



## Report of the Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning and Skills

To the Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel 11 December 2018

### Annual Update on School Improvement Service

<b>Purpose:</b>	To brief/update the Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel on
<b>Content:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. School Improvement Service Performance update (Annual)</li><li>2. ERW Progress against Business Plan priorities locally and regionally</li><li>3. Briefing on the Pupil Deprivation Grant spend</li><li>4. Verbal update on quality of homework/ afterschool clubs</li></ol>
<b>Councillors are being asked to:</b>	Consider the information provided and to forward views to the Cabinet Member via a letter from the Panel Convener
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Councillor Raynor Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning and Skills.
<b>Lead Officer &amp; Report Author:</b>	Helen Morgan-Rees, Head of Achievement and Partnership Tel: 01792 633964 E-mail: helen.morgan-rees@swansea.gov.uk

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 Swansea Council's school improvement service is integrated within the ERW (Education through Regional Working) consortium. ERW has a business plan to deliver school improvement. The latest plan runs from 2017-2021 and is aligned to local priorities in Swansea Council. In this report, the ERW business plan for 2017-2018 remains in focus. The ERW business plan contains school improvement actions, governance arrangements and corporate improvement actions. All priorities link to measurable outcomes in schools, where appropriate.

The Education Improvement Service (EIS) in Swansea now sits within the Achievement and Partnership Service (APS) to help deliver regional strategies for school improvement and takes account of local priorities, as itemised in the annexe to the ERW business plan and operational plans within the service. School improvement officers in Swansea Council have clear priorities for supporting and challenging schools to improve and seek out qualitative feedback from teachers and leaders in order to meet client needs and improve service

provision. During the academic year 2017-2018, engagement with the Education through Regional Working (ERW) central team has reached hiatus. The planned review and reform of ERW has not taken place. As a result, the collaboration and service delivery has fragmented in comparison to previous years. The capacity of Swansea's school improvement team has improved during the latter part of 2017-2018. Since November 2015, the school improvement service in Swansea sits within three units. Units consist of the Primary Phase Unit, the Secondary Phase Unit and the Curriculum Phase Unit. Third tier managers are responsible for operations and resources within their units. The Head of Achievement and Partnership has oversight of the three relevant service units. All units aim to work with ERW to deliver a regional school improvement service on behalf of Swansea Council and each Head of Unit takes responsibility for working in alliance with the ERW central team, where possible. However, communication and clarity have declined during this reporting period.

The new professional standards for teaching and leadership came into force in September 2018. The new standards are ambitious and link closely with curriculum reform. Performance management within schools is aligned with the new leadership standards. Current and future work within the school improvement service units is underpinned by new professional standards, curriculum reform and the Education Directorate's five top priorities for 2018-2019:

- 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, wellbeing and behaviour strategies
- Ensure all learning opportunities take place in safe environments

The pupil development grant (PDG) is passed directly to schools and is provided to help support achievement of pupils eligible for free school meals. Schools are required to publish their plans for expenditure on school websites. Welsh Government provide clear guidance on eligible spend. Research evidence supports effective expenditure. There is also evidence from pupil voice to support what works best for learners themselves. The grant is monitored by challenge advisers who consider achievement and by finance officers within the Education Directorate, who check for compliance. The grant is subject to internal and external audit.

The Achievement and Partnership Service (APS) does not normally hold information on homework and afterschool clubs. However, a verbal report can be provided following updates from colleagues in the Poverty and Prevention service area.

## **2. Briefing/Main body of report**

### **2.1 School Improvement Service Performance 2017-2018**

Progress during the year has been strong with an overall RAYG rating based on team evaluations. Work across the units is evaluated each academic term.

<b>Service Delivery Area</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Unit Evaluation and further work (RAYG)</b>
Develop leadership skills	Categorisation A-B schools	YELLOW Embed new leadership standards
Support newly qualified teachers	Strong induction programme	YELLOW Continue to ensure close monitoring
Support effective assessment	Secure assessment	YELLOW Support on baseline in foundation phase
Develop Welsh	Transactional Welsh	YELLOW Consider new ways of working
Support foundation phase	Stronger philosophy	YELLOW Complete the work to support staff
Literacy and numeracy	Pupil performance	YELLOW Consider new ways of working
Digital competence	Pupil performance	YELLOW Embed the new digital strategy
Additional learning needs	Co-ordinators trained	YELLOW Further work to support leadership
Monitor and evaluate performance	Early intervention	YELLOW No schools in a statutory category now
Targeted support to schools	Proportionate response	YELLOW Provide a co-ordinated response
Dissemination of good practice	Reduces variation	YELLOW Build on good work
Monitor grant expenditure	Value for money	YELLOW PDG conference
Support governors	Improved leadership	YELLOW Support with new leadership standards
Revision of sixth form provision	Identification of best practice	YELLOW Follow up on review work
Reducing variation	Quality of teaching	YELLOW Use of data to share best practice
Facilitate networks	Professional learning	YELLOW Support and develop useful networks
Train workforce	Service integrity	YELLOW Ensure challenge adviser receive valuable professional development

## 2.2 ERW Progress against Business Plan priorities locally and regionally 2017-2018

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Local Progress</b>	<b>Regional Progress</b>
Leading learning including developing leadership on all levels	YELLOW	YELLOW

Teaching and learning including supporting curriculum change	AMBER	AMBER
Support for learning including attendance and vulnerable learners	YELLOW	AMBER
School Improvement including categorisation and developing collaborative networks	YELLOW	YELLOW
Organisational effectiveness including review and reform of ERW	N/A	AMBER

### 2.3 Briefing on the Pupil Development Grant spend

Each year, the Pupil Development Grant (PDG) is monitored by challenge advisers. The main areas for expenditure in financial year 2016-2017 are monitored during the autumn each year. In 2017-2018 academic year, the main areas for expenditure were:

Area of spending	Delivered by	Outcome
Intervention programme	Additional staff	Can help catch up
Nurture provision	Teaching assistants	Supports emotional needs
Working with parents	Existing staff	Sustainable solutions
Training staff	External providers	Whole school approach
Tracking	Additional resource	Value for money
Early identification	Existing staff	De-escalation
Wellbeing support	Additional staff	Personal support
Homework/ afterschool club	Additional hours	Safe haven
Subsidising	Direct payment	Inclusion

### 2.4 Verbal update on quality of homework/ afterschool clubs

## 3. Conclusions/Key Points Summary

- The school improvement service provides good support to a range of schools.
- The school improvement function is divided between local and regional officers and this can create duplication.
- The review and reform of ERW has created uncertainty and disengagement at a local level.
- The use of the pupil development grant is most effective where schools have followed Welsh Government's practitioner guidance and research evidence to support provision for pupils eligible for free school meals.

## 4. Legal implications

There are no legal implications.

## 5. Finance (if required)

There are no funding implications.

## **Background Papers**

ERW business plan 2017-2018:

<http://www.erw.wales/about-us/governance/business-plans-and-strategies/>

PDG Practitioner Guidance:

<https://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/131216-pdg-short-guidance-for-practitioners-en.pdf>