

SF4All in rural schools

Research Questions

Primary question:

- What are the organisational implications for leaders in rural schools of the way the new curriculum is being developed?

Secondary aims:

- Identification of challenges and opportunities in respect of teacher recruitment and retention.
- Identification of opportunities to develop curriculum provision which reflects the needs of learners in rural areas.
- Identification of opportunities for further research into extra-curricular provision and participation in rural areas.

Aim

Exploration of the implications of the new curriculum in rural schools and for the specific forms of deprivation that they face.

Background

Rural schools face specific challenges and forms of deprivation. While some may not encounter the levels of economic deprivation experienced in some urban and coastal areas, all face the limitations of poor public transport, and staff recruitment and retention. The latter presents a challenge for school leaders, possibly more acute in small schools, where it may be difficult to recruit specialist staff. Since the development process for the new curriculum is in the hands of schools, including rural schools, this potentially presents an opportunity to reframe learning in ways appropriate to local contexts. Although the development of AoLEs may present challenges for secondary schools, it is possible that the framework can be used to meet specific needs and conditions, making more effective use of staff specialisms and resources. for collaboration.

It is not, however, simply a case of disadvantage in rural schools; they may have easier access to opportunities for outdoor education than urban schools which could be valuable across various AoLEs and offer further opportunities



Figure 1:
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mid_Wales.png

Method & Sample

Initially, the main research method will be semi-structured interviews with Pioneer Leads and SLT. Other staff may be interviewed in a second phase if appropriate. A whole staff survey may be used to gain a wider perspective.

The research will take place in three Pioneer Schools in locations across rural Wales. Between them, the schools are working on four AoLEs.

Progress Notes(May 2018)

Preliminary research complete
Ethical approval January 2018
Research sites identified and confirmed
Final interview schedule in development
Interviews to take place in May and June; first interviews completed.

Research Team:

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