

Children, Young People and Education Committee's Inquiry into Teachers' Professional Learning and Education – request for further information on professional teacher standards.

Response of the Association of School and College Leaders (Cymru)

- 1 The Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) represents over 18,000 heads, principals, deputies, vice-principals, assistant heads, business managers and other senior staff of maintained and independent schools and colleges throughout the UK.

ASCL Cymru represents school leaders in more than 90 per cent of the secondary schools in Wales.

- 2 The timescale for the introduction of the new Professional Standards is, at least superficially, reasonable. However, this is set against a background of schools having to cope with a period of transition and unprecedented change to curriculum and assessment reform. If this was the only major change that was being expected of schools, we would have no problem with the timescale. However, despite our enthusiasm for and support of the new standards, we are not confident that the timescales can be achieved without some degree of support.
- 3 As far as we are aware, no provision has been made by the Welsh Government for staff training for the implementation of these standards. We would suggest that it would be reasonable to provide schools with some additional staff-training time and a degree of financial support. With the plethora of other changes happening at the moment, we fear that otherwise this may not be seen as a priority by schools, and as a result given less than the amount of time and attention it needs to be effective.
- 4 We are concerned that, with both the proposed timescale and lack of central training provision, unless time and resources are given to schools, these important reforms will end up being a “damp squib”. If they are to have the impact which they ought, then they will need to be given sufficient time and resources so that all teachers and school leaders are able to make sense of them properly and then use them effectively.

Conclusion

- 5 I hope that this gives you a clear perspective of our views of this important matter. ASCL Cymru would be happy to contribute to further discussions.

Tim Pratt
Director of ASCL Cymru
September 2017