

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL	
Committee:	Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
Date:	12 February, 2025
Subject:	Education Scrutiny Panel
Purpose of Report:	Update on the progress of the work of the Education Scrutiny Panel
Scrutiny Chair:	Councillor. Dylan Rees
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor. 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:	Elin Allsopp, Scrutiny Officer 07812700543 ElinAllsopp2@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

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 fifth progress report and covers the period October 2024- January 2025

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 4 occasions during the period and considered the following issues:

2.1 The Welsh Language

At its meeting in October⁴, the Panel had the opportunity to engage in fieldwork by visiting both Ysgol Cybi and Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi, including their respective language centres. This visit allowed the panel to observe the schools' Welsh language journey and the progress made over the past year in advancing the Welsh in Education Strategy. The panel was able to identify and recognise the effective practices being implemented to support primary school learners, as well as the extended efforts to foster developments in secondary schools.

Specific focus was given to the following aspect:

✚ Ensuring that Education in Anglesey is fit for purpose for the learning communities of the future: The Welsh Language

Outcomes:

- i. Gained a comprehensive understanding of the existing Welsh language teaching and learning practices, including their strengths, challenges, and areas for improvement.
- ii. Received assurance regarding the ongoing development and implementation of Welsh Language Plans, ensuring alignment with national standards and goals for language revitalisation.

2.2 Improve Teaching and Learning

At its meeting in November⁵, the Panel received a comprehensive presentation on Improving Teaching and Learning through the importance of measuring learner progress, delivered by representatives from GwE, who also shared insightful case studies of good practice. These case studies were showcased through the perspectives of both a Primary Headteacher and a Secondary Headteacher on the Island, providing a clear demonstration of the diverse methods and the positive impact of effectively measuring learner progress across different educational settings. The following key points were highlighted:

✚ Continuous Support for Individual Learners: Tracking learner progress helps to monitor and support students on a day-to-day basis, ensuring ongoing attention to their needs.

✚ Capturing and Reflecting on Progress Over Time: The process of identifying, recording, and reflecting on each learner's development provides valuable insights into their growth and areas for further focus.

✚ Ensuring Data Accuracy: The importance of accurately recording data to inform decision-making and enhance teaching practices was emphasised.

Outcomes:

- i. Gained insight into how measuring learner progress fosters a culture of accountability among teaching staff, leading to a consistent commitment to improving student outcomes and supporting ongoing professional development.
- ii. Received assurance that schools on Anglesey are effectively measuring learner progress, ensuring that student development is accurately tracked and supported.

³ Meetings of the Education Scrutiny Panel held on 24/10/2024, 21/11/2024, 18/12/2024 and 23/01/2025

⁴ Fieldwork session of the Education Scrutiny Panel held on 24 October, 2024

⁵ Meeting of the Education Scrutiny Panel held on 21 November, 2024

2.3 Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework

The Panel (18/12/2024) was provided with a comprehensive overview of the whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing, which aims to promote positive emotional and mental health by encouraging a supportive cultural environment within schools by using the following strategy:

- Assessing the school's needs and strengths
- Creating the plan to address the gaps and build on the strengths
- Implementing the plan through collaboration with multi-agencies
- Evaluating

This approach is integrated across the whole school curriculum, with particular emphasis on the Health and Wellbeing Area of Learning and Experience. Specific attention was given to the following aspects:

- ✚ Recognising the importance of supporting staff wellbeing to create a positive and resilient school community.
- ✚ Building an inclusive and nurturing school culture that promotes mental health and wellbeing for all.
- ✚ Providing school-wide initiatives for raising awareness, disseminating information, and advocating for mental health.
- ✚ Offering a range of support services that cater to the needs of all students, with specific attention to those requiring additional or targeted help.
- ✚ Ensuring that tailored support is available for students with specific mental health or wellbeing needs.
- ✚ Addressing the needs of vulnerable children and young people, ensuring they receive the necessary support for their emotional and mental health.
- ✚ Providing targeted support during key transitions—such as from home to school, primary to secondary, and from school to further education, training, or work—to ensure students' mental health is supported at every stage.
- ✚ Providing staff and leadership teams with the training and tools needed to effectively support student wellbeing and promote a positive school culture.

Outcomes:

- i. Gained a clear understanding of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework, including its key principles
- ii. Received assurance that schools are effectively implementing the Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework through tailored action plans, designed to address the unique needs of each school.

2.4 Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion

At its meeting in January, 2025 (23/01/2025), the Panel gave detailed consideration to the progress report on work streams introduced in response to the legislation, with an update on the Inclusion systems and processes in place across the Island. Attention was mainly given to the following aspects:

✚ The Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Service provides a wide range of valuable resources which include the following:

- Educational Psychology
- Education Welfare
- Counselling
- Medical and Physical Sensory
- Specific Learning Needs
- Early Years Assessment and Observation

✚ Support with Inclusion is offered on several different levels, which include:

- Training
- Consultation
- Modelling
- Use of nurturing and trauma-informed interventions

✚ The Additional Learning Needs Service has gone through a successful legislation transfer, with many other positive aspects such as the establishment of the Headteacher Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Forum and the School provision maps- a key document which offers consistency that outlines the provision of support and interventions that a school or educational organisation will provide to students who require additional assistance.

✚ Similarly, the Inclusion service promotes effective collaboration with multiple agencies, leading to reduced waiting times for counselling support from the school counselling team.

✚ However, several challenges continue to exist in both the Additional Learning Needs Service and Inclusion, which include:

- Expanded statutory responsibilities and tribunal requirements for ALN
- A surge in demand for Counselling and Inclusion within the Primary Sector and Additional Learning Needs provision following Covid-19
- Ongoing issues with depleting resources and recruitment
- Funding uncertainty.

Outcomes:

- i. Gained a comprehensive understanding of the Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Services, along with the challenges.
- ii. A questioning strategy for public scrutiny of the Gwynedd and Ynys Môn Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Partnership report at the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee to be held on 12 February, 2025.

2.5 Scrutiny Panel work programme for the period October, 2024 → January, 2025

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 Panel would focus on field work:

School Visits: Theme → Voice of The Learner: Curriculum for Wales

Areas of Focus– measure local progress in delivering the New Curriculum. Specific focus on the Primary and Secondary Sectors and developments in the transition period

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, with a focus on fieldwork:

- 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.

Fieldwork will be meaningful and closely aligned with the Education Scrutiny Panel's work programme, empowering Members to engage and challenge effectively during meetings while also contributing to the ongoing development of our scrutiny model.

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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Cllr. Gwilym Owen Jones
Education Scrutiny Panel Chair
Date: 24/01/2025

(rev. 24/01/2025)

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	
Cllr Ieuan Williams	