

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL	
Committee:	Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
Date:	15 October, 2024
Subject:	Education Scrutiny Panel
Purpose of Report:	Update on the progress of the work of the Education Scrutiny Panel
Scrutiny Chair:	Cllr. Dylan Rees
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr. Dafydd Roberts, Portfolio Holder - Education and the Welsh Language
Head of Service:	Marc Berw Hughes, Director of Education, Skills and Young People
Report Author: Tel: Email:	Anwen Davies, Scrutiny Manager 07971167198 AnwenDavies@ynysmon.llyw.cymru
Local Members:	N/A

1 - Recommendation/s
The committee is requested to: R1 Note the progress made during the last period in terms of the work of the Education Scrutiny Panel.
2 – Link to Council Plan / Other Corporate Priorities
Direct link to the Council Plan: 2023-2028. Education is one of the six key strategic aims (Council Plan: 2023-2028) namely - ensuring an effective education provision for today and for future generations. It is considered that Elected Members have a crucial role in realising this aim by scrutinising and holding to account. The work of the Education Scrutiny Panel contributes towards this aim.
3 – Guiding Principles for Scrutiny Members
To assist Members when scrutinising the topic:-
3.1 Impact the matter has on individuals and communities [focus on customer/citizen]
3.2 A look at the efficiency & effectiveness of any proposed change – both financially and in terms of quality [focus on value]
3.3 A look at any risks [focus on risk]
3.4 Scrutiny taking a performance monitoring or quality assurance role [focus on performance & quality]
3.5 Looking at plans and proposals from a perspective of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term • Prevention • Integration • Collaboration • Involvement [focus on wellbeing]

3.6 Potential impacts that this decision could have on:

- protected groups under the Equality Act 2010.
- those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage in their lives (strategic decisions).
- opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

[focus on equality and the Welsh language]

4 - Key Scrutiny Questions

At the Panel's request:

1. To what extent is the Scrutiny Committee satisfied with the direction of the Panel's work?
2. What suggestions does the Committee have to further strengthen the work of the Panel?
3. What other areas should the Panel be scrutinising?

5 – Background / Context**1. CONTEXT**

1.1 Members will be aware of how the scrutiny panels contribute towards the Council's governance arrangements:

- Social Services Scrutiny Panel
- Finance Scrutiny Panel
- **Education Scrutiny**

1.2 Panel Governance Arrangements

The Scrutiny Committee¹ confirmed the Panel's terms of reference in a way that creates the conditions to broaden the remit of its work with the following key benefits:

- i. Developing a scrutiny model for Education that focuses on a smaller group of Members working together on specific themes so that they can be more involved, develop a level of expertise in the subject and encourage good attendance and teamwork.
- ii. Strengthen Members' capacity to further challenge performance by improving the quality of their general knowledge and understanding regarding school performance data.
- iii. A forum for discussing information on Service risks as a basis for the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee's forward work programme.
- iv. A forum for developing a group of Members with the expertise and ownership to lead discussions on Education issues at the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

Members will be aware of the robust governance arrangements in place as a basis for the work of the Panel² and it is intended to continue to convene monthly meetings of the Panel in future. Furthermore, arrangements have been put in place to regularly report on progress to the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee through the Chair of the Panel, Cllr. Gwilym Owen Jones. The membership of the Panel is attached (**Appendix 1**).

2. FOCUS ON THE EDUCATION SCRUTINY PANEL'S WORK

This is the Education Scrutiny Panel's fourth progress report and covers the period February – October, 2024.

¹ Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee, 21 June, 2022

² Meetings of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 20 April and 27 June 2017

The Panel³ met on 5 occasions during the period and considered the following issues:

2.1 School Improvement Guidance: Framework for Evaluation, Improvement and Accountability (Welsh Government)

At its meeting in April⁴, the Panel received a presentation on the national school improvement guidance together with the local progress in preparation for the guidance. Specific attention was given to the following aspects:






- The requirements of the Welsh Government's School Improvement Guidance that will be statutory by September, 2024
- An outline of the key messages regarding evaluation, improvement and accountability.

Outcomes:

- i. Understanding the implications of the National Framework for Evaluation, Improvement and Accountability
- ii. Recognising good practice being undertaken locally.

2.2 The Welsh Language

The Panel looked in detail at the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022/2032 (Anglesey's vision, aim and objectives for Welsh medium Education) under the following headings:

-  School categories
-  The work undertaken by the language centres and the Immersion Grant
-  Communication
-  Language Coordinators Contribution
-  Welsh Language Charter

Specific attention was given to the progress made during 2023/24 by means of a case study on the language centres. Information was presented regarding the extended support to primary and secondary schools.

Outcomes:

- i. Receive assurance regarding the progress made during the past year in realising the Welsh in Education Strategic by means of a case study by the language centres
- ii. Recognise good practice undertaken by the language centres in supporting primary school learners and the extended work to support developments in secondary schools

2.3 Measure the Impact of Leadership

At its meeting in June, 2024⁵, the Panel gave detailed consideration to the impact of leadership on schools and how service provision is supported at every level. Information was shared regarding the various methods / interventions afforded by

³ Meetings of the Education Scrutiny Panel held on 25/04/2024, 23/05/2024, 20/06/2024, 11/07/2024 and 03/10/2024

⁴ Meeting of the Education Scrutiny Panel held on 25 April, 2024

⁵ Meeting of the Education Scrutiny Panel held on 20 June, 2024

the Learning Services in supporting school leaders. The details of the good practice case study were presented through the lens of a Primary Headteacher on the Island as a way of demonstrating the impact of effective leadership on schools.

Outcomes:

- i. Receive assurance regarding the standard of leadership in Anglesey's schools
- ii. Understand the impact of effective leadership on standards in individual schools.

2.4 Estyn inspections – Welsh Government update

The Panel⁶ was given an overview of the proposed changes to Estyn inspections from September, 2024 onwards:

- Approach – the key principle steering the development work is ensuring clarity around the expectations in relation to Estyn inspections and reduce any unnecessary work
- Specific direction in the national guidance to review the following provisions:
 - Maintained schools and pupil referral units
 - Local government education services
 - Youth work
 - Welsh immersion arrangements in local authorities
 - Adult learning partnerships in the community.

Outcomes:

- i. An understanding of Estyn's inspection arrangements from September, 2024 onwards
- ii. Receive assurance regarding the local arrangements that have been put in place in preparation for the changes to Estyn inspections.

2.5 Digital Environment in Schools

At its meeting in July, 2024⁷, the Panel gave detailed consideration to the Anglesey digital strategy – the expectations and how schools manage the digital environment to have a positive influence when introducing the Curriculum for Wales. Specific attention was given to the following aspects:

- Anglesey's digital strategy for schools
- Digital champions network
- School priorities
- Support for schools – cross curricular skills; training; supporting digital leadership

Outcomes:






⁶ Meeting of the Education Scrutiny Panel held on 20 June, 2024

⁷ Meeting of the Education Scrutiny Panel held on 11 July, 2024

An understanding of the digital environment in schools on Anglesey – expectations and positive influence in introducing the Curriculum for Wales.

2.6 GwE Anglesey Annual Report: 2023/24

On 3 October 2024 a discussion ensued around the main findings of the GwE Annual Report: 2023/24. The document evidenced and recognised the collaboration and partnership between GwE and the Local Authority in recent years. Attention was mainly given to the following aspects:

- Focus on local quality under a series of specific headings:
 -  Leadership
 -  Teaching and Learning
 -  Curriculum and Provision
 -  Learner progress and Standards
 -  Support and challenges for schools causing concern
- Several key priorities have been agreed under the headings listed above for further development and improvement (Primary and Secondary / Additional Learning Needs)
- A questioning strategy for public scrutiny of the Annual Report at the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee⁸ - to evidence the added value and to implement the principles identified in the Education Scrutiny Charter.

Outcomes:

- i. An understanding of the quality of the education provision in our schools and key areas to be prioritised for further development and improvement
- ii. Develop a robust questioning strategy on Education issues that are of strategic importance to the Council.

2.7 Schools Placed in Category, Estyn Follow Up or Receiving Additional Support

The Panel also reviewed Local Authority schools placed in category, subject to Estyn follow up or receiving regular additional support over the last period⁹, in order to scrutinise the improvement arrangements in place within specific schools.

Outcomes:

- i. Receive the latest information regarding standards in schools on Anglesey
- ii. Receive assurance that improvement measures are in place and that appropriate support is available for schools that are causing concern
- iii. The input of the Education Scrutiny Panel is based on having arrangements for holding to account and robust scrutiny

2.8 Scrutiny Panel work programme for the period April → October, 2024

⁸ Meeting of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel to be held on 15 October, 2024

⁹ Meeting of the Education Scrutiny Panel on 11 July, 2024

The forward work programme was reviewed at every meeting of the Panel with the aim of ensuring a robust work programme to support the Panel's contribution to the Council's governance arrangements. It was noted that the next meeting of the Scrutiny Panel¹⁰ would focus on the following field work:

School Visits: Theme → The Welsh Language

- Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi
- Ysgol Cybi, Holyhead
- The Language Centres of both schools

Focus areas – learning and teaching practices in relation to the Welsh language; and Welsh language development plans.

Moving forward, the themes in the Education Scrutiny Panel's forward work programme will reflect the priorities of the Learning Services under the following headings:

- i. Work towards ensuring progress, achievement and educational equality
- ii. Using an integrated approach to ensure fairness and mitigate the impact of poverty
- iii. Support children, young people and staff to be safe, healthy and improve their wellbeing
- iv. Ensure that Education on Anglesey is fit for purpose for future learning communities.

6. MATTERS TO BE ESCALATED TO THE PARENT COMMITTEE FOR CONSIDERATION

No matters to be escalated by the Panel.

6 – Equality Impact Assessment [including impacts on the Welsh Language]

6.1 Potential impacts on protected groups under the Equality Act 2010

N/A

6.2 Potential impacts on those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage in their lives (strategic decisions)

N/A

6.3 Potential impacts on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language

N/A

7 – Financial Implications

N/A

8 – Appendices:

Education Scrutiny Panel Membership (**Appendix 1**)

9 - Background papers (please contact the author of the Report for any further information):

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¹⁰ Education Scrutiny Panel 24 October, 2024

Cllr. Gwilym Owen Jones
Education Scrutiny Panel Chair
Date: 03/10/2024

(rev. 04/10/2024)

MEMBERSHIP OF THE EDUCATION SCRUTINY PANEL

Member	Scrutiny Committee
Cllr Gwilym Owen Jones (Chair)	Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
Cllr Margaret M Roberts (Vice-chair)	
Cllr Non Dafydd	
Cllr Derek Owen	
Cllr Arfon Wyn	Corporate Scrutiny Committee
Cllr Alwen Watkin	
Cllr Keith Roberts	
Vacant seat	