth 2020 ddim yn gallu enwi tri sgìl a ddysgwyd ganddynt, dim ond 11% oedd yn methu gwneud hynny yn 2021. Mae'n amlwg bod ein hymgyrch i sbarduno metawybyddiaeth wedi talu ar ei chanfed.

Dysgu o ganlyniad i'r broses ymholi

Mae'r athrawon sy'n ymwneud â chreu'r prosiect newydd a'i guradu drwy ymholi yn datblygu cyd-ddealltwriaeth o'r Cwricwlwm i Gymru newydd a sut y gallai edrych yn ein hysgol yn 2022. Mae'r 'mabwysiadwyr cynnar' hyn, yn nhermau Rogers, ynghyd â'r aelodau hynny o staff sydd wedi addysgu prosiect 'Ein Byd', yn raddol yn dod yn 'fwyafrif cynnar'.

Rydym yn dysgu bod ymholi'n gallu bod yn arf defnyddiol iawn wrth feithrin hyder staff, yn enwedig mewn cyfnod o ansicrwydd. Yn ystod y cyfnod clo, cafwyd nifer fawr o holiaduron a chwestiynau gwirio gan athrawon pwnc, staff bugeiliol a'r Uwch Dîm Arwain. Yn absenoldeb gallu arsylwi neu ymholi ar lafar am les neu gynnydd, roeddem yn dibynnu'n drwm ar y mecanweithiau hyn i gasglu adborth gan ddysgwyr, rhieni a staff er mwyn mesur llwyddiant lles a chynnydd.

Rydym hefyd yn dod yn fwy hyderus wrth gymhwyso prosesau: pan oedd y garfan TGAU ar fin dychwelyd i'r ysgol, arweiniodd holiadur Google Forms cyflym ar les at greu grŵp ffocws ar-lein ar gyfer dysgwyr Blwyddyn 11 a dau grŵp ffocws staff ar Google Classroom. Cafodd eu cyngor ei baru â chanfyddiadau arolwg cenedlaethol Comisiynydd Plant Cymru ym mis Ionawr 2021 a chyngor doeth Doug Lemov yn 'Teaching in the Online Classroom', a oedd yn cael ei ddarllen am ei gyfarwyddyd ynghylch cynnydd. O fewn wythnos, dosbarthwyd cyngor perthnasol i'n holl staff ynghylch hwyluso dychweliad dysgwyr Blwyddyn 11 i'r ysgol.

Rydym yn symud tuag at 'inquiry as stance.' [Cochran-Smith a Lytle]

Beth weithiodd yn dda?

Yr hyn sydd wedi gweithio orau i ni, boed hynny o ran dyluniad y cwricwlwm neu ymholi, fu cydweithredu a rhannu arferion gorau. Cadarnhawyd hyn yn ein harolwg o

staff ym mis Mawrth 2020, ‘Pan fydd staff yn cydweithredu o fewn ac ar draws adrannau, mae’r deilliant yn llawer gwell i ddisgyblion. Mae angen i staff gefnogi ei gilydd gyda newidiadau mor enfawr, fel y gallwn rannu ein syniadau gwych a datrys problemau gyda’n gilydd.’ Fodd bynnag, nid ydym mewn gwirionedd yn ceisio cyflwyno arferion unffurf ar draws adrannau.

Er eu bod yn canolbwyntio ar grŵp blwyddyn ac un uned waith i raddau helaeth, roedd ein cwestiynau ymchwil ar gyfer 2020-21, o ran ffocws addysgegol, yn eithaf eang. Rhoddodd hyn gyfle i ddeuddeg aelod ein Grŵp Ymholi drafod y canllawiau newydd ar asesu er mwyn sylwi ar ei oblygiadau o ran sut y gallai effeithio ar eu haddysgeg eu hunain i gefnogi cynnydd. Roedd ffocws gwahanol Feysydd Dysgu a Phrofiad yn amrywio o ‘ganmoliaeth ystyrlon’ i ‘gylchoedd pwynt triphlyg’. Roedd yn ymddangos yn bwysig i barchu galluoged aelodau ein grŵp ymholi sy’n cynrychioli pob Maes Dysgu a Phrofiad, a chaniatáu lle iddynt ddatblygu llwybrau ymholi sy’n benodol i’w Meysydd Dysgu a Phrofiad hwy.

Rydym yn datblygu tir cyffredin yn ein dealltwriaeth o’r hyn y mae cynnydd yn ei olygu i bob un ohonom.

Fodd bynnag, drwy ddyluniad y cwricwlwm ac ymholi, rydym yn dysgu sut mae safbwyntiau gwahanol yn gallu creu synergedd cyffrous. Rydym yn darganfod mwy am sut y gall addysgeg ac asesu cynnydd mewn gwahanol Feysydd Dysgu a Phrofiad fod yn wahanol, ond eto gyfrannu at ddull cyfannol o ddysgu a chynnydd.

Beth fu’n fwy o her?

Wrth ystyried y ddwy agwedd ar asesu o fewn ein cylch gwaith a sut roedd modd asesu cynnydd, roedd yn ymddangos bod y ffocws wedi symud yn eithaf dramatig yn ystod y cyfnod clo.

Ym mis Hydref, dim ond dau o’r naw dull/deunyddiau a gasglwyd gan y Grŵp Ymholi a allai fod wedi cael eu disgrifio fel rhai sy’n cefnogi ein dysgwyr ar unrhyw ‘sail dydd i ddydd’; bellach, roedd gennym fwy o ddiddordeb mewn casglu tystiolaeth o gynnydd dros amser, yn unol ag agwedd dau. Erbyn mis Mawrth, fodd bynnag, roedd y rhan fwyaf o aelodau’r Grŵp Ymholi wedi symud eu ffocws i agwedd un.

Roedd llawer o athrawon wedi gwneud iawn am y diffyg addysgu wyneb yn wyneb drwy ddefnyddio dulliau ‘parhaus’ arloesol i gefnogi cynnydd: adborth fideo, negeseuon Mote, gwersi byw, marcio i-Pad, Jamboard, rhannu dogfennau, cylchoedd pwynt triphlyg, logio gweithgarwch corfforol ac ystod eang o gwisiau a gemau, yn cael eu cynnal yn gydamserol ac yn anghydamserol. Mae un honiad, bod ‘y rhai sydd wedi ymgysylltu’n dda wedi cael addysg dda,’ o ran dysgu pynciau, wedi’i gadarnhau gan nifer o holiaduron ymholi’r athrawon eu hunain.

Fodd bynnag, o ran rhai o’r pynciau mwy creadigol yn draddodiadol, yn ogystal ag yn erbyn y pedwar diben ac o ran dysgu dwys am ymholi, mae’n bosibl bod llai o gynnydd wedi’i wneud. O ystyried dull gwyddor gwybyddiaeth Horvath [https://www.tes.com/news/3-reasons-why-your-school-timetable-wrong] i gefnogi cynnydd, rydym o’r farn bod dysgu sydd angen ‘llif’ ac sy’n creu gwelliant

cynyddrannol tuag at nod hirdymor yn llai addas ar gyfer dysgu ar-lein, yn enwedig pan mae'r cynnydd gorau'n cael ei gyflawni drwy ddull cydweithredol neu gyd-adeiladu.

Camau tuag at ddatblygu diwylliant o ymholi

Ein gwaith erbyn hyn yw ceisio ymgorffori dealltwriaeth ddyfnach o ymholi yn yr ysgol, a cheisio cyrraedd y rhai sydd heb ymgysylltu eto.

Yn bwysig, mae'n ymddangos bod y syniad o ymholi yn cael ei normaleiddio. Rydym eisoes yn clywed llawer mwy o eirfa sy'n seiliedig ar ymholi yn cael ei defnyddio ymhlith athrawon, megis 'seiliedig ar dystiolaeth', 'casglu', 'ffurflenni' ac 'archwilio'. Credaf mai ein gwaith ni yw archwilio mwy, ac wrth wneud hynny, dylem fod yn barod i gyflwyno cwricwlwm cadarn sy'n seiliedig ar dystiolaeth i ddysgwyr yn 2022.

Rydym yn bwriadu adolygu a diwygio ein system rheoli perfformiad bresennol. Mae'r broses yn un barhaus, ond rydym yn ystyried symud y ffocws i ymholiad proffesiynol. Byddai hyn yn dechrau gyda HMS, yna sesiynau hyfforddi grwpiau bach ar ymholi i staff, i'w dilyn gan ddull diwygiedig o arsylwi ar wersi. Byddai llai o arsylwadau gwersi, a'r rheiny'n fyrrach a mwy cydweithredol ac yn canolbwyntio ar gwestiwn ymholi'r athro, yn cynyddu galluogedd athrawon ac yn rhoi mwy o ddilysrwydd i'r broses gyfan.

Yn ein profiad ni o ddewis cwestiynau ymholi arweiniol, mae'n well gan bobl ar y cyfan gymryd rhan yn y cam gwneud penderfyniadau cychwynnol na chael eu cyflwyno'n ddiweddarach neu fod â dewisiadau cyfyngedig. Mae'r un peth yn debygol o fod yn wir am ymholiadau athrawon unigol, gan arwain at sbectrwm amrywiol iawn o ddatblygiad addysgu a dysgu.

Mae'r ffordd rydym yn rhannu'r wybodaeth honno wedyn yn cael ei thrafod hefyd. Mae gennym gylchlythyr tynnu sylw staff wythnosol y gellid ei ddefnyddio, neu gellid ychwanegu'r ymholiadau i'r gofod Dysgu Proffesiynol ar ein gwefan.

Gwerthuso effaith ymholiad

Ym mis Mehefin, cawsom adborth canmoliaethus iawn yn dilyn ymweliad gan ESTYN, sy'n awgrymu ein bod ar lwybr o dwf parhaus o ran dysgu cyfunol, rhannu arferion gorau a rheoli newid arloesol, gan gynnwys ymholi proffesiynol.

Drwy gydol y broses ymholi, mae dull cydweithredol y Grŵp Ymholi wedi bod yn allweddol. Mae'r grŵp hwn wedi tyfu i ddeuddeg aelod o staff ar draws y chwe Maes Dysgu a Phrofiad. Gyda'n gilydd, rydym wedi penderfynu ar ein cwestiynau ymholi arweiniol, llunio holiaduron, cynnal grwpiau ffocws dysgwyr, cymryd rhan mewn grwpiau ffocws a chyfweliadau, dadansoddi canlyniadau a rhannu canfyddiadau. Eto, hyd yma, oherwydd y cyfyngiadau symud, dim ond ein hymholiad arweiniol ar y cyd sydd wedi digwydd yn ddi-dor o'i ddechrau i'w ddiwedd.

Hoffem i’n Grŵp Ymholiadau dreialu’r dull newydd o ddysgu proffesiynol drwy ymholi. Oherwydd eu profiad, maent mewn sefyllfa ddelfrydol i allu gwneud hyn.

Mae’r Grŵp Ymholi wedi profi’n ffynhonnell barn a gwerthusiad gonest, felly mae’n gwneud synnwyr i ofyn iddynt gymryd rhan yn y rhaglen newydd yn gyntaf a gofyn iddynt ddefnyddio eu gwybodaeth am weithdrefnau ymholi ac asesu ar bob cam o’r ffordd.

Yn y pen draw, o ran gwerthuso, mae pob aelod o staff yn gyfrifol am sicrhau cynnydd eu dysgwyr eu hunain, a’r ffordd orau o ddangos tystiolaeth o hynny, ar wahân i asesiadau academaidd, yw drwy ymholi.

Mae hyn yn symud ffocws asesu cynnydd o broses ysgol gyfan i’r rhyngweithiadau personol ‘dydd i ddydd’ hynny sydd mor fuddiol i’n dysgwyr.

Cefnogaeth gan gymheiriaid

Rwyf wedi gwerthfawrogi’r cyfle i weithio gyda chydweithwyr yn y sector cynradd, ac wedi dysgu llawer iawn am y gwahanol systemau a blaenoriaethau mewn ysgolion cynradd. Credaf ein bod ni i gyd wedi gwerthfawrogi cael yr amser a’r cyfle i gydweithredu, arsylwi a rhannu syniadau.

Yn ystod y flwyddyn ddiwethaf, rydym wedi dysgu gwerthfawrogi amrywiaeth yn fwy hefyd. Er bod gwerth mawr mewn cydweithredu, nid oes angen i ni fynnu cysondeb o ran dulliau gweithredu, ‘Consistency is the playground of dull minds.’ [awdur Harari, Yuval N. Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind. Efrog Newydd: Harper, 2015]

Nid yw amrywiaeth yn golygu gostwng safonau, dim o gwbl. Wrth gwrs, ni allwn golli golwg ar bwysigrwydd cymwysterau yn y sector uwchradd, ond dylai rhyddhau athrawon o gyfyngiadau cysondeb, ynghyd â chyfleoedd ar gyfer dysgu proffesiynol a chyd-adeiladu cwricwlwm pwrpasol, sicrhau bod llawer o flodau’n blodeuo. Mae ecoleg yn dangos i ni fod bioamrywiaeth yn hanfodol ar gyfer cynnal planed iach, felly mae amrywiaeth addysgegol yn hanfodol ar gyfer system addysg iach.

Gobeithiwn y bydd datblygiad systemau dysgu proffesiynol newydd a chydweithrediad ein hysgolion partner yn galluogi mwy o’n staff i deimlo’n hyderus bod ymholi yn adnodd defnyddiol, i ddeall gwerth gwahanol ddulliau o addysgeg ac y byddant yn gweld bod ein cwricwlwm newydd yn mynd i allu cefnogi ein dysgwyr i gyflawni, i fod, yng ngeiriau ein pennaeth, yn ‘gwricwlwm gydag uniondeb’.

<u>English</u>

Enquiry question

How can we best support our Year 7 students to make progress in the 'Our World' cross-curricular project and beyond?

Enquiry overview

Our first cross-curricular project, 'Our World', was the subject of our 2019-21 lead enquiry. Learner responses to the project were investigated through learner baseline, interim and final questionnaires and a focus group, plus a staff questionnaire. The school-wide nature of the project presented it as a good subject for investigating new concepts of progress with the 2020-21 year 7 cohort. In addition, the data collected pre-covid19 has proven to be an interesting benchmark against which to measure the impact of the pandemic on both day-to-day progress and progress over time.

Using an iterative approach, our Enquiry Group first revisited the results from the previous year's enquiry into the project. We found we were keen to improve learner metacognition, giving more time to explicitly teaching the purposes: we felt learners had been given the opportunity to learn many skills which they had not identified in the questionnaire. Using 'Supporting learner progression: assessment guidance,' we aimed to apply methods which exemplified the first two aspects of assessment: 'Supporting individual learners on an ongoing, day-to-day basis' and 'Identifying, capturing and reflecting on individual learner progress over time', as these impact directly on pedagogy.

To address the enquiry aim, we used a quantitative approach as part of our action research, setting the same baseline and final questionnaires at the same times as last year (October and March). The core of the questionnaire, which was co-constructed by the Enquiry Group and validated by a learner focus group, asked the learners to self-assess their skills and competencies against twelve statements on a Likert scale of 1-10, three from each of the four purposes, plus each asked three qualitative questions about progress.

Coming out of lockdown, we have held two staff focus-groups and have interviewed each member of the Enquiry Group to try to make sense of how our assessments have changed and where progress, if any, has been made. The final Year 7 questionnaire has run and data from the two successive cohorts of Year 7s has been collated.

What we saw almost across the board, were increased scores from November to March 19-20 when learners were in school, but decreasing scores from November to March 20-21 when the learners were mainly at home.

Despite evidence that our e-learning programmes have been very successful in some ways, as attested by staff and subject-based testing, these results suggest that our e-learning programmes were not as successful as our school programmes in

promoting the four purposes. However, it does allow us to use the data from 20-21 as a control: it shows that the improvements made against the four purposes between October and March 19-20 seem to have been facilitated by the learners' experience of school, as opposed to perhaps simply the increased maturity of the learners.

Additionally, we found that whereas the March 2020 questionnaire identified 29% of respondents who could not name three skills they had learnt, in 2021, only 11% did not identify three skills in 2021. Our metacognition drive clearly paid some dividends.

Learning as a result of the enquiry process

The teachers involved in both the creation of the new project and the curation of it through enquiry are developing a shared understanding of the New Curriculum and how it might look in our school in 2022. These 'early adopters', in Rogers' terms, combined with those members of staff who have taught the 'Our World' project are gradually becoming the 'early majority'.

We are learning that enquiry can be a very useful tool in building staff confidence, particularly in times of uncertainty. Lockdown saw a proliferation of questionnaires and check-in questions from subject teachers, pastoral staff and the Senior Leadership Team. In the absence of being able to observe or verbally enquire about well-being or progress, we relied heavily on these mechanisms to gather feedback from learners, parents and staff in order to gauge the success of well-being and progress.

We are also becoming more confident in applying processes: when the GCSE cohort were about to return to school, a quick Google Forms questionnaire on well-being led to a Year 11 on-line learner focus group and two staff focus groups on Google classroom. Their advice was paired with findings from the Children's Commissioner for Wales' January 2021 national survey and Doug Lemov's sage advice from 'Teaching in the Online Classroom,' which was being read for his guidance on progress. Within a week, relevant advice on facilitating the return of our year 11s to school was circulated to all staff.

We are moving towards, 'Inquiry as stance.' [Cochran-Smith & Lytle]

What worked well?

What has worked best for us, whether in terms of curriculum design or enquiry has been collaboration and sharing best practices. This was borne out in our March 2020 survey of staff, 'When staff collaborate both within and across departments, the outcome is far better for pupils. Staff need to support each other with such huge changes, so we can share our great ideas and iron out problems together.' However, we are really not at all looking to introduce uniform practice across departments.

Although focused on one year group and largely one unit of work, our 2020-21 research questions were, in terms of pedagogical focus, quite broad. This gave all

twelve members of our Enquiry Group an opportunity to discuss the new guidance on assessment to tease out its implications for the way in which it might impact on their own pedagogy to support progress. AOLE foci ranged from ‘meaningful praise’ to ‘triple point cycles’. It seemed important to respect the agency of the members of our enquiry group who represent each AOLE and allow them the space to develop their AOLE-specific lines of enquiry.

We are developing common ground in our understanding of what progress means for us all.

However, we are learning, both from curriculum design and enquiry, how different perspectives can create an exciting synergy. We are finding out more about how pedagogy and assessment of progress in different Areas of Learning and Experience can be distinct, yet contribute to a holistic approach to learning and progress.

What’s been more of a challenge?

When considering the two aspects of assessment within our remit and how we might assess progress, the focus seemed to shift quite dramatically under lockdown.

In October only two of the nine methods / materials collected by the Enquiry Group might have been described as supporting our learners on any ‘ day-to-day basis’; instead we were more interested in gathering evidence of progress over time, as per aspect two. By March, however, the majority of members of the Enquiry Group had shifted their focus onto aspect one.

Many teachers had compensated for the lack of face-to-face teaching by using innovative ‘on-going’ methods to support progress: video feedback, mote messages, live lessons, i-pad marking, jamboards, shared documents, triple-point-cycles, the logging of physical activity and a wide range of quizzes and games run both synchronously and asynchronously. One claim that ‘those who have engaged well have had a good education,’ in terms of subject learning, has been borne out by several of the teachers’ own enquiry questionnaires.

However, in some of the traditionally more creative subjects, as well as against the four purposes and in terms of deep learning about enquiry, perhaps less progress has been made. Considering Horvath’s cognitive science approach [https://www.tes.com/news/3-reasons-why-your-school-timetable-wrong] to supporting progress, we are thinking that learning which needs ‘flow’ and builds incremental improvement towards a long-term goal is simply less suited to on-line learning, especially when progress is best made through a collaborative approach or co-construction.

Steps to develop a culture of enquiry

Our work now is to try to embed a deeper understanding of enquiry within the school and to try to reach those who have not yet engaged.

Importantly, it seems that the idea of enquiry is becoming more normalised. We are already hearing a lot more enquiry-based vocabulary being used amongst teachers, such as ‘evidence-based’, ‘gather’, ‘forms’ and ‘explore’. I believe it is our job to explore more, and in doing so we should be prepared to present learners with a sound evidence-based curriculum in 2022.

We intend to review and revise our current performance management system. The process is on-going, but we are considering shifting the focus to professional enquiry. This would start with INSET, then small group training sessions on enquiry for staff and be followed by a revised approach to lesson observations. Fewer, shorter and more collaborative lesson observations with a focus on the teacher’s enquiry question would both give teachers more agency and lend the whole process more authenticity.

In our experience with choosing lead enquiry questions, on the whole, people much prefer to be engaged at the initial decision-making stage than being brought in late or having limited choices. The same is likely to be true of individual teacher enquiries, leading to a nicely diverse spectrum of teaching and learning development.

How we then share that information is also under discussion. We have a weekly staff ‘Heads-up’ newsletter which might be used, or we could add the enquiries into the Professional Learning space on our website.

Evaluating the impact of enquiry

In June, we had very complimentary feedback following an ESTYN visit, suggesting we are on a trajectory of sustained growth in terms of blended learning, sharing best practice and managing innovation of change, including professional enquiry.

Throughout the enquiry process, the collaborative approach of the Enquiry Group has been key. This group has grown to twelve members of staff across all six AOLEs. Together, we have decided on our lead enquiry questions, devised questionnaires, run learner focus groups, participated in focus groups and interviews, analysed results and shared findings. And yet, to date, because of lockdown, only our joint lead enquiry has been nose to tail.

We would like our Enquiry Group to trial the new approach to professional learning through enquiry. Because of their experience, they are in an ideal situation to be able to do this.

The Enquiry Group has proven to be a source of honest opinion and appraisal, so it makes sense to ask them to participate in the new programme first and to ask them to apply their knowledge of both enquiry and assessment procedures at every step of the way.

Ultimately, in terms of evaluation, each member of staff is responsible for ensuring the progress of their own learners, and the best way to evidence that, apart from in academic assessments, is through enquiry.

This shifts the focus of assessment of progress from whole-school to those 'day to day' personal interactions which so benefit our learners.

Peer support

I have appreciated the opportunity to work with my colleagues in the primary sector and I have learnt a great deal about the differing systems and priorities in primary schools. I believe we have all appreciated having the time and opportunity to collaborate, observe and share ideas.

In the last year or so we have learnt to appreciate diversity more too. Although there is great value in collaboration, we do not need to insist on consistency of approaches, 'Consistency is the playground of dull minds.' [Harari, Yuval N. author. Sapiens: a Brief History of Humankind. New York: Harper, 2015]

Diversity does not mean a lowering of standards, far from it. Of course we cannot lose sight of the importance of qualifications in the secondary sector, but freeing teachers from the constraints of consistency, combined with opportunities for professional learning and the co-construction of a purposeful curriculum, should ensure the blossoming of many flowers. Ecology teaches us that biodiversity is essential for the maintenance of a healthy planet, so pedagogical diversity is essential for a healthy education system.

We hope our development of the new professional learning systems and the collaboration of our partner schools will enable yet more of our staff to feel confident that enquiry is a useful tool, to understand the value of different approaches to pedagogy and that they will see that our new curriculum can support our learners to achieve, to be, 'a curriculum with integrity,' in the words of our headteacher.