

Case study 1: A large training focused school cluster

Background

The first supernumerary teacher started working across the Cardiff cluster in April 2018, with another nine teachers starting in September 2018 – all were undertaking their NQT (newly-qualified teacher) year, all successfully completed this by July 2019.

The management and delivery model adopted remained the same for both years of the Project, with additional local authority funding supporting the absence management procedures, this post has been the main point of contact for the supernumerary teachers.

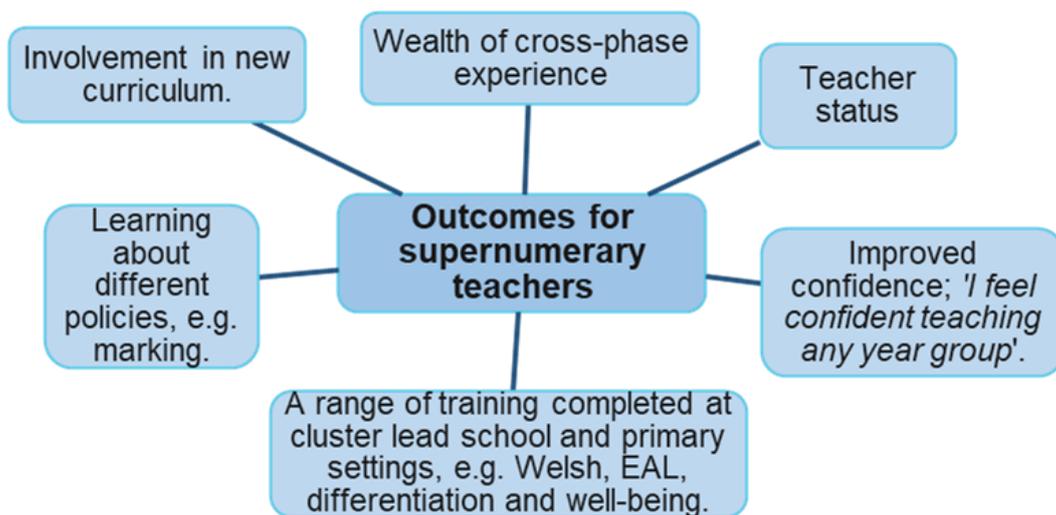
A shared Outlook calendar was used to manage the teachers allocation between schools, deployed by Fitzalan High School (the cluster lead school). The primary trained teachers were allocated according to their skillset and the 'best fit' for a particular school, but if another school needed cover there was capacity to be able to allocate a teacher. All supernumerary teachers also received a booklet containing the procedures for each of the primary schools. This positively impacted consistency across the cluster.

Cardiff cluster	Allocation and role	Impact
 <p>10 schools</p>  <p>10 teachers</p> <p>Cluster lead large city secondary school</p>	<p>Each teacher worked across 3 schools each term; experiencing all 10 schools (1 secondary and 9 primaries) during the project.</p> <p>Teachers primarily covered teachers to work on school improvement plans, secondly school cluster events, thirdly sickness.</p> <p>One afternoon each week all cluster teachers trained together at Fitzalan High School (the cluster lead school).</p>	<p>Having consistency with the same people worked well, the cluster schools were keen to employ the cluster teachers. It worked well because the cluster teachers <i>'mark the work and deliver any follow up work'</i>; they liaise with the class teacher – <i>'whereas someone from an agency, would just appear and go again'</i>.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><i>'The most successful aspect of the project has been the quality of teaching and learning across the phases, and standards as a whole.'</i> (Cluster lead)</p> </div>

Training delivered

- There is a strong teacher training ethos in the cluster lead school with training delivered across the cluster; there are opportunities for NQTs and teaching assistants to lead workshops or training in their area of expertise.
- The cluster lead school is an NQT Aspire school, with a team delivering to primary and secondary staff.
- All supernumerary teachers participated in training every Wednesday afternoon at the cluster lead school, this contributed to them *'feeling part of the school'*.
- The supernumerary teachers also participated in all the inset training at the cluster lead school.
- They have also been able to attend a range of CPD (continuing professional development) opportunities offered by the cluster primary schools.

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training together means all supernumerary teachers received '<i>the same message in terms of expectations, and quality of teaching and learning and that has been really impactful</i>'. • They all understand the new curriculum - the philosophy behind it and how different schools are implementing it. • The supernumerary teachers have had opportunities to share and collaborate with each other during training. • Training is regular and planned, and not ad hoc as opposed to agency supply teachers who receive very little training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to provide opportunity for supernumerary teachers to complete medium term planning and assessment, they needed to be allocated to schools on longer term projects.



This project has been a more *'supportive way for these NQTs to start their career; teaching in a range of schools, meeting all sorts of different children. The cluster teachers have been able to teach across phases in one year – some teachers have never done that in a career'*.
(cluster school headteacher)

'There's a whole group of people you are going through your NQT stuff together and that wasn't the case before – you were on your own.'
(supernumerary teacher)

Case study 2: Special Educational Needs cover

Background

One supernumerary teacher started working across the cluster in Nov 2017. The teacher completed their NQT (newly qualified teacher) induction during the first year of the Project.

The management and delivery model adopted remained very similar for both years of the Project. The teacher provided cover for a long-term absence for four days at the cluster lead school (Maes Ebbw School), spending the fifth day at the other cluster school (Ysgol Bryn Derw) (the allocation was determined by the size of the schools). The supernumerary teacher's role at the cluster school varied; PPA (planning, preparation and assessment) cover for the same class at the beginning changing to covering a range of classes for PPA from Spring 2019.

Newport cluster	Allocation and role	Impact
 <p>2 schools</p>  <p>1 teacher</p>	<p>Four days a week in the larger cluster lead school covering a long-term sickness. The fifth day in the smaller school – releasing a range of teachers to complete reviews and to allow for the expertise of the cluster teacher to be shared with more staff.</p>	<p>It has been possible to plan ahead – with the specific curriculum focus that is needed, this has allowed the main teacher to hand over some responsibility for a particular subject area.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><i>The young people have had a massively good deal out of having access to [the supernumerary teacher]. This would not have been the case with a supply, as [the teacher] has planned for the future.</i></p> <p><i>(Cluster lead)</i></p> </div>

Contrasting staffing requirements between mainstream and Special schools

Agency supply teachers are not indemnified to be able to use specific training qualifications such as ‘team teach, handling’ in the Special school. As a result there can be supply teachers in classes **unable to ‘move and handle’**, even though they are trained; this means there is **more workload** on the other members of staff in the class.

Such an issue would not be so pressing for a mainstream school, but for a Special school, there is a greater demand to move pupils, toilet visits etc., such **‘demands on staff can be draining’**. In this cluster the supernumerary teacher has been signed off by the headteacher to use such techniques, as she is employed by the school.

The teaching assistants (TAs) **understand the routines and systems** better than an irregular supply cover teacher would, with the teacher needing to take the lead from them as they know the children. Unless a teacher is in a classroom consistently as the ‘teacher’ in a Special school, the teacher has to take the lead from the TAs as they know the children.

Staffing challenges

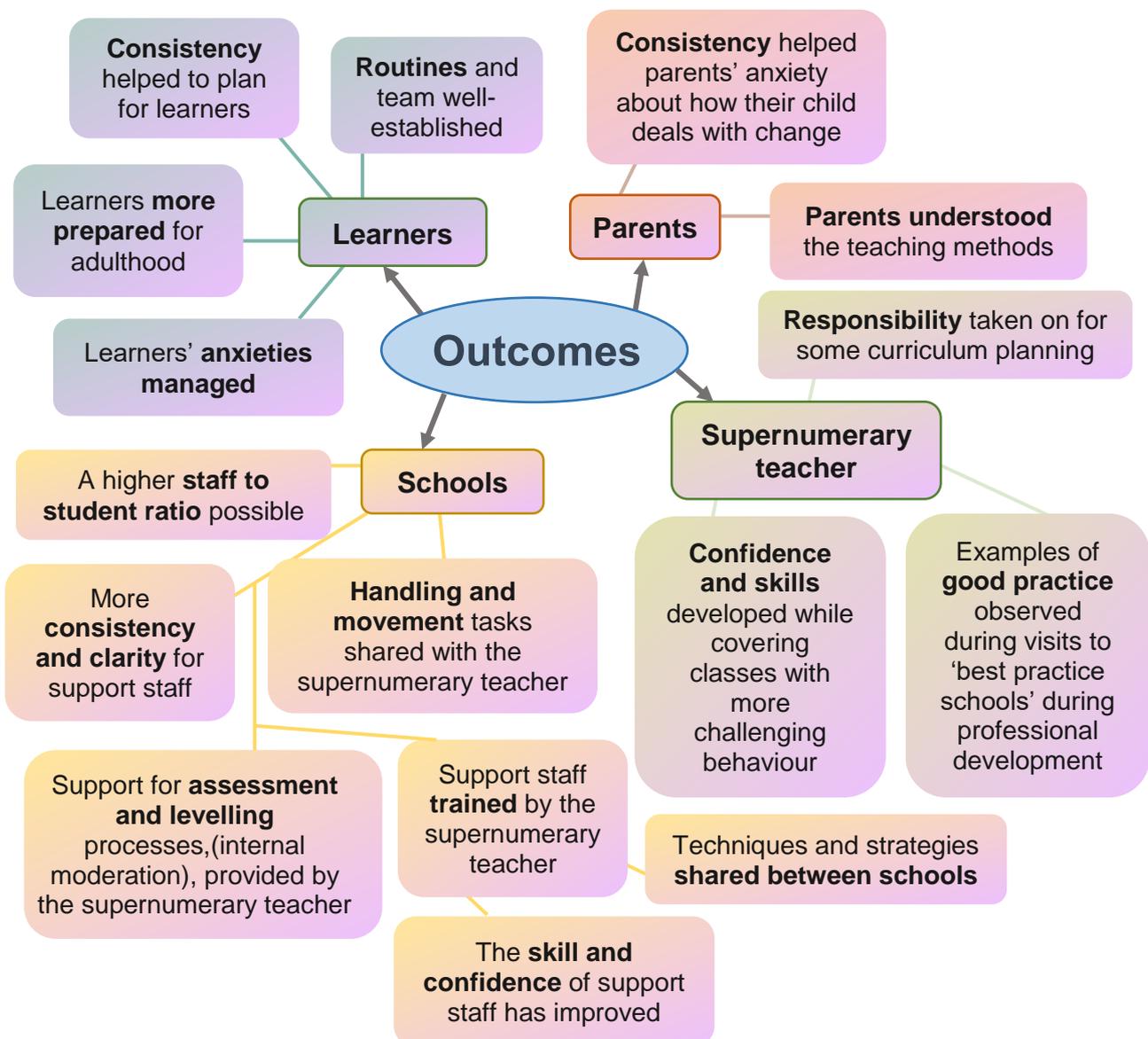
*'The challenge for the sector is **knowledge of the individual children** and the knowledge of the way a school works – this is more important than whether you have a certificate that says you are a qualified teacher.*

*Parents want to know that someone who knows their child and **understands the needs of their child** is in front of their child'.*

(cluster school headteacher)

A teacher's ability to '*step in and click with a class*' is different in a Special school. For example, the supernumerary teacher spent a two week block at the other cluster school. There was a negative impact on the pupils and class team at the cluster lead school - it is difficult to explain the situation to the learners. A more regular weekly pattern can suit learners better; with the supernumerary teacher spending the same day each week at the other cluster school, and the lessons delivered in their absence by a Level 4 HLTA (Higher Level Teaching Assistant) each week.

However, on the other hand consistency may not be as critical as in mainstream, when there is only one adult in a class – a Special school class can have eight children and four adults, if there is a change in the teacher there can still be a level of consistency from the support staff.



Case study 3: A large cluster with a smaller number of supernumerary teachers

Background

There are two supernumerary teachers working in the Wrexham cluster. The cluster schools initially looked at the number of children on role in each school in the cluster and worked out a percentage allocation which equated to a number of days of supply cover to which each school was entitled per term; there was some flexibility within this allocation. All of the NQT (newly-qualified teacher)'s observations were completed in Ysgol Heulfan (the cluster lead school), where they were most familiar with pupils and school policies such as behaviour management routines. Often, the supernumerary teachers were used to release staff to focus on school-level priorities such as professional development and particular projects. Some of the cluster schools have used the supernumerary teachers' time on a regular basis e.g. the same day per week. The supernumerary teachers have also been involved in extra-curricular activities. The cluster finds that it is not particularly practical to use the supernumerary teachers for sickness cover, which is too ad hoc. The supernumerary teachers have been in high demand within the cluster.

Wrexham cluster	Allocation and role	Impact
 <p>8 schools</p>  <p>2 teachers</p>	<p>An online calendar is used to book the teachers' time, with allocation roughly decided by pupil numbers. Schools tend to book their supply cover weeks in advance and in most cases, the teachers are used to release staff to focus on school-level priorities such as professional development and particular projects. Some schools book a teacher on a regular schedule. Teachers are also involved in extra-curricular activities.</p>	<p>The project has allowed cluster schools to raise standards within schools, focusing on school improvement priorities to a greater extent than they might otherwise manage. The teachers have built good relationships with colleagues and have benefitted from a wider range of professional learning, observing good practice and experience of extra-curricular activities.</p>

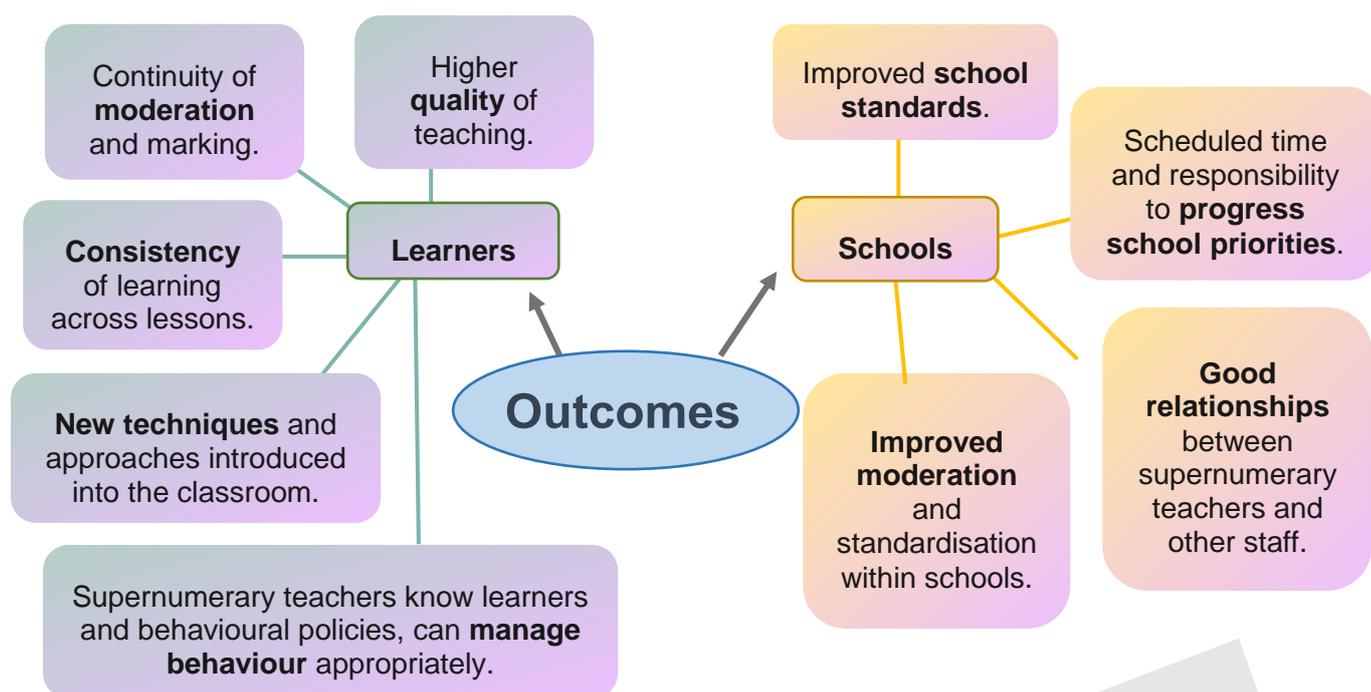
Making the most of available Supernumerary teacher time

For this pilot project, the cluster decided to trial employing two supernumerary teachers across the eight schools. The schools judged this to have been correct for a pilot, but of course it has meant that schools needed to ensure their limited time with the supernumerary teachers was used to best effect. As such, the cluster schools have made sure they allow supernumerary teachers to deliver meaningful lessons while providing cover. They have planned and delivered lessons across upper Key Stage 2 and lower Key Stage 3, for example delivering weekly sessions on literacy, numeracy and science. They have also been involved in extra-curricular activities; one has supported an after-school football club and they have attended a residential course with pupils. They have also been involved in Forest School and one has provided valuable support in the cluster lead school's resource provision. The supernumerary teachers were given two weeks of planning time at the start of the project and in September 2018 to ensure they could deliver valuable lessons while providing cover. Learners emphasised that they find the lessons just as enjoyable and that the supernumerary teachers bring new teaching approaches, resources and games to the classroom.

Using cover for specific school improvement priorities

The supernumerary teachers have primarily been used to release staff to focus on school development priorities. For example, using the supernumerary teacher cover:

- For staff to work on a formative assessment project (run by the regional education consortium).
- For staff to work on levelling pupils' work and building portfolios.
- To focus on monitoring of standards of pupils' work and to monitor subject areas (it is usually challenging for them to release staff for such activities). This school also noted that using the supernumerary teachers in this has allowed them to continue to improve following an Estyn monitoring period, focusing on developing pupil learning and raising standards.
- To release middle managers, each of which have been allocated a priority from the School Improvement Plan to progress during this non-contact time.



The greatest value of the project has been the ability for school to regularly utilise [the teacher] for internal moderation and standardisation of work within school. This has allowed SLT (school leadership team) and subject leaders to continually monitor and raise standards of teaching and learning.

The teachers know the pupils, staff and routines of the school which help them to deliver lessons effectively. Pupil behaviour has been better as the teachers understand individual pupils' needs; this has meant the pupils respond well towards them. Teaching and learning in class has remained at a high standard even when we have to release teachers from their classes.

Case study 4: A Welsh-medium cluster

Background

The Neath Port Talbot cluster has piloted different ways of apportioning teachers' time over the duration of the project. Initially, a specific apportionment was set aside for each school but this arrangement did not respond effectively to the needs of schools as they arose. Secondly, a flexible system of allowing schools to use teachers at short notice for the supply of illness or emergency was piloted. This system caused a burden for Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur, which organised teachers' time. The cluster has now established a process of apportioning teachers' time to support the schools' improvement plans (taking into account a sensible number of days for each school). Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur's bursar keeps records of the supply teachers' time. Cluster schools try to provide their needs to the lead school a month in advance, and the bursary provides a fortnightly schedule.

Overall, the supply teachers have worked across Key Stages. The current system has allowed a good balance between the needs of schools and the needs of supply teachers themselves.

Neath Port Talbot cluster	Allocation and role	Impact
 <p data-bbox="204 1200 344 1229">10 schools</p>  <p data-bbox="212 1395 352 1424">5 teachers</p>	<p>The cluster has trialed different approaches to allocation, starting with an equal and regular split between schools, moving to a completely flexible on-demand approach and then finally settling on using the teachers to support school improvement priorities across the cluster. The teachers generally work across key stages and are allocated periods for planning together.</p>	<p>Schools have used the teachers to release staff to focus on school improvement, for example collaborative planning for the new curriculum. The teachers are familiar with schools' policies, approach and strategies, including the Welsh Language Charter. The project has provided consistent Welsh-medium supply cover, which is often very difficult to secure.</p> <div data-bbox="858 1402 1422 1615" style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><i>Usually, when you leave work for supply teachers, it isn't always completed, or not to the standard you want, and you have to re-do it – this hasn't happened. (Translation)</i></p> </div>

Specific benefits for Welsh-medium cluster schools	Benefits the Project has offered to supernumerary teachers
<p>The Welsh-medium schools regularly face challenges in recruiting suitable supply staff through external agencies, able to teach through the medium of Welsh to a high standard. It is not uncommon for schools to make use of non-Welsh speaking supply teachers, when faced with a lack of other options. Supernumerary teachers address these supply challenges, ensuring schools can access Welsh-medium supply regularly and with less difficulty.</p> <p>Supernumerary teachers are familiar with the school's Welsh-language policies, projects and approaches. For example, they have been able to work in-line with the schools' Welsh Language Charter strategy and adopt or develop appropriate resources.</p> <p>They have understood and supported the school's focus on Welsh language and literacy, using the same drills and language formats as other teachers. For example, one supernumerary teacher reported that running Speaking and Listening sessions with learners was a specific performance objective for them.</p>	<p>The teachers have received time for joint planning at the start and end of term. During this time, they have successfully created resources, shared teaching methodologies and focused on school-level priorities.</p> <p>The salary offered through this project is more stable than the normal supply salary, though still less stable than a permanent teaching post. Teachers benefit from the status of being a teacher with permanent roles. They have access to the training available for other teachers, including specific courses on themes such as ASD (autism spectrum disorder) and safeguarding in different schools.</p> <p>They have also been invited to join school communities, participate in social events and create relationships with co-workers. The early years of teaching can be very challenging and feeling part of the community, and having necessary support, has a positive impact on the well-being of NQT (newly-qualified teacher) and supply teachers.</p> <p>They have been able to gain experience across different key stages (for example, a secondary-trained teacher gained some experience in Foundation Phase). They are now 'better teachers', demonstrated through the performance management processes.</p>

