

**Report To:** Performance Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 26 February 2015

**Lead Officer:** Head of Education

**Report Author:** Strategic Planning Team Manager

**Title:** The post inspection action in response to the Estyn Inspection on the quality of Local Authority Education Services for children and young people in Denbighshire

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## **1. What is the report about?**

- 1.1 Provide an update on the progress made in response to the recommendations made by Estyn following the 2012 inspection.

## **2. What is the reason for making this report?**

- 2.1 To provide information on and consider progress made following the report presented to the scrutiny committee on 17 July 2014, in response to the recommendations made by Estyn following the 2012 inspection.

## **3. What are the Recommendations?**

That the Committee:

- 3.1. considers the information provided and supports the conclusion that the Local Authority Education Service has met Estyn's recommendations;
- 3.2 determines whether further monitoring of the action plan's implementation is required.

## **4. Report details**

- 4.1 The main findings of the Estyn Report showed that the Local Authority achieved 'Good' for the three key questions:-
- 4.1.1 How good are outcomes?
  - 4.1.2 How good is provision?
  - 4.1.3 How good is leadership and management?
- 4.2 All other indicators were also judged to be 'Good', with the exception of 3.1 'Leadership', which was judged to be 'Excellent'.
- 4.3 However, in order to improve further, Estyn recommended the following:
- 4.3.1 **Recommendation 1:** Improve the accuracy of Teacher Assessments at

the end of Key Stage 3; and **Recommendation 2**: identify all services for children and young people in Denbighshire and establish an effective system to measure the impact of these services to help the Authority and its partners know whether these offer good value for money.

## **5. Recommendation 1**

- 5.1 At the Performance Scrutiny meeting of July 2014 it was agreed that as a result of the maintained improvement in the accuracy of teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 3, further stand-alone reports on this matter were not required. In future this aspect would be monitored through the annual report submitted to the Committee on external examination results and teacher assessments

## **6. Progress against Recommendation 2**

- 6.1 A strategic analysis of partnership working in Denbighshire has been undertaken (see Appendix 1). This strategic work will be developed and reviewed on an ongoing basis under the auspices of the Wellbeing Plan and Denbighshire Strategic Partnership Board.
- 6.2 Simultaneously a small task and finish group has worked to gather information from the community over the last six months and the work will continue at least until the end of the calendar year. As it is believed that over 1,000 groups exist across Denbighshire with which Young People could be engaged, this is a significant piece of work.
- 6.3 This approach also supports the Council's Safeguarding responsibilities by developing better understanding of the requirements for safeguarding training and support for groups that are not directly funded or supported by the Council.
- 6.4 The activity to date was reviewed in December, (see Appendix 2) and recommendations for embedding the work into 'business as usual' activities are being considered by the Head of Education.
- 6.5 It is believed that this twin-tracked approach meets the spirit and the letter of the Estyn recommendation, and is being tested out with a peer reviewer in March.

## **7. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

- 7.1 Improving performance in education and the quality of school buildings is one of the Council's corporate priorities for 2012-17 term of office. In monitoring the delivery of the attached action plan the Committee can assist the Council to fulfil part of the above ambition.

**8. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

- 8.1 All costs accrued will be supported by service budgets. Continued financial constraints require an ongoing review of this work to balance the recommendations of the regulator and the outcomes for the residents of the County, with the resources of the Local Authority.

**9 What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.**

- 9.1 The purpose of the report is to review and consider progress against recommendations. Therefore, the report is not seeking a decision in response to a proposal. There are no adverse effects on any of the protected characteristics as a result of this report.

**10 What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

- 10.1 Consultation has been carried out with Key Stakeholders including the Children, Young People & Families Partnership.

**11 Chief Finance Officer Statement**

- 11.1 The costs associated with this work are being absorbed within current service budgets. All areas of Council expenditure will continue to be reviewed as part of the ongoing budget process.

**12. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

There is a risk that this activity does not meet Estyn's expectations in line with their recommendation. The approach is being therefore being tested by a peer reviewer. During the review and reduction of services in line with Cutting the Cloth there is a risk that the approach described above cannot be continued at the current level over the medium to long term. A sustainable model for the future is therefore being considered.

**13. Power to make the Decision**

- 13.1 No legal requirements but Local Authority inspections are mandatory.
- 13.2 Article 6.3.2(f) of the Council's Constitution stipulates that scrutiny committees may ensure that actions indicated in action plans are carried out.

**Contact Officer:**

Strategic Planning Team Manager  
Tel: 07766 367168