

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION
AND
SCHOOL SPORT**

ACTION PLAN FOR WALES

**Report of the Physical Education
and School Sport Task Force**

2001

**NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN
THE HEALTH OF THE PEOPLE OF
WALES**

**WHAT CAN HAVE THE MOST
IMPORTANT IMPACT ON THEIR
HEALTH AND FITNESS?**

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SCHOOL
SPORT**

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INTRODUCTION

The National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) is committed to improving the health of the people of Wales and attaches great importance to physical education and school sport. **The Physical Education and School Sport Task Force** was set up in May 2000 to advise the NAfW on how to strengthen the position of physical education and sport in schools. Its task was to consider current provision and recommend ways of improving overall standards in physical education and school sport for all young people in Wales.

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE TASK GROUP

- To identify the key issues affecting physical education and school sport and recommend ways of improving provision for all young people in Wales.
- To agree and promote a common vision for the future development of physical education and school sport.
- To identify and promote good practice in physical education and school sport.
- To review the nature and effectiveness of current initiatives aimed at improving the quality of physical education and school sport.

BACKGROUND

Physical education and school sport have the potential to address a wide range of issues facing schools. For example, they often have a positive impact on pupil disaffection; they can aid school improvement, raise the fitness levels of pupils and encourage them to follow healthy lifestyles. Physical education and school sport of high quality can help to make sport and healthy exercise lifelong habits, when they are taught well by inspirational teachers, properly qualified coaches and trained adult volunteers.

Over the past ten years, overall standards in physical education have improved. However, the amount of good or very good work in primary and secondary schools has decreased. Levels of fitness amongst young people are a cause for concern. Not enough attention is being paid to developing youngsters' knowledge and understanding of health-related issues or to raising standards of health, exercise and fitness. Fewer youngsters now walk to school and many spend an increasing amount of time on sedentary activities such as computer games or watching television. More and more young people in Wales are overweight and have poor eating habits.

It is clear that habits formed during childhood continue into

later life and that young people will be more able to enjoy a fulfilling and healthy adult life if they are fit and active. To achieve this, schools must make sure that the physical health and fitness levels of young people reach the highest standards.

The key principle behind the recent review of the National Curriculum (NC) in Wales was that every young person should be entitled to receive a broad and balanced curriculum. Physical education is an essential part of this curriculum and needs to receive sufficient time in the school curriculum. The review also allows greater flexibility for 15 and 16 year olds so that schools can make their physical education curriculum more appropriate for the range of needs and interests of young people. It is hoped that this will motivate young people to participate in purposeful physical activity whatever their gender, ability, disability, ethnicity or geographical location.

As well as laying the foundations for skill in sport and enhancing health and fitness, physical education is an essential part of personal and social development and makes an important impact across the whole curriculum. The quality of a school's physical education and its provision for school sport often has a direct influence on the quality of its overall ethos.

A physically- educated young person:

- takes part regularly in physical activity;
- is physically fit;
- knows what involvement in physical activity means and benefits from it;
- values physical activity and how it contributes to a healthy lifestyle;
- has learned skills necessary to perform a variety of physical activities.

Physical education is best described as planned, structured lessons that take place within the school day as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. However, for provision to be fully effective, it is also essential to have supportive sporting opportunities outside curriculum time. These include:

- activities at lunch-time, before and after school that include structured and unstructured opportunities to experience new activities, practise existing skills and develop new skills;
- learning out of school hours;
- school sport that allows pupils to prepare for and participate in sports or activities where they represent their school, town, district, county;
- Junior Clubs, which are sports clubs with a separate junior

section;

- community sport that includes sports development opportunities in leisure and recreation centres, youth and community groups.

Based on the evidence of school inspections, Estyn has identified a number of important issues:

- good standards in physical education depend on effective management of the subject, including giving enough curriculum time for young people to make progress and improve the standard of their performance;
- the quality of preparation of trainees in Initial Teacher Education and Training (ITET) courses to teach physical education is consistent;
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses for teachers are not always available and are not always well co-ordinated;
- accommodation and resources in many schools are not managed effectively and they are often in a poor state of repair;
- there is not enough strategic partnership and liaison between physical education and school sport and this prevents pupils from having equal access to school sport across Wales.

The strategic approach outlined in the recommendations of this report will enable Wales to develop a nation of active, fit and physically talented young people, much better placed to enjoy a fulfilling and healthy adult life. In doing so, it will also lay the foundations for elite sportsmen and women to compete with the best in the world.

SUMMARY OF KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Raise standards in physical education by making sure that all schools:
 - manage the subject effectively within the whole school curriculum;
 - set challenging targets for raising standards in physical education and school sport;
 - provide enough curriculum time to teach the requirements of the National Curriculum for physical education in all key stages;
 - develop young people's physical skills from one year to the next and improve their understanding of the importance of health and fitness.
2. Make sure that Initial Teacher Education and Training gives trainees the necessary confidence, knowledge, skills and understanding to teach physical education.
3. Raise standards in physical education and school sport by establishing accredited continuing professional development (CPD) programmes for all teachers.
4. Improve the quality of accommodation and resources for physical education in all schools in Wales.
5. Support schools in Wales to extend opportunities for school sport beyond the school day by improving the quality and the breadth of after school activities for all young people whatever their age, ability, ethnicity, gender or geographical location.
6. Establish Curriculum Development Centres (CDCs) and make sure they work together for the identification and development of good practice in physical education and school sport.

SECTION 1: PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Raise standards in physical education by ensuring that all schools:

- manage the subject effectively within the whole school curriculum, including setting targets for raising standards in physical education and school sport;
- provide sufficient time for teachers to deliver the requirements of the National Curriculum for physical education in all key stages;
- develop progression in young people's physical skills, including improvement in their understanding of the importance of health and fitness.

1.1 MANAGING PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Good provision for physical education is essential to an all-round, effective school. Academic success and high achievement in physical education and school sport are strongly linked. There is much good practice in the provision and management of physical education in Wales as identified by Estyn and the Sports Council for Wales (SCW). In the best provision, physical education has a high profile within a school and its continued development is identified in the school development plan. The managers of the school also recognise the important part that physical education can play not only in the academic success of young people, but also in their personal and social development.

Effective management of teaching and learning in physical education is essential for achieving consistency of attainment and improvement in standards across Wales. Schools need to make sure they offer a broad, balanced programme which is relevant to the needs of all young people and that will have a lasting impact on their lives in terms of continued participation and healthy lifestyles. This programme must include everyone, taking account of gender, ethnicity and special needs. Appropriate arrangements should be the entitlement of all young people, including additional teacher support if required.

Sharing good practice leads to greater consistency in standards, motivates schools, departments and individual teachers and helps to establish a network of support for teachers of physical education within and across Local

Education Authorities. Several agencies have identified examples of good practice in physical education. These include The Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC), Estyn and SCW.

We recommend that:

- 1.1.1 headteachers should identify areas for development in physical education and school sport in the school development plan;
- 1.1.2 secondary physical education departments and primary subject leaders should identify quantitative and qualitative targets in their subject development plans aimed at raising standards. These targets should include health-related education and fitness issues.
- 1.1.3 all primary inspection reports should include a report on standards in physical education.

1.2 TIME

The National Curriculum Orders for Physical Education were among the last to be published. While this gave teachers more time to prepare, it also allowed other subjects to claim more time to cover the demands of their Orders. This has led to a big reduction in the time allocated for physical education across all key stages, even though it is a compulsory subject in all four key stages.

Both Estyn and the SCW have highlighted the reduction in time for physical education in a number of surveys and reports. They have concluded that these reductions have led to lower standards and reduced opportunities for pupils across Wales. This imbalance must be corrected if schools are to develop effective programmes of physical education that will have a positive impact on pupils' motivation, participation and achievement in physical activity both in and outside school.

Estyn data shows that activity levels of young people (5-18 year olds) are low and too many do not do enough exercise to promote cardiovascular health. There has been a gradual decrease in the amount of physical activity undertaken by young people on a weekly basis, especially among girls. This is made worse by the fact that extra-curricular activities tend to provide for the interests of the more able, competitive young person rather than for all young people. The

importance of physical education to the health and fitness of all our young people cannot be ignored.

We recommend that:

- 1.2.1 the NAFW makes physical education a core subject within the National Curriculum;
- 1.2.2 schools allocate at least 2 hours of curriculum time for physical education each week at all key stages for all young people;
- 1.2.3 the NAFW should publish guidelines for the effective use of curriculum time using case studies from LEA and Estyn reports.

1.3 CONTINUITY AND PROGRESSION IN LEARNING

The National Curriculum for Physical Education in Wales has outlined the basic entitlement for all young people. However, pupils' experience of physical education and school sport varies too much because of differences in funding, availability of subject specialist staff, support from managers, quality of facilities and geographical location. For this reason, schools are not able to provide a consistent pattern of provision. Estyn inspection reports also show that curriculum links between primary and secondary schools are often not good enough to further the progress made by young people.

Similarly, pupils often do not make consistent progress in those schools where the main indoor teaching area is regularly used for other activities for significant periods of time, such as for examinations and school concerts. This seriously affects the continuity of physical education programmes and hampers the progress pupils can make. The loss of facilities is made worse during frequent periods of bad weather. Schools often timetable large numbers of pupils for physical education at the same time. All these factors affect the organisation of pupils' learning and often result in poor motivation. These are serious causes for concern.

We recommend that:

- 1.3.1 Local Education Authorities (LEAs), with funding from NAFW, should establish a system of physical education co-ordinators to raise standards, spread good practice and work with groups of schools and their senior management teams to help them plan the curriculum together;
- 1.3.2 schools manage their facilities effectively, especially gymnasias and sports halls, and always make their use for physical education and school sport the main priority.

SECTION 2: TRAINING

2.1 PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING (ITET)

Ensure that Initial Teacher Education and Training equips trainees with the necessary confidence, knowledge, skills and understanding to teach physical education.

There is currently wide variation in the quality of physical education training provided for trainees, particularly in the primary phase. The time allocated to university or college-based training is often not enough to allow trainees to develop the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding to teach the subject competently and confidently. There is also a great deal of variation in the quality of physical education training provided by schools, especially in the primary phase. Teachers without much subject knowledge often cannot give trainees appropriate levels of support and guidance to improve their practice. It is essential that all trainees have the opportunity to observe good practice in the teaching and management of physical education and school sport.

A minority of primary trainees complete their course without ever having taught physical education. This is a major cause for concern. Physical education is very different from most other subjects in the curriculum due to its practical nature and the equipment and apparatus used. Safety is of paramount importance. If standards are to be improved, fundamental changes need to be made to the way trainees are prepared to teach physical education.

We recommend that:

2.1.1 the NAFW produces a National Curriculum in Physical Education for Initial Teacher Education and Training to improve consistency in the quality of training across Wales;

2.1.2 all ITET providers should give trainees an agreed number of hours training in the teaching of physical education in order to deliver the requirements of the proposed NC in physical education for ITET and to make sure they achieve a clearly-defined minimum level of competence by the time they complete their course;

2.1.3 all trainees must include reference to levels of competence achieved in physical education in their Career Entry Profile (CEP);

2.1.4 the NAFW should commission a survey of good practice in mentoring trainees in physical education during their ITET course.

2.2 CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Raise standards in physical education and school sport by establishing accredited continuing professional development (CPD) programmes for all teachers.

Physical education and school sport of high quality depends on appropriately trained, well-qualified teachers and coaches who regularly and systematically update their skills through relevant training. Currently, the availability and quality of continuing professional development courses vary too much and are not well co-ordinated. This is mainly because there is no national strategy that takes into account individual teachers' professional needs and aspirations, the needs and priorities of individual schools and national priorities.

Over the past three years, the amount of good work in primary schools has decreased. In secondary schools, standards are generally not as good as they were two years ago and the amount of good work has decreased a great deal. In primary schools, where most teachers of physical education are non-specialists, additional support and development are needed if standards are to be improved.

The absence of physical education advisory personnel in some Local Education Authorities (LEAs) has led to a lack of support for many practising, newly-qualified, non-specialist and supply teachers. In addition, many teachers are also not able to access National Governing Body (NGB) coaching courses.

We recommend that the NAFW:

2.2.1 identifies priority areas for teacher development in physical education;

2.2.2 sets up a Professional Development Board for Physical Education in Wales (PDB-PE Wales) to put in place a regional and national strategy for assuring the quality of accredited professional development for physical education teachers. The terms of reference for this group should include the:

* *adoption of the 'Code of Practice for Continuing Professional Development - Physical Education', produced by the physical education*

subject associations, and applied to all future CPD;
* establishment of career development portfolios for all teachers of physical education linked to common teacher competencies;
* provision of specific professional development programmes for newly-qualified teachers (NQTs) and supply teachers.

2.2.3 establishes a system to help all teachers and trainees access national coach education programmes including a summer school of NGB courses for NQTs and ITET trainees;

2.2.4 makes physical education a compulsory part of any teacher induction or early professional development system introduced in Wales to strengthen safe practice;

2.2.5 establishes a training programme for all non-specialist inspectors, mentors and tutors of physical education;

2.2.6 should establish a system of school physical education co-ordinators and train them to provide support for primary school teachers in order to improve standards;

2.2.7 should provide specific professional development programmes for NQTs and supply teachers.

SECTION 3: ACCOMMODATION AND RESOURCES

Improve the quality of accommodation and resources for physical education in all schools in Wales.

The range and quality of facilities have a large impact on the breadth, balance and continuity of physical education and school sport. In many schools, there are many weaknesses in the facilities and resources for physical education and extra-curricular activities. Some facilities are in a poor condition. Inadequate maintenance and delays in carrying out necessary repairs severely disrupts provision. A number of schools regularly use off-site, public facilities to supplement provision; for example for swimming lessons which are a compulsory part of the primary physical education curriculum. However, lack of funding for transport and operational fees often prevents schools making the best use of available facilities, including other local authority leisure facilities.

Physical education facilities are used more and more for other activities such as school examinations. This has a damaging impact on teachers' planning and delivery of PE and standards achieved by young people.

Giving pupils more access to facilities and resources of good quality will help to make sure that more young people have the opportunity to participate fully in physical education and school sport. All schools should be encouraged to establish a structured programme for developing, monitoring and maintaining physical education and school sport facilities of good quality.

We recommend that:

- 3.1 Estyn should identify basic standards for physical education accommodation in primary and secondary schools;
- 3.2 the NAFW should allocate a significant amount of the extra National Lottery money, recently announced by the First Minister, to LEAs for the development and maintenance of school facilities;
- 3.3 a strategic approach to the provision of school and community facilities should be established;
- 3.4 school-based facilities, such as gymnasias and sports halls, should be managed more effectively with physical education and school sport requirements as the main priorities for specialist use.

SECTION 4: SCHOOL SPORT

Support schools in Wales to extend opportunities for school sport beyond the school day by improving the quality and the breadth of after school activities for all young people irrespective of age, ability, ethnicity, gender or geographical location.

Evidence from Estyn inspection reports and SCW surveys identifies a range of extra-curricular activities encompassing recreational, non-competitive activities as well as the more traditional competitive team games. During the last decade, this provision has increased where schools work in close co-operation with various sporting agencies within the locality. However, this is not always the case. Generally, there is not enough strategic partnership and liaison between physical education and sport for young people.

Overall, there is a clear link between standards of achievement in schools and the quality of provision, participation and success in a range of extra-curricular activities. It is important that all pupils have equal access to sporting opportunities whatever their ability, disability, talent, interest, gender, ethnicity or the urban or rural locality in which they live. Pupils should also be encouraged to improve their own performances and, where appropriate, progress to a higher level. This will require additional support and coaching expertise if current providers are to extend out-of-school sporting opportunities.

In order to get more girls to take part in school sport, there is a need to review current media coverage of women in sport. Attention also needs to be given to promoting effective role models that will improve girls' motivation.

In many areas across Wales, access to sporting facilities requires a great deal of travelling to off-site venues and, in many cases, additional transport is required to ensure that young people arrive home safely. Shared resources, closer links, agreed local plans and additional funding are required to support these schools in their endeavours to develop progression and continuity in youngsters' sporting skills. LEAs should be encouraged to apply for funding from the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) to support out-of-school learning in physical education and school sport.

Regular and consistent evaluation of the range of extra-curricular activities is needed to ensure that the breadth of activities available meets the various needs and interests of

young people and that the quality of all provision is assured. LEAs need to take this into account when reviewing their Educational Strategic Plan (ESP).

We recommend that:

- 4.1 all schools should adopt a strategic approach to planning and implementing school sporting opportunities for all young people whatever their age, gender, ability, ethnicity or geographical location;
- 4.2 schools should adopt a co-ordinated approach to their planning of physical education and school sport in order to use resources within the community efficiently and effectively;
- 4.3 cross phase school co-ordinators should work with community providers of sport to provide a sustainable infrastructure for the development of school sport;
- 4.4 out of school hours learning opportunities, including sport, should be annually evaluated and LEAs should apply for funding from the New Opportunities Fund (NOF);
- 4.5 a Regional School Sports Association (RSSA), appropriately funded and to include primary and secondary teachers, Sports Development Officers (SDOs), Regional Development Officers and Dragonsport co-ordinators should be set up for the purpose of co-ordinating school sport within LEAs and throughout the Principality;
- 4.6 the Dragonsport Initiative should be extended into secondary schools.

SECTION 5: THE WAY FORWARD

A STRUCTURE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SCHOOL SPORT INITIATIVES

Establish a collaborative structure of Curriculum Development Centres for the identification and development of good practice in physical education and school sport.

The recommendations made in the previous chapters depend a great deal on a supportive structure for their development. The establishment of Curriculum Development Centres (CDCs) are needed through which strong partnership links can provide a seamless provision of physical education and sporting opportunities for young people in schools and the community. Such a development could do much to overcome the criticism, highlighted in this report, regarding the lack of strategic partnership and liaison between physical education and school sport.

However, for policy to become practice, close co-operation is also required between the policy makers of national and local government. Collaboration will also be required amongst the funding agencies if young people are to benefit from physical education and school sport.

We recommend that:

- 5.1 the NAFW should appoint a national co-ordinator to manage, monitor, evaluate and report on the implementation of the recommendations of this report.
- 5.2 a steering group should be set up to support the implementation of the recommendations.
- 5.3 the NAFW should establish a collaborative structure for the identification, strengthening and further development of existing good practice in physical education and school sport by piloting a network of curriculum development clusters (*Appendix 1*) to provide structural support for the recommendations identified in this report. A flexible range of models will be required in order to reflect the individual needs and specialisms locally and regionally.

The structure should provide:

- a cluster of schools, colleges and/or leisure centres for the promotion of effective liaison and continuity between key

phases of education;

- *a network to strengthen and develop existing good standards in physical education and school sport;*
- *a network for the development of new initiatives in physical education and school sport;*
- *centres committed to sufficient provision of time, supportive management and the identification and sharing of good practice in both its physical education programme, extra-curricular activities and initiatives such as Dragonsport;*
- *centres within which to develop professional development programmes for trainee teachers and lecturers, students on Initial Teacher Education and Training programmes and coaches;*
- *centres that develop shared provision and use of specialist resources;*
- *centres that promote knowledge and understanding of health and fitness and which are committed to an active lifestyle philosophy;*
- *centres that will produce evidence of good practice to be shared throughout Wales.*

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT CENTRES

A Curriculum Development Centre might consist of a minimum of four institutions, at least three of which would be schools. Not all centres would follow the same model. Different models would need to meet the needs, interests and specialisms already evident locally and regionally. Possible models might include a mix of primary, secondary and special schools, colleges of further and higher education and leisure centres. Examples of different Curriculum Development Centres might include:

MODEL A

A secondary school, two main feeder primary schools and a College of Further Education

MODEL B

Two secondary schools, three primary schools including a special school, and a University

MODEL C

Two secondary schools, four primary schools and a Leisure Centre

MODEL D

Three secondary schools, 5 primary schools, a special school, Leisure Centre and a University.

MODEL E

A secondary school and four feeder primary schools

Management Structures

Curriculum Development Centres will have **Project Managers**, for example an LEA adviser, who will liaise with the curriculum development managers for each centre. S/he will monitor and evaluate the project initiatives and report when required.

Each Curriculum Development Centre will have a **Curriculum Development Manager** who will support and manage the physical education and sports development initiatives within that centre, for example a Head of a Physical Education Department.

Each Curriculum Development Centre will have a **Centre Development Officer** who will work along side practising teachers providing advise and support focused on raising standards in physical education and school sport. This would be done with support from the project manager and their curriculum development manager.

APPENDIX 1 ISSUES FOR ACTION

ISSUE	RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all schools understand the impact that physical education and school sport can have on school improvement. • Ensure that all schools set challenging targets for raising standards in physical education and school sport.
2. Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Physical Education and School Sport Action Group. • Strengthen curriculum links between primary and secondary schools to ensure continuity and progression in pupils' learning. • Develop close links between local schools, sports clubs and sports agencies to enhance and extend the provision in schools. • Improve liaison between governing bodies of sport and other agencies involved in physical education and school sport.
3. Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide sufficient time for physical education to meet the requirements of the NC in all Key Stages and ensure that it is used effectively to provide quality physical education and sporting opportunities for all pupils.
4. Training and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a continuum of training and development for all teachers. • Review the allocation of time to college-based physical education work in all primary courses. • Ensure that all trainees have the opportunity to observe good practice in the teaching and management of physical education and school sport. • Establish a minimal level of competence that all trainees must achieve on completion of their course. • Introduce a system of early professional development for all NQTs during their first year of teaching. • Improve access to good quality governing body coaching/teaching courses in order to gain additional qualification and experience. • Provide all teachers with carefully planned and accredited continued professional development in physical education and school sport. • Develop the role of the subject leader to ensure closer monitoring of provision in each school. • Improve the competence of non-specialist tutors and inspectors who comment on quality and standards achieved in physical education lessons taught by trainees or teachers.
5. Health Related Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the importance of physical fitness and active life-styles. • Increase opportunities for all pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of the key principles of

	health and fitness.
6. Accommodation and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the quality of accommodation and resources in a large number of primary schools. • Ensure that available accommodation in all schools is managed and maintained effectively.
7. Extra curricular provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the gender balance and participation rates in extra-curricular activities. • Encourage schools to develop strategies for extending the range of extra-curricular activities and increase the level of participation by pupils. • Ensure that extra-curricular activities contribute effectively to the life and work of the school and extend pupils' learning and achievement.

APPENDIX 2 : GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACCAC Authority for	The Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Wales
BAALPE Physical	British Association of Advisers and Lecturers in Education
CEP	Career Entry Profile
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
Dragonsport participation in primary activity	A SCW initiative aimed at increasing extra-curricular
Estyn Training in	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Wales
ITET	Initial Teacher Education and Training
LEAs	Local Education Authorities
NAfW	National Assembly for Wales
NC	National Curriculum
NGB	National Governing Body
NQTs	Newly Qualified Teachers
NOF Distributor)	New Opportunities Fund (National Lottery
PDB-PE (Wales) Education in	Professional Development Board for Physical Wales
PHAB Association	Physically Handicapped and Able Bodied
RSSA	Regional School Sports Association
RDOs	Regional Development Officers
SDOs	Sports Development Officers
SCW	Sports Council for Wales

APPENDIX 3: MEMBERSHIP OF THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SCHOOL SPORT TASK FORCE

David Cobner UWIC	Head of School of Sport, PE & Recreation,
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Huw Jones	Chief Executive, Sports Council for Wales
Jeff Jones	Welsh Local Government Association and Leader of Bridgend County Borough Council
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Richard Parry Jones	Director of Education, Isle of Anglesey LEA
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