

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales
Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and
Education Committee

Grant gwella addysg: Plant Sipsiwn, Roma a Theithwyr, a phlant o leiafrifoedd
ethnig | Education Improvement Grant: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, and
Minority Ethnic Children

EIG 09

Ymateb gan : Awdurdodau Addysg Lleol Gogledd Cymru (GwE)

Response from : North Wales Local Education Authorities (GwE)

Wrexham County Borough Council

EAL

- Numbers of EAL pupils is continuing to increase, 63.05% (2015 against 2011)
- Allocation of funding from GWE now shared between services is based on historical data.
- There has been a reduction of funding of £30,000 from 2015/16 to 2016/17 for the EAL service.
- Only a limited number of EAL learners are eFSM therefore PDG funding is not available to support the majority of this cohort of pupils. (112 pupils, PLASC 2016)
- The changes in funding arrangements have resulted in the criteria levels for support being raised and the levels of direct support from the service being reduced.
- This has had an impact not only in terms of the reduced support for language development, but also in terms of the broader aspects and issues that impact on pupil attainment.
- There has been an increased focus on capacity building with schools as a more sustainable long term approach to providing for the needs of the pupils.
- This work requires a commitment of secure and sustained funding, for development, implementation and evaluation of impact on pupil attainment.

- Collaborative work sharing good practice and examples of capacity building cross LA North Wales EAL services has been shared with Jacqui Sharples (WG)
- Reporting framework for identified groups of learners

GRT

The decrease in funding, towards the Traveller Education Service in Wrexham, has had considerable impact on our capacity and service delivery. Furthermore this has impacted negatively on the engagement of Gypsy and Travellers in education. Staff ratios per child have doubled, meaning that less direct support to individual children. This, in turn has affected attendance and achievement.

Denbighshire

How the Welsh Government monitors the way local authorities use the Education Improvement Grant and how the new, amalgamated grant supports Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, and Minority Ethnic children, with specific reference to improving educational outcomes;

With MEAG and G&T Education Grant, there used to be annual reporting that was fairly in-depth. These reports were completed by individual services in each LA. Strengths were that services had better information about EAL learners than was reported through SIMS/ PLASC/ DEWI and so the information the WG received was more accurate. Nationally collected information about EAL learners is not always correctly recorded due to a range of issues:

- EAL learners – no box ticked and no EAL stage ascribed.
- NEWBES – not recorded accurately
- EAL Stage not updated
- Admitted to a different NC Year – now this is not an issue with out-of-year students taking GCSEs, whereas it had been, with students' results being totally invisible to systems.
- Admitted to a different NC Year – as DoB had not been properly matched to NC Year on admission to school.

I am unsure how the WG is currently monitoring the use of the EIG for this group of learners. I have asked colleagues in the two LAs (DCC and CCBC) many times since the EIG has been introduced, about a new reporting FW, but none has been produced to date. It would seem that this has left a gap in reporting since 31.03.15. I understand that GwE will be producing a report. It is important that any regional reporting involves EMAS/MEAS/ EAL Service managers to capture the full context and information.

the effectiveness of other Welsh Government policies and strategies for supporting the education of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, and Minority Ethnic children;

Please see below

any key issues arising from amalgamating the other previously separate grants into the Education Improvement Grant.

Minority ethnic achievement is no longer ring-fenced and therefore no longer guaranteed. Unpredictable level of funding – may have slight increase/decrease year on year. Funding now is not related to need i.e. number of learners at different stages of English language acquisition. It is not clear how the EIG is being allocated. LA services are now dealing with this uncertainty as well as working to meet increasing demand to meet the needs of schools and learners.

Question 1: From 2015-16, the Gypsy Children and Traveller Children Grant and the Minority Ethnic Achievement Grant were merged into the new Education Improvement Grant. What impact has this had on the levels of educational support available to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller and Minority Ethnic children, and their educational outcomes? If this is a concern to you, how should this be addressed?

It is important to recognise that changes to MEAG/EIG funding are not taking place in isolation, but in conjunction with LA budget pressures and real or potential cuts, creating a further level of risk to provision for minority ethnic achievement/ EAL/ WAL.

In Denbighshire, support for minority ethnic achievement/ EAL/ WAL is through a central service team of qualified, expert EAL teachers. Aspects of the service are shared with Conwy. Since the introduction of the EIG, there has been a reduction of one EAL teacher (0.4FTE) on the service team. This is a reduction of 7.7% from 5.2 to 4.8 FTE teachers/coordinator posts.

Numbers of schools with identified EAL learners are gradually increasing and numbers of EAL learners in schools continue to increase, with a 10% increase in numbers between PLASC 2014 and 2016.

The service received an uplift in funding following the end of the MEAG in 2015/16. There was no increase or reduction in EIG funding for minority ethnic achievement in 2016/17.

The remainder of the EAL Service budget is made up of Revenue Budget and income from a Service Level Agreement with schools, whereby the majority of schools with EAL learners are part-funding the service. For 2016/17, the SLA contributes nearly 8% of the total service budget. Schools do not have to buy into the SLA and may financially be unable to do so in the future. This

leaves provision to support minority ethnic achievement/ EAL/ WAL at risk.

Already the service is stretched to cover DCC schools with EAL learners and we need to scope the need for WAL learners with DCC Welsh medium schools. This will increase the demand on EAL Service expertise and support.

Concerns are for the future funding for minority ethnic achievement. It may be too soon to see the full implications of the amalgamation of what was the MEAG into the EIG. With the EIG covering 11 different previously separately funded areas, and the possibility or even likelihood that the EIG 'pot' will be reduced, it will become an increasing challenge to meet needs. Many EAL learners new into DCC schools are in the early stages of learning EAL and therefore have more significant needs. It is also too soon to see trends in outcomes for EAL learners as there have only been the summer 2016 results since the EIG was introduced.

As a central service, we are working with schools to train school staff to support EAL learners. We are working on collaborative capacity building projects to up-skill school teachers and TAs in the use of EAL strategies in the classroom. We are on the way, but there is a danger that funding to support minority ethnic achievement may be cut before real progress has been achieved for schools.

Question 2: How effective are other Welsh Government policies and strategies for supporting the education of Gypsy, Roma and Traveler, and Minority Ethnic children? If this is a concern to you, how should this be addressed?

Talking with Head teachers, there is a widespread lack of awareness of any policy or guidance published by the WG to support minority ethnic pupils. There has been more in the way of research than policy. WG has commissioned several research reports in recent years, but schools are largely unaware of them and the intended opportunities to move practice forward in schools in Wales are in most cases, missed. It would seem that the most effective way for schools to learn about WG minority ethnic and EAL publications is through central services. This is ok, but this 'bottom-up' approach misses giving the priority this area of education needs. A WG report noted that schools, even those with larger numbers of EAL learners, rarely prioritise this area of education.

As an example of a missed opportunity to promote a higher profile with schools, WG published *Minority ethnic achievement in education in Wales* (2014) in addition to the minister's policy statement on Minority Ethnic Achievement in Education (2014) which stated that it was '*clearly situating minority ethnic achievement under the wider school improvement and education reform agenda in Wales*'. However, it is found on the website under Inclusion and SEN. In the document again it states '*We see minority ethnic achievement as being inherent in our wider School Improvement*

Programme. This would indicate that WG is still unclear as to where it sees minority ethnic achievement for children and young people in Wales. A clear strategic lead from WG would clarify and define the direction for schools, local authorities and regional school improvement consortia.

In addition, labelling the document as: 'Action required – None – for information only' does not seek to drive anything forward.

Staying with the above publication, there were some potentially very useful statements and aspirations which remain un-actioned by WG.

'Working with Ethnic Minority Achievement Services, the Welsh Government has introduced a stronger outcome-focused service delivery system.' Where is this improved delivery system to be seen? Who is responsible for its delivery and who is monitoring the outcomes?

'To support the services in their endeavours to achieve better outcomes for their learners, the Welsh Government has committed to take forward:

- the compilation of a 'toolkit' of capacity-building strategies to equip class teachers with the resources to support minority ethnic achievement; and*
- the development of a new, fit-for-purpose assessment tool to review pupils' EAL and/or WAL needs as appropriate.*

We will continue to facilitate the sharing of good practice and professional support through all relevant Welsh education forums.'

Again, these are good aspirations. However to date, neither a 'toolkit' to equip class teachers nor a 'fit-for-purpose assessment tool' have been forthcoming from WG.

WG needs to decide the direction and engage schools. Without a doubt, WG has the buy-in from LA services throughout Wales who are dedicated to improving outcomes for minority ethnic pupils. Wales needs an overall strategic lead and direction from WG.

Make it a requirement for LAs to use core funding to part-fund services.

Another WG publication is *Welsh as an additional language (WAL) (2014)*. Again this is found under 'Social research' and so there is presumably also no requirement for action.

There are some really valuable recommendations coming out of this research, of relevance to the wider agenda of EAL and minority ethnic achievement. Some areas included a more sophisticated model for tracking EAL and WAL progress (*better than the 5 Stage model); targeted use of good quality data; collaboration in approaches to support WAL learners. Little appears to have moved forward on a national level to support minority ethnic learners in Welsh medium schools – this is an area that really needs addressing by WG.

*as England has now adopted the 5 Stage model, NASSEA (Northern Association of Support Services for Equality & Achievement) have aligned the recently revised NASSEA Assessment Framework with Stages A – E for learners at different Key Stages. WG could look at this approach for a well-researched approach to assessing EAL.

At the last MEALA group meeting, it had been suggested that the 5 Stage model could be aligned to the LNF, which could be a useful approach.

The ***Evaluation report on capacity building approaches and good practice to support the delivery of English as an additional language (EAL)*** (2015) is again, found under Part of: Inclusion and SEN and again with, 'Action required None – for information only.'

WG will be able to move forward on recommendations and aspirations by engaging schools, Head teachers, teachers and teaching assistants. ***Minority ethnic achievement in education in Wales*** (2014) and the ***Evaluation report on capacity building approaches*** (2015) were both officially launched in Cardiff, but I can't help wondering if the invite lists are always the best and so really miss engaging key players in securing progress in minority ethnic achievement - schools. Schools need to feel engaged in the conversation. I cannot recall if schools were invited to the Minister's policy statement on Minority Ethnic Achievement in 2014.

In 2015, selected schools were invited to the feedback event in Cardiff for the ***Evaluation report on capacity building approaches***, based on their numbers of learners. I feel a few points are relevant here: isolated learners matter. Each individual matters and they matter nationally when you add up all the numbers. Schools with isolated learners need to be engaged equally with schools with much larger numbers of learners.

In addition, having another launch in Cardiff means it is again difficult to encourage attendance and buy-in from schools in other areas of Wales. None of the schools from the GwE area sent any representatives, not even those who were invited. I tried, even offering to pay supply cover and transport costs from our budget.

Who sends the invites also matters – they were not sent directly to the schools from WG. EMAS/ MEAS/ EAL services were asked to invite schools on WG's behalf. This fails to make it sound like it is important or a priority in any way.

What more could be done to support the educational attainment of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller and Minority Ethnic children: in schools; by Local Authorities; by regional consortia; and by the Welsh Government.? Do you know of examples of good practice or successful policies? If so, what are they?

Raise the profile of EAL, WAL and minority ethnic achievement with schools and local consortia. Really engage school Heads, SLTs, teachers and teaching assistants.

Estyn use their inspection guidance for EAL, minority ethnic achievement and equalities in inspecting each school with EAL, WAL and minority ethnic learners and give feedback.

Ensure that ITT and CPD, including the new master's course, include quality content for EAL, WAL and minority ethnic achievement.

Ensure that WG standards are clear about expectations for Heads, teachers and teaching assistants e.g. HLTA standards, practicing teacher standards. Ensure that the LNF reflects the needs of these groups of learners. It could be really valuable to use data WG is already collecting to produce expected progress for EAL/ WAL learners. There are very few tests, possibly only the British Picture Vocabulary Scale (BPVS), which are specifically linked to progress in EAL acquisition.

Swansea EMLAS team have produced a useful tracker graph with Key Stage outcome table which helps in looking at expected progress for EAL learners. A number of years ago, Birmingham LA Advisory & Support Service produced NC level progress graphs based on data from their schools for EAL learners starting in different NC years. WG would be in a very good position to produce similar progress graphs for EAL Stage/ NC level or LNF. Head teachers would be very interested in predicted progress models for EAL acquisition.

Ensure that national curriculum revisions reflect the needs of these groups of learners.

Have a named member of staff in each school with responsibility for minority ethnic achievement/ EAL/ WAL/ GRT. The current SEN revision in Wales was initially going to include these groups of learners in its scope, but this is now no longer planned. This is of course to be welcomed in that SEN is not to be confused with EAL/ WAL. However, it would have meant that there would definitely be a member of staff in each school with responsibility for outcomes for these learners. There is currently no requirement for this, although in carrying out an audit with our schools based on Estyn guidance, it is the first point our service audit form (DCC & CCBC) raises with schools to ensure there is a named member of the teaching staff or ALNCo or the head teacher or SLT member.

If minority ethnic achievement/ EAL/ WAL is to become part of regional school improvement, local consortia need to liaise with LA services which is where the expertise lies. WG funding has built the expertise within LA services over a number of years. It has taken a long time, with many EAL teachers studying to gain Masters level qualifications. There is a danger that cuts to funding and changes to delivery Wales will lose this resource. This is the singular most useful resource that WG has to support the minority ethnic achievement agenda.

Late notification to local consortia and LAs does not help planning for minority ethnic achievement/ EAL/ WAL. It is now November and again, the picture for the EIG from 1st April 2017 is not clear. Earlier notification would assist this. Erratic and unclear funding arrangements for the EIG are difficult to work around. A three year plan for the EIG would help.

If you could recommend to the Welsh Government one thing it could do to improve the educational attainment of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, and Minority Ethnic children, what would it be?

Take a definite strategic policy lead, based on good practice research, including that already commissioned by WG and alongside this, ensure the funding to deliver on it.

Do you have any other concerns about the amalgamation of the other previously separate grants into the Education Improvement Grant? If so, please provide details.

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Conwy

How the Welsh Government monitors the way local authorities use the Education Improvement Grant and how the new, amalgamated grant supports Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, and Minority Ethnic children, with specific reference to improving educational outcomes;

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It is important to recognise that changes to MEAG/EIG funding are not taking place in isolation, but in conjunction with LA budget pressures and real or potential cuts, creating a further level of risk to provision for minority ethnic achievement/ EAL/ WAL.

In Conwy, support for minority ethnic achievement/ EAL/ WAL is through a central service team of qualified, expert EAL teachers. Aspects of the service are shared with Denbighshire. Since the introduction of the EIG, there has been an overall reduction of one EAL teacher (1.0FTE) and 0.4 FTE EAL HLTA to the service team. This is a reduction of 20.8% from 4.8 to 3.8 FTE teachers/coordinator posts and 100% for the EAL HLTA post.

Numbers of schools with identified EAL learners are gradually increasing and numbers of EAL learners in schools continue to increase, with a 25% increase in numbers between PLASC 2014 and 2016.

The service received slightly decreased funding following the end of the MEAG in 2015/16 and then a slight uplift again in 2016/17. The remainder of the EAL Service budget is made up of Revenue Budget and a Service Level Agreement with schools. During the period since the EIG was introduced, CCBC Revenue Budget for has been cut by 21.5%

Income from a Service Level Agreement with schools, whereby the majority of schools with EAL learners are part-funding the service. For 2016/17, the SLA contributes just over 4% of the total service budget. Schools do not have to buy into the SLA and may financially be unable to do so in the future. This leaves provision to support minority ethnic achievement/ EAL/ WAL at risk. It has taken a fair amount of time and effort introducing the SLA with schools, some of which has been valuable discussion involving moving the minority ethnic achievement/ EAL/ WAL agenda forward. Time has also been spent over an added level of paperwork, which has not been so valuable.

Overall, there has been a cut of 10.4% in the total budget for minority ethnic achievement/ EAL/ WAL in Conwy since the introduction of the EIG.

Already the service is stretched to cover CCBC schools with EAL learners and we need to scope the need for WAL learners with CCBC Welsh medium

schools. This will increase the demand on EAL Service expertise and support.

Concerns are for the future funding for minority ethnic achievement. It may be too soon to see the full implications of the amalgamation of what was the MEAG into the EIG. With the EIG covering 11 different previously separately funded areas, and the possibility or even likelihood that the EIG 'pot' will be reduced, it will become an increasing challenge to meet needs. Many EAL learners new into CCBC schools are in the early stages of learning EAL and therefore have more significant needs. It is also too soon to see trends in outcomes for EAL learners as there have only been the summer 2016 results since the EIG was introduced.

As a central service, we are working with schools to train school staff to support EAL learners. We are working on collaborative capacity building projects to up-skill school teachers and TAs in the use of EAL strategies in the classroom. We are on the way, but there is a danger that funding to support minority ethnic achievement may be cut before real progress has been achieved for schools.

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Swansea EMLAS team have produced a useful tracker graph with Key Stage outcome table which helps in looking at expected progress for EAL learners. A number of years ago, Birmingham LA Advisory & Support Service produced NC level progress graphs based on data from their schools for EAL learners starting in different NC years. WG would be in a very good position to produce similar progress graphs for EAL Stage/ NC level or LNF. Head teachers would be very interested in predicted progress models for EAL acquisition.

Ensure that national curriculum revisions reflect the needs of these groups of learners.

Have a named member of staff in each school with responsibility for minority ethnic achievement/ EAL/ WAL/ GRT. The current SEN revision in Wales was initially going to include these groups of learners in its scope, but this is now no longer planned. This is of course to be welcomed in that SEN is not to be confused with EAL/ WAL. However, it would have meant that there would definitely be a member of staff in each school with responsibility for outcomes for these learners. There is currently no requirement for this, although in carrying out an audit with our schools based on Estyn guidance, it is the first point our service audit form (DCC & CCBC) raises with schools to ensure there is a named member of the teaching staff or ALNCo or the head teacher or SLT member.

If minority ethnic achievement/ EAL/ WAL is to become part of regional school improvement, local consortia need to liaise with LA services which is where the expertise lies. WG funding has built the expertise within LA services over a number of years. It has taken a long time, with many EAL teachers studying to gain Masters level qualifications. There is a danger that cuts to funding and changes to delivery Wales will lose this resource. This is the singular most useful resource that WG has to support the minority ethnic achievement agenda.

Late notification to local consortia and LAs does not help planning for minority ethnic achievement/ EAL/ WAL. It is now November and again, the picture for the EIG from 1st April 2017 is not clear. Earlier notification would assist this. Erratic and unclear funding arrangements for the EIG are difficult to work around. A three year plan for the EIG would help.

If you could recommend to the Welsh Government one thing it could do to improve the educational attainment of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, and Minority Ethnic children, what would it be?

Take a definite strategic policy lead, based on good practice research, including that already commissioned by WG and alongside this, ensure the funding to deliver on it.

Do you have any other concerns about the amalgamation of the other previously separate grants into the Education Improvement Grant? If so, please provide details.

Minority ethnic achievement is no longer ring-fenced and therefore no longer guaranteed. Unpredictable level of funding – may have slight increase/ decrease year on year. Funding now is not related to need i.e. number of learners at different stages of English language acquisition. It is not clear how the EIG is being allocated. LA services are now dealing with this uncertainty as well as working to meet increasing demand to meet the needs of schools and learners.

Anglesey

From 2015-16, the Gypsy Children and Traveller Children Grant and the Minority Ethnic Achievement Grant were merged into the new Education Improvement Grant. What impact has this had on the levels of educational support available to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller and Minority Ethnic children, and their educational outcomes?

Anglesey County Council has maintained the same level of support in this area since the grants were merged into the EIG. This can be shown below;

2014/15 - £48,865.12

2015/16 - £50,055.40

2016/17 - £48,510 (planned).

How effective are other Welsh Government policies and strategies for supporting the education of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, and Minority Ethnic children?

What more could be done to support the educational attainment of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller and Minority Ethnic children:

1. in schools;
2. by Local Authorities;
3. by regional consortia; and
4. by the Welsh Government.

Implement a single All-Wales Strategy that is fairly funded.

Do you know of examples of good practice or successful policies? If so, what are they?

If you could recommend to the Welsh Government one thing it could do to improve the educational attainment of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, and Minority Ethnic children, what would it be?

Implement a single All-Wales Strategy that is fairly funded.