



FAMILIES FIRST QUALITY AWARD

Schools in Wales
August 2026



**The Five Pillars
&
Impact Assurance Statements**

About Assessment Services

Assessment Services Ltd is a leading assessment centre with over 30 years of accreditation experience. Our commitment is clear: we ensure that our assessment processes deliver real value to organisations. Guided by our philosophy **“We Care...We Assess...We Add Value,”** we have developed and accredited numerous standards across various sectors, including:

- Aspiring to Deliver Excellence in Care
- Customer Service Excellence
- Families First Quality Award for Organisations in Wales
- Investors in People
- Leadership and Management
- Information and Guidance for voluntary and not-for-profit organisations
- matrix – Information, Advice & Guidance
- One Planet Standard
- Quality Assessments, National Citizen Service Trust
- Supply Chain Partnership Standards
- SFEDI Qualifications
- The Strategic Growth Pathway

We work with organisations of all sizes and sectors, from small teams to large multi-site operations, providing trusted and independent accreditation services.

About This Award

Schools are crucial to their communities. They must show respect for parents and regularly update them on students' progress. Leading educational institutions build strong partnerships with parents and collaborate with a range of partners to enhance students' learning experiences. The **Families First Quality Award (FFQA) for Schools in Wales** offers educational institutions the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to supporting families and to delivering high-quality education.

This recognition signals to families and regulators, such as Ofsted, that the institution prioritises student welfare and achievement. Earning the Award boosts a school's credibility, confirms adherence to relevant standards, and demonstrates strong leadership and management.

Regulatory Alignment	Positioning of the Award	Multi-Academy Trust Level Adoption
The Award is clearly mapped to: ▪ Equality and inclusion duties ▪ Keeping children safe in education ▪ Ofsted and Estyn ▪ Safeguarding requirements	FFQA is positioned as: ▪ A culture and impact standard ▪ A leadership and governance assurance framework ▪ A strategic partner for inspection readiness	The Award provides : ▪ Clear reporting categories ▪ Cross-school benchmarking ▪ Trust-wide oversight

The Five Pillars of the Award

- **Culture & Ethos of Partnership** – welcoming, trusting, inclusive culture, transitions, and alignment between vision and lived practice.
- **Communication & Transparency**– clear, accessible, statutory, and in Wales bilingual communication about policies, safeguarding, finance, admissions and complaints, with bilingual access in Wales.
- **Engagement, Voice & Co-Production** – meaningful parent and pupil/learner voice, governance involvement, feedback loops, and co-production in school improvement.
- **Equity, Inclusion & Safeguarding** – early identification of vulnerable learners, effective use of funding Pupil Development Grant (PDG), Pupil Premium (PP), robust safeguarding, attendance and wellbeing, tackling poverty and barriers, and Welsh-medium equity.
- **Integrated Support & Community Partnership** – multi-agency working, community and employer partnerships, transitions, early education access and promoting Welsh language and culture.



The Award & Estyn

If you meet the FFQA outcomes, you are already demonstrating many of the core Estyn expectations.

How the 5 Pillar Impact Model Supports Ofsted: The tables below demonstrate how FFQA for Schools in Wales can support a school's preparation for an external school inspection.

Key

✓✓✓ = Strong Direct Alignment

✓✓ = Substantial Contribution

✓ = Supporting Contribution

FFQA & Estyn High-Level Judgement Alignment Matrix

FQA Pillar	Quality & Standards	Wellbeing & Attitudes to Learning	Teaching & Learning Experiences	Care, Support & Guidance	Leadership & Management
Pillar 1 Culture & Ethos of Partnership	✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓
Pillar 2 Communication & Transparency	✓	✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
Pillar 3 Engagement, Voice & Co-Production	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓
Pillar 4 Equity, Inclusion & Safeguarding	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
Pillar 5 Integrated Support & Community Partnership	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓

Definitions

Information, advice, and assistance (IAA) help parents, prospective parents, and family members access the information they need to make informed decisions about their children's care, health, education, and recreation, including for children with special needs.

For the Award, IAA is defined as:

- **Information** – accurate, up-to-date, and objective information on childcare, health, recreation, and learning opportunities, progression routes, choices, funding, where to find help and advice, and how to access it.
- **Advice** – activities that help parents/carers, prospective parents and family members interpret information and apply it to their own circumstances.
- **Assistance** – provision of impartial signposting, brokerage and referrals to specialist support to help parents/carers, prospective parents and family members meet their information needs and make progress.

Providing IAA

Schools regularly provide families with important information, guidance, and support. They share details on school operations, teaching methods, educational options, and curriculum content. Staff can also direct families to local resources and support services as needed. Moreover, they help students and parents manage major life changes and prepare for developmental challenges associated with growth and maturity.

Delivering IAA

Schools play a crucial role in delivering face-to-face IAA to families in their communities. This support helps parents, prospective parents, and other family members make informed decisions about their child's education and access to school services. By providing IAA, schools help parents promote important outcomes, including health, safety, enjoyment, academic success, social contribution, and economic stability. These initiatives also foster optimism and hope for the future.

Features & Explanations

A **reference number** and a **title** identify each of the 36 impact-led **Assurance Statements** required to achieve the Award. Additionally,

- The focus of each Pillar is outlined.
- The significance of each impact-led **Impact Assurance Statement** is explained.
- What each **Pillar** might mean in practice is outlined under the headings of **Intent, Implementation, and Impact**.
- For each **Impact Assurance Statement**, concrete examples of what “doing the basics,” “doing better,” and “doing the best” could look like are provided. This should help your school self-assess and plan next steps.
 - **Doing the basics:** Minimum actions that meet the outcome requirements or expectations.
 - **Doing better:** Steps that go beyond the minimum, indicating proactive improvement.
 - **Doing the best:** Exemplary actions demonstrating leadership, innovation, or sector-leading practice.
- Where the term Parent/Carer appears in the Standards and Assurance Statement, it broadly refers to anyone with parenting responsibilities, including mothers, fathers, teenage parents, foster carers, other carers, guardians, prospective parents, grandparents, adoptive parents, and family members.

Every school seeking assessment is different and will address how it meets the Award in ways that reflect its uniqueness.



Pillar 1: Culture & Ethos of Partnership

In Wales, schools are rooted in inclusive values, wellbeing and community partnership. A strong welcome reflects Curriculum for Wales's emphasis on belonging, equity and positive relationships, ensuring every family feels respected and confident from first contact.

Focus: of Pillar 1 The lived experience of families: ▪ Alignment between vision and lived practice ▪ Inclusive bilingual ethos ▪ Staff visibility and approachability ▪ Transition experience ▪ Trust and confidentiality ▪ Welcoming culture	Pillar Overall Impact Statement Families consistently report that they feel welcomed, respected and valued as genuine partners in their child's education.
Estyn Evaluation Focus ▪ Leaders promote a clear vision and strong values ▪ Learners feel safe, respected and included ▪ Positive relationships underpin the school culture ▪ The school community demonstrates mutual respect	Alignment Explanation ▪ Alignment between vision and lived practice supports improvement culture ▪ Relational leadership strengthens leadership judgement ▪ Trust between families and school enhances safeguarding confidence ▪ Welcoming culture supports wellbeing and belonging
What This Might Mean in Practice Intent: Leaders embed relational culture aligned with Curriculum for Wales values. Example evidence may include: ▪ Bilingual ethos documentation ▪ Confidentiality procedures ▪ Relational practice training ▪ Vision aligned to Curriculum for Wales Implementation: Welcoming, inclusive and bilingual culture is visible. Example evidence may include: ▪ Bilingual signage audit ▪ Induction records ▪ Staff visibility records ▪ Transition documentation Impact: Families report belonging and trust. Example evidence may include: ▪ Evidence of bilingual inclusion ▪ Parent survey data ▪ Transition feedback ▪ Wellbeing trends	

Pillar 1: Impact Assurance Statements

1.1 Welcoming First Impressions: Families describe their initial contact and ongoing engagement as welcoming, responsive, and professional, reflecting a positive school culture.

Significance: Positive first impressions help families feel welcomed and valued from the outset. In Welsh schools, this warmth and professionalism foster inclusive community engagement and set the tone for ongoing partnership. Families describe first contact and ongoing engagement as warm, inclusive and professional, fostering a strong sense of belonging.

Doing the basics: Staff greet families at reception in a friendly manner; queries are answered politely and promptly; and basic information is available in both Welsh and English.

Doing better: Staff receive training in inclusive and culturally sensitive communication; welcome signage and materials are bilingual; families receive a welcome pack containing key information.

Doing the best: Staff greet families by name in their preferred language; feedback from families on their first impressions is collected and used to improve the experience; families are proactively invited to share their culture and language as part of school life.

1.2 Visible, Approachable Leadership: Leaders and staff are visible, approachable, responsive and solution-focused, modelling high expectations and fostering respectful relationships.

Significance: Visible, approachable leadership encourages open communication and builds trust within the school community. For schools in Wales, this fosters respectful relationships and upholds the collaborative ethos central to the Curriculum for Wales. Leaders and staff are visible, approachable, and responsive, thereby fostering positive, respectful relationships.

Doing the basics: Leaders are occasionally seen by families at drop-off or pick-up; families can book appointments to meet leaders.

Doing better: Leaders are regularly present and visible at key times; they communicate proactively, are approachable for conversations, and model bilingual greetings and positive relationships.

Doing the best: Leaders actively seek feedback from families and pupils; they hold regular bilingual drop-in sessions or forums; and the school community recognises them as champions of respectful, responsive engagement and high expectations.

1.3 Vision in Practice: The school's vision reflects the values and purposes of Curriculum for Wales and is clearly understood by families.

Significance: Putting the school's vision into daily practice demonstrates commitment to the values and purposes of the Curriculum for Wales. This clarity fosters shared understanding among families and supports a unified direction for learning. The school's vision reflects the values and purposes of the Curriculum for Wales and is clearly understood by families.

Doing the basics: The school's vision and values are displayed in both Welsh and English, and the Curriculum for Wales is cited.

Doing better: Staff, pupils, and families can explain how the vision aligns with the purposes of the Curriculum for Wales, and the vision is referenced in assemblies, communications, and school events.

Doing the best: The vision is co-developed with families, pupils, and staff; it is embedded across classroom practice, policies, and decision-making; stories and examples of the vision in action are regularly shared and celebrated in both Welsh and English.

1.4 Bilingual Identity Visible: The environment reflects an inclusive ethos and visibly promotes Welsh-medium and bilingual identity, consistent with the school's context.

Significance: Celebrating Welsh-medium and bilingual identity within the environment strengthens cultural pride and inclusivity. It reflects the school's commitment to the Welsh language and aligns with national priorities for bilingualism. The environment embodies an inclusive ethos and visibly promotes Welsh-medium and bilingual identity, consistent with the school's context.

Doing the basics: Bilingual signage is displayed throughout the school, and some school communications are available in both languages.

Doing better: Displays, resources, and public spaces celebrate the Welsh language and culture alongside other community languages, and school events and assemblies include Welsh-medium elements.

Doing the best: The school environment is fully bilingual and inclusive, showcasing Welsh identity and cultural heritage; pupils and families are engaged in promoting bilingualism and celebrate its value; bilingualism is a lived, everyday experience for all learners.

1.5 Trust and Confidentiality: Confidentiality is maintained, and relationships are founded on trust and mutual respect.

Significance: Upholding trust and confidentiality reassures families that their privacy and dignity are respected. This is foundational to building positive, supportive relationships within the school community. Confidentiality is maintained, and relationships are built on trust and mutual respect.

Doing the basics: Confidential information is handled in line with policy; staff maintain professional boundaries.

Doing better: Families are informed about how their information is used and stored; staff receive regular training in confidentiality and data protection; trust is reflected in family feedback.

Doing the best: Trust and confidentiality are openly discussed as part of the school ethos; families are partners in safeguarding and information sharing; the school is regarded as a trusted hub for support and advice.

1.6 Equity From First Contact: Vulnerable and disadvantaged families feel supported, with equity evident from the outset.

Significance: Demonstrating equity from first contact ensures that all families, especially vulnerable and disadvantaged families, feel supported and included. This approach aligns with Wales's commitment to fairness and social justice in education. Equity is evident from the outset, supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged families.

Doing the basics: Vulnerable and disadvantaged families are identified and signposted to support services as required.

Doing better: Support is proactive and tailored from the outset; staff are trained to recognise and address barriers to engagement; and communications are accessible and inclusive.

Doing the best: Equity is embedded in every interaction; families are involved in shaping support; the school works with community partners to ensure no family is left behind and that access to all opportunities is maximised.

1.7 Seamless Transitions: Induction and transition arrangements are well planned, supporting learners' emotional wellbeing and continuity of learning.

Significance: Well-planned induction and transitions support learners' emotional wellbeing and continuity of learning. In the Welsh context, this helps pupils feel secure and confident as they move between phases of education. Induction and transition arrangements are well planned, thereby supporting learners' emotional wellbeing and continuity of learning.

Doing the basics: Induction and transition information is provided to families, and pupils meet new teachers or visit new classrooms before moving on.

Doing better: Transition programmes include activities to support emotional wellbeing; families and pupils are involved in planning and review; support is available to those with additional needs.

Doing the best: Transitions are personalised and flexible; feedback from families and learners informs ongoing improvements; the school collaborates with feeder or destination settings to ensure continuity of learning and wellbeing.

Pillar 2: Communication, Transparency & Bilingual Access

Welsh schools operate within a clear legislative and accountability framework, including Welsh language legislation and Estyn inspection. Transparent, bilingual and accessible communication ensures families can participate confidently and equitably in school life.

Focus: of Pillar 2 The lived experience of families: ▪ Admissions clarity ▪ Bilingual communication (Welsh & English) ▪ Complaints procedures ▪ Digital and non-digital access ▪ Financial transparency ▪ Policy accessibility ▪ Safeguarding communication	Pillar Overall Impact Statement Families report that communication is clear, accessible, timely, transparent, accessible and available in their preferred language, enabling them to make informed decisions and feel confident in the school's leadership.
Estyn Evaluation Focus ▪ Complaints procedures are understood and effective ▪ Information for parents is clear and accessible ▪ Leaders ensure statutory compliance and accountability ▪ Safeguarding information is clear and understood ▪ Welsh language provision meets statutory requirements	Alignment Explanation ▪ Accessible safeguarding communication enhances Care, Support & Guidance ▪ Accountability and openness strengthen leadership effectiveness ▪ Bilingual communication reflects Welsh Language Standards ▪ Transparent admissions and financial clarity strengthen governance
What This Might Mean in Practice Intent: Communication meets Welsh Language Standards and statutory requirements. Example evidence may include: ▪ Admissions and finance documentation ▪ Communication policy ▪ Welsh Language compliance documentation Implementation: Information is accessible in preferred language. Example evidence may include: ▪ Accessible format log ▪ Estyn report publication evidence ▪ Language preference register ▪ Website bilingual audit Impact: Families feel informed and linguistically respected. Example evidence may include: ▪ Complaints analysis ▪ Evidence of Welsh-language engagement uptake ▪ Parent survey responses	

Pillar 2: Impact Assurance Statements

2.1 Clear Financial & Entitlement Information: Admissions, financial matters and statutory entitlements are clearly explained and easy to understand.

Significance: When admissions, finances, and entitlements are clearly explained, families in Wales are empowered to make informed decisions about their children's education. This transparency fosters trust and aligns with Welsh schools' values of openness. Admissions, financial matters, and statutory entitlements are clearly explained and easy to understand.

Doing the basics: Admissions, fees, and statutory entitlements are set out in printed or online materials; staff answer questions when asked; and information is available in both Welsh and English.

Doing better: All financial and entitlement information is proactively shared with families in accessible formats; guidance on application processes is provided; FAQs address common issues.

Doing the best: Regular workshops or information sessions are held to explain financial matters and entitlements; materials are available in multiple community languages and in accessible formats; family feedback is used to improve clarity and accessibility.

2.2 Accessible Key Policies: Key policies, including safeguarding, are accessible, regularly reviewed, and clearly communicated.

Significance: Ensuring policies are accessible and regularly reviewed guarantees that families know their rights and responsibilities. In Wales, this supports the safeguarding and wellbeing of learners, in line with statutory and Estyn expectations. Key policies, including safeguarding, are accessible, regularly reviewed and clearly communicated.

Doing the basics: Key policies, including safeguarding, are available on the website or at the school office. Policies are reviewed as required.

Doing better: Policies are reviewed regularly, with plain-language summaries provided; families are notified when policies are updated; policies are available in both Welsh and English.

Doing the best: Families are consulted during policy reviews; accessible versions (easy-read, translated, audio/video) are available; policy updates are part of ongoing dialogue through meetings or newsletters.

2.3 Fair Complaint Process: Families understand how to raise concerns or complaints and are confident that these will be handled fairly and transparently.

Significance: A fair, transparent complaint process reassures families that their voices will be heard and respected. In Welsh schools, this reinforces accountability and the collaborative partnership between home and school. Families know how to raise concerns or complaints and are confident they will be handled fairly and transparently.

Doing the basics: The complaints policy is available and communicated to families, and families know whom to contact with concerns.

Doing better: The complaints process is explained during induction and in parent handbooks; progress updates on complaints are provided; families receive clear timelines and outcomes.

Doing the best: Families help review and improve the complaints process; anonymised examples are shared to show how feedback leads to change; mediation and restorative approaches are used, and families report high confidence in the process.

2.4 Transparent School Improvement: Estyn reports and school improvement priorities are shared openly.

Significance: Openly sharing Estyn reports and school improvement priorities demonstrates a commitment to transparency and continuous improvement. This builds confidence among families and meets the expectations of the Welsh inspection framework. Estyn reports that these priorities are shared openly and transparently.

Doing the basics: Estyn reports and school improvement plans are published and accessible to families.

Doing better: Families are informed of key findings and improvement priorities through meetings or newsletters; summaries are provided in accessible language and in both Welsh and English.

Doing the best: School improvement priorities are co-developed with families; progress is reported regularly and transparently; families are involved in reviewing impact and next steps.

2.5 Equitable Communication Routes: Both digital and non-digital communication routes are equitable, and literacy and language barriers are proactively addressed.

Significance: Equitable communication routes ensure that all families, regardless of background or literacy level, can access information. In Wales, this supports inclusion and removes barriers to engagement within the school community. Both digital and non-digital communication routes are equitable, and literacy and language barriers are proactively addressed.

Doing the basics: Information is sent by email, text, or post as needed; support is provided to families with limited digital access.

Doing better: Families can choose their preferred communication method; the school identifies and addresses literacy or language barriers; translated and accessible versions are provided.

Doing the best: Communication preferences are regularly reviewed and adapted; the school partners with the community to reach all families; digital inclusion is actively promoted and adequately resourced.

2.6 Bilingual Communications Assured: Communications are available in Welsh and English, in line with Welsh language legislation and the school's commitments to the Welsh language.

Significance: Providing all communications in both Welsh and English upholds the Welsh Language Measure and promotes respect for linguistic rights. This commitment strengthens the school's role in supporting bilingualism and Welsh identity. Communications are available in both Welsh and English, in line with Welsh language legislation and the school's commitments to the Welsh language.

Doing the basics: Letters and key information are provided in both Welsh and English, in line with legislation.

Doing better: All communications, including digital, are routinely bilingual, and staff are trained to ensure consistent bilingual provision.

Doing the best: Bilingual communication is the norm across all school interactions; families can switch languages seamlessly; the school celebrates.

2.7 Language of Choice: Families can receive communications in their preferred language.

Significance: Enabling families to choose their preferred language for communication demonstrates respect for diversity and individual needs. In Wales, this practice reflects the national focus on linguistic inclusion and equality, allowing families to receive communications in their preferred language.

Doing the basics: Families can request communication in their preferred language if needed.

Doing better: Families are asked about their language preference at enrolment, and this preference is recorded. Communications are sent in the preferred language whenever possible.

Doing the best: Language choice is embedded across all systems; a range of community languages is supported; the school regularly reviews provision and adapts to changing needs, ensuring all families feel included and respected.

Pillar 3: Engagement, Voice & Co-production

Curriculum for Wales places learner agency and co-construction at the heart of education. Meaningful participation from families, learners and governing bodies strengthens improvement planning and ensures decisions reflect the needs of the whole community.

Focus: of Pillar 3 The lived experience of families: ▪ Co-production in school improvement ▪ Feedback systems ▪ Governing body engagement ▪ Learner agency (Curriculum for Wales) ▪ Parent forums ▪ Participation tracking	Pillar Overall Impact Statement Families and pupils actively shape school life and feel that their voices influence decisions and improvement priorities.
Estyn Evaluation Focus ▪ Curriculum for Wales emphasis on learner agency ▪ Democratic participation and citizenship ▪ Learner voice and participation ▪ Stakeholder engagement in school improvement	Alignment Explanation ▪ Active parent forums strengthen leadership accountability ▪ Co-production enhances engagement and motivation ▪ Learner agency aligns with Curriculum for Wales principles ▪ “You said, we did” processes demonstrate reflective leadership
What This Might Mean in Practice Intent: Learner agency and parental partnership drive improvement. Example evidence may include: ▪ Engagement strategy ▪ Governance engagement framework ▪ School improvement plan consultation records Implementation: Participation structures operate effectively. Example evidence may include: ▪ Curriculum co-construction examples ▪ Learner voice records ▪ Parent forum minutes ▪ Participation tracking data Impact: Stakeholder input influences school direction. Example evidence may include: ▪ Documented changes from consultation ▪ Increased participation data ▪ Learner leadership case studies	

Pillar 3: Impact Assurance Statements

3.1 Amplifying Community Voice: Forums for parent and learner voice are active, inclusive and influential in shaping school priorities.

Significance: Active, inclusive forums ensure that all voices within the school community are heard and valued. In Wales, this practice aligns with the Curriculum for Wales' democratic ethos and strengthens a sense of belonging. Forums for parent and learner voice are active, inclusive and influential in shaping school priorities.

Doing the basics: Parent and learner forums or councils are established and meet occasionally, and families and learners are invited to provide feedback.

Doing better: Forums are representative, meet regularly, and discuss school priorities; their outcomes are shared with the school community.

Doing the best: Forums proactively seek input from underrepresented groups; their recommendations directly inform school improvement; the impact of community voice is visible, and feedback loops are closed ("you said, we did") in both Welsh and English.

3.2 Meaningful Parental Contribution: Parents make a meaningful contribution to school-improvement planning and evaluation.

Significance: Meaningful parental input in planning and evaluation fosters genuine partnership and accountability. For Welsh schools, this approach supports co-construction, a key principle in the Welsh educational context. Parents contribute meaningfully to school improvement planning and evaluation.

Doing the basics: Parents are consulted on school policies or plans through surveys or meetings.

Doing better: Parents participate in working or focus groups for specific improvement initiatives, and their input informs decisions.

Doing the best: Parents co-design improvement plans with staff and governors; their contributions are integral to evaluation and strategic planning; outcomes are communicated transparently in both languages.

3.3 Feedback Drives Change: Feedback from families and learners demonstrably informs decision-making and leads to visible change.

Significance: Using feedback to drive visible change demonstrates responsiveness and builds trust among families, learners, and the school. In Wales, this reflects a commitment to continuous improvement and learner-centred practice. Feedback from families and learners informs decision-making and drives visible change.

Doing the basics: Surveys or feedback forms are distributed to families and learners, and feedback is acknowledged.

Doing better: Feedback is analysed, and results are shared with the community; clear examples are provided to show how feedback has influenced decisions.

Doing the best: A systematic process ensures that feedback is reviewed and acted upon, that impact is reported back to families and learners, and that changes are visible and celebrated in both Welsh and English; families and learners help evaluate the effectiveness of these changes.

3.4 Inclusive Engagement Monitoring: Parental engagement is regularly reviewed, and barriers to participation are addressed to promote equity.

Significance: Regularly reviewing engagement and addressing barriers promotes equity and inclusion. This is particularly important in Wales, where closing participation gaps is a national priority for educational equity. Parental engagement is regularly reviewed, and barriers to participation are addressed to promote equity.

Doing the basics: Attendance at parent evenings and events is recorded, and low engagement is noted.

Doing better: The school analyses engagement by group (e.g., by language or background), and targeted support or invitations are used to address underrepresentation.

Doing the best: Engagement strategies are co-developed with families; barriers are systematically identified and addressed (e.g., timing, language, accessibility); engagement data is regularly reviewed and transparently shared.

3.5 Shared Learning Conversations: Families contribute to learning discussions, wellbeing conversations, and, where appropriate, to individual learning plans.

Significance: Shared learning conversations between families and schools strengthen home-school links and support learners' progress. In Wales, this collaborative approach is central to personalised learning and wellbeing in the Curriculum for Wales. Families contribute to learning discussions, wellbeing conversations, and, where appropriate, to individual learning plans.

Doing the basics: Families attend parents' evenings and receive updates on learning and wellbeing.

Doing better: Families are encouraged to contribute to discussions on learning and wellbeing, and their input is valued and incorporated into individual learning plans.

Doing the best: Meetings are flexible and tailored to families' needs; families co-author learning plans and wellbeing strategies; resources and support are available in both Welsh and English.

3.6 Learner Agency Promoted: Learners exercise agency and leadership in line with the Curriculum for Wales principles.

Significance: Promoting learner agency and leadership empowers pupils to shape their education. This is fundamental to the Curriculum for Wales, which prioritises pupil voice, autonomy, and active citizenship. Learners exercise agency and leadership in line with the Curriculum for Wales principles.

Doing the basics: Learners are consulted on aspects of school life, and opportunities exist for some leadership roles.

Doing better: Learners have structured opportunities to lead projects, contribute to curriculum design, and participate in decision-making.

Doing the best: Learner agency is embedded across all areas of school life, reflecting the Curriculum for Wales principles; learners are empowered to initiate change, influence policy, and evaluate impact; bilingual leadership opportunities are available.

3.7 Active Governing Engagement: Governing bodies demonstrate meaningful engagement with parents and the wider school community.

Significance: Meaningful engagement by governing bodies with parents and the wider community ensures accountability and shared understanding. In Welsh schools, this supports transparent governance and ensures that local voices are represented in decision-making. Governing bodies demonstrate meaningful engagement with parents and the wider school community.

Doing the basics: Governors attend school events and receive reports from school leaders.

Doing better: Governors meet parents and community members to discuss key issues, and feedback from these meetings informs governance.

Doing the best: Governors regularly consult with and represent the whole school community; they facilitate forums in both Welsh and English; their engagement leads to demonstrable improvements in school policy and practice.

3.8 Bilingual Engagement Opportunities: Engagement opportunities are available in both Welsh and English, reflecting the school's Welsh-language context.

Significance: Providing bilingual engagement opportunities upholds the Welsh Language Measure and fosters inclusion for both Welsh and English speakers. This approach reflects the linguistic and cultural diversity celebrated in Welsh schools. Engagement opportunities are available in both Welsh and English, aligning with the school's Welsh-language context.

Doing the basics: Some engagement opportunities (e.g., meetings and written communications) are available in both Welsh and English.

Doing better: All engagement activities are routinely bilingual, and families can choose their preferred language for participation.

Doing the best: Bilingual engagement is embedded and visible across all school activities; interpretation and translation are readily available; the school actively promotes and celebrates bilingual participation as part of its ethos.

Pillar 4: Equity, Inclusion & Safeguarding

Welsh Government policy places strong emphasis on equity, poverty reduction, Additional Learning Needs (ALN) reform and safeguarding. Schools must work proactively to remove barriers, reduce the impact of disadvantage and ensure all learners are safe, included and able to participate fully.

Focus: of Pillar 4 The lived experience of families: ▪ ALN & inclusion ▪ Attendance & wellbeing ▪ Equity of Welsh-medium access ▪ Poverty mitigation ▪ Pupil Development Grant (PDG) impact ▪ Referral pathways ▪ Safeguarding transparency	Pillar Overall Impact Statement Families, especially those facing disadvantage or vulnerability, experience the school as inclusive, protective and relentlessly committed to their child's success and equity of opportunity.
Estyn Evaluation Focus ▪ ALN provision and inclusive practice ▪ Care, support and guidance systems ▪ Impact of Pupil Development Grant (PDG) ▪ Progress and outcomes of vulnerable learners ▪ Safeguarding effectiveness ▪ Tackling the impact of poverty	Alignment Explanation ▪ Attendance and wellbeing systems support learner engagement ▪ Early identification and referral strengthen safeguarding ▪ Equity of Welsh-medium access promotes fairness ▪ Inclusion strategies support Curriculum for Wales access ▪ Transparent PDG impact reporting supports Quality & Standards
What This Might Mean in Practice Intent: Equity, poverty mitigation and safeguarding are central priorities. Example evidence may include: ▪ ALN framework ▪ PDG strategy documentation ▪ Safeguarding policy and audit Implementation: Systems identify and support vulnerable learners. Example evidence may include: ▪ Attendance data ▪ Free school meal uptake ▪ Multi-agency case records ▪ PDG impact reports ▪ Referral pathway documentation Impact: Disadvantaged learners experience improved outcomes. Example evidence may include: ▪ Attendance improvement ▪ Family confidence survey data ▪ Gap reduction data ▪ Wellbeing indicators	

Pillar 4: Impact Assurance Statements

4.1 Early Targeted Support: Vulnerable learners, including those eligible for the Pupil Development Grant (PDG) and those with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), are identified early and provided with effective support to improve outcomes.

Significance: Early identification and targeted support for vulnerable learners, including those eligible for PDG and ALN, promote equity and ensure interventions are in place before gaps widen. In Wales, this is vital to upholding the principle of inclusive education and to supporting national priorities to reduce inequality. Vulnerable learners, including those eligible for the Pupil Development Grant (PDG) and those with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), are identified early and supported effectively to improve outcomes.

Doing the basics: Vulnerable learners, including those eligible for PDG and those with ALN, are identified through data and teacher observations, and standard interventions are provided.

Doing better: Early identification uses a mix of data, staff training, and family input; support is tailored and regularly reviewed for impact; families are involved in planning support.

Doing the best: Identification is proactive and collaborative, drawing on community insight and multi-agency input; support plans are co-produced with learners and families; and intervention effectiveness is rigorously tracked and dynamically adjusted to ensure the best outcomes.

4.2 Transparent PDG Impact: The use and impact of Pupil Development Grant (PDG) funding are transparent and demonstrably aimed at reducing the impact of poverty on attainment.

Significance: Transparent use of PDG funding reassures families and the community that resources are being used effectively to address poverty-related attainment gaps. This aligns with Welsh Government priorities for social justice and accountability in education. The use and impact of PDG funding are transparent and demonstrably focused on reducing poverty's impact on attainment.

Doing the basics: The school publishes how PDG is spent and outlines the intended outcomes on its website.

Doing better: The use and impact of PDG are discussed with staff and families; outcome data are analysed to ensure that spending reduces the impact of poverty on attainment.

Doing the best: Families and learners help shape PDG spending priorities; detailed impact reports are shared in accessible, bilingual formats; successful strategies are shared with the wider community and inform future planning.

4.3 Robust Safeguarding Culture: Safeguarding systems are robust, clearly communicated, and trusted by families.

Significance: Robust safeguarding systems protect the welfare and rights of all learners and build trust with families. In the Welsh context, clear safeguarding is essential to comply with statutory guidance and to meet Estyn inspection expectations. Safeguarding systems are robust, clearly communicated, and trusted by families.

Doing the basics: Safeguarding policies and procedures are in place, up to date, and communicated to staff and families.

Doing better: Regular, high-quality safeguarding training is provided to all staff; safeguarding processes are clearly communicated to families in both Welsh and English; families' trust in safeguarding is assessed through feedback.

Doing the best: Safeguarding is embedded as a whole-school, visible culture; pupils and families are empowered to contribute to policy and practice; the school is recognised for outstanding safeguarding practice and serves as a resource for other schools.

4.4 Promoting Attendance: Attendance and wellbeing are monitored and promoted in collaboration with families and partners.

Significance: Collaborative approaches to monitoring and promoting attendance and wellbeing foster shared responsibility among schools, families, and partners. This proactive partnership is central to learner success and wellbeing in Wales. Attendance and wellbeing are monitored and promoted in collaboration with families and partners.

Doing the basics: Attendance is tracked, and families are contacted in cases of concern; wellbeing is monitored through check-ins or surveys.

Doing better: Attendance and wellbeing are promoted through regular communication, assemblies, and support programmes; families and external partners are involved in planning and in promoting attendance.

Doing the best: Attendance strategies are co-developed with families and learners; barriers are addressed at both individual and systemic levels; the school collaborates with the whole community to celebrate positive attendance and wellbeing.

4.5 Confident Referral Pathways: Staff understand and confidently apply referral pathways and multi-agency safeguarding and support protocols.

Significance: A confident, consistent use of referral pathways ensures that pupils receive timely, appropriate support from both the school and external agencies. In Wales, this multi-agency approach is central to effective safeguarding and inclusive support. Staff understand and apply referral pathways and multi-agency safeguarding and support protocols with confidence.

Doing the basics: Staff are aware of referral and safeguarding protocols and know whom to contact for advice.

Doing better: Staff receive ongoing training and case-study-based practice on referral pathways; multi-agency collaboration is routine; families are supported throughout the referral process.

Doing the best: All staff are confident and proactive in applying referral pathways; the school leads or shapes local multi-agency working; referral outcomes and processes are reviewed and refined using family feedback.

4.6 Promoting Bilingual Access: Equity of access to Welsh-medium and bilingual provision is actively promoted in line with the school's context.

Significance: Actively promoting access to Welsh-medium and bilingual provision upholds the Welsh Language Measure and ensures that all learners can benefit from bilingualism. This commitment supports the national ambition to reach a million Welsh speakers by 2050. Equity of access to Welsh-medium and bilingual provision is actively promoted in line with the school's context.

Doing the basics: Welsh-medium and bilingual provision is available as appropriate to the school's context, and information is provided in both Welsh and English.

Doing better: The school actively promotes equitable access to Welsh-medium and bilingual opportunities through outreach, events, and communication; support is available to families new to Welsh-medium education.

Doing the best: The school champions bilingual provision, co-creating opportunities with families and the community; all learners are encouraged and supported in accessing bilingual experiences; barriers are systematically identified and removed.

4.7 Removing Financial Barriers: Financial hardship does not prevent participation in learning, enrichment, or wider aspects of school life.

Significance: Removing financial barriers ensures that every pupil can fully participate in learning, enrichment, and wider school life. In Wales, this supports social mobility, fairness, and the principle that no child is left behind due to economic circumstances. Financial hardship does not prevent participation in learning, enrichment, or wider school life.

Doing the basics: Support for essential costs (e.g., uniform and trips) is available to families in hardship, and information is provided discreetly.

Doing better: The school proactively identifies families who may need financial support; additional funding ensures participation in enrichment and wider school life; stigma is minimised.

Doing the best: No learner is left behind because of financial hardship; support is personalised and proactive, and celebrated as part of the school's inclusive ethos; the school works with partners to address the wider causes of hardship and advocates for families at local and national levels.

Pillar 5: Integrated Support & Community Partnerships & Welsh Identity

Education in Wales is strengthened through collaboration with local authorities, community partners and families. Partnership working supports progression, career readiness and the shared ambition of Cymraeg 2050 to grow Welsh language use across communities.

Focus: of Pillar 5 The lived experience of families: ▪ Bilingual cultural promotion ▪ Community integration ▪ Employer partnerships ▪ Multi-agency collaboration ▪ Transition planning ▪ Welsh language development	Pillar Overall Impact Statement Families experience the school as a connected community hub that that promotes wellbeing, prepares learners for life, works collaboratively with partners to improve children's life chances and strengthens Welsh language and cultural identity.
Estyn Evaluation Focus ▪ Community engagement ▪ Curriculum breadth and progression ▪ Preparation for next stages of education, training or employment ▪ Strategic partnerships and system leadership ▪ Welsh language promotion and bilingual development	Alignment Explanation ▪ Employer partnerships support progression pathways ▪ Multi-agency collaboration enhances Care, Support & Guidance ▪ Outward-facing leadership strengthens management judgement ▪ Transition planning strengthens continuity of learning ▪ Welsh language promotion aligns with national priorities
What This Might Mean in Practice Intent: The school strengthens community partnership and Welsh identity. Example evidence may include: ▪ Partnership agreements ▪ Transition strategy ▪ Welsh language promotion plan Implementation: Multi-agency and bilingual initiatives operate effectively. Example evidence may include: ▪ Community event documentation ▪ Employer engagement records ▪ Transition plans ▪ Welsh-medium baseline monitoring Impact: Families experience coordinated support and strengthen Welsh identity. Example evidence may include: ▪ Community engagement trends ▪ Family feedback ▪ Increased Welsh language participation ▪ Positive post-16 destinations	

Pillar 5: Impact Assurance Statements

5.1 Connecting Families to Services: The school connects families with relevant local authority services, Family Information Services and community partners.

Significance: Connecting families with local authority and community services removes barriers to learning and wellbeing. In Wales, this holistic approach supports the Curriculum for Wales' wider aims and strengthens community cohesion. The school connects families with relevant local authority services, Family Information Services, and community partners.

Doing the basics: The school has leaflets or posters in reception about local services, and staff can direct families to relevant agencies upon request.

Doing better: Signposting is proactive; staff regularly refer families to services based on identified needs; the school website and newsletters provide up-to-date information about available support.

Doing the best: The school hosts drop-in sessions with on-site service providers; staff are trained to identify needs early and to support families through referral processes; the impact of signposting is tracked, and family feedback is used to improve practice.

5.2 Joined-Up Agency Working: Multi-agency collaboration supports smooth transitions and progression in line with the Curriculum for Wales.

Significance: Effective multi-agency collaboration ensures seamless support for learners, particularly during key transitions. In the Welsh context, this joined-up working aligns with national policy and promotes the best possible outcomes for all pupils. It supports smooth transitions and progression in line with the Curriculum for Wales.

Doing the basics: The school communicates with other agencies as required (e.g., for safeguarding or SEND), and information is shared when pupils move between settings.

Doing better: Regular meetings are held with health, social care, and educational partners; transition plans incorporate input from all relevant agencies; families are updated on multi-agency involvement.

Doing the best: The school leads or co-leads multi-agency forums; joint action plans are developed and reviewed collaboratively; multi-agency working is seamless and anticipates pupils' needs, ensuring smooth transitions and holistic support.

5.3 Enriching Community Partnerships: Employer and community partnerships enhance learning and support career readiness.

Significance: Partnerships with employers and community groups broaden pupils' experiences and raise aspirations. For Welsh schools, these relationships support the development of real-world skills aligned with the Curriculum for Wales's four purposes. Employer and community partnerships enrich learning and promote career readiness.

Doing the basics: School invites local employers or organisations to occasional assemblies or events.

Doing better: Partnerships are sustained, with curriculum-enrichment activities (e.g., work experience, mentoring, enterprise days); local employers contribute to careers education.

Doing the best: Partnerships are strategic and co-designed with community stakeholders; students engage in long-term projects or placements; the impact on pupils' aspirations and readiness for next steps is measured and celebrated.

5.4 Welsh Language Partnership: Welsh language development is actively promoted in partnership with families and the wider community.

Significance: Actively promoting Welsh language development in partnership with families and the wider community strengthens bilingualism. This commitment upholds the Welsh Language Measure and supports the national goal of increasing the number of Welsh speakers.

Doing the basics: Welsh language use is encouraged in school; some communication with families emphasises the importance of Welsh.

Doing better: The school runs events, workshops, or family sessions to promote Welsh language development, and partnerships with local Welsh-language groups are in place.

Doing the best: The school works closely with families and the wider community to co-design strategies that promote the Welsh language; families are celebrated as partners in language development; and Welsh language learning is embraced as a shared community goal.

5.5 Monitoring Bilingual Progress: Baseline assessments and learner progress within Welsh-medium and bilingual provision are monitored and evaluated.

Significance: Monitoring progress in Welsh-medium and bilingual provision ensures that all learners are supported in achieving their potential. In Wales, this evaluation is essential for raising standards and promoting linguistic inclusion. Baseline assessments and learners' progress in Welsh-medium and bilingual provision are monitored and evaluated.

Doing the basics: Baseline and progress assessments are carried out for Welsh-medium and bilingual learners.

Doing better: Progress data is analysed to identify trends and inform provision, and families receive regular progress updates in both Welsh and English.

Doing the best: Assessment and progress tracking are fully integrated and inform personalised support; families are involved in setting and reviewing bilingual progress goals; outcomes are celebrated and inform whole-school practice.

5.6 Linguistic Policy Considerations: Linguistic implications are carefully taken into account when making policy and strategic decisions.

Significance: Considering linguistic implications in policy decisions demonstrates respect for Wales's bilingual context. This practice ensures that strategic choices uphold the rights of Welsh and English speakers and promote linguistic equality. Linguistic implications are carefully considered in policy and strategic decisions.

Doing the basics: Policy documents address the linguistic context and statutory requirements for Welsh-medium provision.

Doing better: Linguistic implications are actively considered in all policy and strategic decisions; stakeholders are consulted about linguistic impact.

Doing the best: Linguistic policy is co-developed with families, learners, and the community; all strategic decisions are underpinned by a clear commitment to Welsh language development and bilingualism; impact is evaluated and adapted as needed.

5.7 Supporting Welsh at Home: Families are supported in promoting Welsh language development at home through access to bilingual resources and literature.

Significance: Supporting families to promote Welsh at home extends learning beyond the classroom and fosters a positive attitude towards bilingualism. Providing access to bilingual resources strengthens the use of Welsh in daily life and supports national ambitions. Families are supported in promoting Welsh language development at home through access to bilingual resources and literature.

Doing the basics: Families are provided with lists of Welsh-language resources or with links to websites.

Doing better: Bilingual books, apps, and resources are readily available to families, and families are shown how to support Welsh at home through workshops or guides.

Doing the best: The school runs regular workshops and family learning events; families co-create and share resources; the school community celebrates families' contributions to Welsh language learning; and ongoing support is tailored to families' needs and contexts.



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