

A summary list of all the options identified by Robert Hill.

Chapter 2 - how to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom.

Short term Options:

Use high-quality schemes of work from excellent schools to help weaker schools plan and implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework.

Provide access to a sufficient range of materials and resources in Welsh to support the application of the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework across the curriculum.

Ensure that literacy and numeracy training is focused on improving classroom teaching, including effective teaching of phonics, reading recovery, writing and numeracy skills, and that delivery is closely coordinated with regional consortia.

Introduce a standardised tracking system for literacy and numeracy for all pupils in years 2 to 9 across Wales.

Make extensive use of the Improving Teacher Programme (ITP) and Outstanding Teacher Programme (OTP).

Set up a nationally approved list of schools from inside and outside Wales to provide classroom and whole-school support and make the list available for consortia and schools to use.

Promote the Education Endowment Foundation toolkit on closing gaps in attainment and link it to using the Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG).

Identify and train Lead Practitioners and Lead Practitioner departments to maximise the skills of the best teachers.

Medium Term options:

Increase the numbers of teachers trained and deployed in partnership with Teach First.

Expand employment and school-based routes into teaching as Lead Practitioner Schools, federations and clusters develop.

Use the curriculum reviews at Key Stages 2 and 4 to ensure that the curriculum prioritises key areas of knowledge and skills.

Extend use of video technology to support classroom coaching.

Invite the review of Welsh second language teaching, that is already under way, to consider:

- extending the use of immersion groups and secondments to Welsh-medium schools to boost the language skills of teachers teaching Welsh as a second language
- whether functional skills in Welsh should form part of the core requirement.

Increase the number of Lead Practitioner Schools without comprising on quality, and ensure that special schools and Welsh-medium schools play a full role in the programme.

Delegate resources from local authorities to federations and hard clusters of schools (that include Lead Practitioner Special Schools) to be responsible for education welfare services and the provision of additional learning needs.

Use Estyn inspections to assess how well schools are deploying their Pupil Deprivation Grant funding and closing gaps in attainment.

Chapter 3 - options for development and role of school leaders.

Short term options:

Establish leadership development boards, comprised of school leaders, at national and regional level to lead a step-change in the development of school leadership capacity.

Draw up a leadership development pathway agreed with the national leadership development board.

Agree with the national leadership development board the framework for a leadership development curriculum – including the outline of a stepping-stone qualification to headship.

Advertise for and accredit providers nationally to develop and deliver leadership development programmes based on the agreed framework, in partnership with Lead Practitioner Schools.

Regional leadership development boards to commission their best schools and external organisations to provide training for middle leaders – particularly on the use of data, performance management and coaching.

Regional consortia to draw on the best schools inside and outside Wales to provide whole school improvement programmes to support serving heads.

Regional consortia to work with Lead Practitioner Schools and other federations and hard clusters to organise leadership placements across schools within the consortia.

Medium term options:

Review the NPQH application and assessment procedures as the leadership development framework and stepping-stone qualification to headship is put in place.

Allocate a coach to all those working towards their NPQH accreditation.

Consider introducing a scholarship scheme to help applicants cover the cost of all or part of the training involved in moving from the stepping-stone qualification to headship to full NPQH accreditation.

Regional leadership development boards to draw up leadership succession plans.

Consider turning the national leadership development board, as it becomes established, into a teaching and leadership academy or foundation – independent of government but receiving some grant funding to support its remit.

Chapter 4 - options for increasing autonomy for schools.

Short term options:

Set out clear direction of travel for schools to work together through formal partnerships.

Use headteacher retirements and the implementation of 21st century school strategies to facilitate an increase in the number of federations.

Use the forthcoming guidance on statutory intervention on schools causing concern to indicate that federation with a high performing school should, wherever feasible, form the core of a recovery programme.

Establish a funding incentive for high performing schools to assist weak schools.

Review the draft regulations on federations to consider how they might be amended to facilitate the proposed two-tier governance model.

Invite the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) to lead the delegation of business and financial management to federations and clusters of schools, based on the Denbighshire County Council model.

Delegate schools' allocation of School Effectiveness Grant (SEG), Welsh in Education Grant (WEG) and Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) to schools that are 'good' or better, without requiring them to supply plans for spending the funding.

Introduce a national template for service level agreements between local authorities and schools.

Medium term options:

Amend regulations and legislate as necessary to facilitate a broader range of organizational models for hard clusters of schools, based on the Co-operative Trust Model.

Delegate a higher level of specific grants to schools working through a federation or hard cluster with the expectation that all such funds were paid through federations and hard clusters.

Allocate schools capital funding through federation and hard clusters rather than to individual schools.

Consider giving schools in a federation or hard cluster, particularly where they include a special school, the right to provide education welfare and additional learning needs services.

Adjust the accountability and inspection system to recognise the added value generated by federations and hard clusters, as well as that by individual schools.

Identify a distinct standard spending assessment block for statutory local authority duties and functions such as school transport that cannot sensibly be delegated – separate from a block for schools' spending – and delegate the vast majority of the schools' block to schools.

Work with local authorities to develop greater standardisation of school funding formulae.

Commission a detailed study on the potential implications of a national funding formula.

Chapter 5 - options for reforming the school accountability.

Short term options:

Link the proposed all-Wales system for tracking pupils from Years 2 to 9 to the National Reading and Numeracy Tests to provide an overall assessment of a child's progress.

Introduce a bank of standardised tasks (not tests) at the end of Key Stages 2 and 3 to help teachers assess pupil progress in writing (including proficiency in spelling, punctuation and grammar) and oracy more consistently.

Continue with school banding but discuss with secondary school leaders their concerns about its detailed operation in order to build greater consensus and ownership.

Simplify and consolidate the various data sets so that schools, local authorities, regional consortia and Estyn all use the same data sets and work to and interpret data in the same way.

Assess the performance of post-16 students in all settings using standardised completion, attainment, success and destination data.

Inspect schools on a more proportionate and less predictable basis and reduce the notice for inspection to two or three working days.

Publish procedures to ensure that heads and governors can address in a timely way the capability of staff and headteachers that have had the opportunity and support to improve, but whose performance remains inadequate.

Provide a standard school performance data template for governors.

Medium Term options:

Introduce an annual balanced school report card that summarises for every primary school their performance and progress.

Use the planned changes to the GCSE and vocational qualifications system that are being introduced from September 2015 onwards as the basis for considering a move to a balanced scorecard for secondary schools.

Review the operation of the inspection model to ensure that it is appropriate for schools working as part of federations, trusts or other hard clusters.

Provide a separate inspection assessment of post-16 provision in schools linked to the use of common performance data.

Carry out a fundamental review of the inspection criteria for local authorities to reflect the transfer of school improvement functions to regional consortia.

Monitor the impact of the new governor training arrangements.

Enable outstanding chairs of governors to act as Lead Practitioners and so support improvements in governance at other schools.

Work with CBI Wales and other employers to develop a register of aspiring and serving business leaders willing to serve as school governors in each region.

Chapter 6 – options for the roles and responsibilities of the local authorities, regional consortia.

Short term options:

Cut the number of local authority education services by a third by April 2014 either by voluntary mergers or the Minister for Education and Skills using his powers to intervene following unsatisfactory Estyn inspections.

Local authorities to stop providing school improvement services.

Fund regional consortia directly by top-slicing Revenue Support Grant subject to:

- all consortia covering a standard set of key functions
- consortia obtaining Ministerial consent for their organisational structures, annual business plans, outcome targets and appointment of their director
- consortia governance being vested in a board of local authority leaders, a Ministerial appointee, an education improvement expert and three headteachers (one primary, one secondary and one special school)
- consortia boards attending a twice-yearly stocktake with the Minister for Education and Skills
- consortia moving as quickly as practicable to a core staffing model, supplemented by buying in a range of school improvement expertise.

Use reserve powers to bring in other providers where consortia fail to deliver.

Establish written protocols between regional consortia and local authorities regarding intervention in schools causing concern.

Medium Term Options:

Include education in new slimline elected local authorities that:

- reflect Wales' city regions and economic sub-regions to support how an authority's education vision is linked to a region's skills, enterprise and employment agenda;
- integrate key public services and functions and operate on a co-terminus basis to reduce duplication and maximise synergies between functions;
- reflect the new slimmed-down commissioning role of local authorities and
- focus on supporting the development of a self-sustaining, school-led improvement system; and
- locate political responsibility for education with a named elected member supported by a named education lead officer.

Consider relatively minor consortia boundary changes to secure greater coherence with the footprint of how other public services in Wales are organised.

Strengthen the School Standards and Delivery Unit so that it has sufficient expertise to:

- contribute to leading-edge teaching and learning practice, and leadership of school improvement;
- support and challenge the plans and work of consortia in preparation for the
- proposed twice-yearly stocktakes; and
- act as an expert link into education policy-making within the Welsh Government.