EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE

POLICY REVIEW: SCHOOL OF THE FUTURE

THEMES EMERGING FROM THE CONSULTATION – SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

The themes relate to those set out by the Committee in the terms of reference for the policy review.

A list of respondents to the consultation is attached to this paper.

School as a community resource

Many respondents felt that primary and secondary schools had the unrealised potential to serve their local communities as loci for lifelong learning and training opportunities:

➢ Outreach for FE/HE
➢ Library and other amenities for school/community use
➢ Community use of schools' Information and Communications Technology (ICT) suites, access available throughout the year
➢ Pre-parenting and parenting classes
➢ Adult Literacy classes
➢ Welsh for Adults' classes
➢ Parents improving basic skills in secondary school classes

Any move in the direction of a community school or college would require a long-term strategy, compiled by all 'partners' involved. A multi-agency approach would be required, as local services could be co-located at the school site. Teams of community professionals would work together e.g. teachers, community police officers, social workers, librarians and health professionals to provide a seamless service to the surrounding community. Respondents alluded to the pivotal role of both ELWa-National Council and the Community Consortia for Education and Training (CCETs) in any such approach. The contributory role of informal education providers such as charities and non-governmental organisations was also mentioned.

It was felt that the security of school buildings could be increased i.e. a reduction in vandalism, if buildings were in constant use by the local community.

The composition of teaching staff would reflect the multi-cultural make-up of the local community.

School transport/safe routes to school and local food procurement could also be issues for the local community to examine. Parents and pupils could be involved in decision-making within the community e.g. considerations and projects for sustainable development.

Issues for consideration:

1. A possible need to define what is meant by 'community' and indeed its 'resources'.
2. The policy of parental choice in schools sometimes created artificial boundaries within communities.
3. Flexibility was imperative – respondents felt that a 'one size fits all' approach would be inappropriate.
4. Child protection issues had to be acknowledged when allowing other adults/members of the community to use facilities.
5. Resources and additional funding would be required to support 'community schools' on a pan-Wales basis.
6. Appropriate guidance on establishing and operating such initiatives would be necessary.

Development and use of ICT

ICT was viewed as a versatile tool for teachers: an aid for planning and a tool for the sharing of ideas. ICT facilities/equipment would provide an audiovisual experience for learners alongside interactive whiteboards and mini-screens for pupils/learners. ICT would also be an effective tool for developing information literacy.

Many respondents felt that broadband connection to every school and home in Wales was of paramount importance for connectivity between schools and seamless learning between the school and the home.

The role of the National Grid for Learning Cymru was cited as instrumental in taking this agenda forward in Wales.

It was suggested that ICT was a useful tool for managing school administration: registration, school budgets etc.

In terms of community access, school ICT suites could be available throughout the year.

It was felt that Welsh-medium provision of ICT opportunities was significantly under-developed in comparison to English-medium. A virtual centre for Welsh-medium ICT development could be instigated.

ICT/distance-learning could be used to develop networks of excellence and support, especially for post-16 provision.

Issues for consideration:
1. Intellectual property rights and the sharing of information.
2. Upgrade equipment as required.

Teaching methodology

It must acknowledge that teaching methods are a matter for the professional judgement of individual teachers. Teachers would require training in teaching methods to support the development of lifelong learning within the local community.

Respondents often referred to 'learning to learn' and 'learning to love learning' and the teaching of 'information literacy' – helping learners to identify, locate, evaluate and use/apply information accordingly. While there remained a commitment to the provision of a broad curriculum, respondents perceived an increasing emphasis on meeting and delivering the needs of individual learners. There was a need to acknowledge the diversity of learning skills and multiple intelligences and also a need to create links between disciplines.

A need to examine bilingual: English/Welsh-medium teaching methodologies.

Increased use of the natural environment as a resource for teaching.

Curriculum

There was a strong emphasis on the need for a broad and balanced curriculum whilst acknowledging and meeting the individual needs of the learner. Schools could also take account of the needs/circumstances of their local communities in their curricula.

Some respondents called for acknowledgement of the dramatic change in learning styles/context during the transition stage from primary to secondary school and how this could have a negative and somewhat destabilising effect on learners' progress.

Education and training had become separated and there was a need for parity of esteem between vocational and academic qualifications and eradicating the perceived 'hierarchy of learning'.

A considerable emphasis was placed on the concept of 'learning to learn'. Respondents felt that the curriculum should be more competence/process-led as opposed to being information/content-led. Information literacy was regarded as

key; learning could be recognised as doing as well as thinking: experiential, affective, cognitive and reflective learning.

Respondents identified the need for linkages between subjects, leading to less compartmentalisation of learning. Seamless learning could also be achieved through the use of ICT as a tool.

Out of School learning opportunities such as breakfast clubs and homework clubs etc. were seen as positive opportunities. Out of Hours learning could be defined as enabling, extending or enriching (Estyn) but should not be seen as merely add-on activities, as they required planning and organisation.

Some felt that the current emphasis on continuous assessment could be counter-productive for some learners. Many submissions alluded to the idea of phasing of examinations to reflect individual ability not age.

A majority of respondents welcomed the statutory frameworks for personal and social education (PSE) and work-related training (WRE) for 14-19 year olds. The importance of lifeskills and keyskills was also highlighted.

Following the Committee's policy review on the Welsh Language in Education, there was a need to maintain the commitment to the Welsh-medium/bilingual continuum. Some also illustrated the need to acknowledge minority languages as well as English and Welsh which might exist in a community.

Many respondents felt that citizenship education and education for sustainable development needed embedding in the curriculum. Learners needed to learn what it is to be a local, national and global citizen. Learners should know their responsibilities and choices in life and be involved in decision-making processes.

Some respondents emphasised the need for schools and Local Education Authorities (LEAs) to adhere to the Special Education Needs (SEN) Code of Practice, especially in respect of linguistic (bilingual or Welsh-medium) equal opportunities.

A number of respondents focused on the benefits of physical education to which every learner had entitlement.

Funding

Respondents called for greater financial autonomy for schools. Some called for the need for a three-year funding cycle. Headteachers spent too much time bidding for funding for short-term initiatives. Schools and learners would benefit from longer-term, strategic planning.

Many felt that increased transparency from LEAs was necessary and that the disparity in spend per pupil compromised the equal opportunities of learners. There was a need for a more just allocation of funding – equal opportunities issue.

Education for sustainable development could be reinforced in transport policies, energy, purchasing policies and ground maintenance. There was a need to up-grade or re-build school building in order to deliver lifelong learning agenda. Schools or school administrators would benefit from enhanced business improvement skills.

Widening opportunity and participation

Some respondents saw increasing voluntary sector participation in schools, with perhaps learners pursuing placement opportunities.

Multi-racial and multi-cultural societies reflected in make-up of schools.

Library access for all in schools – a community resource.

Church schools saw their own prominent roles in the future.

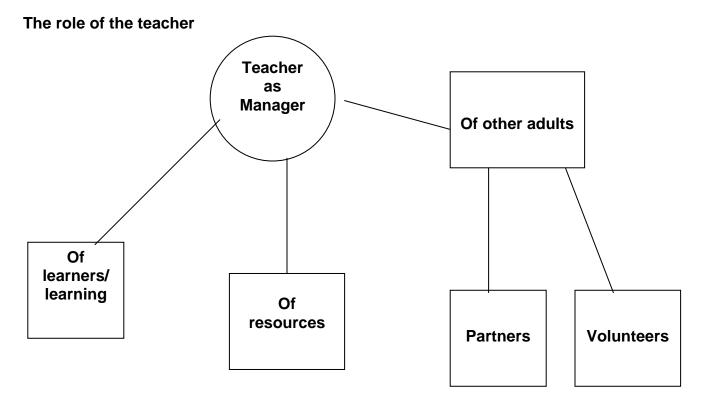## Adding value to education and the school experience

Many people felt that the present timetabling of the three-term school year was unhelpful for learners and out of phase with the financial year. Suggestions were made that some LEAs and schools could pilot six-term-a-year models.

School buildings needed to be fit for purpose and used after traditional school hours for the benefit of the local community. Some respondents referred to the necessity of school playing fields. Kinaesthetic learners also required physical space in which to learn. Learners' diets needed addressing – there was a need for the promotion of healthy food in schools, with produce derived from the surrounding locality.

There was a need for greater recognition of social and personal achievements in schools with possible accreditation for learners in their leisure time.

The principles of both the Assembly's Children and Young People's Framework and the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child should underpin any planning and delivery of service for young people.

Other themes to have emerged:

The role of the teacher

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                    │  Teacher    │              ┌──────────────────┐
                    │    as       │              │                  │
                    │  Manager    │              │  Of other adults │
                    └─────────────┘              │                  │
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        ┌──────────┐       │                        │           \
        │   Of     │  ┌──────────┐           ┌──────────┐  ┌──────────┐
        │ learners/│  │   Of     │           │          │  │          │
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Many respondents envisaged the role of the teacher in the school of the future as one of learning manager: a manager of learners, a manager of resources and a manager of other adults i.e. other professionals within the community setting and support staff/classroom assistants. The role of the teacher could be enhanced to include that of outreach worker, researcher and networker. Essentially, the pedagogical role of the teacher would be retained.

Teachers in the near and distant future may view themselves as learners in that they can acquire additional qualifications etc. through continuing professional development. The notion of teachers acquiring chartered status was also put forward.

Considerable importance was placed on reducing bureaucratic burdens on teachers in order to enable them to fulfil their primary function of teaching.

Governance/management/leadership

LEAs will continue to play a strategic role in the governance of schools. The governing body could be seen as a non-executive body who could provide constructive critique to the headteacher on issues of quality and standards.

Mission statement/school ethos.

Respondents to the School of the Future Review
(Direct)

N.o	Date	Respondent	Organisation	Position
1	August 2002	Brian Rowlands	SHA	Secretary
2	6/9	Leslie J Francis	The Welsh National Centre for Religious Education	Director
3	11/9	Roz Harrison (e-mail)	Rhosymedre Junior School	Head Teacher
4	11/9	Norman B Moore	Wales Council for the Deaf	Director
5	23/9	Andrew Strong (e-mail)	Llanbister School	Head Teacher
6	11/10	Professor Mike Scott	NEWI	Principal & Chief Executive
7	14/10	Sally Francis	Welsh Primary Schools Association	Head Teacher
8 ✸	18/10	Phil Bassett	NEWI	Head of Education
9	23/10	Grenville Jackson	National Council - ELWa	Director of Strategy and Learning Development
10	29/10	Ernst Wegerif & Elvira Beijdorff	Nant-y-Cwm Steiner School	Member of Staff & Administrator
11	31/10	David Francis	South Wales Police	Assistant Chief Constable (Operations)
12	31/10	Dr Heledd Hayes	NUT	Education Officer
13	31/10	R. Elwyn Williams	Conwy County Borough Council	Director of Education
14	31/10	Iain Robinson	AVAYA UK	Sales Director UK & Ire, Government Solutions EMEA
15	1/11	Ruth Ab Ieuan	University of Wales	Assistant Secretary
16 ✸	1/11	Andy Shercliff	XL Wales	Managing Director
17 ✸	1/11	Paul Johnson	Education Department, UNICEF UK	Education officer
18	4/11	Edwyn Williams	UCAC	General Secretary

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Committee Secretariat

19 ✷	5/11	Gary Brace	GTCW	Chief Executive
20 ✷	6/11	Simon Pilling	Health & Safety Executive	Strategy & analytical Support Directorate
21	6/11	Peter R. Williams	Church in Wales Diocesan Directors of Education	Provincial Officer for Statutory Education
22	7/11	Dave Tyler	St Thomas Primary School, Swansea	Headteacher
23 ✷	8/11	Huw Jones	Wales Principal Youth Officers	Principal Officer Community Education
24 ✷	8/11	Oona Stannard	Catholic Education Service	Director
25 ✷	11/11	Alan Tuckett	NIACE (NIACE Dysgu Cymru response)	Director
26	12/11	Naz Malik	All Wales Ethnic Minority Association (AWEMA)	Director
27 ✷	13/11	Catrin Redknap	Welsh Language Board	Chief Education and Training Officer
28	14/11	Member of Education subject Committee	All Wales Ethnic Minority Association (AWEMA)	
29	15/11	Roger Thomas	Countryside Council for Wales	Chief Executive
30	15/11	Elizabeth Inseal	Bettws High School	Head of Learning Community & Skills Centre
31 ✷	15/11	Catherine Hester	Oxfam Cymru	Curriculum Adviser
32 ✷	18/11	Jeff Greenidge	Ufl Ltd Wales	Director
33 ✷	18/11	Nia Jones	Environment Agency Wales	Assistant Assembly Liaison Officer
34 ✷	19/11	Chris Holmes	RSPCA	National Education Adviser
35 ✷	22/11	Mike Greenaway	Play Wales	Director
36	26/11	Peter Griffin OBE	Governors Wales	Chair

37	26/11	Professor James Arthur (personal)	Canterbury Christ Church University College	Professor of Education and Head of Educational Research
38	28/11	Norma Redfearn (personal)	General Teaching Council for England	Member
39 ✸	2/12	Sir Adrian Webb	University of Glamorgan	Vice Chancellor
40	5/12	Dr Sue Lyle	Swansea Institute of Higher Education Consultation Day	Senior Lecturer in Education
41	7/12	Andrew Pollard	ESRC	Director, Teaching and Learning Research Programme
42	9/12	Claire Fowler	RSPB Cymru	Head of Lifelong Learning, Wales
43 ✸	10/12	Huw Llywelyn Evans	Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals Wales	Executive Officer
44 ✸	12/12	Margaret Minhinnick	Sustainable Wales	Director
45	16/12	Ann MacGarry	Centre for Alternative Technology, Machynlleth	Education Officer
46	19/12	Susan Lewis	Estyn	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales
47	10/1	School Council (C J Hess)	Ysgol Glan y Môr	Deputy Head
48	13/1	School Council (S K Matthews)	Bryn Elian High School	Head
49	13/1	Pam Boyd	Education Extra	Acting Deputy Director
50	15/1	School Council	Bryntirion Comprehensive School	
51	15/1	School Council	Ogmore School Bridgend	

52	15/1	School Council (Gareth Matthewson)	Whitchurch High School, Cardiff	Headteacher
53	15/1	Cath Little	The Fountain School – Cardiff Steiner Initiative	Teacher

Please note that responses marked with ✶ are available electronically on the Committee's website:

http://www.wales.gov.uk/keypubassemedlearning/content/school-future-responses-e.htm

If hard copy of other responses is required, please contact Committee Secretariat.