

National Assembly for Wales
Children, Young People and Education Committee
CYPE(4)-15-15 – Paper 1
Inquiry into Supply Teaching
Evidence from : Welsh Government

Introduction

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide written evidence on supply teaching in Wales to inform the Children, Young People & Education Committee's 'Inquiry into Supply Teaching'. The paper is structured to correspond with the principal areas of the Committee's inquiry.
2. It is generally accepted that the quality of teachers is the single most important factor that has the greatest impact on improving learner outcomes. In seeking to raise standards across our education system in Wales it follows that all teachers who work with learners in our schools, irrespective of the nature of their deployment, have an important role to play.
3. Supply teachers form a significant and important part of the teacher workforce in Wales and, like all teachers, it is necessary to ensure they have the appropriate skills to provide high quality teaching. They perform a particularly important role in maintaining continuity of learning during periods of teacher absence, both short and long term.
4. The Welsh Government is focussed on ensuring that there is a high quality of supply teachers who are effectively utilised to supporting the education of our young people in the most cost effective manner.

Background

5. Over the past 2 years, supply teaching in Wales has been referenced in the following three reports:
 - a. *The Impact of Teacher Absence*, Estyn, September 2013;
 - b. *Covering Teacher Absence*, Wales Audit Office, September 2013; and
 - c. *Covering Teachers Absence*, Public Accounts Committee, May 2014
6. All three reports provided a helpful and comprehensive analysis of supply teaching in Wales and address a number of issues currently being reviewed by the Children, Young People & Education Committee. Since their publication the Welsh Government has taken a number of proactive steps to address their various recommendations including the development of *Effective Management of School Workforce Attendance* guidance document to be published in July 2015.

7. The guidance document is being drafted in conjunction with local authority officials with engagement from key stakeholders from the sector. The guidance will provide a framework to improve the cover of lessons to minimise disruption to children's learning; ensure value for money for education; and to assist in reducing teacher absence.
8. The guidance will be disseminated to all schools, local authority, consortia and Welsh Government officials to ensure that all partners understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to ensuring the effective cover of lessons. The guidance will address a number of recommendations set out in the reports published by Estyn, WAO and the Public Accounts Committee. In addition to setting out the roles and responsibilities of all key stakeholders, the document will include model policies, examples of best practice and suitable resources (for example, an outline induction handbook) for schools.

Prevalence and use of supply teachers

9. Current numbers of supply teachers registered in Wales have remained fairly static over a five year period. Data from the Education Workforce Council (EWC) shows that the figure was just over 5000 in 2009 and was around 4800 in December 2014. Teachers are required to update their own data if their employment status changes, however the EWC does not proactively engage with teachers to ensure that this is the case.
10. The employment of supply teachers is governed by a combination of UK Employment law (including the Temporary Workers Directive) and the School Teachers Pay and Conditions document. School teachers' pay and conditions have not been devolved and remain the responsibility of the Department for Education.
11. Ultimately it is the duty of individual head teachers, working with their Governing Body and wider school team, to determine the best way to manage absences and provide cover in their schools.
12. The Wales Audit Office and Estyn Reports estimate that just under 10% of all lessons were covered by staff that are not the usual teacher. There are a range of staff who may cover for a teachers' absence including cover supervisors, teaching assistants/ higher level teaching assistance or supply teachers. Cover is required for both foreseen (training, peer to peer support, maternity/paternity leave) and unforeseen absences (sickness, grievance absence).
13. The Estyn, WAO and PAC Reports all highlighted the importance of utilising data, notably on teacher absence rates, to reduce the number of lessons requiring cover.
14. It is essential that teachers engage in ongoing professional learning to maintain and develop the quality and effectiveness of their professional practice. As in many other professions, sharing professional practice is

often the most effective means of supporting and improving practice. This can often mean teachers observing the practice of others and then applying what they have learnt to their own practice. In these situations some absence from the classroom will be inevitable but it should always result from an assessment of the longer term benefits of improving practice set against the short term impact on continuity of learning.

15. The Welsh Government has committed to a number of initiatives to improve the monitoring of teacher absence from the classroom. These include:
- The development of the *Effective Management of School Workforce Attendance* guidance which will set out the roles and responsibilities of local authorities, consortia and the Welsh Government in relation to school data collection, dissemination and analysis. It will also set out the responsibilities for head teachers and governors in providing data and responding to issues;
 - The guidance will also include best practice approaches that should be considered when organising training and development opportunities and events for teachers. This will include ensuring the Welsh Government and its partners consider the range of delivery options when providing learning opportunities to the school workforce to ensure that the impact of teacher absence from the classroom forms part of the decision making process.
 - The commitment to publish teacher absence data annually at a local authority level to help enable any potential issues or trends to be identified. This data will be available to form part of the people management monitoring, reviewing and challenge process within local authorities and consortia;
 - The publication, in April 2015, of the *National Model for Regional Working – Revitalising People Management in Schools*. This provides a people management framework for the delivery of specialist HR functions. This document underlines the responsibilities on schools, local authorities and consortia including the collection, analysis and reporting on data to improve school performance;
 - Introduction of regulations for School Development Plan (SDPs). When formulating the SDP a school should consider a range of quantitative and qualitative performance data including teacher absence information. The SDP will provide a focus for engagement within schools and challenge advisers will advise and support schools in identifying and implementing the actions necessary to bring about improvements on a range of data, including teacher absence data; and
 - Guidance to accompany the SDP regulations includes an expectation that, when schools set out their approach to the professional learning of their staff, they give consideration to adopting strategies that minimise the negative impact of teachers' absence from the classroom on learner progress. This should be balanced with the need to provide high-quality professional learning experiences and schools will need to carefully assess the impact of their provision so they are confident they achieve the optimum balance.

The impact on the outcomes for pupils as a result of the use of supply teachers

16. In 2013 Estyn conducted a thematic review on the impact of teacher absence. The resultant report outlined in detail the impact on the outcomes for pupils as a result of teacher absence from the classroom.
17. Estyn made a number of recommendations for schools, local authorities and consortia. In addition to highlighting these recommendations to the relevant bodies the Welsh Government are developing *Effective Management of School Workforce Attendance* guidance to be published in the summer term. This document will reflect the good practice highlighted in the Estyn, WAO and PAC reports and include a range of resources (model policies, frameworks and tools) for schools to adapt and implement to improve the quality, whilst reducing the quantity, of classroom cover.
18. The Welsh Government will be making a request to Estyn for a further thematic review to be undertaken, in 2016/17, on cover arrangements and to assess the effectiveness of the guidance. This will provide the opportunity for the new guidance to be fully developed and embedded for a whole academic year before the study takes place.

Professional Learning

19. The *New Deal for the Education Workforce* offers all education practitioners, including supply teachers, in Wales an entitlement to access world class professional learning opportunities to develop their practice throughout their career. Underpinning the *New Deal* is embedding professional learning activities within schools but also providing access to learning opportunities through online professional learning materials and resources. This provides a more flexible and effective approach for all teachers to develop and will contribute to improving teacher standards whilst reducing teacher absence from the classroom for training purposes.
20. Through the School Development Plans, schools are now required to set out detail of the schools' provision for addressing the professional learning needs of all staff, including staff temporarily placed at the school, which will include short and long term supply teachers.
21. New Directions, who have recently been awarded the Framework Agreement for the Provision of Supply Teachers (see para. 30), are committed to delivering relevant training and professional learning. New Directions provides for training on safeguarding, classroom management and conflict and behaviour management, through the Team Teach programmes to all their supply teachers.

Performance Management

22. Revised Appraisal Regulations were introduced in 2011 which covered the Performance Management (PM) of teachers and head teachers. The

regulations also covered unattached teachers which generally include teachers employed centrally by local authorities..

23. The revised regulations also included provision for the performance management of teachers temporarily placed in a school for a term or more. Previously, the minimum period was one year. This allows a larger number of supply teachers carrying out long term supply to come within the scope of the regulations and therefore subject to a school's PM policy.
24. The regulations do not apply to teachers on short term contracts of less than one term. This was a reflection of the practical difficulties in administering a PM cycle over such a short period of time.
25. However, whilst not subject to regulations, it is still incumbent on schools to effectively monitor and manage the performance of any staff working in the school, whatever the length of their employment.
26. New Directions, who have recently been awarded the Framework Agreement for the Provision of Supply Teachers (see para. 30), are committed to providing performance management to all their supply teachers.

The role of local authorities and regional consortia

27. *The National Model for Regional Working – Revitalising People Management in Schools*, published in April 2015, provides a people management framework for the delivery of specialist HR functions. This document builds on the requirements set out in the *National Model for Regional Working* (Guidance document 126/2014). The document sets out the requirement for consortia business plans to detail how local authority HR support will be provided to schools. It also outlines the responsibilities of local authorities and consortia in delivering HR support and services. The document explicitly references the requirement for local authorities to deliver HR support and advisory services to schools under a Service Level Agreement. The guidance sets out the requirement for schools, and governing bodies, to take part in training and development programmes to assist them to meet their people management responsibilities.
28. Business plans in relation to HR provision for schools will be monitored through the annual Ministerial review and challenge events with each consortium. Where HR issues have an adverse effect on school improvement we will collectively analyse causes and identify suitable interventions.
29. *Effective Management of School Workforce Attendance* will clearly set out the roles and responsibilities of local authorities and consortia in relation to the effective cover of lessons, supply teachers and supply agencies.

Supply Agencies and Quality Assurance

30. The National Procurement Service (NPS) developed and awarded a framework agreement for a Managed Service for the provision of Agency Workers on 8 April 2015, including supply teachers. The agreement was awarded by the NPS on behalf of the Welsh Public Sector, including all 22 Local Authorities, and is for a period of three years, with an option to extend for a further 12 months. The successful single supplier award on Lot 3 – Education was given to New Directions Education Limited. During the tender development the NPS engaged with the Department for Education and Skills, which helped to strengthen the specification and technical award criteria around such issues as Professional Training and Learning. The NPS also engaged with representatives of Welsh Local Authorities.
31. Lot 3 will commence on 1st August 2015, in readiness for the new academic year. Until this time the existing All Wales framework with New Directions (as let by Cardiff City Council in 2012) will continue to run.
32. All 22 Local Authorities have signed up to use the Framework Agreements that the NPS put in place, and as such they will expect their schools to use the framework to meet their supply teacher requirement. However, schools are free to use any method of supply to cover their lessons.
33. The spend under the existing All Wales framework has continued to grow annually, indicating that most framework customers are using the framework provider to meet this requirement (where the requirement exists). Outside of the framework, it is believed that schools continue to use a range of other suppliers. There are approximately 50 other teaching supply agencies currently operating in Wales
34. In 2007, the Welsh Assembly Government introduced the Quality Mark Wales (QMW), a voluntary scheme designed to promote the safe recruitment of supply teachers into Welsh Schools. The Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC), a recognised umbrella body for the recruitment industry, was awarded the contract and managed the scheme on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government from April 2007. The scheme cost just over £216,000 over a four year period.
35. During the summer of 2010, a review of the scheme was undertaken by officials who sought the views of supply agencies, teacher unions and other partners as to the impact that the quality mark had made in relation to its stated aims.
36. The evidence gathered by the critical analysis indicated that the scheme was limited in its ability to influence the recruitment and management practices of all supply agencies. Officials set out their concerns relating to the current and future effectiveness of the scheme, its failure to demonstrate value for money, and the limited support it had gained from

supply agencies, teachers, and teacher unions. There was little evidence to suggest that as a result of the introduction of the QMW scheme, supply agencies in Wales had significantly altered the way they did business (in particular, in relation to pay and conditions issues).

- 37. The then Minister, on the basis of the review, decided in December 2010 that the scheme would not continue beyond March 2011.
- 38. REC has launched the Audited Education scheme, a new standard for recruitment in education which builds on the legacy of the Quality Mark, which supply agencies in Wales can apply for.
- 39. The guidance document will set out roles and responsibilities for supply agencies, including an outline of the minimum standards that schools should look for when selecting an Agency.

Shortage of supply teachers in some subjects (including Welsh medium)

- 40. The Welsh Government does not control the composition of the supply teacher workforce as it is largely self-selecting and rarely constant. Through Initial Teacher Education and Training (ITET) intakes, the Welsh Government takes account of the teaching population as a whole.
- 41. A Teacher Planning and Supply Model (TPSM) is used as a workforce planning tool to gauge numbers of new entrants to ITET programmes in Wales. It is used as a basis to calculate the number of teachers required to maintain the required levels in Wales. The TPSM has two elements: firstly a Desired Stock Model, which projects the number of teachers required, based on pupil projections and current pupil-teacher ratios; and secondly a Teacher Supply Model, which projects the number of in-service teachers and subsequent over/under supply of teachers, given flows in and out of the service. These cover the in-flow of newly qualified teachers and re-entrants to teaching in Wales, and the out-flow due to retirements and other leavers.
- 42. To address priority recruitment areas, the Welsh Government will offer financial incentives in academic year 2015/16 to support initial teacher training in key subject areas as follows. Please note that the figures included in brackets in the attached table denote the total support payable to the student, which is incentives value plus the tuition fee grant support.

<u>First degree qualification of student</u>	<u>High priority subjects</u> Mathematics, physics, chemistry, Welsh	<u>Medium priority subjects</u> Modern languages, ICT (computer sciences)	<u>All other main secondary subjects & primary</u> <i>(high level support only)</i>	<u>Primary supplement</u> English, Welsh, mathematics and science only (degree subject specialism to raise standards at primary in numeracy and literacy and support sciences)
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1st	£20,000 (£25,190)	£15,000 (£20,190)	£3,000 (£8,190)	£3,000
2.1	£10,000 (£15,190)	£6,000 (£11,190)	£0	£0
2.2	£6,000 (£11,190)	£0	£0	£0

43. The Welsh Language Sabbatical Scheme provides teachers, including supply teachers, with the opportunity to improve their Welsh-language skills in an environment outside of their schools. The aim of the training is to improve the language skills of practitioners in the Welsh-medium sector, in support of the Literacy agenda; and to provide training for practitioners in the English-medium sector in order to deliver the Welsh second language curriculum in schools.