

# Carmarthenshire 11-19 Curriculum Review

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*“The fact is that given the challenges we face, education doesn't need to be reformed -- it needs to be transformed.*

*The key to this transformation is not to standardise education, but to personalise it, to build achievement on discovering the individual talents of each child, to put students in an environment where they want to learn and where they can naturally discover their true passions.”*

Ken Robinson, *The Element: How Finding Your Passion Changes Everything*.

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## 1.0 Context and Purpose

Education in Wales is in a phase of great transition. Over the next five years, the curriculum offered to children and young people will change significantly. New qualifications will be implemented together with the recommendations of the Donaldson Report, *Successful Futures*. The Welsh Government believes that these changes will enable young people to be well-educated in schools and colleges and well prepared for the modern workplace. However, these changes will occur at a time of reductions in Welsh Government funding for education at all levels and when the future model for local government in Wales is uncertain.

The Welsh Government is proposing that the number of local authorities in Wales is reduced significantly. Local authority services are being regionalised, with school improvement functions already being delivered via four regional consortia. All public sector organisations are being challenged to work together in more innovative ways, with the expectation that their budgets will reduce year on year for the foreseeable future.

For those working in Carmarthenshire education, this collaborative approach is not new. The County Council (the Local Authority), secondary schools and Coleg Sir Gâr (the College) have worked together in partnership since 2000 to develop and implement a range of strategic educational initiatives that have met the requirements of successive, and often complex, Welsh Government policies. These partnership developments have delivered significant benefits for young people, through large capital programmes and high quality provision for learners. The strength of Carmarthenshire educational partnership working is widely recognised as being sector leading, in marked contrast to the open competition for Post 16 learners that exists in some parts of Wales and throughout England.

Close collaboration has been at the heart of the strategic educational change that has taken place over the last 15 years. This collaboration has included the local authority's successful Modernising Education Programme (MEP) and Coleg Sir Gâr's historic and ground-breaking merger into the University Group structure of Trinity St David. Both developments are examples of innovative changes undertaken to improve opportunities for learners at all levels across Carmarthenshire.

Joint planning and commissioning of 14-19 Learning Pathways delivery across Carmarthenshire has been in operation since 2005. This provision is managed through four partnership clusters of schools, the college, training providers and related organisations. The partnership offers collaborative courses in Welsh, English and bilingually to over 900 pupils each year. Development of vocational training routes at Key Stage 4 has been a particular focus of this work.

However, both the Local Authority (LA) and the College recognise that to meet the forthcoming financial, social and economic challenges facing Carmarthenshire, a more visionary plan for education and training is needed. This plan will set out the actions required to deliver an innovative and sustainable curriculum for all young people aged 11-19 in Carmarthenshire in period to 2020 and beyond. This curriculum will be informed by the requirements of the Welsh Government and the regional and local economy. It will also be informed by the needs of young people, whether they wish to work locally or progress their careers elsewhere in the UK or abroad.

Following discussions between the LA's Director for Education & Children and the Principal of Coleg Sir Gâr, it was agreed that, in line with the WG's on-going Transformation Agenda,

a joint strategic review into the further development and delivery of 11-19 education and training in Carmarthenshire should be undertaken.

This review will provide evidence to inform a strategic vision of the future of education in the county. It will identify the changes needed to ensure that all children and young people can access “a curriculum that is engaging and attractive\*” in 21<sup>st</sup> Century facilities. This work will be fundamental to meeting one of the key strategic objectives of the Welsh Government’s “Qualified for Life” strategy for *“leaders of education at every level working together in a self-improving system, providing mutual support and challenge to raise standards in all schools (and colleges).”*

The findings of the review will:

- provide evidence to inform the future “strategic fit” of education and training;
- Identify and implement a Carmarthenshire curriculum that will improve educational standards;
- Deliver improvements for learners;
- Equip young people for further study and work and:
- Assist employers and the local economy.

In March 2014, it was agreed that the County Council’s Lifelong Transformation Manager (LTM) would undertake the review. This work is closely linked to a related strategic review being undertaken by the local authority of the 3-19 curriculum in Carmarthenshire and the implantation of the Donaldson Report recommendations.

## **2.0 The Methodology**

This review is based upon five elements which have been developed a case to identify how the curriculum in Carmarthenshire should develop.

### **2.1 Background Research**

The research was undertaken into the relevant Welsh Government policy that sets out the context for a strategic vision for Carmarthenshire 11-19 education. This work included analysis of a range of policies and strategies affecting secondary, tertiary and vocational education over the period 2000-2015, the extent to which these developments had been implemented in Carmarthenshire and the social and economic context of the county with particular reference to the key employment sectors now and in the future.

### **2.2 Establishment of a Joint Working Party (JWP)**

The Review was overseen by a Joint Working Party (JWP) set up as part of the process to steer the Review and lead in the development of the outcomes. The JWP was made up of the Chief Education Officer and Head of Learner Programmes from the LA, the Assistant Principal from Coleg Sir Gar and school representatives.

## **2.3 Consultation Process**

A range of stakeholders were engaged through a variety of one to one meetings and group consultation. Their views were sought on the aspects of the current strengths and weaknesses of the 11-19 education and training system in Carmarthenshire and to suggest how a Carmarthenshire curriculum offer might develop.

Engaging the key stakeholders has enabled views and opinions to be gathered, assess future needs of learners, employers and communities and ensure that the widest possible options for 11 – 19 education and training in Carmarthenshire were considered.

## **2.4 Developing the Vision**

Following research and consultation with stakeholders, the LTM drew together the various strands, summarised the views and provided a models of the possible curriculum development options.

The LTM linked with the members of the JWP to define the vision for the future, identify the strategic priorities and future needs to ensure the identified changes can be delivered locally.

## **2.5 Recommendations**

Following the development of the curriculum models, a range of related recommendations were identified. These options were evaluated against the criteria set out in the WG's 'Transforming Education & Training Provision in Wales: Delivering Skills that Work for Wales' (2008) and the 2015-2016 Ministerial Priorities letter to assess the extent to which they meet the Welsh Government's requirements for change. The draft report will be subject to further consultation in the period January to March 2016 to ensure that the changes and recommendations identified were realistic and met the needs of Carmarthenshire young people, the economy and the wider community.

## **3.0 Executive Summary**

The LA and the College jointly commissioned the Review of 11-19 Education and Training in Carmarthenshire. Both organisations consider that a shared strategic approach is needed to deliver 11-19 education and training in Carmarthenshire in the future. This approach informs the future plan for curriculum delivery in the county.

In a Carmarthenshire context, the changes that are needed now are not about “bricks and mortar”, either through reducing the number of schools, or by building more facilities. The change that is required is to identify and deliver a high quality, innovative Carmarthenshire curriculum for all young people in the county in both Welsh and English, wherever they may be educated. While this curriculum will be informed by a range of Welsh Government policies, it will bring together national, regional and local needs to set out the education and training available to each young person in the county. This will enable each learner to personalise their education to meet their own career development needs, informed by the social and economic background of the county.

The curriculum is also informed by the needs of the local economy, with the prioritisation of vocational training pathways that meet key growth sector needs together with support for the most able pupils to progress to university. The recommendations in this report set out the actions required to implement the new curriculum and ensure that young people are both well-educated and suitably prepared for the next phase in their lives.

#### **4.0 Background to the 11-19 Review**

Secondary schools, Coleg Sir Gâr, the local authority, training providers and Careers Wales already work closely together across the county via four clusters, each with a supporting shared governance structure. These clusters oversee joint planning and delivery of collaborative 14-19 provision. However, it is recognised by all parties that a more strategic approach across Carmarthenshire is required to impact positively on learners, employers and local communities. The development of this strategic approach will also support effective use of resources at a time when the budgets available to schools, colleges and the local authority are decreasing.

Over recent years, Welsh Government policy has sought to transform Post 16 education through collaboration. The aim of this work has been to ensure that resources are more focussed on the learner while reducing duplication and “unhelpful” competition between providers. Local authorities have been encouraged to address falling school rolls by rationalising the number of school places available, often via the closure of small schools.

Since 2009, secondary schools and colleges have been required to comply with The Learning and Skills Measure (Wales) to ensure that every young person in Wales has access to a minimum level of breadth of offer of academic and vocational subjects at Key Stage 4 and Post 16. These policy directions and intentions have provided a unique set of challenges to both the local authority and the college over the past decade. To date, both organisations and secondary schools have responded proactively to these changes and can evidence tangible benefits to learners that have resulted from this work. However, further action is now needed if the local authority, schools and Coleg Sir Gâr are to respond proactively to the current challenges posed by Welsh Government policies, funding reductions, local economic priorities and the needs of young people.

#### **4.1 The Case for Change**

The current system of 11-19 education and training in Carmarthenshire requires review to ensure that the changing needs of learners, communities and employers are met. Local and regional economic development strategies focus on the need for the development of higher level skills to maximise employment opportunities. Further Education and Higher Education institutions are being challenged by Welsh Government to offer flexible training and support that meets the needs of employers and the key growth sectors in the local economy.

Currently, the twelve secondary schools offer vocational courses at Key Stage 4 in partnership with Coleg Sir Gâr and training providers. Eight secondary schools have sixth forms offering A Levels and vocational courses. Three of these schools deliver these courses primarily through the medium of Welsh, with some Welsh medium provision in the five remaining schools. In the Llanelli area there is a tertiary system with English medium A Level provision delivered at the Graig Campus of Coleg Sir Gâr. The college also offers a

wide programme of further and higher education courses at campuses in Llanelli, Carmarthen, Ammanford and Gelli Aur. Both the secondary school and further education sectors in Carmarthenshire have a strong track record in preparing young people for progression to university, though many of those who progress to higher education outside Carmarthenshire do not return to work.

Additionally, the geography and population scarcity in some areas of Carmarthenshire presents a challenge to the successful delivery of an equitable curriculum for all young people in 11-19 education in the county. While it is clear that there is a need for a sustainable model of 11-19 education in Carmarthenshire, achieving this at a time of reducing financial resources will require further trust and innovative partnership working between all relevant parties.

## **5.0 Strategic Context – Introduction**

The strategic context section sets out how the review fits with the existing national and regional policy. It provides an overview of Carmarthenshire and local contexts. It defines the current arrangements for the delivery of 11-19 education and highlights current good practice and areas for further development.

## **6.0 National Policy Context**

There are a wide range of Welsh Government policy initiatives that have shaped the local curriculum and related resources delivering education in Carmarthenshire in schools, Coleg Sir Gâr and training providers over the past ten years. These initiatives are often complex and in some cases not complementary. However, learning providers in Carmarthenshire have a good record of responding and adapting to the changes required by these policies, with the results being seen in the improved opportunities for learning that have developed in the county. The key policies that have shaped existing policy over the past ten years and that inform future developments are detailed below.

### **6.1 14-19 Learning Pathways (2006)**

The current strength of educational partnership working in Carmarthenshire is built on the implementation of the Welsh Government's 14-19 Learning Pathways programme. Learning Pathways 14-19 was the distinct approach taken in Wales to transform the way in which young people are educated. This innovative approach was championed by the then Minister of Education, Jane Davidson. It focused on the needs of individual learners, their learning experience in formal, non-formal and in-formal education and the development of skills that help them to achieve their potential.

The learning pathways framework consists of six key elements, falling into two distinct categories: Learner provision and learner support. The three elements of learner provision are:

- An individual learning pathway – to meet the needs of each individual, including formal, non-formal and informal strands;

- wider choice and flexibility of courses – leading to qualifications from a local curriculum;
- wider learning from the learning Core – including skills, knowledge, attitudes values and experiences that all 14 to 19 year olds will need whatever their pathway.

Learner support comprises of:

- access to a learning coach – support for learning to be available at greater intensity for those in greatest need;
- access to personal support – to help overcome personal barriers to learning;
- impartial careers advice and guidance.

Implementation of the 14-19 Learning Pathways initiative transformed education and training in Carmarthenshire. This transformation included a greater focus on vocational training routes linked to local economic priorities and enhanced personal support for learners to help them succeed. Shared working between secondary schools, Coleg Sir Gâr and training providers focussed on improving the vocational choices available to learners and shared assessments of the quality of this delivery. This work resulted in the establishment of a long-standing culture of trust between education providers that does not exist elsewhere in Wales. This culture enables the needs of the learners to be foremost in the curriculum planning process.

While WG policy has now moved on from the 14-19 Learning Pathways model, it is essential that Carmarthenshire retains the learner centred ethos and the well-established local learning pathways via schools and Coleg Sir Gâr into key employment sectors such as construction and care. These principles underpin the development of the Carmarthenshire curriculum in the future.

## **6.2 Transforming Education & Training Provision in Wales - Delivering Skills that Work for Wales (2009)**

The key priority of this WG strategy was to secure a workforce sufficiently skilled to access high level employment opportunities in the future. The report identified the need to integrate the work of schools, Further Education Institutions (FEI's), Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) and other Post-16 providers to transform the ways in which education and training provision is delivered across a geographic region.

As a result, learning providers were expected to form geographic and sectoral learning partnerships. These partnerships would be required to plan and implement the improvements outlined in the WG Policy. The transformation of education and training provision was required to widen options available to 14-19 year olds, reduce unnecessary duplication of provision and move to excellence across networks of providers. All local authorities were required to submit a Strategic Outcome Case (SOC) outlining how the required changes would take place.

The report identified a range of possible options for increased collaborative working across providers. These options were to be considered to secure significant improvements in the education and training delivery for post-16 learners and could include informal collaboration, shared governance of local learning partnerships combining the delivery of schools and colleges and the removal of transfer of existing provision for reasons of duplication or financial inefficiency.

The WG expectation was that the local learning partnerships would focus on areas for development where there is the greatest need for an improvement in learner outcomes.

It was intended by the WG that all those involved in providing Post 14 education and training should work together to address the following key performance indicators:

- an improvement in levels of basic skills;
- an increase in the rate of 16-18 and 19 - 24 participation in education, training and employment;
- an increase in overall learner success rates, reflecting higher levels of learner completion as well as the achievement of qualification aims;
- an increase in Level 2, 3 and 4 qualifications; and
- an increase in progression to higher level learning or higher level employment.

The WG's expectation was that collaborative proposals would take account of the relative inefficiencies that occur in Post-16 provider delivery. The WG believed that inefficiencies were more likely to arise when school sixth forms operate with fewer than 150 students (based on Audit Commission research) but recognise that rurality and the need for Welsh Medium delivery must also be taken into account.

The Carmarthenshire response to the transformation agenda was based on the existing strengths of partnership delivery linked to the implementation of the 14-19 Learning Pathways initiative. Since 2009, the partnership is able to evidence a range of positive outcomes linked to this initiative, including improved pupil performance at Key Stage 4, improved staying on rates and a reduction in the number of young people becoming NEET. This work continues to be on-going in Carmarthenshire and will remain as an underlying principle in the development of a local curriculum outlined in the recommendations of this report.

As a response to the wider Transformation Agenda, the WG launched a range of reviews, strategies and policies which included:

- The Structure of Education Services in Wales (Thomas 2011) which recommended the rationalisation of FE Institutions from 19, to the establishment of between 8 – 12 FE corporate entities by August 2013 and concluded that the development of regional consortia was viewed as a positive way forward. Further collaboration and partnership was identified as necessary to ensure that learners in the 14–16 and 16–19 age range are offered real opportunities and choice.
- The Future Delivery of Education Services in Wales (Hill 2013) highlighted Estyn's perception of shortcomings in the work of local education authorities. The Review focused on the effectiveness of the current education authority delivery and considered what should be undertaken at a local, regional and national level.

The Hill Review led to the establishment of four regional school improvement consortia with a focus on:

- raising standards and improving learner outcomes at all ages;
- better support and challenge to schools to improve standards;
- developing and strengthening the leadership of schools and the quality of teaching and learning;
- ensuring value for money and effective use of resources; and
- bringing about coherence and strong links between all areas of the education system, including post-16 provision and the wider children's services agenda.

Details of the work of regional school improvement consortium for South West and Mid Wales (*ERW*) are included in the regional section of this review.

### **6.3 Learning and Skills Measure (2009)**

The Welsh Government's Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 provided a statutory basis for the 14–19 Learning Pathways initiative. The 14–19 Learning Pathways policy transformed curricula provision and support for learners, helping to raise achievement and attainment, prepare young people for high skilled employment or higher education. The intention of this policy was to enable Wales to compete economically in 21st Century Europe. The Welsh Government believed that including the basic principles of this policy in a legal framework ensured that the policy would be implemented in a consistent way to the benefit of 14–19 year old learners across Wales.

The Measure places a duty on local authorities in Wales to form local curricula for learners in Key Stage 4 and in Post 16 education and training. It also provides Welsh Ministers with regulation making powers to stipulate the minimum number of courses of study to be included within a local curriculum, and the minimum number of vocational courses of study to ensure that local area curricula contain a wide range of options of study both academic and vocational in nature.

The Measure supported the implementation of 14-19 Learning Pathways. It ensured that all learners at Key Stage 4 in Wales are able to choose from a minimum of 25 courses of which three must be vocational and that 30 choices are available to 16-18 year old learners, of which 5 must be vocational. All secondary schools in Carmarthenshire and Coleg Sir Gâr are currently meeting the requirements of the Learning and Skills Measure. However, budget cuts combined with reduced funding to support 14-19 related collaboration mean that it may not be possible to sustain the current curricular offer, particularly in smaller schools in rural areas.

### **6.4 A Curriculum for All Learners (2010)**

This document provided guidance for teachers/practitioners of learners with a range of additional learning needs in mainstream and special settings/schools. It supports teaching and assessing against the school curriculum 2008. The guidance is focused particularly on Key Stages 2 and 3, but will be useful to staff working in the Foundation Phase and with learners aged 14-19 in a variety of settings. It is based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and has seven core aims which seek to ensure that all children and young people develop their potential to the full. This document has now been superseded by the Curriculum for Life (2015) and the Donaldson Review recommendations.

### **6.5 The Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools and Education Capital Programme (2010-present)**

The 21st Century Schools and Education Capital Programme is a major, long-term and strategic capital investment programme. The aim of the programme is to create educational communities fit for the 21st Century in Wales that deliver:

- Learning environments that will enable the successful implementation of strategies for improvement and better educational outcomes

- Greater economy and efficiency for learning environments through better use of resources
- A sustainable education system that meets national building standards and reduces the recurrent costs and carbon footprint of education buildings.

In December 2011, the Minister for Education and Skills announced a £1.4 billion investment for the first wave of 21st Century Schools and education projects. This funding is on a 50:50 match funded basis with local authorities throughout Wales. This funding is intended to create school environments that meet the needs of the community and provide the best learning provision for the area.

WG are currently working with local authorities to deliver the first wave of 21st Century School projects by 2019. However, local authorities determine the pace of delivery of their individual projects. The first wave of these projects was initially timetabled over a 7 year period. The implementation of the Local Government Borrowing Initiative as part of the 21st Century programme enables local authorities to accelerate spending on their programmes and to deliver their projects in five years instead of 7 years.

Carmarthenshire is at the forefront of schools related MEP developments in Wales. Funding from this programme has transformed education in the Dinefwr area, with significant upgrades to the Amman Valley and Maes Y Gwendraeth sites and a complete new school build in Ffairfach (Ysgol Bro Dinefwr). These developments have enabled the removal of large numbers of surplus school places and allowed young people to be educated in state of the art facilities. There have also been significant refurbishments at Ysgol Y Strade, Coedcae and Bryngwyn Schools and at a wide range of primary school locations across the county.

## **6.6 Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (2011 to present)**

At a local authority level, the Welsh Government's Welsh Medium Education Strategy (WMES) outcomes and targets are delivered via the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. The WMES sets out the Welsh Government's vision for an education and training system that responds in a planned way to the growing demand for Welsh-medium education. The aim is to facilitate an increase in the number of people of all ages able to use the Welsh language with their families, in their communities and in the workplace. The WESPs are a key vehicle for creating an improved planning system for Welsh-medium education.

The Carmarthenshire Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESP) provides the means for the Welsh Government to monitor the way in which the local authorities respond and contribute to the implementation of the WMES objectives by:

- Ensuring that every step of local authority education processes includes full consideration of Welsh-medium education;
- Extending provision where a need is identified on the basis of improved planning;
- Moving Welsh-language support services gradually away from the traditional roles of *Athrawon Bro* towards a new training and mentoring service;
- Ensuring the delivery of Welsh-medium support services on the basis of consortia in the near future;
- Improving standards and extending the use of Welsh by children and young people, and
- Demonstrating progress against the specific targets in the WMES.

Further development of Welsh medium education in the county, including vocational provision, is fundamental to this review. The details of these recommendations are included in the curriculum section of this report.

## **6.7 Building Resilient Communities: Taking forward the Tackling Poverty Action Plan (2013 to present)**

This WG initiative sets out a number of targets in relation to poverty and educational attainment. These targets aim to:

- Narrow the attainment gap at the end of Foundation Phase by 10 per cent by 2017.
- Raise attainment by 15-year-olds eligible for free school meals of the Level 2 inclusive of English / Welsh First Language and Mathematics to 37 per cent by 2017.
- Reduce the number of young people who are not in employment, education or training aged 16 to 18 to nine per cent by 2017. At the end of 2012, the figure was 10.2 per cent.
- Reduce the proportion of young people who are not in employment, education or training aged 19 to 24 in Wales relative to the UK as a whole by 2017.

The Welsh Government's *Child Poverty Strategy* and related *Rewriting the Future* document (2015) highlight the importance of three strategic objectives to:

- Reduce the number of families living in workless households, as children living in workless households are particularly at risk of living in poverty.
- Increase the skills of parents and young people living in low-income households so they can secure well-paid employment and in-work progression, as in-work poverty is a growing issue.
- Reduce the inequalities which exist in the health, education and economic outcomes of children and families by improving the outcomes of the poorest.

Preventing poverty is fundamental to the Welsh Government's vision for supporting low income households. Consequently, WG initiatives to tackle poverty are closely linked to the government's strategies to improve educational attainment at both a local authority and regional consortia level. Work to address child poverty in Carmarthenshire is closely linked to this curriculum review. Targeted activities funded by the Families First and Pupil Deprivation grants play an important role in supporting children, young people and families experiencing poverty. Reducing the effects of poverty is also an important feature of the forthcoming round of ESF funding, with a primary focus on reducing the number of young people who become NEET. These activities will be incorporated into the range of support that compliments Carmarthenshire curriculum related developments.

## **6.8 Families First (2012)**

In 2012, the WG created an integrated, whole-family approach to supporting families in Wales. Families First is aimed at improving the way agencies work together and places a clear emphasis on early intervention for families, particularly those living in poverty, to help stop problems from escalating towards crisis. As part of Families First, Wales is the only country to require all local authorities to operate a "team around the family" model, that encourages organisations to work together to assist families and help them address the breadth of challenges they can face.

The WG believes that the problems facing families are becoming more challenging and services face difficult choices as awareness and demand for support increases. The guiding principle throughout this work is of public services working together to meet people's needs effectively, sustainably and at the earliest opportunity. Families First brings together organisations to work with the whole family, not just the individual. This means agencies realigning the way they work to better meet the needs of the family. It means building on the strengths inherent in the family unit and building a 'team around the family' approach that brings agencies and services together in a co-ordinated way, making it less complex for families to access the support they need.

In Carmarthenshire, the Families First approach has been embedded into the work of the Department for Education and Children through a combination of made and commissioned family support services. These services provide targeted support for young people identified by the Vulnerability Assessment Profile as being at risk of not succeeding in school. This additional support is vital in ensuring overcoming a range of barriers that can prevent young people achieving their full potential and will be retained as part of the developing Carmarthenshire Curriculum model.

## **6.9 The Post 16 Planning and Funding Framework (2014)**

In September 2014, the WG implemented a new planning and funding system (P16P&FF) for Post 16 education in school sixth forms that replaced the recurrent funding methodology used previously. The new system brings funding allocations for Sixth Forms in line with the arrangements for Further Education colleges and Work Based Learning.

The Post 16 planning and reporting arrangements for local authorities seek to:

- improve the efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of the post-16 planning and funding to focus on better outcomes and progression for learners;
- standardise the planning of provision across the school and College sectors to improve information to make better informed decisions; and
- focus attention on the broader outcome for individual learners.

From September 2016, Welsh Government have proposed that funding will be based upon programmes of learning rather than qualifications, with each programme having a defined purpose and outcome against which it will be monitored.

The planning role of the local authority is significantly enhanced in the new system, with added responsibility for co-ordinating the delivery of Sixth Form provision. This includes ensuring that duplication of provision is avoided and that the courses provided meet local and regional economic priorities. In FE settings, the new system has resulted in a much more student-led curriculum and removed those programmes run primarily to attract additional funding. This has resulted in a curriculum that is more based on employability and employer need, with the planning aspects linked closely to local labour market information and needs.

Preparatory work has taken place to prepare secondary schools for the new Post 16 funding system. This work has involved collecting data regarding the number of pupils currently studying on each of the funded learning programmes within the new funding methodology. During the transitional period, the authority is using a funding model based on pupil numbers and funding uplifts for Welsh Medium provision, sparsity and rurality that has been agreed with the secondary school head teachers.

The Carmarthenshire Local Authority Plan is required to be submitted to Welsh Government in April each year and will be based upon the following principles:

- Provision of high quality education for all learners;
- Ensuring equality and diversity;
- Optimising the use of resources through developing models of collaboration and sharing;
- Ensuring provision is affordable and sustainable;
- Promoting the delivery and development of Welsh Language provision.

Linked to the principles above, there is an expectation from the Welsh Government of a much greater role for the local authority in guiding Post 16 delivery in schools. To support this role in Carmarthenshire, there is considerable potential for the evolution of a commissioning model for sixth form funding. This could be linked to the existing cluster governance structure and include funding allocated for courses delivered by schools together and/or with Coleg Sir Gâr in collaboration. A new commissioning model would need to be closely linked to the local economy and sectoral priorities and should include opportunities to expand vocational Welsh medium provision.

#### **6.10 The Review of Qualifications 14–19 (2012)**

The Review of Qualifications for 14-19 year olds in Wales (WG November 2012) was launched in September 2011, setting out a vision of “qualifications that are understood and valued and meet the needs of our young people and the Welsh economy.” The review recommended that there is a need to develop a high-quality, robust and distinctive national qualifications system for 14 to 19 year-olds in Wales. Proper recognition of the value of vocational qualifications is seen as ensuring that learners gain the skills needed by employers and the modern Welsh economy. As well as their intrinsic value, vocational qualifications are seen as motivating and engaging for those learners who might otherwise lose interest in education.

The review concluded that for learners at 14-16, vocational qualifications should be aimed at providing a general introduction to an industry sector rather than leading to occupational competence, and should form part of a broad and balanced general curriculum. These should be IVETs (Initial Vocational Education and Training), which do not lead to vocational competence and should only be available to learners at age 14; or level 2 CVETs (Continuing Vocational Education and Training) which lead to vocational competence. Either category should be available post 16. This change should improve the coherence of curriculum pathways.

Where qualifications are focussed on meeting employer needs and have a vocational basis there will be an increased need for these to be delivered by appropriately experienced vocational practitioners, whether this be in school, college or training provider settings.

## **6.11 Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (2013)**

The Youth Engagement and Progression Framework focuses on reducing the number of young people aged 11 to 25 who are not engaged in education, employment or training (NEET) in Wales. This non-statutory plan sets out the responsibilities of the local authority in bringing together a partnership to oversee local delivery of the framework.

The strategy identifies has six key elements that combine to enable a reduction in the number of young people becoming NEET in a local area:

- Identifying young people most at risk of disengagement via a Vulnerability Assessment Profile (VAP);
- Better brokerage and co-ordination of support for young people;
- Stronger tracking and transitions of young people through the system;
- Ensuring provision meets the needs of young people;
- Strengthening employability skills and opportunities for employment; and
- Greater accountability for better outcomes for young people.

This work links with the implementation of the Post 16 Planning and Funding System in 2014, the recommendations of the Review of 14-19 Qualifications in Wales 2012 together with the WG's wider work to boost youth employment through Jobs Growth Wales, traineeships and apprenticeships.

Carmarthenshire has developed a shared approach to implementing the YEPF, working in close collaboration with Pembrokeshire and overseen by the shared two counties Executive Group. The Vulnerability Assessment Profile (VAP) is now operating in all schools. This tool identifies young people in need of additional support, which is then provided by a combination of mainstream services and Families First interventions overseen by the Team Around the Family approach. The VAP will also be used to target interventions funded by the regional Cynnydd ESF bid. Funding from this bid is likely to be available from early in 2016 and will be overseen by a joint management group incorporating staff from the local authority and Coleg Sir Gâr.

## **6.12 New Deal for the Education Workforce in Wales (2014)**

A new deal to support teachers, leaders and support staff with their professional development throughout their careers while raising the esteem was announced by Education Minister in June 2014. The new deal provides practitioners with the opportunity to access high quality professional learning at every stage of their career. This development aims to improve overall performance in the classroom and improve the attainment levels of Welsh learners.

The new deal will be supported by a National Professional Learning Model, designed to improve the quality of professional practice while building respect for the workforce. In return for this support, the Welsh Government expects teachers, leaders and support staff to take responsibility for their own professional learning and to share their knowledge and good practice with others – a feature of any high status profession.

This initiative will also see regional school improvement consortia, through the National Model of Regional Working, working together to provide a national programme of professional development opportunities for education staff. The full local training programme linked to the New Deal is currently being finalised.

### **6.13 Qualified for Life (2014 to present)**

Qualified for Life is the Welsh Government's educational improvement plan. The 5 year plan (2015-2020) aims to improve the educational attainment of learners aged 3 to 19. Key activities of the plan are placed under 4 strategic objectives:

- An excellent professional workforce with strong pedagogy based on an understanding of what works (linking closely with the New Deal, as described above).
- A curriculum which is engaging and attractive to children and young people and which develops within them an independent ability to apply knowledge and skills.
- The qualifications young people achieve are nationally and internationally respected and act as a credible passport to their future learning and employment.
- Leaders of education at every level working together in a self-improving system, providing mutual support and challenge to raise standards in all schools.

The Carmarthenshire 11-19 review is, in part, a Carmarthenshire response to Qualified for Life, given the identified focus on staff development, curriculum development, worthwhile qualifications and leaders working together across sectors in a self-improving system. The actions identified in this review will address these themes and provide a range of strategies to ensure that Qualified for Life is implemented effectively in the county.

### **6.14 Skills Implementation Plan (2014)**

The purpose of this plan was to translate the high-level priorities within the Welsh Government policy statements on skills into delivery. The plan set out key policy actions which will take place in the period to 2016–17. These actions provide the basis for future employment and skills policy interventions over the next decade.

The scope of this plan is aligned to the policy statement on skills and focuses on post-19 employment and skills policy in Wales. However, the Welsh Government highlights the need for close links with the compulsory and post-compulsory education system. This is to ensure that the future workforce reflects government ambitions for a highly skilled society. This includes the development of staff with Level 3 in skill areas that employers value and which are regionally important being a key benchmark.

This attainment target is set alongside the need to improve the literacy, numeracy and ICT skills of working adults to at least Level 2 wherever possible. Welsh Government also consider the need for Welsh-medium delivery of post-19 skills in line with employer need. The plan is underpinned by a series of Skills Performance Measures to be used as the continual reference point when evaluating policies and programmes to ensure they remain on track to deliver the WG future ambition.

They are focused on the following four key areas:

- Jobs and growth - Improvements in employment and productivity levels.
- Financial sustainability - Ensuring an appropriate and sustainable balance of funding is available to support the skills system sourced from government, employers, individuals and European funding.
- Equality and equity - Providing equality of opportunity for individuals in accessing post-19 employment and skills support.

- International skills benchmarking- Improving the skills profile to ensure Wales remains competitive as a nation.

These four areas are the focus of the 2015-2016 Ministerial Letters to local authorities and Further Education Colleges. Given this, the actions identified in this review link closely to the Welsh Government's expectations of learning organisations as identified in these letters.

### **6.15 The Revised Welsh Baccalaureate (2015)**

The Welsh Baccalaureate (WB) is delivered by schools and colleges across Wales. The WB gives broader experiences than traditional learning programmes, to suit the diverse needs of young people. The 2012 Estyn Report on Welsh Baccalaureate delivery established that the majority of students who study the core are exposed to a wide range of topics and opportunities that help them to improve their knowledge, understanding and interpersonal skills. The Welsh Government believe that students studying the WB are becoming more confident, improving their essential and social skills and gaining a better understanding of a range of topics from enterprise to politics and current affairs.

The core at each level is studied alongside a range of appropriate academic and/or vocational optional qualifications. Candidates who meet the requirements of the Core and Options relevant to each level of the qualification, are awarded the Welsh Baccalaureate Foundation, Intermediate or Advanced Diploma as appropriate.

From September 2015, the WB enters a 4 year transition period for implementation of the qualification (2015-2020). This phased implementation is intended to enable schools and colleges to manage the change, develop staff and ensure high quality delivery of the qualification. Welsh Government have set out phased targets for this period, with the intention being that there is 100% implementation of the WB by 2020.

The revised WB is based on a graded Skills Challenge Certificate and supporting qualifications (including GCSEs, A Levels and vocational awards). The primary aim is to enable learners to develop and demonstrate an understanding of and proficiency in the essential and employability skills of communication, numeracy, digital literacy, planning and organisation, creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, and personal effectiveness. The emphasis is on applied and purposeful learning and to provide opportunities for assessment in a range of real life context through three challenges (Community, Global Citizenship, Employment and Entrepreneurship) and an extended individual project.

The revised WB, combined with the introduction of the capped 9 GCSE programme by September 2017 has significant staffing implications for Welsh schools. The combination of these changes will mean that teaching staff in non compulsory capped 9 subjects will spend less time on their chosen subject specialisms and more time teaching the WB related curriculum. These changes are already affecting Carmarthenshire secondary schools and Coleg Sir Gâr and will impact further on subject specialist staff over the coming years as the WB is implemented for all pupils at KS4 and Post 16.

Implementing the revised WB has already proved challenging during the 2015-2016 academic year. The late receipt of the revised course specifications, coupled with new requirements for e-portfolios has meant that pupils, students and staff have found it difficult to engage positively with the new qualification. Welsh Government will undertake a further

review of the issues associated with the Welsh BaccaLaureate early in 2016. It is hoped that this review will address the current problems being faced by schools and colleges.

In parallel with the Welsh BaccaLaureate changes, all young people in schools sixth forms and further education who have not passed GCSE Maths and English are now required to resit these qualifications as part of their Post 16 study programme. No additional funding is allocated for this delivery, placing financial, timetabling and staffing pressure on schools and college.

While it will not become compulsory to deliver the WB to all pupils in schools and colleges until September 2020. However, the local authority and Coleg Sir Gâr believe that the WB is an essential part of the developing Carmarthenshire curriculum as the qualification develops the skills young people need to succeed in life, that employers want and that enables effective progression to higher education.

### **6.16 National School Categorisation System (2015)**

In September 2014, the Welsh Government published the National School Categorisation System guidance for schools, local authorities and regional consortia. The purpose of the national categorisation system is to identify schools that are in most need of support and to ensure support and resources are directed most effectively to secure the improvements necessary in the school system.

This guidance explains in detail the three steps of the National School Categorisation System:

- performance and standards;
- self-evaluation and capacity to self-improve in relation to leadership and teaching;
- Improving schools through regional education consortia and learning categorisation and level of support, challenge and intervention.

The Welsh Government developed this guidance with the regional consortia prior to its publication with this information being available to consortia challenge advisers when categorising schools in 2014-2015 year. As of February 2015, 4 Carmarthenshire secondary schools (33%) were rated as Green (excellent), 6 (50%) as Yellow (good) and 2 (17%) as Amber (satisfactory). No Carmarthenshire Secondary Schools were rated as Red (in need of intensive support). This position represents a positive change from the 2014-2015 year, with 83% of schools being in the Green or Yellow categories, compared to 65% across the ERW region.

## 6.17 Successful Futures - The Donaldson Review (2015 to present)

In February 2015, the Welsh Government published the curriculum and assessment review undertaken by Professor Graham Donaldson, who had previously undertaken similar work in Scotland. The aim of the review was to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current curriculum.

Strengths were identified as:

- Equity and inclusion;
- The support for Special Educational Needs through Routes for Learning ;
- The Foundation Phase ;
- The emphasis on literacy, numeracy and wider skills ;
- Welsh culture and language ;
- The revised Welsh Baccalaureate.

The review identified the weaknesses as:

- overload, redundancy and complexity of successive modifications;
- current curriculum not enabling young people to achieve identified standards;
- assessment and accountability have become intertwined in an unhelpful way.

Additionally, teachers told Professor Donaldson that they would like to be able to decide what and how they would teach their subjects. Children and young people told the review that they wanted a greater focus on life skills, personal confidence, basic skills, work skills, career advice and well-being.

Informed by this feedback, Donaldson proposed that a new curriculum be developed with the four clear purposes of developing young people as:

- ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives;
- enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work ;
- ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world ;
- healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society;

Donaldson asserts that the current curriculum structure is too complex and needs to be simplified and made more coherent. The current structure inhibits the “flow and progression” in learning and “responsiveness to local needs”. Donaldson believes that a more consistent approach should be developed encompassing both the Primary and Secondary stages, to at least Key Stage 3. He highlights the need for more “imaginative use of time” and an extension of the Foundation Phase approach, where areas of learning are used instead of subjects. It is also recommended that all teachers be responsible for literacy, numeracy and digital competence.

The review advises that the Welsh language needs to be strengthened within curriculum and proposes “that all children and young people should continue to learn the Welsh language to the age of 16”. The need to improve the ‘quality and relevance’ of Welsh language teaching in English-medium schools is identified.

The review suggests that Welsh-medium schools become Welsh language hubs to provide support to English-medium schools.

Research on children's learning progression should be utilised in developing descriptions of expected achievement. They should be both challenging and accessible and offer leeway for students who excel and those that progress slower.

The review suggests that assessment procedures be simplified and that "the Welsh Government should develop an overall assessment and evaluation framework as recommended by the OECD". The report suggests the use of teacher assessments along with external testing in assessment.

The recommendations have major implications for the professional development of teachers and other practitioners across Wales and in Carmarthenshire including:

- the need to extend teachers capacity in Welsh language, health and well-being;
- digital competence, computer science and coding;
- curriculum planning and assessment.

Following the publication of Successful Futures, the Welsh Government encouraged all those involved in education to take part in "The Great Debate" to shape the evolution of this policy. As of December 2015, the full implications of the Donaldson Report on the curriculum in Wales and Carmarthenshire are yet to become clear, though the Carmarthenshire pioneer schools for the Successful Futures programme have now been identified. Local delivery of the Donaldson reforms on the 3-19 curriculum are the subject of a major local authority report (*Palmantu'r Ffordd / Paving the Way*) that is complimentary to this review and the related recommendations. This report includes detailed analysis of pupil data, performance trends and current school timetabling models and thus these topics are not duplicated by the contents of the 11-19 Review.

### **6.18 Lead Creative Schools (2015)**

The Arts Council for Wales's Lead Creative Schools Scheme aims to promote new ways of working, with innovative and bespoke programmes designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The Lead Creative Schools Scheme is designed to work with schools to provide the creative people, skills and resources that are needed to help schools address these challenges.

The scheme will use well developed teaching and learning techniques that are specifically designed to be practical and relevant to real life curriculum demands. These techniques are informed by extensive research from around the world into what makes a high performing school. The aim of the Lead Creative Schools is to nurture and develop the creativity of learners so that they achieve their potential, grow as well rounded individuals and are prepared with skills for life.

The Lead Creative Schools Scheme allows schools to enter into a long-term programme that aims to support them to:

- work with Creative Practitioners in their classrooms to transform teaching and learning;
- devise and implement a project or programme of work linked to individual school development priorities;
- find creative approaches to literacy, numeracy and to reducing the attainment gap between learners eligible for free school meals (eFSM) and their peers;
- embed changes in teaching practice leading to sustainable impact;

- put the arts and creativity at the heart of school life; and
- be recognised for their commitment to improvement through creative teaching and learning and the arts.

Funding for Lead Creative Schools comes from a £20 million budget allocated to support the implementation of Creative Learning through the Arts between 2015 and 2020. Schools will begin to benefit from the plan

during the 2015/16 academic year. During the life of the plan it is envisaged that one third of schools in Wales will have the opportunity to participate in the Lead Creative Schools Scheme. The Carmarthenshire Lead Creative Schools have now been identified and work to implement this programme will begin early in 2016.

### **6.19 Annual Ministerial Priorities for Further Education Colleges and Local Authorities (2015)**

The Minister for Education and Skills sets out the annual priorities for the FE and Local Authority Post-16 school sectors in May each year in preparation for the coming academic year. For the 2016-2017 year, these priorities are:

- **Jobs and growth** including collaborative approaches to ESF project development, skills performance measures the development of the Regional Skills Partnerships and employer engagement and enterprise;
- **Financial sustainability** including co-investment in skills;
- **Equality and equity** including the Child Poverty Strategy and Tackling Poverty Action Plan, Youth Engagement and Progression Framework, the development of the Seren Network for the most able young people, literacy and numeracy, Welsh Language, Standards, Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or disabilities;
- **International Skills benchmarking** including quality, standards and learner destination tracking, apprenticeship frameworks, Welsh Baccalaureate, the new Welsh Qualifications Wales Body, Workforce Education Registration.

The Minister also required FE institutions and local authorities to continue to deliver adult community learning, to further develop the use of e-learning and to work closely with the regional school improvement consortia in the strategic development of provision. There was also an expectation that all those involved in Post 16 education and training would continue to develop a “culture of transparency and collaboration” and deliver efficiency gains and achieve the best use of resources through this collaboration. While the partnership related work in county is addressing the issues raised by the Minister, the recommendations of this review draw together a number of further themes to meet the identified priorities.

### **6.20 The Seren Network (2015)**

In 2015, the Welsh Government published a report by Paul Murphy MP that identified the factors that contribute to low numbers of Welsh young people progressing to Oxford and Cambridge universities. The report recommended the establishment of a network of local hubs delivering enhancement activities for school and college pupils in Year 12 that will prepare them to apply for places at the Sutton Trust 30 most competitive universities in the UK. Following developmental work in 2015, the Carmarthenshire/Pembrokeshire Seren Hub was launched in February 2016, with 330 able and talented young people across both counties identified as potential participants. A programme of enhancement activities for this

group of young people is planned for 2016-2017, with a shared executive group of school, FE college and LA staff overseeing this work.

## **6.21 The Estyn Annual Report (2015)**

The 2015 Estyn Annual Report includes reference to a number of themes very relevant to this report. Changes to the Welsh curriculum are discussed in detail. The strengths of the curriculum in good secondary schools are identified as being where schools work in partnership with other schools and colleges to broaden the choices available to young people at Key Stage 4. This widening of the curriculum includes vocational pathways linked to the local economy and the role of the Welsh Baccalaureate in broadening understanding of enterprise, citizenship and the world of work. The commitment of high-performing schools to the development of a pupils' broader social and moral awareness and the promotion of healthy lifestyles is emphasised. A wide range of cultural, artistic, musical and sporting activities are also identified as being integral to the development of confident learners who are well prepared for future study and employment.

In order to deliver this wide and interesting curriculum, Estyn note the importance of imaginative planning by senior managers that enables innovation and the development of autonomous cross curricular learning. The role of schools, colleges and the local authority working together to develop a curriculum relevant both to learners and the key sectors of the local economy is highlighted, as is the sharing of information about young people to better track their progress. Linked closely to the implementation of the four core purposes of Successful Futures, Estyn note that schools should be preparing for the implementation of the new curriculum by building on the existing good practice identified in curriculum design and development. As later sections in this review will note, much of this practice already exists in Carmarthenshire, leaving the county well placed to develop an innovative approach to local curriculum development.

## **6.22 National Strategies – A Summary**

The past 15 years have seen successive attempts by the WG to transform the delivery and provision of 11-19 education and training through new policies, strategies and legislation. During this period, Welsh Government initiatives have sought to:

- support and challenge to schools and colleges to improve standards and learner outcomes;
- tackle the causes and effects of poverty on children and families;
- develop and strengthen the leadership of schools and colleges;
- ensure value for money and effective use of resources;
- bring about coherence and strong links between all areas of the Post-16 provision;
- facilitate a process of merger and collaboration;
- increase the amount of Welsh Medium provision;
- address falling rolls within schools through a rationalisation of school places; and
- bring FE and Schools Post 16 delivery under the same funding regime.

While these aims are commendable, the diverse and sometimes unconnected nature of Welsh Government policy presents a significant challenge to successfully implementing these policies at a county level. Implementing these changes regionally and across local authority boundaries is even more challenging.

Much of this work has, and continues to be, funded by individual WG grants tied to strict funding criteria. In recent years, some of these grants have been administered on a regional basis, which requires additional bureaucracy in order to manage resources effectively. Differing approaches at a local authority level can also make the development of a consistent regional approach to WG priorities difficult. However, given the joined-up approaches to 11-19 curriculum development that already exist in Carmarthenshire, this review will identify how these challenges can continue to be overcome to meet the needs of children, young people, families, communities and the local economy in Carmarthenshire.

## **7.0 The Regional Context**

Both the Carmarthenshire County Council and Coleg Sir Gâr are committed to regional working and the development of a coherent strategy to better deliver education and training for young people. This commitment is seen in the considerable staff time and effort devoted to regional activities as part of the “day job” of senior staff from both organisations. There are three main existing groups that facilitate the delivery of regional working.

### **7.1 The Regional Learning Partnership**

The Regional Learning Partnership (RLP) is a strategic partnership of education and regeneration partners in south west and central Wales working to deliver: skills for jobs and growth, skills that respond to local needs, skills that employers value and skills for employment. The partnership is made up of key representatives from local government, higher education, further education, third sector, and private sector across Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, Powys and Swansea.

#### **7.1.1 The Regional Delivery Plan for Employment & Skills for South West and Central Wales**

The Welsh Government’s Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has developed a strategic approach to the delivery of employment and skills support for both individuals and businesses, which will provide a basis for the future utilisation of European Structural Funds and other sources of funding. In response to this approach to the employment and skills agenda, the RLP has facilitated the development of a Regional Delivery Plan for Employment and Skills for South West & Central Wales that is aligned strategically with what is outlined in the National Policy Statement on Skills (published January 2014) and subsequent Implementation Plan (published July 2014).

The plan is also seeking to align with the priorities of the Swansea Bay City Region and the Growing Mid Wales development, to enable the provision of skills and learning to meet the needs of the region’s economic and labour market over the next ten years and beyond.

In October 2014, the Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology, Julie James AM, formally announced the regional skills partnership structures that will develop and publish annual regional employment and skills plans which will identify investment priorities as well as local demands and opportunities. The fourth version of the plan was submitted to the Welsh Government in March 2015, with a revised annual submission required by March 2016.

The RLP is facilitating the development of regional interventions via four framework groups – Regional Young People, Regional Adult Employability, Regional Skills for Growth and

Regional Entrepreneurship. The interventions are based on evidence of regional skills and employment needs, and complement the national schemes. This includes a range of workforce up-skilling provision and support for entry into, and progression within the workplace, responding to specific regional economic conditions and priorities. It is also includes regionally-focused youth engagement activities.

The frameworks have been developed by the RLP to establish a co-ordinated approach, reduce project duplication and establish referral mechanisms. Each framework is a strategic approach to addressing a particular theme or cohort of participants under which a number of national, regional and local projects will sit.

To avoid duplication and identify gaps in activity, projects being delivered by national organisations e.g. Welsh Government are included in the frameworks. As external funding bids are approved, the frameworks will be used in future as a tool to identify emerging demand, existing provision and skills gaps. The Welsh Government requested that each regional skills partnership develops Demand & Supply Assessments to support the implementation of the Regional Delivery Plans by September 2015.

The Welsh Government's Skills Implementation Plan set out a key role for regional skills partnerships in providing a mechanism to advise Welsh Government on future regional prioritisation of skills funding in line with employment and skills needs. The Demand & Supply Assessment for each region is the mechanism for partnerships to provide this evidence base to the Welsh Government. It also offers an opportunity to influence the prioritisation of funding in key areas.

The focus for the first year of Demand / Supply Assessments will be; Work Based Learning Allocations including Apprenticeships 2016 – 17 and Further Education Deployment of Funds 2016 – 17 (Post 16). The Assessments will focus on 3-4 key priorities to influence Apprenticeship allocation and Further Education deployment of funds. Welsh Government will then feedback to the regional skills partnerships by July 2016 on how funding allocations have been influenced as a result of the Demand & Supply Assessment process as well as ways in which the process being piloted for the 2016-17 allocations can be improved for future years.

A task and finish group will be established comprising of representation from the region's Further Education Institutions and Work Based Learning Contract Holders. The assessment will be split into two to reflect the geographies of Growing Mid Wales and the Swansea Bay City Region Board.

## 7.2 The Swansea Bay City Region

The Swansea Bay City Region (SCBR) was launched in July 2013 and covers the four Local Authority areas of Neath Port Talbot, Swansea, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire. Working together as a City Region offers these local authority areas a new approach to economic regeneration including:

- Larger and more efficient labour markets and therefore better prospects for job creation;
- Scope for better planning of housing, transport, support for business and other services beyond existing administrative boundaries;
- Better prospects for attracting investment, innovation and value added economic activity.

The aim of the SCBR is for South West Wales to be a confident, ambitious and connected European City Region by 2030, recognised internationally for its emerging knowledge and innovation economy. The key high level target of the Strategy is that by 2030 productivity levels in the Swansea Bay City Region are once again at 90% of the UK level.

The associated SCBR Economic Regeneration Strategy 2013-2030 highlights concerns regarding skill levels in the region, stating that: *“There are major [skills] deficits across our City Region. We have insufficient people with higher level qualifications and too many people with no qualifications at all”*. In Carmarthenshire, 23.9% of the population have qualifications at level 4 and above compared with a Welsh average of 30.3%, while 26.8% of the population have no qualifications at all, compared with 11.4% nationally (2011 Census, ONS).

The Regional Development Plan will implement Strategic Aim 2 (supporting the development of a skilled and ambitious workforce across SWW) of the Swansea Bay City Region Economic Regeneration Strategy (p23). The key priorities within this aim are:

- Building skills in education;
- Transition into work;
- Raising demand and improving skills.

The SCBR strategy states that one of the objectives should be to “ensure that further and higher education provision in the city region offers flexible support that is fully aligned to and shaped by the needs of employers and the key knowledge-based growth sectors in the local economy.”

Furthermore, the Strategy requires a focus on “improving attainment and ambitions in our low performing schools to ensure that young people leave the education system with the skills and qualifications that will let them progress to high quality employment”. The sectors of advanced manufacturing, creative, energy and environment, food (including agriculture), ICT, financial and professional Services, life sciences and tourism are identified as key to the prosperity of the city region. The Strategy also aligns to the priorities in the neighbouring Ceredigion and Powys regeneration strategies.

Possible future capital developments at Coleg Sir Gâr are already aligned to the priorities of the Swansea Bay City Region. The overall development of 11-19 education and training in Carmarthenshire must be considered in this wider regional context and will be informed by the work of the Swansea Bay City Region to date and in the future.

## 7.3 The ERW Consortium Regional School Improvement Service

In February 2014, the Welsh Government published its 'National Model for Regional Working'. This national model outlined the vision for regional school improvement consortia as well as the respective roles of each tier (schools, local authorities, regional consortia and the Welsh Government) within the education system (Welsh Government, 2014a).

The national model covers the following elements in five key sections:

1. the mission, values and principles of effective school improvement;
2. the scope of regional consortia;
3. delivery of respective regional consortia and local authority functions ;
4. governance and accountability ;
5. the organisation and operation of consortia ;

Following the release of the National Model for School Improvement, the ERW Consortium was reformed in April 2014. The Consortium comprises of six Local Authorities; Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Powys, the County Borough of Neath Port Talbot and the City and County of Swansea. The purpose of ERW is to deliver a single consistent and integrated professional school improvement service for children and young people in a range of settings within the six Local Authorities. ERW's priorities for 2015-2018 are Leading Learning, Teaching and Learning and Support for Learning. These are supported by cross cutting work streams to be amended yearly depending on operational changes and needs.

School improvement services are delivered through a 'hub' model structure. Locally, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire local authorities are working together to challenge the performance of schools and improve teaching and learning. The consortium hub provides a school improvement service to 192 schools, with work overseen by a shared Head of Service role. Teams deliver initial challenge and intervention within defined areas and work with multidisciplinary specialists. Improving the leadership of schools is a key task across the hub, as is the work of Challenge Advisors in brokering a range of support and furthering the school to school support agenda. Hub challenge advisors also work across the region in line with the RISIS agreement to which both authorities are party.

#### **7.4 The Cynnydd and Cam Nesa Regional ESF Projects**

Following the ending of the Engage regional NEET reduction ESF project in 2014, partners across south west Wales have been working on a bid for a successor project within the EU programme for West Wales and the Valleys 2016-2020. Pembrokeshire County Council have led the bidding process for the new project (Cynnydd) which involves Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Swansea and Ceredigion County Councils, together with the FE colleges in each of these areas and Careers Wales. While delays in programme approval have meant that the original submission planned start dates in 2015 have now passed, an £18M bid will be submitted to the Wales European Funding Unit (WEFO) in March 2015, with the project launch anticipated for April 2016. In Carmarthenshire, the Cynnydd bid is likely to bring an additional £2M of ESF funding to be used for youth support systems to prevent young people aged 11-19 in schools and Coleg Sir Gâr becoming NEET.

In addition to the Cynnydd Project, a further regional bid (Cam Nesa) is in development for additional ESF resources to support young people aged 16-25 who are currently NEET in Carmarthenshire. It is anticipated that this bid will be submitted to WEFO in the summer of 2016.

## 7.5 Regional Context – Conclusion

Regional working to improve education and economic development demonstrates the delivery of national priorities in action, through a wide variety of collaborative arrangements. These arrangements seek to improve quality, create efficiencies, and provide a single 'route map' as a focus for delivery. Overarching the regional agenda is The Swansea Bay Region Economic Regeneration Strategy 2013-2030. The focus of this strategy is on skills development, maximising employment opportunities and providing a continuum of learning from schools into further and higher education to promote awareness of the value of up-skilling and the progression opportunities for further training. These regional developments link closely with partnership initiatives at a local authority level that aim to improve the quality of life and work in Carmarthenshire.

## 8.0 The local context: A Carmarthenshire Overview

Carmarthenshire is the third largest county in Wales by area (2365 square kilometres) and the fourth largest county by population (184,681). While Carmarthenshire is a mainly rural county with a population density in 2012 of 76.7 people per square kilometres (ranking 19 in Wales), Llanelli is the fifth largest urban area in Wales and there are significant populations located in the towns of Carmarthen, Ammanford and Burry Port.

Carmarthenshire has a rich cultural heritage and its own identity which sets the county apart. The county has the highest number of Welsh speakers in Wales and has developed its own Welsh Language Strategy in partnership with many organisations to secure a sustainable future for the language. The Welsh language plays a key role in Carmarthenshire life with 43.9% of the population over the age of 3 being Welsh speakers and 58.1% of the population have one of more skill in Welsh.

Statistics Wales forecast that the number of people in Carmarthenshire will increase by approximately 14,000 (7.7%) to 198,000 in 2026, though much of this increase is a function of an aging population. Currently, young people (0-18) make up 21% of the total population, with 57% of people aged 19-64 and 22% being 65 and over. Overall GVA growth in South West Wales has been consistently below that of the UK and Wales over the past two decades with 38% of households in Carmarthenshire defined as living in poverty. As of March 2011 there were 8,430 registered business units in Carmarthenshire. Of these 76% were small businesses with 4 or less employees which is above the all Wales rate of 66.4%.

WG's projections indicate a small decline (1.7%) in the population aged 0-15 between 2008 (22,187) and 2023 (21,799). In relation to those aged 16-64, there is a decline of 1.5% between 2008 (70,871) and 2023 (69,818). The secondary school population is predicted to rise by 337 from January 2015 (11,278) to January 2021 (11,615). The school sixth form population is projected to decrease by 144 in the period from January 2014 to January 2020 (13,331 pupils to 11,615 pupils).

Carmarthenshire has areas that have significant levels of deprivation. Results from the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) in 2014 show that the county has 25 areas that are within the 30% most deprived wards in Wales. The majority of these areas (60%) are located in the Llanelli region (15) with 20% in the Amman area (5), 12% in the Gwendraeth area (3) and 8% located in the Carmarthen area (2). Within Carmarthenshire, 18% of pupils

between the ages of 5 and 15 are entitled to free school meals in comparison with the all-Wales figure of 19.7%.

In 2012, the principal employment sectors in Carmarthenshire by number of full and part-time staff were health (12,500 employees), retail (8,500), agriculture, forestry & fishing (7,391), education (6,400), manufacturing (6,100) and public administration (4,700).

The principal business sectors in Carmarthenshire in 2013 were agriculture, forestry and fishing (2,140 business units), retail (850), construction (770), professional, scientific and technical (525), accommodation and food services (520). The majority of Carmarthenshire's businesses are micro and small to medium enterprises (SMEs). Thus the need to promote and support enterprise, innovation and entrepreneurship is vital. In 2012, 70% of the employment in Carmarthenshire was in the private sector. The Welsh Government priority sector with the greatest number of business units locally in 2012 was food and farming (2,170).

Total employment is projected to vary during the period 2013 to 2030, with a period low of 72,700 in 2015, before increasing through to a high of 78,400 in 2030. The projected increase in total employment from 2013 to 2030 is 5,600. The principal sectors for projected job growth by 2030 are health (8,900), retail trade (8,600), education (7,100), construction (6,700), and residential & social (6,600). The total number of people claiming key out of work benefits is lower than the Welsh average: 1.6% in Carmarthenshire against 1.9% in Wales. Of those claiming job seekers allowance, 2.8% are in the 18-24 age cohort, compared with a Welsh average of 2.7%.

Data for the 2014-2015 period months shows a -9.6% (-194) decline in the number of JSA claimants in Carmarthenshire from 2,019 in November 2014 to 1,825 in November 2015. Figures for Wales for the same period show a -22% decrease, Carmarthenshire is now ranked as the 6<sup>h</sup> lowest Authority in Wales for JSA Claimants (figures worked out at working age population 16-64).

The Welsh Government projects that the number of households in the county will increase from 81,102 in 2015 to 85,408 by 2023. It is probable that this rise in population will be caused largely by an increase in the number of people of pensionable age (over 65+). While the population of Carmarthenshire is predicted to grow, much of this growth is in people of retirement age and those who are economically inactive. Thus to ensure the future prosperity of the Carmarthenshire, there is an imperative to educate and train young people to meet future economic and social needs. Despite current initiatives to retain young people in the county, significant numbers leave the area for higher education and/or to access employment opportunities. There are also issues with some young people not having the skills or interest to take up the jobs that are available in some key sectors locally.

## 8.1 Carmarthenshire Local Service Board

The **Local Service Board (LSB)** is a voluntary arrangement which brings together leaders and chief executives from key organisations, representatives from voluntary and community sectors, and a senior civil servant from the Welsh Government. Its purpose is to plan services and overcome barriers and blockages to ensure that all the organisations which provide services within Carmarthenshire do so in a way that puts the customer first. The voluntary sector representatives ensure that local communities have a voice, whilst the senior civil servant from the Welsh Government offers a link between local, regional and national interests.

The board meets every 2 months and is chaired by Barry Liles, the Principal of Coleg Sir Gâr. The Local Service Board is part of the wider network of partnerships known collectively as the Carmarthenshire Partnership. It oversees the development and delivery of the Integrated Community Strategy for Carmarthenshire 2011-2016 and reports to an Annual Forum on progress. Outcome 2 of the Integrated Community Strategy highlights the need for “People in Carmarthenshire to fulfil their learning potential”. LSB partners aim to achieve this outcome by:

- improving skills in literacy, numeracy, IT, bilingualism and communication in learners of all ages;
- ensuring the assessment of learners is consistent and rigorous;
- developing school leaders that have skills to work collaboratively;
- investing in the 21st Century Schools Programme;
- increasing the aspirations of all of our children, and in particular our looked after children;
- delivering a varied curriculum including vocational options;
- nurturing young people who speak Welsh to become community leaders;
- delivering financial literacy education within schools.

Many of these objectives are covered by current partnership delivery and will also for a significant part of the recommendations of this review. From March 2016, Carmarthenshire Local Service Board is being restructured, with 3 revised thematic groups (Prosperous and Resilient Communities, Healthier Communities, Fair and Safe Communities) tasked with delivering the priorities of the board. The development of the Carmarthenshire 11-19 curriculum will be integral to the economic prosperity strand of the LSB’s future work.

## 8.2 Carmarthenshire Corporate Strategy 2015-2020

The Corporate Strategy sets out the Council’s strategic priorities and aspirational vision for the future of the county. These strategic priorities and aspirations are aligned to the multi-agency county-wide outcomes identified in the Local Service Board’s Integrated Community Strategy focusing on improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of the people of Carmarthenshire.

Two of the strategic priorities within the Corporate Strategy have particular relevance to this report. They link closely to the economic and demographic factors addressed above. *Ensuring that people in Carmarthenshire fulfil their learning potential* will require a focus on:

- Continuous improvement in education outcomes for all children and young people across all learning phases;

- Successfully introducing and translating the new national curriculum and qualifications into an inspiring and engaging local curriculum;
- Developing a self-improving school system across the County making every school a good and improving school;
- Continuing to improve school attendance;
- Ensuring a range of youth support services to foster the engagement of young people in education, work and community life;
- Continuing to improve the condition, suitability and resource efficiency of the schools network through the Modernising Education Plan by investing a further £170m in the improvement of school premises through the 21st Century School Programme;
- Further developing the *Un Sir Gâr - Yr Hwb* service approach by simplifying access to learning and employment support services for young and working age people.

The focus on ensuring that *Carmarthenshire has a stronger and more prosperous economy* includes:

- Creating jobs and growth throughout the County;
- Developing training and learning opportunities for local people;
- Improving the highway infrastructure and communication network to support further economic development and connectivity;
- Ensuring long-term economic and social benefits for Carmarthenshire through the Swansea Bay City Region and future European and external funding avenues.

The curriculum developments proposed in this review link very closely with these outcomes and are thus key actions for the Department for Education and Children. These actions are identified in the Departmental Business Plan 2015-2016. The department is also working closely with both the County Council's Regeneration and Leisure department, Local Service Board partners (including Coleg Sir Gâr, University of Wales, Trinity Saint David and the Hywel Dda Health Board) and Pembrokeshire County Council to contribute to the delivery of these aims. The strength of current partnership working in county provides an excellent foundation for this work.

### **8.3 Coleg Sir Gâr's Corporate Strategy 2014-2017**

This document sets out the strategic priorities for the Coleg Sir Gâr during the identified period. The overall mission of the college is "to be excellent, to be the college of choice" with a strategic vision identifying four key priority areas:

- Our service: to be a College with the highest standards, an inclusive curriculum and an enriched learner experience.
- Our culture: to be a bilingual College, rooted in our Community, where the wellbeing of our learners and staff is at the heart of everything we do.
- Our delivery: to deliver inspirational teaching and learning, and achieve innovation and excellence in all our activities.
- Our resource: to provide the very best resources for learners and staff while ensuring a strong sustainable financial performance.

Close partnership working with the local authority is fundamental to this vision, with the college's longstanding commitment to collaborative working being identified elsewhere in this report as key to the development of a Carmarthenshire curriculum that meets the needs of learners, communities and the local economy.

In April 2013, Coleg Sir Gâr entered the group structure of the University of Wales, Trinity Saint David to ensure a sustainable future for the college and greater opportunities for Carmarthenshire learners. This arrangement not only underpins 11-19 partnership working in the county, but also opens up considerable potential for the expansion of higher education courses that enable young people to progress to degrees in key sectors while remaining resident in the county.

#### **8.4 Current Educational Provision and Partnership Working**

In Carmarthenshire, delivery of the Welsh Government's 14-19 Learning Pathways initiative is delivered via three local geographical cluster groups and one thematic Welsh Medium group.

The structure comprises the:

- Tâf Myrddin cluster (Ysgol Dyffryn Tâf, Ysgol Emlyn, QE High School, Ysgol Bro Myrddin, Coleg Sir Gâr)
- Dinefwr cluster (Ysgol Dyffryn Aman, Ysgol Bro Dinefwr, Ysgol Maes Y Gwendraeth, Coleg Sir Gâr )
- Llanelli cluster (Bryngwyn, Coedcae, St John Lloyd, Glanymor, Ysgol Y Strade, Coleg Sir Gâr ) and;
- Y Bartneriaeth (Ysgol Maes Y Yrfa, Ysgol Y Strade, Ysgol Bro Myrddin and Coleg Sir Gâr).

Coleg Sir Gar is a key partner in all clusters, together with relevant training providers and Careers Wales in each area. Cluster working enables learning providers to implement strategic and operational planning for collaborative working and provides opportunities to share good practice to benefit learners. These clusters function within a shared governance structure that is unique in Wales. Shared governance groups include secondary school and Coleg Sir Gâr staff and governors, together with local employers.

Historically, cross-boundary working with neighbouring authorities (notably with Ceredigion in the BECA Partnership in the lower Teifi valley) has ensured the viability of some provision for young people aged 14-19 in rural areas. However, the further development of this partnership will require a strategic commitment from Ceredigion County Council to proceed.

A report on the quality of Carmarthenshire local authority education services for children and young people in by Estyn in March 2012 highlighted that:

*“Partnership working between the authority, further and higher education establishments, employers and secondary schools in developing the work of the four 14-19 networks is good. The arrangements for the joint governance of these networks is sector leading. They successfully promote co-operation and remove unhelpful competition between providers. They also enable school governors, the college, employers and the authority to plan, monitor and resource an effective 14-19 curriculum that meets the needs of learners in their clusters very well. Cross authority collaboration ensures that learners in urban and rural areas benefit from a wide curriculum choice.”*

Since the 2013, the Network has been working sub-regionally with Pembrokeshire. This work involves sharing of co-ordinator staff resources and the development of a common approach to tracking and support for young people at risk of becoming NEET in partnership with Careers Wales. Joint working is led by a shared Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire 14-19 Executive Group that includes representatives of schools, both colleges, training providers, Careers Wales and local authority staff. This shared approach is also unique in Wales and has enabled good practice to be developed and shared in both two counties, aligned to school improvement developments across the *ERW* Western hub.

### **8.5 Implementing the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 for 14-19 Learners in Carmarthenshire**

In Carmarthenshire, the Learning and Skills measure has delivered positive outcomes 14-19 learners by:

- Increasing the range of courses available in academic and vocational subject areas delivered in both Welsh and English;
- Ensuring that individuals have more equal access to courses across the county;
- Developing a curriculum that better meets the needs of local learners;
- Enabling access to learning coaching and a wide range of additional personal support to overcome barriers to success in education and training;
- Improved “parity of esteem” between vocational and academic courses;
- Increased learner satisfaction and motivation due to opportunities to follow a more diverse curriculum that better reflects the interests of learners;
- Significantly reducing the number of young people who become NEET at 16 in the period 2005-2011;

Collaborative working by schools, Coleg Sir Gar and training providers has enabled young people to:

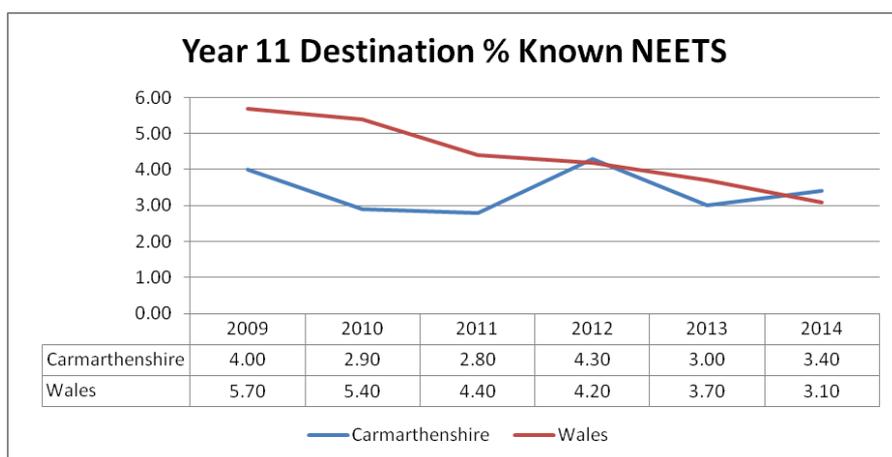
- Study in other learning settings away from their home institution for part of their timetable;
- Learn in larger groups with young people from other schools and colleges;
- Undertake courses in specialist subject areas that would not be available or viable in individual institutions;
- Get a better understanding of course content in vocational areas enabling better Post-16 learning choices (which could include a change from the initial identified subject area);
- Be more engaged with their studies through a wide choice of courses to reflect their interests with the resulting improvement in pupil performance and as evidenced by improving results at Key Stage 4;
- Progress to further learning in their chosen vocational area on leaving Year 11.

Additionally, the development of 14-19 Learning Pathways and the Learning and Skills Measure has enabled the rebuilding of trust between Post-16 learning providers that was eroded following the incorporation of Further Education colleges in 1993. The collaborative provision overseen by the 14-19 Networks has been instrumental in embedding genuine partnership working for young people by schools, further education colleges, training providers, Careers Wales and the local education authority. This work has required many hours of brokerage and facilitation by the 14-19 related staff in the local authority, schools and Coleg Sir Gâr. This work has resulted in more effective collaborative planning and a more integrated approach to the delivery of a wide range of Welsh Government initiatives. It has also improved the support services available for children and young people.

## 8.6 Pupil Destination Data – Carmarthenshire Context

School destination and NEET “snapshot” data is captured by Careers Wales at the end of October each year for Year 11, 12 and 13 leavers. This data provides a useful indicator of how young people are able to progress through the education system locally. It includes details of pupils who would benefit from additional targeted support to move on to further education, training and employment. The data is published annually in April by Statistics Wales, and relates to the previous academic year.

Carmarthenshire Year 11 data reflects the current “mixed economy” for Post 16 provision, comprising of school Sixth Forms, Coleg Sir Gar FE delivery including an academic Tertiary system for the Llanelli area, vocational courses and work based learning provision. Data for Year 12 and Year 13 relates to Carmarthenshire school sixth form data only. It does not include FE college destination data, which WG record this in a different way, making comparison of outcomes difficult.



In 2014, the percentage of Carmarthenshire Year 11 pupils becoming NEET rose from 3.0% (65 young people) in 2013 to 3.4% (69 young people) with the Wales average being 3.1%. Carmarthenshire ranked 14<sup>th</sup> of 22 local authorities in Wales for this key performance indicator.

This small increase in 2014 was a result of a combination of the following factors:

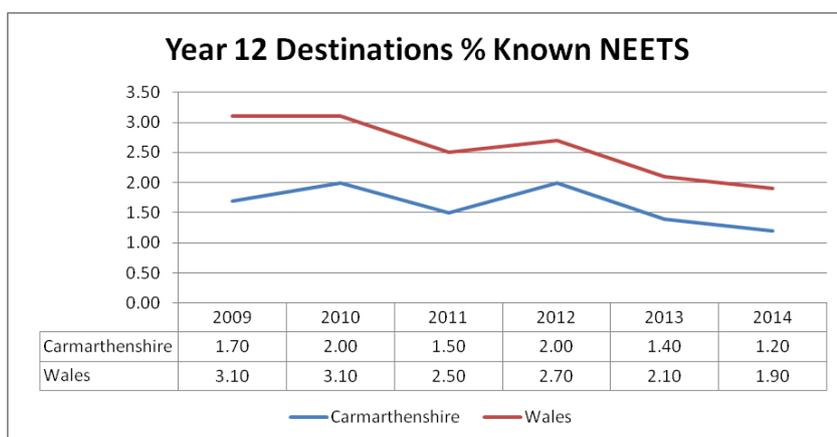
- The high level of dependency on annual grant funding to support the Youth Service and YEPF making long term planning difficult;
- Restructuring of the Youth Service linked to the required departmental budgetary savings and Families First service changes;
- An increased focus on pupil attendance leading to more young people being educated at home (given parents are concerned about fines if pupils do not attend school and thus are withdrawing their children to avoid this) and where this happens in Years 10 and 11, the likelihood of these young people becoming NEET increases significantly.
- The delays in implementing the Welsh Government and Wales European Funding Unit the 2015 -2020 ESF programme which offers opportunities for targeted project work with this cohort of young people.

Progression by young people from year 11 to to the sixth forms in the county has remained fairly constant over the period 2004-2015, varying between 38 and 42% (av. 40.3%). The percentage progression to FE has increased from 39% in 2004 to 47% in 2015 (av. 43%).

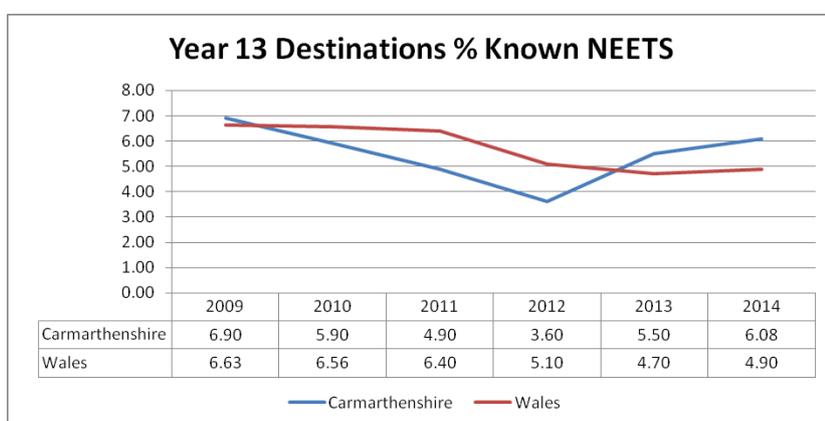
Given that the sixth form progression remains fairly constant, it appears that the reduction in the percentage of young people becoming NEET has translated into an increasing percentage of young people entering FE.

These trends demonstrate the strength of local educational partnership working, which is acknowledged as sector leading. Consequently, in contrast to other areas in Wales and England, there is not great competition locally for Post 16 pupils. This enables more pupil-centred information, advice and guidance (IAG) to be provided by schools and Coleg Sir Gâr, resulting in the needs of the learners being met more effectively.

The effects of YEPF related working can be seen in the “not known” category, with only 1 young person being of unknown status in 2014, compared to 94 young people in 2004. This reduction demonstrates that the collective local intelligence about the whereabouts of young people is much improved. This enables the delivery of targeted services (such as those funded by Families First) to support these young people and their families.



In 2014, Carmarthenshire schools retained 84% of their Year 12 leavers, ranking 6<sup>th</sup> of 22 Welsh Authorities for this KPI (Wales average 82%). This suggests a high degree of pupil satisfaction with the Sixth Form experience on offer in schools. The percentage of young people becoming NEET at the end of Year 12 was 1.2% (Wales average 1.9%) with Carmarthenshire ranking 6<sup>th</sup> of 22 Welsh Local Authorities for this KPI. The percentage of young people becoming NEET varied across the schools from 0% to 4%. However, focus on this cohort of young people remains a priority since levels of pupil drop out from Year 12 can be an indicator of dissatisfaction with the curriculum on offer, particularly for those pupils who return to the Sixth Form without a clear focus for progression and/or weak GCSE grades.



The percentage of Year 13 pupils becoming NEET rose from 5.5% (40 yp in 2013 to 6.0% - 46 yp) in 2014. Carmarthenshire ranks 17 of 22 Welsh authorities, with the Wales average being 4.9%. Analysis suggests that this trend is linked to particular schools where the levels of progression from Sixth Form to University are low, and there is significant variation in the outcomes here at an individual school level. For example, the highest rate of progression by pupils from a Carmarthenshire school to Higher Education is 74.5%, while the lowest is 38%. And the school with the lowest rate of progression to HE also has both the highest rate of Year 13 progression to FE (24%) and the highest rate of Year 13 pupils becoming NEET (16%), with the lowest Carmarthenshire school having 1.2% of pupils in this NEET category.

This data suggests that in 2014, some pupils who were not well suited to A Levels stayed on at school when they would have been better served progressing to FE College or work-based training. These pupils did not achieve good grades at A Level in school and thus either went to FE post A Level (in effect wasting two years in school) and/or did not progress and became NEET. Discussions with FE sector managers highlight that this situation also applies to college students as a degree of drop-out occurs following the first (AS) year of A levels, with some of these young people then opting to take full time vocational courses. This area is a particular focus for the new Post 16 Planning and Funding System.

The attainment of Level 4 qualifications by Carmarthenshire residents is lower than the Welsh and UK average. This needs to be addressed through a broader more engaging curriculum with clear progression routes to further and higher education and training. Similarly, the numbers of individuals without qualifications is higher than the national average. These skills deficits are concerning for the local economy, with employers reporting they are not able to find the skilled staff they need to grow their businesses locally. Strong local progression routes for vocational courses, building on the existing pathways between schools and the college are one means to achieve this.

While the existing partnership and cluster arrangements have increased choice for learners and the quality of provision, this work has been supported by external grant funding from the Welsh Government. As grant funding reduces, schools and the college will come under increasing pressure as the National Planning and Funding System impacts on the levels of funding available for 11-19 education and training in Carmarthenshire.

All learners need to be able to access high quality learning experiences for which they are well suited and for which clear progression routes are understood. Progression data indicates that a small proportion of young people across Carmarthenshire are, on occasion, making the wrong choices at key transition points. In 2014 10% of year 12 pupils (93) and 8% of Year 13 pupils left school and moved to local FE colleges. This demonstrates the need for informed and unbiased information advice and guidance (IAG) prior to Post 16 transition to ensure all young people are taking courses that accurately reflect both their intended careers and local economic needs.

## **9.0 A Rationale for 11-19 Transformation**

There is much evidence to show that 11-19 education in Carmarthenshire has improved outcomes for young people since the implementation of the Welsh Government's 14-19 Learning Pathways agenda. However, a new vision and related local curriculum is now required to achieve the following objectives for young people in 11-19 education. The

outcomes for this transformation will be highlighted by this review and linked to the themes identified in the Welsh Government's Ministerial Priority letters to Local Authorities and Further Education Colleges. These outcomes will focus on the following priorities:

Jobs and Growth:

- working collaboratively on ESF bids;
- linking vocational training with the Regional Skills Plan;
- using Labour Market information (LMI) to plan vocational course delivery

Equality and equity:

- working together to reduce the number of young people who become NEET
- minimising the effects of poverty on children, young people and families,
- implementing all elements of the Youth Progression and Engagement Framework,
- ensuring all young people achieve Maths and English GCSE,
- increasing Welsh medium delivery,
- supporting more able and talented pupils through the Seren Hub developments,
- and ensuring transition plan are in place for LLDD learners

In summary, the delivery of 11-19 education and training in Carmarthenshire needs to change and develop further to meet the future needs of learners, employers and communities. Provision also needs to evolve to ensure the delivery structures are sustainable in a period of reducing public funding.

## **10.0 Factors that inform the development of a Carmarthenshire Curriculum**

The development of a curriculum for Carmarthenshire learners is informed by five factors: Welsh Government policy, institutional choices regarding informal, non formal learning and extracurricular activities, local and regional labour market needs, targeted support and the views of young people.

### **10.1 Welsh Government Curriculum Policy**

The Welsh Government sets out what young people are required to learn in secondary schools and further education institutions. Secondary schools in Wales must, by law, teach the National Curriculum to their pupils. The basic curriculum consists of religious education, sex education, personal and social education, and for 14-16 year olds, work-related education, the Welsh Baccalaureate is now online for pupils at KS4. Schools must also provide careers education and guidance for all 13-16 year-olds that meets the requirements of the Careers and the World of Work framework.

At Key Stage 3, the National Curriculum consists of 12 subjects comprising the "core subjects" of English and Welsh, mathematics and science, and the "non-core subjects" of Welsh second language, modern foreign languages, design and technology, information technology, history, geography, art, music, physical education and religious education. In addition, there is a non statutory skills framework, Personal and Social Education (PSE), sex education and the careers and the world of work framework.

At Key Stage 4, only five National Curriculum subjects are currently mandatory (English, Welsh or Welsh second language, mathematics, science, and physical education) and schools have greater flexibility to provide optional subjects that meet the needs and interests of their pupils. The majority of learners at this key stage follow courses leading to external qualifications, principally GCSEs. From 2017, the Key Stage 4 curriculum will change significantly with the move to a "capped 9" offer of GCSE and the implementation of the recommendations of the Donaldson Review. The subjects included in the capped 9 from 2017 are GCSE Welsh 1st Language or English Language, GCSE Mathematics, GCSE Numeracy, and 2 Science qualifications at Level 2, plus another 4 qualifications. From, 2018, science subjects must be 2 GCSEs qualifications. In addition there are opportunities to study vocational courses, the non statutory skills framework, Physical Education, Religious Education, sex education, careers and the world of work framework and the Welsh Baccalaureate.

In Post-16 (non compulsory) education in school sixth forms and further education colleges, young people follow programmes of learning, normally structured around AS/A levels or vocational qualifications at Level 2 or 3. These programmes include GCSE Maths and English for those young people who have not already gained these qualifications. While schools and colleges in this phase of education are currently funded on the basis of the numbers of young people attending host institutions, the Welsh Government is moving to a new National Planning and Funding System based on the actual programmes that are being studied. This change is likely to impact significantly on the funding available to institutions, particularly schools sixth forms. Further Education colleges are already funded on a programme basis.

The implementation of 14-19 Learning Pathways in Carmarthenshire from 2005 onwards has resulted in a much wider vocational curriculum being available for learners in Key Stage 4. These courses have been offered by schools in partnership with Coleg Sir Gar and

training providers. In most cases, these courses have been funded by additional WG grants, formerly 14-19 Annual Network Development Plan resources and most recently, funding allocated from the ERW Education Improvement Grant (EIG). In some cases, schools have opted to continue this provision using mainstream All Wales Pupil Unit funding following the reduction of grant aid for these courses. This vocational curriculum has been informed in part by local labour market needs, with a strong focus on sectors important to the local economy such as construction, engineering, childcare and agriculture provision.

Other areas of collaborative provision (such as hair and beauty courses) are less closely aligned to the local economy and other growth sectors (such as hospitality and tourism) have not featured significantly in collaborative provision to date.

Many of the pupils who have undertaken vocational courses at Key Stage 4 over the period since 2016 have chosen to progress to Coleg Sir Gar for their Post 16 education. These pupils have progressed to both further learning in their initial choice of vocational subject and to a wide range of other courses, including A Levels. This indicates that the engagement of these pupils through additional vocational courses at Key Stage 4 has had a positive effect on pupil achievement at KS4 (for example, increasing GCSE performance) and in supporting their progression to Post 16 education, whether this be in school or college. Tracking of these pupils through their education at CSG indicates that significant numbers have progressed from FE to HE programmes at the college and then to employment in key local economy sectors.

While there have been fewer instances of collaboration in Post 16 settings, there are good examples of schools working together to ensure that a wide curriculum is on offer to all pupils. The *Partneriaeth* of Welsh Medium secondary schools has been pro-active in working together to share Welsh medium A Level and vocational provision between them. This has resulted in shared delivery of low take up A Level subjects (including Psychology and Spanish) and vocational provision in the key sector of Welsh Medium childcare.

However, further cuts to the Post 16 schools budget will place significant challenges on the ability of sixth forms to offer the range of courses currently required by the Welsh Government's Learning and Skills Measure. In order that all sixth form pupils are offered an appropriate and relevant range of courses, further school/school and school/college collaboration will be required in the period 2016-2020.

Existing collaborative courses have depended to a large extent on external WG funding to be viable. A significant part of this funding has been used to support transporting pupils from school to school or college. One means to overcome this cost is the increased use of blended and e-learning technologies to deliver mainstream courses. This delivery would include live and recorded lectures streamed via the internet, shared learning resources accessible via the WG *Hwb* learning platform and the movement of teaching staff to offer face to face tutorials and learning support sessions. That is one means by which this collaborative agenda could be developed further.

The full details of the revised Welsh Baccalaureate qualifications, recommendations of the Donaldson Report and related local actions are included in the parallel CCC document "*Palmantu'r Ffordd / Paving the Way – A Strategic Review of 3-19 Arrangements in Carmarthenshire*". The expectation of the Welsh Government is that these qualifications and recommendations will be implemented in full by all local authorities and further education colleges in Wales. Local implementation of the recommendations of the Donaldson Review

are identified in detail in the “A Strategic Review of 3-19 Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Carmarthenshire” document, to be published in March 2016.

## **10.2 Wider Experiences**

In addition to the compulsory curriculum requirements set out by the Welsh Government, schools and further education colleges have the opportunity to provide a wide range of extracurricular activities for young people. These curriculum enhancements include arts and creative experiences including *eisteddfodau* and dramatic productions, sports teams and informal physical activity, a wide variety of educational visits in Wales, the UK and abroad, and the Duke of Edinburgh and John Muir Awards. In many cases, these experiences are some of the most rewarding and memorable for young people during their time in formal education. These experiences also contribute actively to the development of the “soft” and interpersonal skills required by employers. Despite the on-going financial challenges faced by schools and colleges, it is important that all young people have the opportunity to take part in these experiences. Consequently, they should be retained as a valuable addition to the formal curriculum, though decisions regarding what is to be offered in each institution will remain the responsibility of the school or college concerned.

## **10.3 Careers and the World of Work Framework**

The Welsh Government has sought to strengthen the links between education and the world of work through a range of policy initiatives since 1999. Most recent examples include Qualified for Life, Successful Futures and policies to alleviate the effects of poverty in Wales. The new National Planning and Funding System and the Annual Ministerial Priorities seek to develop this link further, stressing the need for local authorities and colleges to ensure that the needs of the local labour market are reflected in the courses that they offer. The development of the Regional Learning Partnership and SBCR mean that labour market information for the key sectors in south west Wales is much improved. This information will be used to identify the key sectors for curriculum related developments in Carmarthenshire.

The Careers and the World of Work Framework (C&WoW) is concerned with the relationships between young people, their learning and the world of work. It helps learners to explore the attitudes required for employability and lifelong learning and enables them to plan and manage their pathway through learning and work. The framework includes support for young people to make effective career choices, become more entrepreneurial, become motivated, set long term goals and overcome barriers. It assists young people in seeing the relevance of their studies to their life and work and allows the development of the skills required by employers. In related curriculum developments, the revised 2015 Welsh Baccalaureate (and notably the Enterprise and Employability Challenge) includes many of the competencies to be developed through the C&WoW framework.

However, following very significant cuts to the core budget of Careers Wales, the capacity of this organisation to offer universal personal support to young people and deliver the Careers and the World of Work framework has declined significantly. In 2015, Careers Wales passed responsibility for the organisation of work experience and work related learning on to schools and local authorities. Individual schools lack the resources to dedicate staff to provide a comprehensive programme of C&WW and develop effective links with a wide range of local employers and highlight jobs that exist in the local area. There is a need to better promote vocational training and apprenticeships, linked to up-to-date labour market information and regional skills shortage areas. Given the reducing capacity within Careers

Wales, the role of the local authority in this work becomes paramount. In Carmarthenshire, it is proposed that the County Council (both education and regeneration departments) take on this role to ensure all young people are well informed about the local labour market and what qualifications are required to progress to work in the key growth sectors.

#### **10.4 Targeted support**

In addition to the mainstream curriculum, a wide range of targeted services are available to support young people with particular needs. These services include:

- Team Around the Family support services linked to the Welsh Government's Families First poverty reduction initiative;
- Provision delivered by the LA's inclusion service including support for young people with special educational needs, educational psychology, the behavior support team, the transition team, linguistic support for minority ethnic pupils and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and school based counseling;
- Specialist schooling for young people with disabilities, specialist health needs, behavioral issues, and those disaffected with formal schooling;
- Additional support to be offered via European Social Fund programmes such as the regional Cynnydd Project to reduce the number of young people at risk of becoming NEET;
- Social work and health support offered by CCC Children's Services for groups including young people with disabilities and those looked after by the County Council;
- A wide range of learner support services provided for students studying at Coleg Sir Gâr.

#### **10.5 Progression to Higher Education and Employment**

While this review identifies the developments need to ensure young people can access a relevant and appropriate 11-19 curriculum, ensuring that young people are able to progress to higher learning and or/work on leaving school, college or work-based learning at 18 is essential. There are already strong progression routes for young people in key sector areas such as construction and engineering based on the long-standing partnership arrangements supported by Coleg Sir Gâr. These links can be developed further via close working with the CCC Regeneration team and their links with new and expanding firms within the County. Coleg Sir Gâr's place within the group structure of the University of Wales Trinity St David offers the opportunity for the further development of progression routes in key sector areas, including teaching and education. The involvement of employers in existing partnership structures and the CSG Corporate Board will continue to be essential to ensure that the opportunities for the further development of post school and college progression routes can be maximised.

## **10.6 Young People's Participation**

Under the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child, young people have the right to be involved in decisions affecting them and must be provided with an education that develops their personality and talents to the full.

The Welsh Government define participation as being the “right to be involved in making decisions, planning and reviewing an action that might affect them.”

Thus while the Welsh Government sets out the legal and policy framework affecting the delivery of the education at all levels in Wales, all local curriculum developments need to be informed by the views of young people about the range of choices available to them. Themes contained within this review are subject to consultation with young people during the Spring Term of 2016 via the County Council's “Super Survey” on-line questionnaire to be undertaken by school pupils and college students.

## **11.0 A Carmarthenshire Curriculum for 2020**

The provisional universal curriculum offered to young people at Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and in Post 16 Learning is identified below. It is informed by the factors described above and should evolve to ensure a close fit with the needs of the local and regional economy. It will also highlight the range of targeted support available for young people with additional support needs. The combination of the universal curriculum offer, related subject choices and the targeted support available will make up a Carmarthenshire learner entitlement at each of the three stages in 11-19 education and training in schools, FE college and work based learning.

At Key Stage 3 (for young people aged 11-14), it is proposed that this entitlement will comprise of:

1. A Universal offer (in Welsh and English) of:

- The core curriculum (13 distinct subject areas)
- Personal and social education;
- The 4 key outcomes of the Donaldson Principles including the further development of digital literacy;
- The Careers and the World of Work Framework including information on local employment opportunities and the study pathways needed to progress to these jobs;
- Access to programmes to support more able and talented learners;
- A range of wider experiences aimed at developing well rounded learners.

2. Targeted support to meet their identified additional needs including:

- Team Around the Family (TAF) support;
- Access to a range of Inclusion support services;
- Specialist schooling where appropriate;
- Additional personal support offered via the Cynnydd ESF Project for young people most at risk of becoming NEET;

3. Progression to Key Stage 4 in an appropriate learning pathway

*(See Appendix 1)*

At Key Stage 4 (for young people aged 14-16), it is proposed that this entitlement will comprise of:

1. A Universal offer (in Welsh and English) of:

- The “capped” 9 GCSE qualifications (Welsh 1<sup>st</sup> Language or English 1<sup>st</sup> Language, Mathematics, Numeracy, 2 Science GCSEs plus another 4 qualifications)
- The Intermediate Welsh Baccalaureate (including challenges in Global Citizenship, Enterprise and Entrepreneurship, Community and an individual project)
- Personal and social education;
- The 4 key learner outcomes based on the Donaldson Principles;
- The Careers and the World of Work Framework;
- Vocational course options linked to local labour market key sectors;
- Access to programmes to support more able and talented learners;
- A range of wider experiences aimed at developing well rounded young people.

2. Targeted support to meet their identified additional needs including:

- Team Around the Family (TAF) support;
- Access to a range of Inclusion support services;
- Specialist schooling where appropriate;
- Additional personal support offered via the Cynnydd ESF Project for young people most at risk of becoming NEET;
- Children’s Services support for particular groups (looked after young people, young people with disabilities)

3. Progression to Post 16 education or training in an appropriate learning pathway

*(See Appendix 2)*

In Post 16 education (for young people aged 16-19) in school sixth forms, it is proposed that this entitlement will comprise of:

1. A Universal offer (in both Welsh and English) of:

- AS/A Levels or a vocational qualification at Level 2 or 3;
- Advanced Welsh Baccalaureate (including challenges in Global Citizenship, Enterprise and Entrepreneurship, Community and an individual project)
- The 4 key outcomes of the Donaldson Principles;
- The Careers and the World of Work Framework;
- Access to programmes to support more able and talented learners including the Seren Hub;
- A range of wider experiences aimed at developing well rounded learners.

2. Targeted support to meet their identified additional needs including:

- Support to retake GCSE Maths and English if young people have not yet gained these qualifications at Grade C or above;
- Team Around the Family (TAF) interventions to overcome barriers to effective learning;

- Access to a range of Inclusion support services (in school sixth form settings);
- Specialist schooling where appropriate;
- Additional personal support offered via the Cynnydd ESF Project for young people most at risk of becoming NEET;
- Children's Services support for particular groups (looked after young people, young people with disabilities)

### 3. Progression to Post 18 education, training or employment

*(See Appendix 3)*

In Post 16 further education (for young people aged 16-19 ), it is proposed that this entitlement will comprise of:

#### 1. A Universal offer (in both Welsh and English) of:

- AS/A Levels or a vocational qualification at Level 2 or 3;
- Intermediate or Advanced Welsh Baccalaureate (including challenges in Global Citizenship, Enterprise and Entrepreneurship, Community and an individual project);
- The Careers and the World of Work Framework;
- Access to programmes to support more able and talented learners including the Seren Hub and ACE programmes;
- Involvement in the World Skills programme for vocational learners;
- Access to sports and performance academy support;
- A range of wider experiences aimed at developing well rounded learners.

#### 2. Targeted support to meet their identified additional needs including:

- Support to retake GCSE Maths and English if young people have not yet gained these qualifications at Grade C or above;
- Access to a wide range of learner support services;
- Additional personal support offered via the Cynnydd ESF Project for young people most at risk of becoming NEET;
- Specialist support services support for particular groups (looked after young people, young people with disabilities)

### 3. Progression to Post 18 education, training or employment, including Work-based learning programme and apprenticeships within the college.

*(See Appendix 4)*

In Post 16 further training provision and apprenticeships (for young people aged 16-19 ), it is proposed that this entitlement will comprise of :

#### 1. A Universal offer (in both Welsh and English) of:

- A vocational qualification at Level 2 or 3;
- Careers advice and guidance;

#### 2. Targeted support to meet their identified additional needs including:

- Support to retake GCSE Maths and English if young people have not yet gained these qualifications at Grade C or above;

- Access to a wide range of learner support services;
- Specialist support services support for particular groups (looked after young people, young people with disabilities)

3. Progression to Post 19 education, training or employment, including work-based learning programme and apprenticeships within the college.

*(See Appendix 5)*

## **12.0 The Benefits for Learners**

The evolution of a Carmarthenshire curriculum, informed by Welsh Government policy and shaped by local needs will enable the vast majority of young people in Carmarthenshire to achieve their full potential. The aim of identifying this common curriculum is to make young people aware of the range of provision on offer to them and how pathways relevant to their chosen career paths can evolve, linked to local regional and national employment opportunities.

Delivery of the offer will be the responsibility of the individual secondary schools, Coleg Sir Gâr and the locally contracted training providers. For school and FE provision, it is presumed that the Welsh Government will retain the requirements of the Learning and Skills Measures detailing the number of courses to be offered to young people in Key Stage 4 and Post 16. In this case, the local authority will retain responsibility for checking that secondary schools and meeting the Measure. For Post 16 FE provision, this responsibility rests with Coleg Sir Gâr.

However, the likelihood of continuing Welsh Government funding reductions will mean some individual institutions will find it more difficult to meet the requirements of the Measure, increasing the need for cluster based collaborative approaches to delivering the identified curriculum at a local level. Given the need to evolve a curriculum linked in part to local labour market priorities, the further evolution of Carmarthenshire partnership structures, including the joint governance groups and strong linkages with the Local Service Board will be essential if the full potential of the curriculum developments outlined here are to be realised.

The curriculum identified in the 11-19 Review will be developed in Welsh, English and bilingually where appropriate. This will include the prioritisation of course options to ensure a range and linguistic continuum of Welsh-medium opportunities for learners in line with the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009. For Welsh-medium provision, the role of the Partneriaeth Addysg Gymraeg (PAG) cluster network that includes Welsh Medium schools, Coleg Sir Gar and key local employers will be essential in ensuring that effective progression into Welsh-medium course options in Key Stages 4 and 5 will be available. Stronger links into local higher education provision in the medium of Welsh will also be developed to enable further linguistic progression for young people.

The Local Authority, Secondary Schools and Coleg Sir Gar will work together strategically to facilitate linguistic continuity in order to increase the numbers of young people achieving fluency in a broad range of Welsh-language skills. Those not opting for Welsh-medium education will be offered better opportunities to develop Welsh-language skills which enrich their experience of living in a bilingual county. We will also seek to promote Welsh

as a recognised skill in the workplace through work-related educational activities run in partnership with employers, Careers Wales and CCC Regeneration colleagues.

Strong links with Welsh-medium education from the early years and robust linguistic progression through every phase of Carmarthenshire education will enable the development young people who are truly bilingual. 'Enabling the Welsh language to thrive' is a key building block in the 'Curriculum for Wales – a curriculum for Life' document, (WG 2015), namely the implementation plan for the 'Successful Futures' report (2015), authored by Professor Graham Donaldson. Close regard will be given to developing the 9 recommendations offered by Professor Donaldson regarding the place of Welsh in the curriculum – as a discrete subject, as a medium of instruction and as a means of informal communication.

Recent announcements made by Alun Davies AM, Minister for Lifelong Learning regarding The Welsh Language (e.g. Senedd 12.7.16) provide added impetus to developing the Welsh language in education, such as developing one continuum of learning for the Welsh language. These 3-16 curriculum developments will be fully considered, as deemed appropriate, within the 11-19 curriculum described in this document.

It should be noted there will be some young people unable to achieve all that they could during the 11-19 education phase. This will be a result of individual circumstances including physical and mental health problems, disillusionment with the formal schooling system, behavioural issues, elective home education and involvement with the criminal justice system. In these circumstances, a joined-up and targeted approach linked to the YEPF for those aged 16-19 offers the opportunity to target specialised support appropriate to their needs. The developing regional ESF bids (Cynnydd and Cam Nesa) offer the opportunity to provide support for this group of young people in addition to the current targeted services to meet their needs.

### **13.0 The Benefits for the Carmarthenshire Economy**

While there are already good links between education and local employers, the recommendations of this review offer a useful opportunity to improve the connections between the schools, Coleg Sir Gâr and the local authority via both the Departments for Education and Children and Regeneration.

The identified curriculum offers the opportunity, via the Welsh Baccalaureate, Careers and the World of Work framework and core principles of Successful Futures to better prepare young people for employment. The changed curriculum will not only equip young people with the generic skills employers require but will set out the pathways that young people will need to follow in order to progress to work in the key local employment sectors. Use of Post 16 commissioning linked to the key sectors will ensure that funding priority is given to training routes that link closely to local labour market needs. Collectively these actions will mean that young people will be better prepared to take up the work that exists locally and to progress to higher levels of learning, whether this be in-county or beyond.

### **14.0 11-19 Review Conclusions**

Educational partnership working in Carmarthenshire over the past 15 years has improved range and quality of courses available to young people. It has provided pupils and students with opportunities to take courses and gain qualifications relevant to the local economy and

to enable them to progress to universities in Wales, elsewhere in the UK and beyond. The results of this work can be seen in the numbers of young people progressing to higher education and work in Wales and beyond and the reduction in the numbers of young people not in employments, education and training.

However, given the impending curriculum changes, possible structural changes and the impact of reductions in Welsh Government funding, all organisations involved in education and training in Carmarthenshire need to work more closely together to ensure that the educational and welfare needs of young people are met.

Delivering the identified curriculum models provide a clear focus for this work and demonstrate the commitment of the Carmarthenshire partnership to delivering educational experiences that meet the needs of young people, local communities and the economy. Implementing the curriculum models for all phases of 11-19 education provides a renewed focus for partnership working and informs the implementation of the national planning and funding system and possible capital developments in the County. Implementing the recommendations identified below will provide a clear focus for the further development of the Carmarthenshire Learning Partnership and enable the current sector-leading practice in county evolve to meet the changing needs of young people and employer.

Given the strategic case set out above and discussions with key stakeholders, it is important that there is a shared vision for the development of a bilingual Carmarthenshire 11-19 curriculum that will:

- Provide 21st Century education which is creative, innovative and aspires to excellence for all;
- Focus on the needs of all learners with quality as the key requirement for both academic and vocational studies;
- Provide 11-19 educational provision that builds aspirations and self-esteem for all learners and ensures achievement across a breadth of ability;
- Ensure choice and flexibility of learning opportunities and meaningful progression to the next stage of learning or to employment;
- Provide learners with employability skills and work experience as appropriate;
- Be responsive to employer and community needs;
- Meet the needs of those learners who have Special Educational Needs (SEN);
- Ensure that the needs of those learners with additional learning needs (ALN) are met;
  
- Increase opportunities for Welsh-medium and bilingual learning;
- Provide equality of opportunity for all; and
- Provide value for money and maximise the use of limited resources.

## **15.0 11-19 Review Recommendations**

To ensure that the full benefits of the identified curriculum models can be achieved for young people in Carmarthenshire, it is proposed that the local authority, Coleg Sir Gâr and the wider learning partnership:

1. Agree the key components of 11-14, 14-16 and 16-19 shared curriculum offers (*by January 2017*);
2. Implement the agreed curriculum model across all Carmarthenshire Secondary Schools, Coleg Sir Gâr and Carmarthenshire based Welsh Government contracted training providers (*by January 2017*);
3. Agree the revised shared governance and local authority commissioning structure for the revised curriculum offer (*by November 2016*);
4. Develop a commissioning model to underpin the full implementation of the Post-16 Planning and Reporting system for Sixth Form Provision (*by November 2016*);
5. Identify shared priorities for further capital developments based on the curriculum models and the needs of the local economy linked to Swansea Bay City Region priorities (*by January 2017 and on-going*);
6. Utilise Carmarthenshire Education Improvement Grant Funding (or any replacement funding) to support vocational course delivery in the identified growth sector areas (elder and early years care, engineering, energy and environment construction, tourism & hospitality, food and agriculture, creative industries, STEM industries, ICT and professional services) at Coleg Sir Gar and training providers for school pupils in Key Stage 4 and 5 (*from November 2016*);
7. Build on existing partnership relationships with local businesses to focus skills demands and employability of new labour market entrants within Carmarthenshire to ensure that local demands are met (*by January 2017 and on-going*);
8. Ensure strong links with the Swansea Bay City Region Economic Regeneration Strategy 2013-2030 to enable a strategic fit with the key economic sectors being targeted and local progression to Higher Education in the identified priority sectors (*by January 2017 and on-going*);
9. Utilise regularly updated labour market intelligence on which to make informed decisions together with data on sector growth trends and growth sectors for employment on an on-going basis (*by January 2017 and on-going*);
10. Implement a programme of blended and e-learning learning to deliver the 16-19 curriculum in low take-up AS and A Level subjects in both Welsh and English (*from September 2017*);
11. Implement the actions identified in the Carmarthenshire Youth Engagement and Progression Plan to reduce the number of young people who become NEET (*September 2016 and on-going*);
12. Continue to track the destinations of young people to support effective Post 16 and Post 19 transitions through YEPF related work (*September 2016 and on-going*);
13. Provide targeted support for vulnerable young people including those with disabilities and most at risk of becoming NEET utilising ESF funding via the *Cynnydd* and *Cam Nesa* projects for this work (*by September 2016 and on-going*);

14. Support the progress of the most able and talented learners via the Pembrokeshire/Carmarthenshire Seren Hub (*on-going*);
15. Support teachers, lecturers and other practitioners to develop young people's learning about the world of work through a County-wide approach to the delivery of the revised Welsh Baccalaureate (*on-going*);
16. Embed meaningful employer involvement in curriculum change, including strong links with key local employers and County Council regeneration departments (*by January 2017 and on-going*);
17. Consolidate the existing strengths of partnership working with FE colleges and training providers through the implementation of revised partnership structures (*by September 2016 and on-going*);
18. Ensure that the full requirements of the Careers and the World of Work Framework are delivered in Carmarthenshire (*on going*) by:
  - a. Implementing a format for careers days/ week in Years 7-9 involving local employers and LA regeneration departments and linked to local labour market information and JobCentre Plus data;
  - b. Maintaining a work experience placement database (jointly with Pembrokeshire CC)
  - c. Undertaking Health and Safety/ safeguarding vetting for all placements commissioned by the local authorities;
  - d. Delivering an annual Careers conference for Year 10/11 pupils in partnership with Careers Wales;
  - e. Supporting one week of work related experience built into Years 10 and 12, with links to the 3 Welsh Baccalaureate challenges, volunteering and Duke of Edinburgh's Award;
  - f. Strengthening links with parents and carers via newsletter/website, information evenings, parent's evening sessions;
  - g. One to one support with school pupils/students by personal tutors for all young people;
  - h. Developing Team Around the Family and Youth Worker brokerage roles to support transition to education and training for vulnerable young people;
  - i. Early follow up of young people dropping out of school and college in the autumn and winter terms of Year 12.
19. Annual analysis of labour market information to inform collaborative vocational course delivery and Post 16 planning in the period to 2020 (*by November 2016 and on-going*);
20. Accountability for the progress of these recommendations be overseen via the shared governance clusters, Coleg Sir Gâr Corporate Board, Local Service Board and the Education and Children's Scrutiny Committees (*on-going*).

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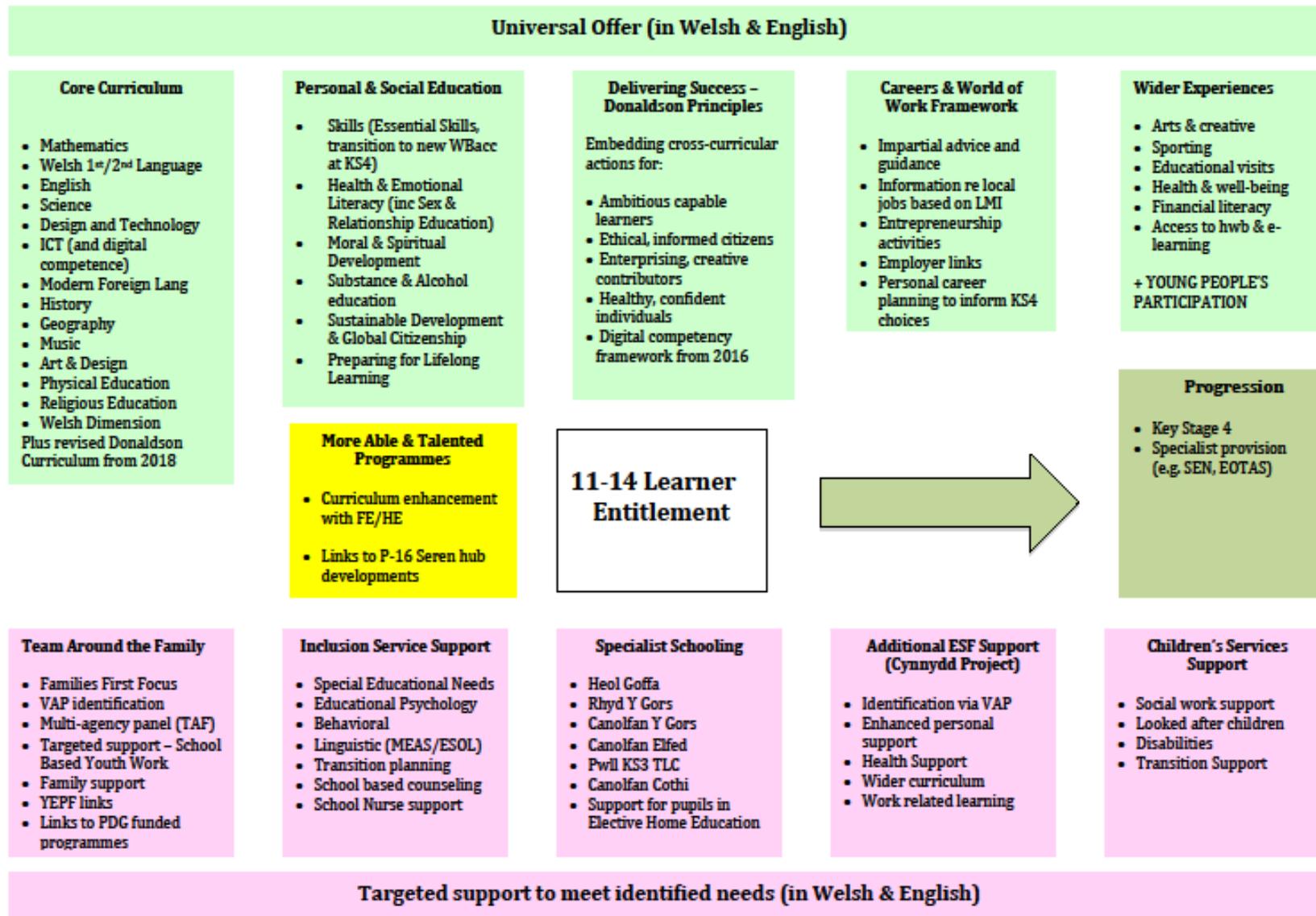
## **17.0 Acronyms used in this report**

AM                                      Assembly Member

CCC	Carmarthenshire County Council
CSG	Coleg Sir Gâr
CVET	Continuing Vocational Education and Training
CW	Careers Wales
CWoW	Careers and the World of Work
DT	Design Technology
EET	Employment Education and Training
ESF	European Social Fund
DfES	Department for Education and Skills (Welsh Government)
EOTAS	Educated Other Than At School
eFSM	eligible for Free School Meals
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ERW	Regional school improvement consortium for south west and mid Wales
ESTYN	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales
FE	Further Education
FEI	Further Education Institution
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IVET	Intermediate Vocational Education and Training
JWP	Joint Working Party
KS	Key Stage
LA	Local Authority
LLDD	Learner with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities
LMI	Labour Market Information
LTM	Learning Transformation Manager
LSB	Local Service Board
MEAS	Minority Ethnic Achievement Service
MEP	Modernising Education Programme
MFL	Modern Foreign language
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-ordination and Development
P16PR	Post 16 Planning and Reporting
PDG	Pupil Deprivation Grant
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
PSE	Personal and Social Education
RLP	Regional Learning Partnership
RLSO	Regional Learning and Skills Observatory
SBCR	Swansea Bay City Region
SBYW	School Based Youth Worker
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SOC	Strategic Outcome Case
SSA	Subject Sector Area
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths

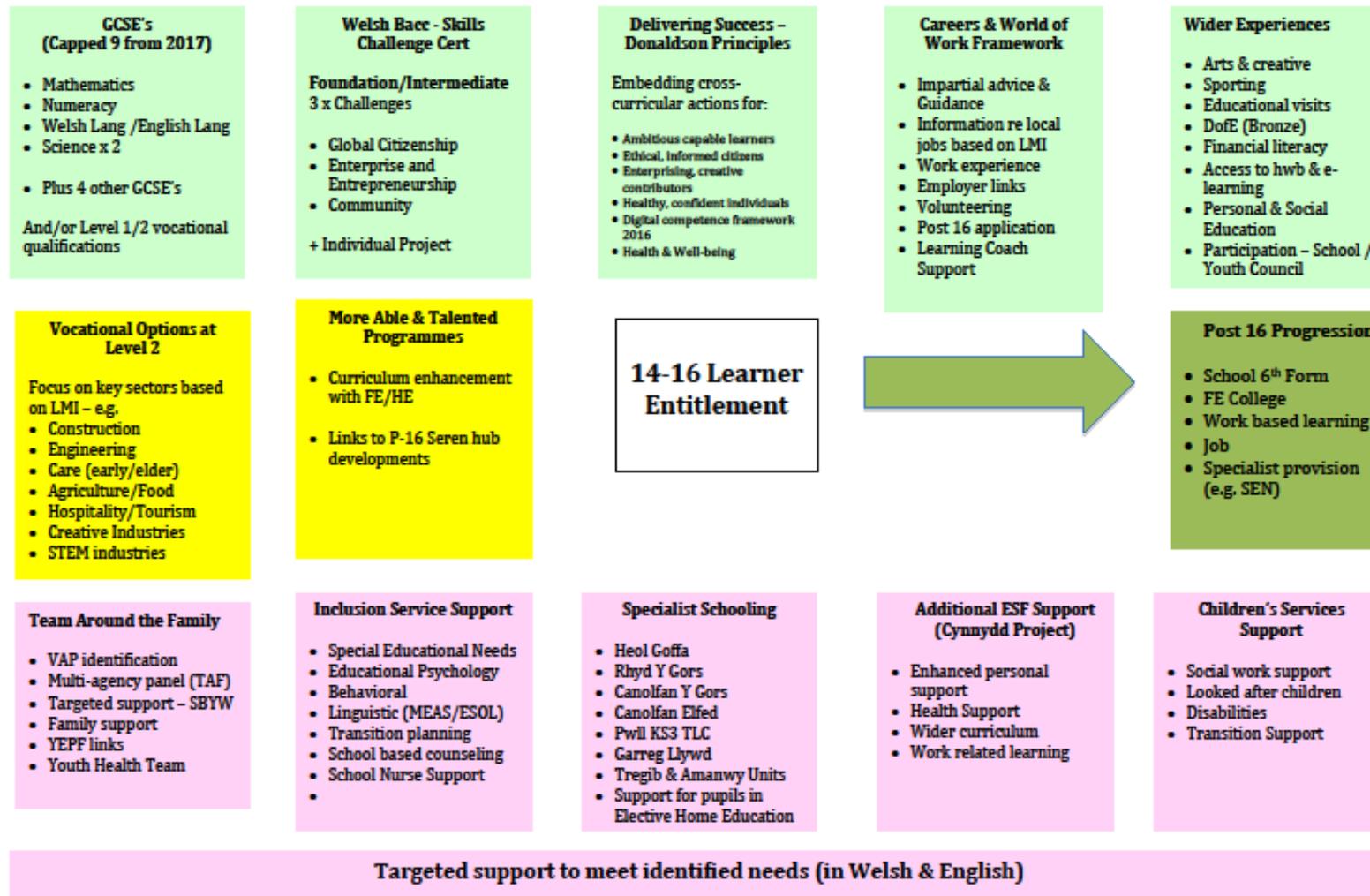
SWW	South West Wales
TAF	Team Around the Family
TLC	Teaching and Learning Centre
WB	Welsh Bacallaureate
WG	Welsh Government
WEFO	Wales European Funding Office
WMES	Welsh Medium Education Strategy
WESP	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan
YEPF	Youth Engagement and Progression Framework

## Appendix 1 - Carmarthenshire Curriculum Offer – Key Stage 3 (Years 7 to 9)

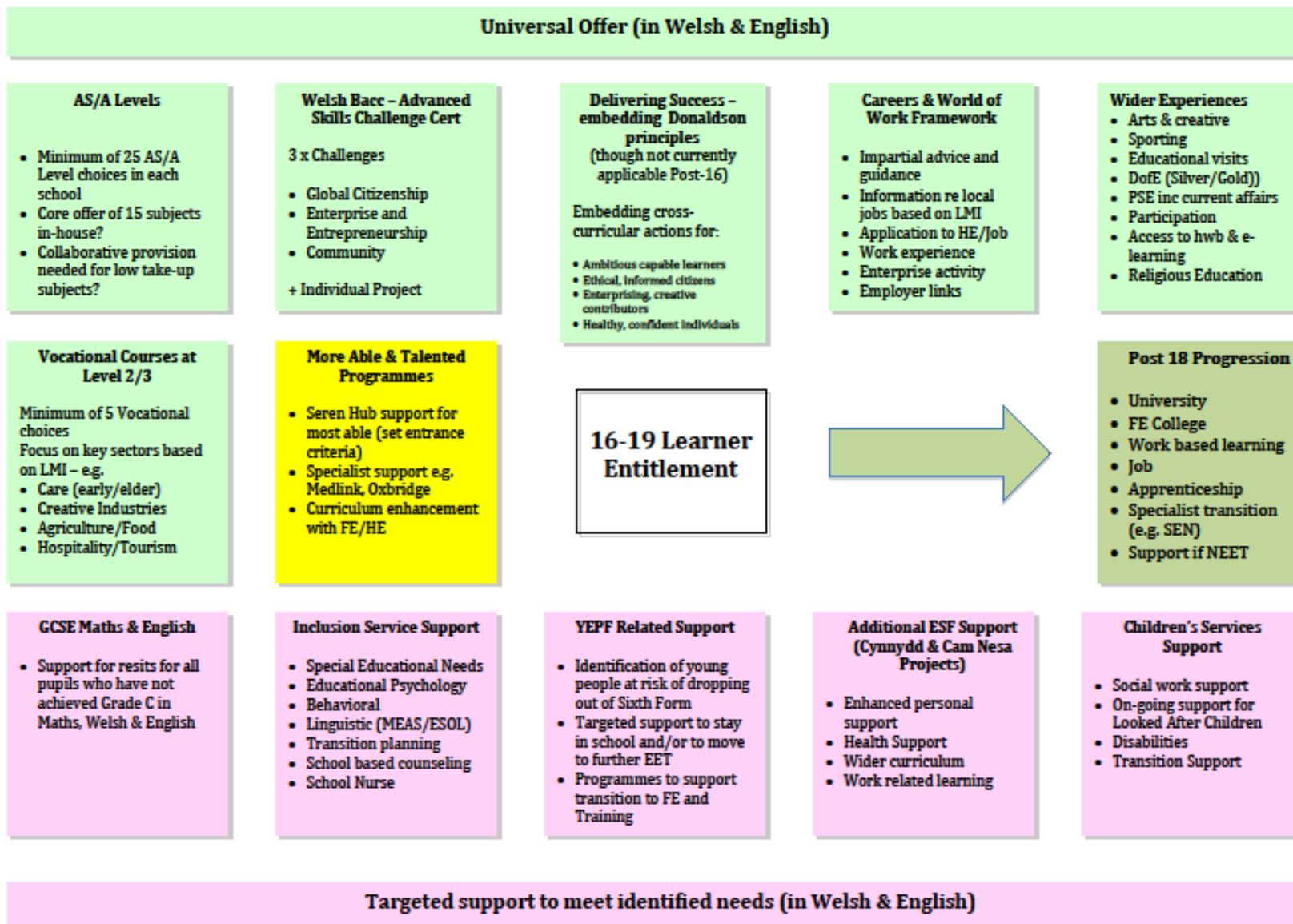


## Appendix 2 – Carmarthenshire Curriculum Offer – Key Stage 4 (Years 10 & 11)

### Universal Offer (in Welsh & English)

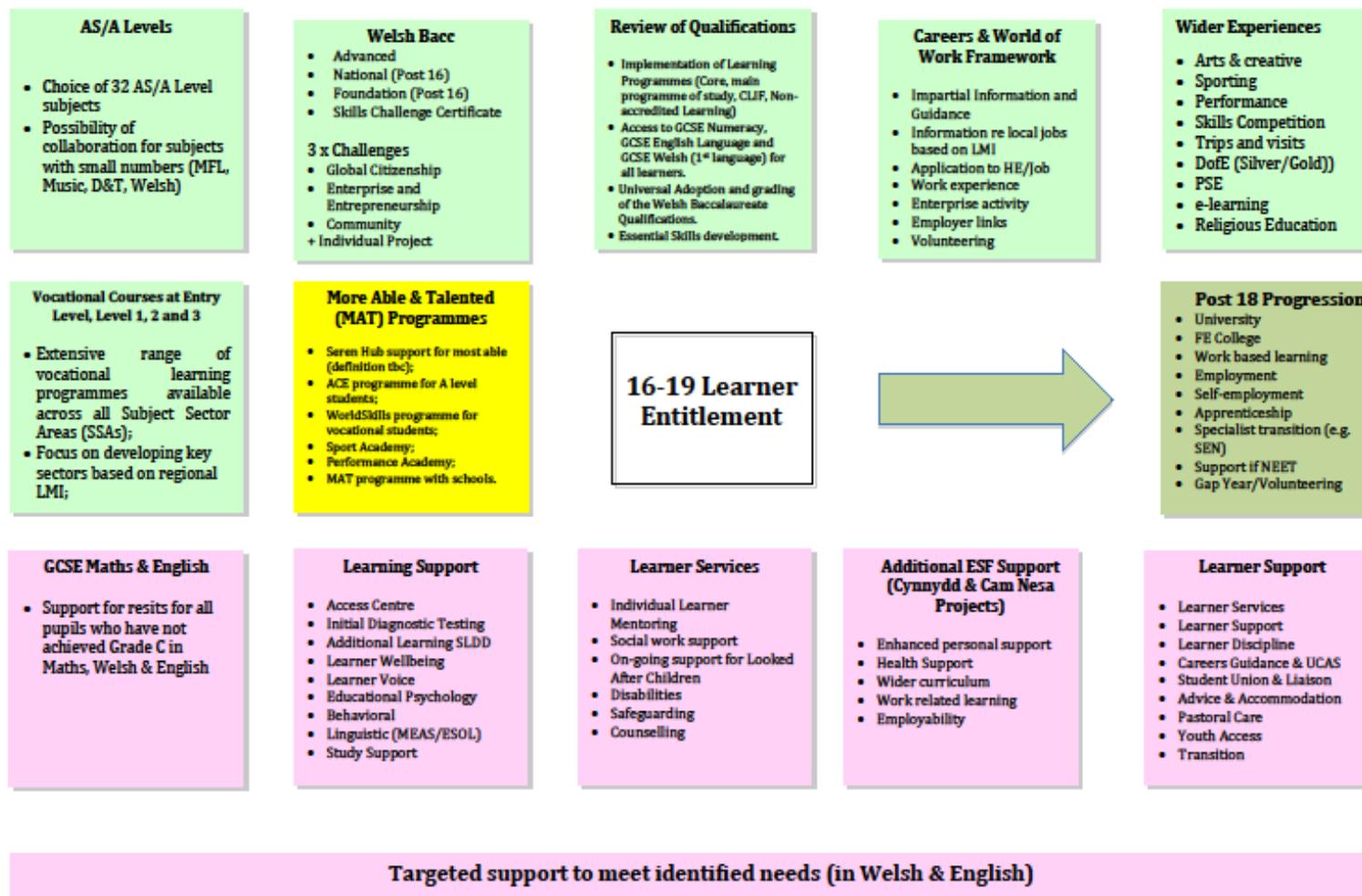


## Appendix 3 - Carmarthenshire Curriculum Offer – Post 16 School Sixth Form (Years 12 & 13)



## Appendix 4 - Carmarthenshire Curriculum Offer – Post 16 FE College

### FE Offer in English with some vocational programmes available in English, Welsh and bilingually



## Appendix 5 - Carmarthenshire Curriculum Offer – Post 16 WBL College and Training Providers

