

Report to	Audit and Governance Committee
Date of meeting	22.01.25
Lead Member / Officer	Diane King (Lead Member for Education, Children and Young People),
Report authors	Geraint Davies (Head of Education)
Title	Estyn Enhanced Local Authority Visit 2024

1. What is the report about?

1.1. The report provides information on the process followed and the outcome of the Estyn Local Authority Visit October 2024 (**Appendix 1**)

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. To present the outcome letter of the recent Estyn Enhanced Local Authority Visit focusing on Attendance and Additional Learning Needs.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1. Audit and Governance Committee are invited to receive the details of this Letter.

4. Report details

4.1. Estyn regularly evaluates aspects of local government education services through a variety of activities. (**Appendix 2**) Some of these activities result in published evaluations, while others don't. These activities include

- Regular Local Authority Link Inspector Meetings
- Assurance and Risk Assessment Meetings
- Enhanced Local Authority Link Inspector Visits (ELV)
- Thematic Reports
- Topical Reports

- Inspections

4.2. On the 21 – 23 October 2024, Richard Thomas HMI and two HMI colleagues carried out an enhanced local authority link inspector visit which focussed on additional learning needs and attendance.

4.3. Estyn usually undertake an enhanced LALI (Local Authority Link Inspector) visit twice in a six-year cycle to each LA (every two years but not in the year when the LGES (Local Government Education Service) inspection takes place). The visit focuses on a specific aspect of the LA's LGES which will be agreed prior to the visit through the LALI.

4.4. A focus area could be one that the LA wishes Estyn to consider, it could be a recommendation from a previous inspection, or it could be an area of Estyn's choice. Attendance and ALN were selected in DCC due to the National and local focus on the areas.

4.5. The work is carried out over two days and involves the LALI plus two other inspectors.

4.6. Prior to the 3 days visit a timetable was agreed and meetings included meetings with:

- Head of Education
- ALN and Attendance senior officers
- Team members
- Chief Executive Officer
- Chair of Performance Scrutiny
- Lead Member for Education
- Head Teachers
- School Staff

4.7. Prior to the meeting appropriate documents were uploaded to the Estyn Virtual Inspection Room to allow inspectors time to scrutinise them.

4.8. The 2 areas in focus were as follows:

- 1. How well does the local authority identify pupils with additional needs early through collaboration, transition and multi-agency working.**
- 2. How effective is the local authority in providing effective challenge and targeted support to improve pupil attendance**

4.9. Estyn identified strengths in each focus areas as highlighted in the outcome letter.

4.10. Estyn do not provide recommendations in Enhanced Visits but offer suggestions for the LA to consider. Estyn suggested 3 points of consideration during the visit.

4.11. Enhanced Visit letters are not published and are issued to support the improvement process of the authority. As a service we are now reviewing the considerations suggested and addressing them through our service area improvement plans.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

5.1 This area of work contributes towards making Denbighshire a healthier and happier place where young people want to live and work and have the skills to do so. It also contributes to make Denbighshire a place where young people can learn and grow, in a fair and safe environment and have the best start in life.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1. There may be additional costs in meeting the recommendations, but we will aim to keep these within existing budgets.

6 What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

7.1. A Well-being Impact Assessment will generally be required for decisions or proposals for change in order to comply with the Equality Act 2010, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language Standards. As this is a report on an inspection outcome a well-being Impact Assessment is not required.

7 What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1 Discussions with the Lead Member for Education, Children and Families formed a critical part of the inspection process, this is the first opportunity to present the letter following its publication.

9 Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1 There were no additional costs during the inspection.

10 What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1 The inspection report highlights all the areas identified that required improvements and forms part of the service evaluation and improvement process.

11 Power to make the decision.

11.1 Powers in relation to matters detailed in this report are as per:

- Section 7 of the Council's Constitution
- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Local Government (Wales) Act 2015