



EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 6TH NOVEMBER 2018

**SUBJECT: SELF-EVALUATION PROCESS AND ITS IMPACT ON THE EDUCATION
DIRECTORATE'S SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE
SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the process of self-evaluation and its impact on the Education Directorate's Service Improvement Plan, and to provide a summary of key strengths and priorities for improvement that are identified as a result of the self-evaluation process.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The self-evaluation process is an integral part of the overall cycle of service improvement. It is fundamental in ensuring the directorate secures ongoing improvements that positively contribute to the objectives in our Caerphilly Local Authority Service Improvement Plan and corporate plan. Over the last twelve months, an increasing number of strategies have been implemented to ensure that the process is robust, increasing the level of challenge, reflecting changes to the Estyn Inspection framework and involving a wider range of stakeholders.
- 2.2 The self-evaluation process has identified a range of strengths and priorities for improvement detailed in the report.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The content of this report contributes to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015, specifically to maximise the contribution of Education towards national goals. It also links to the Local Authority's Wellbeing objectives.
- *A prosperous Wales* – developing a skilled and well educated workforce.
 - *A healthier Wales* – An education system that promotes health and wellbeing as central to its core purpose.
 - *A more equal Wales* – An education system that meets the needs of all learners including those from disadvantaged or vulnerable groups.
 - *A Wales of cohesive communities* – An education system that builds on strengthening communities at a local and national with significant focus on enrichment experiences based on the heritage and language of Wales.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 SELF-EVALUATION POLICY AND PROCESS

4.1.1 A range of data and other information is collected through the self-evaluation process and has the following purposes:

- providing an evidence base upon which to arrive at judgements about pupil outcomes and progress, quality of provision and the effectiveness of leadership and management of Education Services and its future improvement journey;
- reflecting on what has been done to consistently deepen understanding ;
- recognising and celebrating good practice and where appropriate use this to support others in line with Caerphilly LA's vision for education;
- ensuring that stakeholders understand the context of the organisation and the contribution that they can make towards further aid improvement;
- improving the performance, impact and effectiveness of the directorate services and its constituent parts, including commissioned services, so that Members and Regulators can hold officers, the school improvement service, education and youth settings to greater account;
- evaluating value for money across services; and
- quality assuring our contribution to overall corporate objectives

4.1.2 An effective self-evaluation policy will lead to the following:

- strategic and operational plans which are monitored against clear targets and success criteria;
- purposeful activities linked to continuing professional development;
- improved provision for education and youth support services; and
- accelerated outcomes on the standards and quality of education and wellbeing for all learners across the Caerphilly region.

4.1.3 The judgements made during self-evaluation should be:

- **secure** – based on sufficiently robust, reliable and accessible evidence;
- **first-hand** – based on direct observation;
- **reliable** – based on common, well-understood criteria;
- **valid** – accurately reflecting what is achieved and provided;
- **free of bias** – valuing equality of opportunity and diversity; and
- **corporate** – reflect the collective vision of Caerphilly LA.

4.1.4 The Caerphilly Education directorate self-evaluation links directly to the Estyn Local Government Education Services Inspection Framework (LGES) and our wider local authority priorities. This enables us to have an accurate and up to date picture of our strengths and areas for development across all areas of our work.

4.1.5 The three inspection areas of the LGES inspection framework are set out below.

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

4.2. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE SELF-EVALUATION

4.2.1 Self-evaluation processes have improved significantly over the last twelve months. Strategies include:

- a. A series of re-induction training sessions for the Education Management Team. This has helped an increased number of managers and staff improve their understanding of the purpose of self-evaluation and to develop consistency in approach;
- b. A move away from narrative heavy 'FADE' forms to 'Monitoring and Evaluation' reports that capture the impact of the services through internal monitoring and external verification. These reports also include a focus on 'value for money' and actions for improvement;
- c. Introduction of a timetabled monitoring and evaluation cycle to ensure that all aspects of the directorate are robustly reviewed. Individual reports are assigned to key members of staff, thereby increasing expectation around engagement with self-evaluation processes;
- d. Moderation of 'Monitoring and Evaluation' reports to ensure consistency across the directorate;
- e. Dedicating a significant proportion of senior management meetings to self-evaluation;
- f. The expectation for authors of monitoring and evaluation reports to present at senior management meetings. This enables the senior management team to have an improved understanding of the key priorities across service areas. It also allows scope for increased challenge to reports to ensure that judgements are fair and actions for improvement are purposeful;
- g. Focused self-evaluation days to ensure that staff are provided with the opportunity to work in teams. This also includes Caerphilly LA staff who do not work within the education directorate. Partnership working strengthens the quality of self-evaluation processes;
- h. Regional peer moderation. Self-evaluation has been a key area for development for the SEWC School Improvement group for 2017-18. The senior management team also attended Neath and Port Talbot County Council to consider self-evaluation practices;
- i. Increased collaboration with stakeholders; e.g. school survey, HT feedback sessions, pupil feedback;
- j. Strengthened links between the Service Improvement plan, operational plans, corporate objectives and EAS Business plan.

4.2.2 In October 2018, a questionnaire was distributed to staff who participate in the self-evaluation cycle. Findings overall indicated that staff are engaged with the revised self-evaluation policy and understand the impact of self-evaluation on improvement planning.

Questionnaires sent out: 25

Respondents: 21

	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
Processes for self - evaluation have improved over the last twelve months			1	4	16
Self-evaluation engages with a wide range of data to create accurate judgements				6	15
Self-evaluation informs the Service Improvement Plan and operational plans			1	3	17
The key questions used for monitoring and evaluation forms are appropriate (titles of each MER)			1	8	12
Monitoring and Evaluation forms provide me with a clearer understanding of what I need to do next.		1		5	15
I have been provided with appropriate support and guidance to undertake self-evaluation effectively.			1	7	13
I have a clearer understanding of how well we perform as a Local Authority.			3	4	14
Feedback on self-evaluation policy and processes is taken into account.			3	4	14

4.2.3 Qualitative statements from the questionnaires:

- a. *Due to the higher importance and focus on self-evaluation, I believe as a directorate we are more connected with where we have been, where we have to go and how we are going to get there.*
- b. *I feel the changes recently made to the self-evaluation process has already significantly improved the way we work as a team and ensured a real meaningful alignment between our operational plan and the Authorities Well Being Objectives.*
- c. *The away day for Managers brought teams together allowing integration of the plans aiding in the delivery of the high performance which we continually strive for as a Directorate.*
- d. *The 'Monitoring and Evaluation' process adopted allows meaningful challenge whilst also increasing the knowledge base of the Directorate.*
- e. *The staff team, as a whole, have embraced the process allowing it to become embedded into the day to day work of the Directorate.*
- f. *For the responses marked agree rather than strongly agree, I think there is room for further development/improvement.*

- g. *This process has been very productive in that I now know more about other educational areas and not just the Music Service and what we provide. I hope that other service areas know a bit more about the Music Service too through the meetings that we have held so far.*
- h. *The whole process has been explained thoroughly and the 'Monitoring and Evaluation' forms have been extremely helpful as they do give a clearer understanding of what needs doing and by whom.*
- i. *I think that the whole process has been received well by services and I hope it continues in the same format.*
- j. *The opportunities created for discussion & challenge are very helpful when considering our own areas and greatly enhance understanding & knowledge of other service areas & issues within the Directorate.*

4.2.4 Current actions to improve the self-evaluation process:

- a. Further develop the role of stakeholders in the self-evaluation process. At present, stakeholder feedback does not feature in all aspects of the self-evaluation document;
- b. Continue to maintain focus on self-evaluation processes in regional SEWCI meetings in 2018-19 to build on existing regional best practice;
- c. Complete a summary for schools and Youth settings based on the main findings of the self-evaluation report;
- d. Organise a series of meetings for LA staff to share best practice;
- e. Monitor the impact of the revised self-evaluation policy. Consider frequency of reports to ensure the process is manageable. Consider amendments to key questions in light of feedback from stakeholders.

4.3 ROLE OF SCRUTINY IN SELF-EVALUATION

4.3.1 Through the year, members of the Education for Life committee have had opportunity to contribute to the self-evaluation process via regular scrutiny meetings. Members receive a range of reports designed to inform and encourage discussion, resulting in the following outcomes:

- Acknowledgement of the work of the education directorate;
- Consideration to the impact and rate of progress which regards to key education priorities;
- Informed feedback on whether the main priorities are appropriate and how the work of the education directorate can be further improved.

4.3.2 The table below identifies the range of scrutiny reports for the academic year 2017-18 and identifies their relationship to the different inspection areas.

Indicator	Inspection Area	Scrutiny reports 2017-18
1.1	Standards and progress overall	Key Stage 4/Key Stage 5 Performance 2017 (26 th February 2018) Pupil Attainment at Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3 (25 th September 2018)
1.2	Standards and progress of specific groups	Regional target setting strategy (7 th November 2017)
1.3	Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Elective Home Education (EHE) (7 th November 2017) Improving School Attendance (9 th January 2018) Wellbeing Objective 2017-18 (3 rd July 2018) Implementation of the Childcare Offer in Wales (24 th April 2018)

Indicator	Inspection Area	Scrutiny reports 2017-18
2.1	Support for school improvement	Education Achievement Services (EAS) Business Plan 2018-2021 – 28th March 2018. (26 th February 2018) EAS Schools Causing Concern Protocol and Risk Register (22 nd May 2018)
2.2	Support for vulnerable learners	Caerphilly behaviour model and provision (9 th January 2018) Support for mental health for Children and Young People (24 th April 2018)
2.3	Other education support services	
3.1	Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017 - 2020. (9 th January 2018) Summary of Estyn Inspection under the new Common Inspection Framework September 2017 – May 2018 (3 rd July 2018)
3.2	Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Revised guidance for the inspection of local government education services (9 th January 2018) The Directorate of Education and Life Long Priorities for 2018-2023. (22 nd May 2018) Junior and Youth Forum Priorities (9 th January 2018)
3.3	Professional learning	
3.4	Resources	Medium term financial plan – saving proposals for 2018/19 (7 th December 2017) Draft Budget Proposals for 2018/19 (7 th December 2017) Education Capital 2018/19 (26 th February 2018) Education Achievement Service (EAS) Value for Money (22 nd May 2018) 21st Century Schools and Education Band B Proposals. (19 th April 2018) Budget Monitoring 2018/19 (25 th September 2018)

4.3.3 Additional scrutiny committees may also contribute to the education self-evaluation process. For example, on 20th March 2018, the Health, Social care and Wellbeing Committee considered 'How do schools engage with healthy living?'

4.4 MAIN THEMES FROM THE SELF-EVALUATION PROCESS

4.4.1 Good features across the education directorate include:

- a. Performance at foundation phase is good. Performance of the Foundation Phase Indicator in 2018 compares favourably against the regional SEWC and Welsh averages. Trends over time are favourable compared to the SEWC region and Welsh average. Of note, performance in Mathematical Development at Outcome 5+ and 6+ compare favourably against the regional SEWC and Welsh averages. This is also reflected in the performance in trends over a three year period.

- b. Overall, performance at the end of Key Stage 2 is good. Performance at the expected +1 in English, Welsh 1st Language and mathematics remains above the national average.
- c. Performance at Key Stage 3 continues to improve. A range of indicators measuring performance at the end of Key Stage 3 over the previous 3 years has increased and compares favourably against the Welsh average. Trends over time are favourable compared to both the SEWC region and Welsh average.
- d. Standards of achievement (additional awards, national and local accreditations) through the Youth Service (16-25) is good. This is evidenced through the development of skills in 5 key areas essential for personal, social and educational development.
- e. Despite an increase in 2017/18, trends over time indicate that strategies to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) are effective.
- f. The number of schools categorised as red and amber in primary, infant and junior schools has decreased over time. An increasing number of schools are being categorised as 'green', therefore requiring less support.
- g. The LA currently has a relatively low number of schools in a statutory category. At present, there is one primary school and one secondary school in a statutory category. Where schools have been placed in an Estyn follow-up category, nearly all primary, infant and junior schools make good progress within the agreed timeframe and are removed.
- h. School engagement with the Healthy Schools scheme has ensured that Caerphilly has achieved the target of 95% of schools to have reached Phase 3 or above. Caerphilly has achieved above the 10% target figure of schools to achieve NQA status. At present, only eight other authorities across Wales have achieved this level of success. Caerphilly is only one of three LAs to have a Special School achieve the Healthy Schools National Quality Award.
- i. Flying Start Programmes provide effective intensive bespoke interventions in conjunction with health visitors and family support workers.
- j. The implementation of the WG Childcare Offer has been effective. Caerphilly LA was an early implementer and was able to roll out the offer to the full Caerphilly borough within seven months. Feedback from Welsh Government has been very positive.
- k. The Youth service participation structures and provision have been recognised by Welsh Government and the Children's Commissioner for Wales as one of the most effective nationally. Excellent practice within the Youth service has been recognised annually through the Youth Work Excellence Awards.
- l. Caerphilly has been proactive in stimulating demand for Welsh medium education across the borough including development of substantial Welsh medium childcare provision, primary schools and secondary school across 2 sites. The commitment to continue to provide an increased number of places is demonstrated through plans in the 21st century school Band B capital programme, and the successful securing of funding for all Welsh medium capital programme bids.
- m. Students entered for Associated Board and Trinity Guildhall examinations via Caerphilly Music Service have resulted in a 100% pass rate. A record number of more able and talented pupils are supported via the regional Four Counties Orchestra and Wind band. Caerphilly Music Service is the only remaining Local Authority in Wales that provides a subsidy for schools to support students from an economic disadvantaged background.

- n. The Junior Forum, one of a few in Wales, is recognised by WG as an effective and accessible mechanism for participation. Nearly all students demonstrate an increased understanding of children’s rights as well as demonstrating a progression in soft skills attainment. All young people actively involved in the Youth Forum feel that they influence decision making through the youth forum, and demonstrate progression in personal and social skills.
- o. The Cabinet Member for Education plays a pivotal role in the strategic planning of education across Caerphilly. The scrutiny committee play an important role in self-evaluation processes and holding the education directorate to account.
- p. There is a breadth of skills and knowledge alongside a range of experiences across the leadership team;
- q. Processes around self-evaluation and service improvement planning continue to improve.
- r. There are effective and strategic monitoring and evaluation processes in place around the planning and delivery of the 21st Century Schools programme.
- s. Analysis of the most recent Children’s Public Library User Surveys highlights the encouraging levels of customer satisfaction that persist among users under 16 years of age. The Library Service achieved 18 out of 18 core entitlements against the Welsh Public Library Standards in 2017/18.
- t. CCBC’s adult education service is an active member of the Gwent Five County Partnership for Adult Community Learning. Our ACL department has achieved the highest successful completion & attainment rates [learners who start and complete courses] for the last five years.
- u. In 2017-18 the Directorate remained within its budget allocation for the year and contributed to an increase in Authority balances at year end. To date the Directorate has successfully achieved its MTFP annual savings target.
- v. Financial planning has enabled Managers to target investment for specific interventions within Schools and other areas of the Directorate (e.g. £173k identified for Behaviour & Mental Health issues; match funding for European Projects – Bridges into Work 2 and Working Skills for Adults 2 which have recently been extended by WEFO; targeted spend for School Improvement – directed by Chief Education Officer).
- w. The finance team have successfully worked with Managers and Schools to secure “new” funding through a bid process with Welsh Government [e.g. School Business Managers Pilot; Community Focus School Business Managers Pilot; Reducing Infant Class Size Grant; School Based Supply Cluster Pilot].

4.4.2 Main priorities for improvement:

- Improve outcomes at end of Key Stage 4 and 5. Identify any dips in performance at Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 and consider strategies for improvement.
- Await confirmation of outcomes measures for Key Stage 4 and 5 by Welsh Government. Consider alternative strategies to effectively scrutinise performance data in light of changes to performance reporting measures. Data to be based on:
 - National categorisation;
 - Progress of schools causing concern;
 - Estyn inspection outcomes and progress of schools;
 - School engagement in the curriculum reform progress;
 - Implement guidance from WG regarding a national ‘score card’.

- Improve the performance of boys and pupils identified as e-FSM across all phases of education. Work alongside school improvement partners to implement a series of measures to increase accountability for all stakeholders.
- Refine current procedures to monitor and track 'risk' pupils to ensure that all categories of vulnerability are taken into account. Work alongside school improvement partners to monitor, challenge and support schools in order to raise attainment for these students.
- Ensure target setting is focused on aspiration for all learners rather than high stakes accountability.
- Build on the recent increase in attendance data to achieve improvements over time. Continue to build capacity in schools in order to effectively raise levels of attendance.
- Reduce the number of exclusions across secondary schools in line with regional and national data. Support schools in sharing best practice across the SEWC region.
- Continue to develop methods for evaluating the impact education services have on wellbeing and attitudes to learning. Modify existing strategies based on findings.
- Work alongside regional and national partners to further improve the quality of education for pupils identified as EOTAS (Education other than at school).
- Improve identification and outcomes for less able students through the successful implementation of the Additional Learning Needs Reform Act.
- Reduce the number of secondary schools requiring the highest levels of support (amber and red).
- Reduce the number of secondary schools identified as 'Estyn Review' following statutory inspection.
- Work alongside the school improvement service to effectively implement the 'Successful Futures' curriculum.
- Continue to sharpen and improve self-evaluation processes through an ethos of 'collective accountability'. Engage with the national self-evaluation toolkit currently being developed by Estyn, OECD and practitioners. Use the toolkit to inform the Local Authority self-evaluation process.
- Verify the very good practice across the Youth Service through participation in the Quality Mark initiative. Continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the Youth Service and make adjustments to provision where appropriate.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of the 21st Century Schools programme and ensuring lessons learnt from Band A are embedded into the Band B delivery.
- Continue to embed the newly revised leadership structure to maximise attainment and achievement across all aspects of the directorate.
- Continue to promote regional partnerships to ensure consistency and promote best practice.
- Improve financial analysis to enhance how the Directorate considers value for money, thus ensuring that managers are more fully informed when considering the allocation of reducing resources.

4.4.3 LINK TO SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

The above priorities for improvement link with the main objectives identified in the Service Improvement plan.

1. **Standards** - Improve outcomes for all learners particularly those within Key Stage 3 and 4;
2. **Attendance** - Increase the percentage of pupil attendance across primary and secondary schools in order to maximise pupils' learning;
3. **Early Years/Youth/Adult Learning** - Reduce the impact of poverty upon communities;
4. **21st Century Schools** - Transform educational opportunities for learners by delivery of fit for purpose;
5. **Inclusion** - Improve provision and outcomes for vulnerable groups;
6. **Inclusion** - Reduce the rates of exclusions, therefore impacting upon pupil attainment and outcomes;
7. **Inclusion** - Secure excellence in learner well-being;
8. **Inclusion** - Ensure that the LA is fully compliant with the ALN Act.

5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

5.1 The self-evaluation process contributes to the Well-being Goals as set out in Links to Strategy above. It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act:

- Long Term: The importance of balancing short-term issues of attainment alongside longer-term needs around the impact of attainment on economic wellbeing and health and wellbeing.
- Prevention: A long term strategic plan makes a contribution to public bodies meeting their wider objectives.
- Integration: A purposeful, strategic self-evaluation process fully integrates into the Local Authority wellbeing objectives and other corporate objectives.
- Collaboration: Improvement in standards of attainment and achievement is reliant upon effective partnership with a range of stakeholders including schools, EOTAS settings, inclusion and medical specialists and safeguarding teams.
- Involvement: An effective self-evaluation relies on the involvement of pupils and other young people in achieving the identified objectives.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There is no specific equalities impact in relation to the content of this report. The Local Authority self-evaluation process considers all equalities issues through the identification of vulnerable groups related to their achievement and attainment. This identification of groups contributes to priorities identified in the Service Improvement Plan.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no financial implications.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no personnel implications.

9. CONSULTATIONS

9.1 All responses are reflected in the report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 That Members note the content of the report.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 Self-evaluation provides key evidence for improvement across the Education Directorate.

12. STATUTORY POWER

12.1 Education Act 1996.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Cycle of Submitting Reports to SMT