



Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Life Long Learning

Cabinet – 14 December 2017

Estyn Inspection of Local Authority Education Services for Children and Young People 2013 – Update on Progress in Addressing the Five Recommendations

Purpose:	For Cabinet to receive an update on the progress in meeting the five Recommendations in the Estyn Inspection Report.
Policy Framework:	Estyn Common Inspection Framework.
Consultation:	Legal, Finance and Access to Services.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: 1) Cabinet notes the progress update on the five Recommendations in the Estyn Inspection Report.
Report Author:	Nick Williams
Finance Officer:	Chris Davies
Legal Officer:	Stephanie Williams
Access to Services Officer:	Sherill Hopkins

1. Introduction

- 1.1 All local authorities' education services for children and young people in Wales are inspected by Estyn under the Common Inspection Framework. Local authorities are inspected on the basis of a self-evaluation. Swansea Council was inspected in June 2013 and the report was published in September 2013.
- 1.2 This will be the last report updating on progress made on the recommendations from the 2013 inspection. Future reports will provide

updates on new and emerging priorities, in accordance with the Council's Policy Commitments and the Estyn framework, New Inspection Arrangements for the inspection of Local Government Education Services.

2. Background – Estyn Inspection 2013

2.1 Many good features and services were noted in the inspection report. <http://estyn.gov.uk/download/publication/291263.7/inspectionreport-city-and-county-of-swansea-2013>

2.2 Estyn made the following specific judgements:

- Primary attendance rates were well below average with nearly half of schools in the bottom 25% when compared to similar schools on the free-school-meal benchmarks.
- Too many schools did not improve quickly enough when identified as needing follow-up after a core inspection and too many were in categories of concern.
- The reintegration of pupils in key stage 3 educated other than at school back into mainstream schools and the provision in the key stage 4 pupil referral unit were not good enough.
- Processes to quality assure the work of officers were not effective enough to make sure that all officers consistently challenge all schools to improve.
- Performance management and quality assurance processes were not applied consistently enough within education services to identify and address underperformance of staff.
- Education targets were often not sufficiently challenging.
- Annual reviews of the local authority's education services and the self-evaluation report prepared for the inspection provided too positive an analysis of the local authority's work in a few areas.

2.3 The outcomes of the 2013 inspection were that Performance was judged to be Adequate and Capacity to Improve judged to be Good. The Inspection Report made five recommendations for improvement.

- Develop and implement a strategy to improve levels of attendance in primary schools.
- Quality assure the work of officers to secure greater consistency in the level of challenge they offer to schools.
- Improve officers' evaluation of the quality of leadership and management to schools to make sure that underperforming schools are identified and supported quickly.
- Improve the quality of provision for those pupils who are educated other than at school particularly to raise standards of achievement and to assist reintegration back into schools.
- Improve the consistency of leadership across all education services and the quality of self-evaluation and improvement planning within education services.

- 2.4 A Post-Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) was developed in the format of the Education Department Business Plan 2014-15. Estyn accepted the PIAP/Business Plan in July 2014. An end of year report on that plan was produced in 2015. A new self-evaluation report has been completed for 2017. The PIAP and the last self-evaluation report can be found at www.swansea.gov.uk/estyninspections.
- 2.5 The Chief Executive established an Improvement Board in July 2013 to monitor progress following the inspection. It met monthly from that date to July 2016. Due to the progress that has been made, the board has met bi-monthly since September 2016. The board has now agreed to shift its focus from the PIAP to the new priorities that have been set.
- 2.6 The Leader of the Council established a Member-led monitoring board, the Education Leadership Board. This board met termly during the first year after the inspection to February 2015. In order to make the monitoring function more transparent, since March 2015 progress is reported directly to Cabinet twice annually.
- 2.7 In March 2015, the Education Strategy Group was established, under the following terms of reference:
- To act as an innovation and ideas forum, drawing together schools and local authority Members and officers.
 - To ensure the development of coherent and consistent short, medium and long-term financial strategies for education in the City and County of Swansea.
 - To ensure political, officer and school involvement in developing such financial strategies – both revenue and capital.
 - To propose options for Council to consider, outlining potential implications.
 - To provide a mechanism for strategic dialogue in making budget choices, building on the base budget review.

The group is served by a number of key stakeholders and delivery partners, including school governors.

3. Progress on addressing the five recommendations and further work required

Key to ratings:

Green – Very good progress, addressing the recommendation in nearly all aspects.

Yellow – Strong progress, addressing the recommendation in most aspects. Only minor aspects require further attention.

Amber – Satisfactory progress, addressing the recommendation in many aspects. A few significant aspects require significant attention.

Red – Limited progress, does not address the recommendation. All or many aspects still awaiting attention.

3.1 Recommendation 1: Develop and implement a strategy to improve levels of attendance in primary schools.

Status: November 2017 – Green - Very good progress, addressing the recommendation in nearly all aspects.

(March 2015: Amber, October 2015: Yellow, March 2016: Yellow, November 2016: Yellow, May 2017: Yellow, September 2017: Yellow)

Summary

Primary school attendance was 95.0% for the 2016-2017 academic year. This compares to 94.9% for each of the two previous years. The five-year trend since 2011-2012 has an improvement of 2%, which is the joint highest rate of improvement in Wales. The comparative primary attendance data for Wales will be published in December.

For 2016-2017, eight schools achieved 96%+ attendance, 39 schools achieved 95%+, 21 achieved 94%+, 10 achieved 93%+. One school had an attendance of 92.7%.

Further work required

Ensure the very few schools not consistently utilising the comprehensive and robust ERW guidance are challenged by the Education Welfare Officer and Challenge Adviser in the Core Support Visit (CSV) 1 with the headteacher and chair of governors. In those very few schools the CSV1 report will state actions that are needed to be taken and progress will be monitored.

Focus even more closely on persistent absence.

3.2 Recommendation 2: Quality assure the work of officers to secure greater consistency in the level of challenge they offer to schools.

Status: November 2017 – Yellow – Strong progress, addressing the recommendation in most aspects. Only minor aspects require further attention.

(March 2015: Yellow, October 2015: Yellow, March 2016: Yellow, November 2016: Yellow, May 2017: Yellow, September 2017: Yellow)

Summary

The regional school improvement service (ERW) was established in 2014. The central team covers very specific areas of work; leadership, school improvement and performance, and teaching and learning. They drive national policy and address gaps in service provision at a local level. The central team members do not undertake functions delivered by challenge advisers. Challenge advisers (CA'S) and other staff engaged in school improvement activities are employed and deployed by the Local Authority. There has been confusion regarding the role of ERW and the appropriateness of the support offered and the role of the local authority

Challenge Advisers. In September 2017 the ERW Joint Committee initiated a review of how ERW was financed and functions.

Most reports are evaluative and set clear recommendations. Areas for improvement are identified well. Challenge Advisers ensure all schools that are amber or red support schools have detailed support plans with precise actions and timescales. Challenge Advisers robustly monitor these.

Quality assurance is conducted effectively and has only been hampered by turn over in Challenge Advisers. New Challenge Advisers are appropriately coached and supported using clear guidance. Nearly all schools that are set recommendations by Challenge Advisers make strong or very good progress. Where schools have follow-up activity with Estyn, there has been a strong track record in ensuring that schools make very good progress.

Further work required to achieve very good progress

Continue to monitor the written work and fieldwork of Challenge Advisers closely and with a particular focus on new Challenge Advisers.

Ensure there is enough evidence to evaluate the quality of teaching and of the standards seen in pupils' work

- 3.3 Recommendation 3: Improve officers' evaluation of the quality of leadership and management in schools to make sure that underperforming schools are identified and supported quickly.

Status: November 2017 – Yellow – Strong progress, addressing the recommendation in most aspects. Only minor aspects require further attention.

Yellow (March 2015: Yellow, October 2015: Yellow, March 2016: Yellow, November 2016: Yellow, May 2017: Yellow, September 2017: Yellow)

Summary

Leadership and management is now evaluated annually using nationally agreed guidelines. The progress is seen in the increased proportion of officer reports that match Estyn judgements during 2014-2017 in comparison to 2010-2013. The number of schools placed in statutory category has decreased from seven in 2010-2013 to one in 2014-2017.

Challenge Advisers now provide feedback on the quality of strategic planning and evaluation processes and reports. Visits challenge leadership, on all levels. Leaders are expected to produce evidence to demonstrate improvements. There is clearer continuity from one monitoring visit to the next where progress is determined by response to previous recommendations.

Core Support Visits in autumn 2016 and 2017 demonstrated greater evaluation of the impact on standards by leadership of the school.

A new approach since spring 2017 has been adopted to support and challenge targeted underperforming schools using a Team around the School (TAS) approach to hold schools to account on necessary improvements with holistic support from the Local Authority. The approach has quickened the pace of improvement in the very few schools causing concern.

Further work required to achieve very good progress

Ensure the impact of good leadership and management is considered carefully in relation to pupils' outcomes (standards and wellbeing).

Ensure underperforming schools are identified early and the pace of improvement is quick.

Further enhance the quality of school governance.

- 3.4 Recommendation 4: Improve the quality of provision for those pupils who are educated other than at school, particularly to raise standards of achievement and to assist reintegration back into schools.

Status: November 2017 – Amber – Satisfactory progress, addressing the recommendation in many aspects. A few significant aspects require significant attention.

Amber (March 2015: Amber, October 2015: Amber, March 2016: Red, November 2016: Amber, May 2017: Amber, September 2017: Amber)

Summary

Cabinet approved moving forward on the proposed plans for the development of a new building to house PRU provision on the Cockett House site. The Cabinet met in July 2017 and approved the implementation of an interim model of the Half-Way House in the absence of any suitable accommodation to house a full model.

The PRU Improvement Plan is driving further progress and the new headteacher and interim deputy headteacher, are progressing this plan.

Monitoring exercises including lesson observation and scrutiny of pupils' work show an improving trend in relation to the quality of teaching and standards. A number of key appointments have now been made, which are improving the quality of provision.

Discussions have taken place with headteachers across primary and secondary schools to ascertain their needs from the future service in terms of training and support. More detailed follow-up to collate needs is underway.

Reintegration rates improved in 2016-2017 in comparison to 2015-2016.

Further work required to achieve strong progress

Further improve the quality of teaching to ensure this is consistently good in all centres.

Raise standards of achievement and address inconsistencies between centres.

Working in partnership agree and deliver a Wellbeing and Behaviour Strategy for Swansea Council.

Further increase successful reintegration rates building on the improvements in 2016-2017.

Report back to Cabinet on the progress of the business plan to overhaul model of service delivery.

- 3.5 Recommendation 5: Improve the consistency of leadership across all education services and the quality of self-evaluation and improvement planning within education services.

Status: November 2017 – Yellow – Strong progress, addressing the recommendation in most aspects. Only minor aspects require further attention.

Yellow (March 2015: Amber, October 2015: Amber, March 2016: Amber, November 2016: Yellow, May 2017: Yellow, September 2017: Yellow)

Summary

An annual self-evaluation cycle calendar has been established in order to further enhance responsibility, accountability and consistency in leadership and improvement planning.

The 2017 self-evaluation was undertaken in the summer term and finalised in the autumn term. Before it was finalised, it was shared with headteacher representatives through the School Improvement Partnership and with pupils through the Pupil Voice Forum for their feedback and amended accordingly. The self-evaluation report will now become a live document that will be reviewed on a termly basis and moved over to the new Estyn inspection framework for Local Government Education Services.

A pan-departmental risk register is now in place. Operational risks are managed by Heads of Unit and are scrutinised through formal governance methodology using the Education Department's Strategic Leads Board (SLB) and Senior Leadership Team (EDSLT).

The Education Department's unit business plans for 2017-2018 have been completed. These have been scrutinised to ensure alignment with the

Council's priorities and areas for development highlighted as priorities from the self-evaluation process.

A comprehensive performance management system across the Department is now in place. Following consultation with staff, it has been agreed that the Education Department's performance management cycle will be based on an academic year rather than a financial year.

The department has revised its operational plan and service area performance evaluation reporting templates.

Further work required to achieve very good progress

Monitor the Education Department's revised performance management arrangements, to ensure they are embedded across all service areas.

Ensure all operational plans have ambitious success criteria which are robustly monitored.

4. Equality and Engagement Implications

- 4.1 Whilst there are no specific equality and engagement implications associated with this report, some specific areas of work resulting from the recommendations will be subject to the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process (which incorporates the UNCRC). For example, an EIA report has been developed for the EOTAS review.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 Whilst there are no immediate financial implications arising from this report, acceptance could result in additional expenditure at a future time. Acceptance does not mean that additional resources will be made available and it should be assumed that future spending needs will need to be contained within existing budget provision and have full and due regard to the budget principles set out in 'Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future' and the likely levels of future budgets having due regard to the budget and medium term financial plan.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no immediate legal implications associated with this report.

Background Papers:

Common Inspection Framework

<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/inspection/inspection-explained/common-inspection-framework>

Estyn Guidance on inspection on Local Authority Education Services for Children and Young People

<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/inspection/inspection-guidance/local-government>

City and County of Swansea LAESCYP Inspection Report 2013

<http://www.estyn.gov.uk/download/publication/291263.7/inspection-report-city-and-county-of-swanse-2013>

Annual self-evaluation of Local Authority Education Services for Children and Young People, 2017

www.swansea.gov.uk/estyninspections

Appendices: None