



Academi Genedlaethol ar gyfer
Arweinyddiaeth Addysgol Cymru
National Academy for
Educational Leadership Wales

Courageously leading everything inadequately



Meet our Stakeholders

Helen is the headteacher of Ysgol Bryn Castell in Bridgend. Having spent the early part of her career in Cambridgeshire, she returned to Wales in 2010 where she joined the team at Ysgol Bryn Castell as Deputy Headteacher and was appointed to the position of Headteacher in 2014.

She is an active participant and a respected professional within a range of networks and was a finalist in the Inspirational Teaching Awards 2015 for Special School Headteacher of the Year.

EVERYTHING, literally E-V-E-R-Y-T-H-I-N-G in our worlds which we acknowledge & recognise as being safe & secure, ordinary & reassuring has disappeared. We find ourselves living in social isolation with all sense of normality lost. I have made one of my children cry with an 'isolation-hairdo', purchased a £9 online barbers course, (which I have not had the time, capacity or brain power to complete) & overcompensated further by purchasing £40 of hairdressing kit including thinning scissors & a gown, at the same time as I watch my dogs develop higher & higher levels of separation anxiety!

Headteachers have spent hours agonising & planning how best to protect our school communities; we have interpreted Government guidance in a local way, working collaboratively alongside LA Officers to deliver a bespoke model to our learners in the optimal way for them. We have used tacit knowledge & understanding of our school communities to offer some tangible branch of consistency, to pupils, Parents/Carers, staff, Governors & the community, in this frightening world we find ourselves in. We have been courageously leading, making impossible choices, fighting for our local needs, in an unknown world & uncharted territory.

But for many, courageously leading with an overwhelming feeling of guilt, fear & inadequacy. How do we know if we have the provision right, or wrong? What if we miss the signs that a pupil isn't okay? How can we effectively utilise & assimilate the individual needs of our staff whilst ensuring the very best provision for learners? Would it be viable to move the pupils to live in school so that we can control their movements & protect them from the awful world of COVID-19? Am I doing enough? Could I do more?

I feel like I am courageously leading everything inadequately!

Further information and resources can be found at
www.nael.cymru