



Report of the Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning & Skills

Special Cabinet – 23 January 2020

Update on Progress for Education Directorate Priorities 2018-2019

Purpose:	For Cabinet to receive an update on the progress in meeting the priorities set for the 2018-2019 academic year and outline priorities set for 2019-2020 academic year.
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.
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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. Swansea Council was last inspected in June 2013 and the report was published in September 2013.
- 1.2 Until 2017, reports provided updates on progress made on the recommendations from the 2013 inspection. Reports now 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.

- 1.3 Following a self-evaluation using the Estyn Common Inspection Framework and a review of the progress against priorities from the previous academic year, five priorities were set for the 2018-2019 academic year. These were:
- Improve teaching and learning with a particular focus on reducing inequalities for the most vulnerable
 - Improve leadership and school governance
 - Work in partnership to develop a sustainable education system
 - Embed the new Additional Learning Needs (ALN), wellbeing and behaviour strategies
 - Ensure all learning opportunities take place in safe environments
- 1.4 Progress on these priorities have been regularly reported to the Chief Executive's Improvement Board, the Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning & Skills, the Education Strategy Group, the School Improvement Partnership and at headteacher meetings.

2. Progress on addressing the five priorities 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.

2.1 Priority 1: Improve teaching and learning with a particular focus on reducing inequalities for the most vulnerable

Status: Yellow

Strong progress, addressing the priority in most aspects. Only minor aspects require further attention

Summary

Successes

- Nearly all schools inspected during the 2018-2019 academic year received an 'excellent' or 'good' judgement for teaching and learning experiences.
- Standards and particularly at key stage 4 are strong relative to Wales and similar local authorities. Support for improving the quality of teaching is well received by schools. Focused, direct observation of teaching to support schools with their own monitoring is provided.
- The spring term cross-phase headteachers meeting had a strong focus on supporting vulnerable learners. Research evidence was given from Education Endowment Foundation, alongside input from Sir Alastair McDonald and best practice shared by three schools.

- Strong secondary networks facilitated by LA have considered research based evidence on teaching and learning.
- The implementation of new professional standards for teachers have been monitored.

Challenges

- Providing more opportunities for pupils to work independently and to make choices in relation to their learning by promoting the teaching/ learning principles outlined in the new Curriculum for Wales and in new professional standards.
- Ensuring that teachers make effective use of assessment outcomes to plan suitable next steps in their pupils' learning by monitoring schools' use of tracking information in planning for pupils and disseminating good practice in this area.
- End of key stage 4 performance data showed a decline in pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) performance in 2018-2019 academic year.
- Sharing the best features of teaching effectively across schools via the good practice directory, networks, conferences and meetings.
- Providing more opportunities for pupils to work independently and to make choices in relation to their learning by promoting the teaching/ learning principles outlined in the new Curriculum for Wales and in new professional standards.
- Ensuring that teachers make effective use of assessment outcomes to plan suitable next steps in their pupils' learning by monitoring schools' use of tracking information in planning for pupils and disseminating good practice in this area.
- Ensuring that teachers continue to target the most vulnerable learners with effective strategies to support learning by evaluating the quality of school provision/interventions/planning for Looked after Children (LAC), FSM, English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners.
- The young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) audit has been shared at the Secondary Wellbeing Network and with the Youth Support Services Manager. Recommendations include reviewing the vulnerability assessment profile.

Further work required

- Strategic implementation plan for Curriculum for Wales 2022.
- Implementation of recommendations of the Policy Development Committee (PDC) on the effective use of PDG.

2.2 Priority 2: Improve leadership and school governance

Status: Yellow

Strong progress, addressing the priority in most aspects. Only minor aspects require further attention

Summary

Successes

- Inspection outcomes for leadership in 2018-2019 as a whole were rated as good and excellent in all but one school.
- Good programme in place for new and acting headteachers that is now aligned to the national leadership programme.
- Good programme in place for primary deputy headteachers
- A 100% success rate for headteacher qualification from Swansea candidates.
- Strong secondary networks for senior leaders on curriculum and self-evaluation in place.
- A proactive approach to mandatory governor training has resulted in an increased attendance from 71 governors attending in autumn 2017 to 214 governors attending in autumn 2018.
- The one school rated with adequate leadership by Estyn inspection has a coherent action plan for improvement. Estyn found that the school was already working on the recommendations within their school development plan and that standards and provision at the school were good.
- Intelligence gathering on additional risks affecting schools is strong, with appropriate actions taken.

Challenges

- Supporting leadership of a transformational curriculum and schools as learning organisations.
- Non-mandatory governor training sessions are positively received by those in attendance however, attendance figures are low compared to the number of governors / governing bodies.
- A few Estyn inspections have identified issues with governors. However, in nearly all cases leadership was judged to be good or excellent.
- Ensuring that all leaders and managers monitor, evaluate and plan for improvement rigorously in their areas of responsibility and act more effectively on their findings.
- Ensuring that all schools develop as learning organisations by raising awareness of the need to have a strong vision for teaching/learning and use of external influence to improve, for example through primary headteacher meetings, secondary curriculum network and making the connection to evidenced based research clearer via the newsletter.

Further work required

- Completion of programme for new and acting headteachers in 2019-2020.
- Support schools with effective evaluation processes in the absence of requirement for self-evaluation reports to Estyn.
- Develop Swansea minimum standards for peer review between schools.

- Strengthen governing body effectiveness by developing a culture of regular self-review which will better equip governors and governing bodies to manage their responsibilities.
- Supporting leadership of a transformational curriculum.
- Review governor training programme in collaboration with heads of primary and secondary units.
- New evaluation and improvement reforms will lead to new ways of measuring school performance.

2.3 **Priority 3: Work in partnership to develop a sustainable education system**

Status: Yellow

Strong progress, addressing the priority in most aspects. Only minor aspects require further attention

Summary

Successes

- Maintaining the quality of educational provision for learners against a challenging financial context and continuing funding uncertainty.
- Continuing to engage constructively with stakeholders through the School Budget Forum, School Improvement Partnership and other working groups, encouraging an increasingly 'self-supporting' school network, sharing good practice, experience and ideas.
- Continuing to prioritise (relatively) the delegated schools budget and areas of pupil-specific support, maintaining the consistent longer-term 'one education budget' strategy and the principles approved within the Council Budget.
- Successful review and implementation of new models of service provision, in line with budget strategy and medium term financial plan as far as possible enhancing mainstream capacity within schools.
- Successfully progressing statutory school proposals to better balance the demand for, and availability of appropriate provision for learners.
- Successfully developing, submitting and gaining approval to detailed business cases in order to access capital investment from the Welsh Government (WG) and benefit learners at the earliest opportunity.
- Delivery of approved capital schemes in line with programme and project timelines and available funding

Challenges

- Continuing uncertainty regarding level of funding available to schools towards externally driven cost and demand pressures such as teachers pay and pension costs, particularly for future years.
- Continuing late announcement and allocation of significant grant streams for schools which undermine the effective planning and use of this funding as well as artificially enhancing published year end reserves figures.
- Uncertainty regarding the funding arrangements to support the new model of ERW provision and the contributions expected from

authorities as well as the funding available to devolve directly to schools.

- Continuing growth in demand for statutory educational provision and support for pupils as well as raised expectations by WG.
- Severe limitations for further radical reviews of service delivery models with a largely core statutory minimum level of non-delegated service provision which is already demonstrating a lack of resilience and capacity in a number of areas.
- Maintaining the speed of progress to deliver enhanced facilities and accommodation for learners against a context of continuing capacity issues across the Council (e.g. legal, corporate building services, finance, procurement and within Education teams).

Further work required

- Delivery of required Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) savings targets and continuing to as far as possible mitigate the significant continuing demand and cost pressures across a number of service areas, recognising:
 - The increasing likelihood of legal challenges to proposed changes in educational provision and school organisation.
 - The extended planning, consultation and implementation timescales (often phased to protect existing learners) required to deliver further radical changes and transformation as well as the need for benefits to be embedded for each year group before the full picture becomes apparent.
- Progressing further radical service reviews to identify models of provision to better reflect the needs of learners.
- Further business cases to submit to WG to access capital investment.
- Proceeding with delivery of approved capital schemes in accordance with agreed timelines.
- Working with stakeholders to continue to press the case with the WG for adequate funding settlements which fully reflect the cost implications of national decisions and choices.

2.4 Priority 4: Embed the new ALN, wellbeing and behaviour strategies

Status: Amber

Satisfactory progress, addressing the priority in many aspects. A few significant aspects require significant attention

Summary

Successes

- All schools inspected during the 2018-2019 academic year received an 'excellent' or 'good' judgement for care, support and guidance.
- The Draft Behaviour Policy has been approved by the Education Otherwise than At School (EOTAS) Steering Committee, setting out a graduated response to meeting the emotional and behavioural needs of learners in Swansea with an emphasis on understanding needs at an early stage so as to align interventions that prevent an escalation

that requires statutory services, education otherwise than at school or independent/out of county education.

- Well-being Strategy is drafted in terms of a definition, principles, model of understanding but does now need an implementation plan that aligns with the proposed developments in integrated family support services.
- The ALN Strategy is in place and satisfactory progress has been made in raising awareness and engaging schools with the school readiness survey. There has been well-regarded contributions at a regional level and new regional strategy has been developed. An ALN Steering Group has been set upon and met twice.
- PRU was inspected and achieved good judgement in all areas.
- The review of EOTAS services has progressed and a structure approved by EOTAS Steering Group.

Challenges

- Capacity over the academic year in Education and in particular in the ALN team has been constrained, which has hampered further development work.
- The impact of the implementation of the ALNET Act 2018 and Code has been identified as presenting a corporate risk. It is unlikely savings against this area would be realised in the medium term to 2023.
- The contractor for the new build PRU went into receivership delaying the delivery of the new build.

Further work required

- The Behaviour Policy has been approved and is subject to translation and circulation shortly. Consultation has been undertaken with headteacher colleagues and other key stakeholders through the EOTAS Steering Group, policy and plan has been approved by Corporate Management Team (CMT).
- Due to capacity issues work on the Well-being Strategy has been delayed, however, this will be picked up from January by Helen Morgan-Rees, Head of Service who is organising a workshop for key stakeholders to complete.
- Emotional and mental well-being is a key theme for the Education priorities. Good progress has been made against the ALN Strategy last year as reviewed by the ALN Strategy Steering Group. A revised Strategy has been drafted which sets out the plan for the next three years to enable the Local Authority to meet additional learning needs for children and young people across Swansea through the transformation required by the ALNET Act 2018.
- The new structure for EOTAS Services has been approved and consultation is starting this term.

2.5 Priority 5: Ensure all learning opportunities take place in safe environments.

Status: Yellow

Strong progress, addressing the priority in most aspects. Only minor aspects require further attention

Summary

Successes

- All schools inspected by Estyn during the 2018-2019 academic year met requirements and gave no cause for concern for safeguarding.
- Good quality child protection training has been provided in Swansea schools with 98% positive feedback rate.
- Safeguarding and child protection training has been reviewed and is now more aligned with the messages being delivered corporately and on a multi- agency level.
- Improved collaboration between the Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer in Education and the Health & Safety Officer for Schools will improve the oversight of the LA on safeguarding and general safety in schools.
- Access to level 2 child protection training has improved.

Challenges

- Not all schools have recruited safely but these are few in number. Safe recruitment training is provided by HR.
- Review and implementation of school's Strategic Equality Plan.
- Access to restraint training.

Further work required

- Conduct safeguarding reviews and developing peer reviewers on a rolling programme.
- Ensure that all schools receive Violence against Women and Domestic Abuse (VAWDA) training.

3. Priorities for 2019-2020 Academic Year

3.1 Following a thorough self-evaluation using Estyn guidance and evaluation of last year's priorities, the following priorities have been set for the 2019-2020 academic year:

- Further develop specialist provision and placements to meet current and future demand for severe and complex needs.
- Ensure children and young people's needs are identified and appropriate provision is available across Swansea in line with the ALNET Act 2018.
- Improve teaching and learning by developing schools as learning organisations.
- Improve leadership of schools by developing partnerships for school improvement.
- Implement the behaviour strategy to focus on prevention and early intervention for schools.
- Work in partnership to develop a sustainable education system.
- Ensure all learning opportunities take place in safe environments.

4. Equality and Engagement Implications

4.1 The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) and must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Our Equality Impact Assessment process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above.

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

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report, although a number of the actions referred to could result in additional expenditure at a future time. This 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 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 for the inspection of Local Government Education Services

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

City and County of Swansea LAESCYP Inspection Report 2013

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

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

www.swansea.gov.uk/estyninspections

Appendices: None