

## **Estyn – Inspection of Local Government Education Services**

### **Summary of new inspection framework & self evaluation of Education & Youth Portfolio**

- New inspection framework for education services in Local Authorities from September 2017
- Two authorities, Neath Port Talbot and Denbighshire piloted during 2017/18
- All other Local Authorities will be inspected from September 2018 onwards over the following 5 years with 1 LA per region per annual cycle
- Eight weeks' notice of inspection given
- Estyn will gather additional information from other bodies e.g. Welsh Audit Office (WAO), Care Standards Inspectorate (CSI) prior to inspection
- Team led by Reporting Inspector from Estyn and other HMIs, including at least one of the Local Area Link Inspectors (LALI). Representative from WAO will be part of inspection team and potentially representative from CSI if pre-inspection evidence requires it.
- 2-3 weeks prior to inspection, team will make preliminary visit to the LA to meet with range of stakeholders to gather evidence which supports development of lines of enquiry e.g. heads, chairs of governors, leaders/managers from partner organisations such as GwE, other statutory bodies, FE institutions, training providers, voluntary organisations, private companies etc. Will also include meeting with GwE staff who support schools in the authority and children/young people's representative groups.
- First day of inspection week inspection team meet with Chief Exec, Chief Officer, Leader, Cabinet Member for Education and Chair of Scrutiny. LA will give a 30 min presentation on key messages from LA's own self-evaluation. Reporting inspector will then outline emerging themes the team will be focusing on during the week.

The inspection areas in the framework focus on:

#### **1 – Outcomes**

- 1.1 Standards and progress overall
- 1.2 Standards and progress of specific groups
- 1.3 Wellbeing and attitudes to learning

#### **2 – Quality of Education Services**

- 2.1 Support for school improvement
- 2.2 Support for vulnerable learners
- 2.3 Other education support services

### 3 – Leadership and management

- 3.1 Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers
- 3.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning
- 3.3 Professional learning
- 3.4 Use of resources

Inspection team will be making a judgement on four point scale:

- **Excellent** – Very strong, sustained performance and practice
- **Good** – Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
- **Adequate and needs improvement** – Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
- **Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement** – Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

- Follow up activity by Estyn will be considered if one of more inspection area is judged as UNSATISFACTORY or if all inspection areas are judged as ADEQUATE. In these cases, the Local Authority would be considered as one 'causing significant concern' and Estyn will judge whether senior managers have the capacity to bring about improvements. If the LA is determined to be causing significant concern and there is no confidence that managers can secure improvement then the LA will be placed in follow up and Estyn will be actively involved in the post inspection planning process and ongoing monitoring through regular improvement conferences and a formal monitoring visit within 2 years of the original inspection.
- If there is no follow up required then Estyn will issue a report on the inspection which will include recommendations for the Local Authority to work on during the rest of the 5 year cycle with monitoring undertaken during the regular LALI visits.

#### Preparation by the E&Y Team

- Rewriting of self-evaluation report based on new framework – draft going through editing process to get to final version by end of March for circulation to Programme Board and discussion with representative groups within and external to the portfolio.
- E&Y Overview and Scrutiny Committee report in April.
- Evidence to support narrative is being collated to be uploaded to the Estyn Virtual Inspection Room by end of April.
- On agenda for discussion with Estyn in Summer Term LALI visit

## Summary of Strengths/Areas of Development/Risks from the SER

### 1.Outcomes

- 1.1 Standards and progress overall
- 1.2 Standards and progress of specific groups
- 1.3 Wellbeing and attitudes to learning

### Strengths

- Strong progress in improving end of phase learner outcomes in Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3
- Foundation Phase Outcome Indicator one place better (5<sup>th</sup>) than expected benchmarking (6<sup>th</sup>) against other LAs in Wales and 1<sup>st</sup> in GwE region
- Higher than expected levels at Foundation Phase (outcome 6) improved across Language (Eng) Maths and Personal Development
- Strong trend of improvement at Key Stage 2 CSI over three years and in individual subjects of English, Maths and Science at both Level 4 (expected level) and higher than expected level 5
- Strong trend of improvement at Key Stage 3 CSI over three years and improved to 5<sup>th</sup> in Wales, one place above expected benchmark of 6<sup>th</sup>.
- Improved at expected Level 5+ for English and Science and maintained performance in Science.
- Higher than expected performance at Level 6 and 7 improved on 2016 in English, Maths and Science and is above Welsh average (but not improving ranked position)
- Best individual subject outcomes across GwE at Key Stage 4 in English, maths, maths numeracy and science and all above Welsh average
- Improvement in national categorisation outcomes – at primary no 'red' school in three years, reduction in 'amber' and increased in 'green' from 19-25 schools. At secondary, reduction of 3 red schools to 1 (SRG out of SM and JSHS closure)
- Improvement in inspection outcomes in primary to 80% good or better. Increasing number of primary schools receiving excellent judgements.
- Successful track record of getting schools removed from Estyn follow up categories
- Learners Not in Education, Training & Employment (NEET) remains consistently low - 1.6% in 2017. Bespoke NEET prevention initiatives, e.g. Families First Resilience project and TRAC are positively contributing towards the prevention of and reduction of the NEETS cohort.
- Improving outcomes for pupils identified as having Additional Learning Needs at Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3
- Improving outcomes for pupils who have English as an Additional Language
- Clear evidence that support for pupils with ALN or who are vulnerable is impacting positively on learner outcomes and on employment and training outcomes for vulnerable young people in the Integrated Youth Provision/Youth Justice cohort.
- Low rates of unauthorised absence in both primary (0.4% against Welsh average of 1.1%) and secondary schools (0.8% against Welsh average of 1.4%)
- Number of schools and pre-schools engaged in Healthy Schools/Pre-Schools Scheme well above targets set by Public Health Wales
- Inspection reports report good standards of pupil wellbeing/engagement and positive attitudes to learning across Flintshire schools. The Integrated Youth Provision targeted support for substance misuse (Sorted) and sexual health initiatives (Consent) also evidence positive impact upon well-being.

- All five Welsh medium primary schools have successfully gained Bronze and Silver on the Starterlaith initiative and are currently working towards Gold

#### Areas for Improvement

- Improve Foundation Phase Outcome 6+ to reach expected performance of 6<sup>th</sup> in Wales
- Performance of boys at Key Stage 2,
- Outcomes in Welsh first language at Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage
- Continue to improve performance of pupils entitled to FSM at all key stages but particularly at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4
- Improve 'read across' at KS4 to convert good individual subject performance into headlines indicators e.g. L2+
- Improve outcomes at A\*/A at KS4 for more able learners
- Further improve outcomes for KS5 at A\*-C and A\*/A.
- Improve take up and outcomes in Welsh GCSE at KS4
- Improve outcomes for learners in the PRU
- Improve attendance rates and outcomes for EOTAS pupils engaged with external providers
- Reduce number of fixed term and permanent exclusions
- Improve outcomes for Looked After children and improve take up at Integrated Youth Provision targeted support to LAC cohort.
- Reduce the number of funded early years settings being placed in categories of Estyn follow up
- Increase the number of schools receiving 'Excellent' judgements from Estyn

#### Risks

- Funding pressures on delegated schools budgets resulting in reducing staffing and interventions for learners which may undermine standards
- Funding pressures on core LA support teams e.g. Inclusion, Youth Justice Service reducing expert support for learners and risks to preventative programmes.
- Increasing EAL population in context of reducing MEAG funding, impacting on LA/school ability to support learner outcomes
- Increasingly complex needs of learners and accessibility of appropriate provision impacting on learner outcomes achieved
- Increasing numbers of permanent exclusions in primary and secondary phases reducing learner opportunities to secure positive outcomes

## **2. Quality of Education Services**

2.1 Support for school improvement

2.2 Support for vulnerable learners

2.3 Other education support services

#### Strengths

- Effective working between LA and GwE senior managers and with school improvement advisers resulting in very robust joint approach to improving school performance
- Clearly articulated targets for improvement in Local Authority improvement plans which are aligned to GwE business plans

- Effectively co-ordinated response to schools in need of improvement with clear evidence of challenge and targeted support securing sustained progress
- Impact of School Performance Monitoring Group in securing improved school performance
- Good use of data to forensically categorise schools on national model matrix
- Prioritising improvement of school leadership at all levels through interaction with GwE Professional Offer and local coaching/mentoring
- Strong support programme for governors
- Expert inclusion officers who provide effective support to schools
- Increased delegation of ALN funding to schools encouraging more innovative approaches and flexibility in supporting learners
- Good progress in supporting schools for implementation of new legislation for ALN
- Effective partnership working across portfolios and external partners to effectively and efficiently deliver support services for ALN e.g Language and Communication Service (CLASS), Regional Sensory Support Service
- Collaborative, multi-agency approach for joint commissioning of specialist placements for learners
- Consistently above Welsh average for statutory assessment completion rates
- Low appeals rate to the SEN Tribunal for Wales
- Strong provision for safeguarding advice and support across the Portfolio and in schools including high quality training
- Good provision for support and training for schools in Welsh 2<sup>nd</sup> language – positive impact on learner outcomes in primary and high take up of new initiative Cymraeg Campus
- Constructive working relationships with Welsh language organisations through WESP forum e.g. Menterlaith, MudiadMeithrin and Urdd. Proactive Welsh Language provision by Integrated Youth Provision e.g. bilingual Consent Project and social enterprise activity leading to real employment opportunities for young people.
- Increased provision for Welsh medium early years education
- Very effective delivery of pilot 30 hours Childcare Offer – achieved through positive partnership working across LA teams and external partners
- Integrated Youth Provision multi agency team which provides universal and enhanced support through effective collaboration for young people, particularly the most vulnerable
- Good quality Youth Justice Services evidencing reduced first time entrants and reduced re-offenders.
- Effective co productive partnership working with statutory and external agencies resulting in improving support for vulnerable children and families e.g. Early Help Hub ensures families with 2+ ACEs that would otherwise have had no further action from Children’s Services are offered bespoke support and far earlier than previously.
- Hub approach is associated with reducing re-referrals into the Children’s Services front-door as statutory services focus efforts on work with those most vulnerable children and families.
- Effective commissioning process for Families First resulting in dedicated extra support for young people most at risk of poor outcomes (e.g. NEET, young people in families with 2 or more ACEs, young carers, children and young people with disabilities) and their families, as part of a whole family working approach.
- Strong provision for health and wellbeing through Healthy Schools/Pre-Schools Scheme and play provision
- Effective admissions processes with vast majority of parental preferences met and reducing number of appeals

- Effective management of information on schools conditions and suitability which underpins the school modernisation strategy
- Strong track record in delivery of new schools on time and within budget
- Effective processes of consultation on school organisational change

### Areas for Improvement

- Strengthen the collective corporate responsibility for children and young people between the Portfolio and its secondary schools to improve pupil engagement and maximise the use of reducing resources to improve learner outcomes
- Consolidate restructuring of PRU and relocation onto single site to maximise impact of service for PRU learners and extend support for mainstream provision to maintain learners in schools
- Improve the range of alternative provision and speed at which this can be accessed to maintain learner engagement for those who are EOTAS
- Increase access to education, employment and training for young people in the YJS
- Improve access to support for literacy, numeracy and digital competence for young people in the YJS
- Continue to strengthen links between the Portfolio and its secondary schools with the North Wales Economic Ambition Board to maximise learner access to apprenticeships and employment opportunities
- Continue to improve the school estate through school modernisation strategy and capital investment
- Reduce the percentage of surplus places through school modernisation programme
- Increase provision for Welsh medium school places in urban areas of the Authority and increase take up in rural areas where existing provision is under-subscribed

### Risks

- Reducing funding for local government impacts on range of central education services to support children and young people, particularly the most vulnerable
- Reduction in grant funding e.g. EIG/MEAG/Youth Support Grant/Youth Justice Grant/Families First Grant impacts on range of support for school improvement and for vulnerable learners
- Uncertainty of sustainability of grant funding and short term grants with inflexible grant conditions undermines ability for LA to plan strategically to maximise impact
- Affordability of school modernisation programme in current financial context could impact on ambition
- Resilience of central teams and workload levels

## **3. Leadership and management**

- 3.1 Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers
- 3.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning
- 3.3 Professional Learning
- 3.4 Use of resources

### Strengths

- Common vision, values and purpose shared between political leaders and senior officers with high expectations
- Strategic plans e.g. Council Plan, Portfolio Plan and GwE Business Plan are clearly linked and focus on key priorities to improve outcomes for learners across sectors of the Portfolio
- Strategic documentation reflects key legislative priorities e.g. Well-being of Future Generations Act, Social Services & Well-being Act, Education in Wales – Our National Mission, Welsh Language Strategy 2050, North Wales Economic Growth Deal, Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) agenda, National Youth Work Strategy (WG 2014), Children and Young people first (Youth Justice) .
- Clear communication between senior leaders and from the Portfolio to its schools and key partners – constructive joint working
- Performance monitoring procedures are sound – areas causing concern are quickly identified and appropriately responded to
- Data is used effectively to inform decision making
- Self evaluation processes are robust and identify strengths/areas for improvement and area of risk
- Elected members and officers understand the strengths of the education and youth portfolio, and its challenges and robustly challenge at Scrutiny Committee
- Elected members and officers are willing to make difficult decisions to protect the integrity of the service e.g. school organisational change decisions, funding decisions, school performance monitoring
- National and regional priorities are well reflected in strategic and operational plans
- Robust challenge to underperforming schools coupled with timely and targeted support results in improvements
- Very strong strategic partnerships with GwE, statutory agencies e.g health & police and with other organisations as exemplified by the Early Help Hub
- Many good examples of collaborative working improving services and delivering better outcomes for children and young people
- Strong networks of professional practice with schools, Coleg Cambria and GwE
- Good opportunities for professional development through training, secondments, changing operational models
- Effective use and monitoring of grant funding to maximise impact .
- Effective procurement procedures and monitoring of commissioned services
- Resources from core and grant funding are clearly linked to improvement priorities
- Delegation to schools is maximised to support front line delivery
- Central support teams, although reduced due to financial efficiencies, continue to provide good value for money
- Effective partnership working and joint commissioning provides value for money and efficient delivery of services across the Portfolio
- Schools funding formula regularly reviewed in consultation with headteachers to ensure it remains fit for purpose and responsive to changing circumstances
- School Budget Forum meets statutory responsibilities
- Regional consortia arrangements, particularly in light of recent restricting within GwE are delivering effective challenge and support to schools as evidenced by outcomes and so represent good value for money
- Schools provided with good levels of support for employment, financial, legal and other services by central teams via SLAs

- Complaints dealt with timely and appropriately
- Good mechanisms for professional development of core staff through corporate training offer e.g. e-learning, direct delivery, Portfolio team meetings and workshops, Flintshire Academi, Change Exchange, externally provided training with universities and Academi Wales and joint third sector training initiatives which are low cost / no cost
- Annual appraisal scheme which ensures personal and professional objectives are linked to the annual corporate service and portfolio plans. The appraisal cycle identifies the annual learning needs of individual employees
- Portfolio provides good opportunities for Modern Traineeships and Apprenticeships and workforce development recruitment via programmes for employment within play and within IYP programme delivery

#### Areas for Improvement

- Extend range of financial benchmarking undertaken to measure impact of services on outcomes for children and young people compared to other authorities
- Continue to develop the monitoring and governance of GwE to ensure best impact for learners and value for money
- Continue to strengthen professional offer for core staff in the Portfolio to support career development and particularly support succession planning

#### Risks

- Maintaining high quality core services with reducing financial resources
- Poor school funding levels & school balances undermining school performance
- Resilience of senior managers in the Council and in schools to manage the challenging environment
- Attracting and retaining good leaders to senior roles in school and in the Portfolio to provide effective succession
- Affordability of school modernisation programme vs ambition