

# Penclawdd Primary School

A Lead Enquiry School



National Professional Enquiry Programme

Catherine Percival

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# School context

Penclawdd Primary School is located in the village of Penclawdd on the shores of the Loughor Estuary on the Gower Peninsula. Its catchment area also encompasses the nearby villages of Llanmorlais and Crofty. The school comprises of 6 classes – Nursery, Reception/Year 1, Year 1/2, Year 3/4, Year 4/5 and Year 6. There are 138 children on roll and there is 14% eFSM.



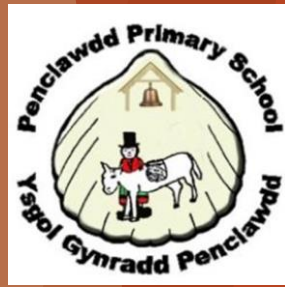
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# Research Question

## Lleisiau Bach - Little Voices

To what extent can the introduction of a pupil 'Senedd' enhance pupil voice and their ability to exercise their right to be heard within our school community?



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# Enquiry Overview

## Rationale

Some of the pupil voice groups in the school were not having the impact that we wanted them to have. Whilst nearly all children (99%) felt that they were listened to by an adult in school, only many children (82%) felt they took part in pupil voice groups. We want all learners to feel like they have a role in pupil voice groups and we wanted to create a system whereby all children felt that they made a contribution to pupil voice. We realised that children could feel this way due to the number of groups v insufficient staffing which led to inconsistencies in the groups (some meeting lots, some rarely meeting) and a system that did not always return to the classroom to speak to all children in order for them to all contribute to decisions being made. Time, workload and staff well-being were also factors contributing to the need for change. Trying to do the current system (despite it being popular with some parents and children) better was not an option due to the above factors so we looked to a new system that in the long run would be better.

## Methodology

From the above information, we decided to trim our pupil voice groups but decide to incorporate previous groups into our new system. Senedd Penclawdd was born and whereby we previously had Healthy Heroes and Science Sparks, under the new system, we would now have ministers which would be led by the First Ministers and a range of additional ministers to work alongside them.

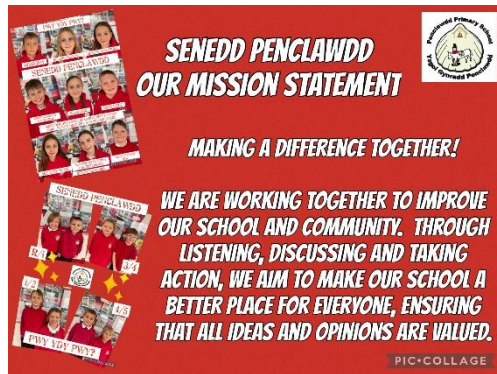
- ✓ Education Minister – supporting Mrs Garcia to develop ambitious, capable learners and to continue to improve teaching and learning
- ✓ Science, Innovation and Technology Minister - Supporting Mrs Rees to develop enterprising, creative contributors and continue to develop our science and technologies across the school
- ✓ Minister for Health and Sport – Supporting Mrs Percival to develop Healthy, confident individuals
- ✓ Minister for Welsh Language and Culture – Supporting Mrs Davies to develop a love of everything Welsh. Encouraging the use of the Welsh language throughout the school in addition to promoting a positive Welsh ethos.
- ✓ Minister for Art and Music – Working alongside Mrs Davies to engage, motivate and encourage learners to develop their creative, artistic and performance skills to the full.
- ✓ Environmental Minister – Supporting Mr Miller to develop ethical, informed citizens of the world, plan and deliver environmental projects, and inspire pupils and the wider school community.

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# Overview continued

- ▶ We shared with the children what we planned to introduce and develop. Year 6 children were given the opportunity to apply and be interviewed for the position of First Ministers (head boy and head girl). Additionally, they were given the opportunity to canvas for votes and present a speech in assembly in order to be voted in as Senedd Ministers. Following the appointment of First Ministers (Head boy and girl) and additional ministers, class representatives were appointed through a vote to join the Senedd. Senedd members had job descriptions to read and sign so they had a clear understanding of what was required from them. In addition to the Senedd, we decided to continue to run a Criw Cymraeg, Eco Wombles and Rights Ambassadors. Initially, we aimed to have a weekly meeting whereby we would discuss an action/area of improvement and then the Senedd members return to their class to seek the opinions of their class friends. Opinions/ideas and thoughts would then be brought back to the next meeting. AoLE leads would be timetabled to work with the Senedd so that by the end of the year, the Senedd alongside all children should have had the opportunity to work across many areas of learning and ultimately make a difference and bring about change.
- ▶ Alongside the meetings, a range of activities were undertaken to set up systems and processes in order for the Senedd to run smoothly, efficiently and productively, for example, meeting note books, suggestion boxes, update the website, newsletters, mission statement



<https://www.penclawddprimary.co.uk/plant-children/pupil-voice-penclawdd/the-senedd>



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### Our Suggestion Box

Hi everyone!

We are really excited to talk to you today about something new that's going to make a real difference in our school—the **Suggestion Box!**

This box is a place where YOU get to share your ideas, thoughts, and even small problems that you think need solving. It's your way to help make our school even better!

**Why is This Important? – Your Rights Matter!**

Did you know that, as children, we all have special rights? These are called **Children's Rights**, and they are protected by something called the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**.

Here are some of your rights that the Suggestion Box helps to support:

- ✔ **The Right to Be Heard (Article 12)** – You have the right to share your opinions, and adults should listen to what you have to say.
- ✔ **The Right to an Education (Article 28)** – You deserve a great school experience, and your ideas can help improve it.
- ✔ **The Right to Be Safe (Article 19)** – If something is worrying you at school, you can use the Suggestion Box to let us know.

**How Does It Work?**

- ✔ If you have an idea—like a new club, playground improvements, or ways to make learning more fun—just write it down and pop it into the box.
- ✔ If something is bothering you at school, and you think it needs fixing, you can write that too!
- ✔ You don't have to put your name on it if you don't want to—your voice still matters.

**What Happens Next?**

- ◆ Every week, the Senedd will check the box.
- ◆ We'll share and talk about your ideas in Senedd meetings and work with teachers to see what can be done.
- ◆ We'll share updates with you, so you know what's happening with your suggestions!

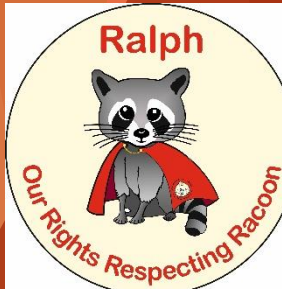
**For More Serious Problems – Speak to a Trusted Adult**

The Suggestion Box is great for sharing ideas and small worries, but if you have a big problem that is personal or making you feel unsafe, it's really important to talk to a **trusted adult** instead.

- ◆ This could be your teacher, a teaching assistant, the headteacher, or any grown-up in school that you feel comfortable with.
- ◆ They will listen to you and help in the best way possible.
- ◆ Your safety and happiness are the most important things, and there are always people here to help.

Remember - This is YOUR school, and YOUR ideas matter. **Your voice deserves to be heard**—because that's one of your rights! So don't be shy—get writing, get suggesting, and let's make our school an even better place for everyone! 🗣️

Thank you! *The Senedd* 🌟



# Learning as a result of the enquiry process

## Research Skills

Asking good questions – Learning how to frame a meaningful and focused enquiry question.

Planning an investigation – Deciding what you want to find out and how.

Collecting data – Using interviews, surveys, observations, or focus groups.

Recording information – Keeping accurate notes, using tables, charts, or visual methods.

## Critical Thinking

Making sense of findings – Interpreting what the information means.

Spotting patterns and themes – Noticing common ideas or differences.

Thinking about causes and effects – Understanding why things happen.

We build enquiry into our ADDs calendar to ensure staff have sufficient time to undertake their enquiry. Each term staff are allocated a number of ADDs sessions to ensure they can complete the enquiry cycle tasks.

## Communication Skills

Listening to others – Taking time to hear different voices, including pupils and staff.

Sharing your ideas clearly and presenting findings – Explaining what you found out. We utilise a Powerpoint each year. We find that it is easy to pdf to upload to the website. It is easy to use when presenting findings to others including Governors.

## Reflective Thinking

Asking "What did we learn?" – Summing up what your enquiry discovered.

Thinking about what could change – Using your findings to suggest improvements.

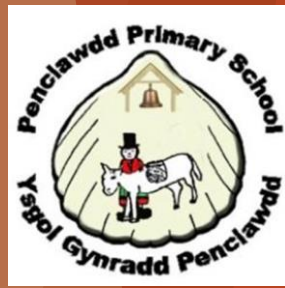
Learning about learning – Noticing how you learned during the process.

We also share what we have learnt with others and make decisions as to whether the learning should be implemented across the school. Sometimes staff are addressing cohort specific needs, other times learning can be utilised whole school to bring about greater change.

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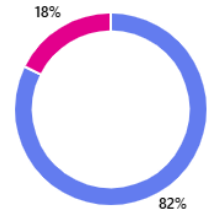
# Final findings/outputs



- ▶ 100% feel that their voice is heard through the Senedd
- ▶ 100% feel that they have the opportunity to share their ideas and opinions
- ▶ 100% feel that their suggestions are taken seriously by an adult

25. I take part in school clubs or pupil voice groups.

● Yes 70  
● No 15



## Impact

Improved pupil voice – greater involvement

Improved access to children's rights – we have the right to be heard, we have the right to relax and play

Improved staff well-being and reduced workload

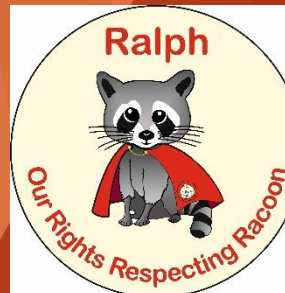
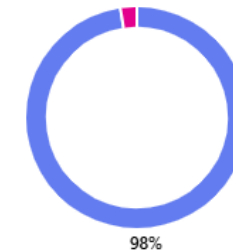
we have helped other people by hearing there ideas and making them feel seen

20. I feel listened to by the adults in school.

● Yes 83  
● No 2

The suggestion box will help people share ideas outside of meetings.

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# What worked well

- ✓ An enquiry that directly involves pupils – they bring the additional enthusiasm when the going gets tough. Motivated, hard-working, creative and powerful.
- ✓ Senedd Penclawdd, as a concept, has been excellent to raise the profile of pupil voice. Going forward it will be important to embed the model and systems set up, and further raise the profile of the Senedd.
- ✓ All ministers led on a range of projects throughout the year – Siarter Iaith Gold, Eco Flag level 2, fun run fundraiser (£2000), development of the yard for older learners, running of the Science fair, appointment of new First ministers, speaking with Governors, writing of newsletters, speaking at whole school events



i am proud of the progress we made and all the big events we had

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WE have listened to everyone's ideas, for how we could make the school better.

We have raised money for lots of new equipment and we've watched the senedd grow, we all express our ideas together and learn about how to make the school even better



# What was more of a challenge



- Time – However creative we try to be, time continues to be a problem.
- Workload – Several NPEP courses took place after school. Several clashes with other courses, meetings and family life. Would be easier to attend via TEAMS during the school day.
- The data (questionnaires) did not reflect the narrative outcome from staff and pupils

## Next Steps

- Increase staff involvement to ensure fortnightly meetings are as a minimum

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# Steps to developing a culture of enquiry

- ▶ Enquiry built into Performance Development

## IMPACT

- Enquiry process cycle is becoming part of our everyday. It has motivated and empowered staff to develop a curriculum fit for purpose and bespoke to the needs of our pupils
- Improved staff-wellbeing. Staff well-being is a priority and the enquiry process has had positive benefits to how staff feel and contributed to good mental and emotional well-being.
- ▶ Engagement with NPEP
- ▶ Annual completion of the 'Schools as a learning organisation' audit tool.
- ▶ Enquiry is built into the ADDs calendar to allow collaboration to support the setting of the 'BIG' question, peer support to develop enquiries as well as time to present on findings in order to assess impact and the next steps.
- ▶ Allocation of time and staff training
- ▶ Sharing learning with all stakeholders

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# Evaluating the impact of enquiry

The well-being of staff is regularly evaluated via a staff well-being questionnaire. Staff feel that the encouragement of professional learning is excellent in the school, staff also feel that the acknowledgement of achievements is excellent and ultimately, staff feeling happy in the workplace is also excellent. Developing a culture, whereby staff feel motivated and supported, will ensure best possible outcomes for all learners and I feel that the enquiry process contributes to this.

Staff are empowered to take charge of their professional learning and to utilise enquiry to ensure their practice and professional knowledge is evidence informed - from evidence outside of their classroom and also from evidence that has been applied and tested in their school. There is strong evidence to suggest that teachers find this one of the most effective forms of professional development (Gilchrist, 2018).

Enquiry is built into Performance Management and alongside other professional targets, staff are supported to undertake enquiry within their own classroom or within their leadership role.

## NEXT STEPS

- Further develop a cluster approach to enquiry

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# Peer support

- ▶ Regular support with LA NPEP lead
- ▶ In-house support through regular ADDs sessions
- ▶ SLT support through Performance Development
- ▶ School to school support through NPEP termly meetings
- ▶ Cluster support

# Next steps i.e. continuation/deepen the enquiry; move to a new focus

- ▶ Continue to embed enquiry across the school. Further utilise the training videos available from Swansea University to upskill staff.
- ▶ Further develop approach to enquiry across the cluster
- ▶ Share learning across the cluster

# Contact Details

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