

EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Monday 10 th October, 2022
Report Subject	Self-Evaluation Report Education Services 2021-22
Cabinet Member	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure
Report Author	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Education and Youth Portfolio undertakes a rigorous annual self-evaluation of its performance and services to provide assurance to the Council on the quality of education services in Flintshire. The report identifies strengths and areas for further improvement and those areas for improvement are then reflected in the Council Improvement Plan and the Portfolio's own Business Plan.

For the previous two years during the COVID-19 pandemic, with the suspension of inspection activity by Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training, Estyn, the portfolio's previous two evaluation reports have not followed the Local Government Education Services (LGES) Inspection framework but provided a detailed overview of the portfolio's range of services and how they have responded to supporting learners and schools during the pandemic.

However, with the resumption of all inspection activity by Estyn from April 2022 onwards, including the inspection of Local Government Education Services, the Portfolio's evaluation report this year has reverted back to the Estyn framework. The report is structured to provide assurance to the Council across the three inspection areas of:

- Outcomes
- Quality of Education Services (including Youth Services)
- Leadership and Management

Each inspection area is evaluated in detail for the period 2021-2022 and concludes with a summary of further areas identified for improvement to ensure the continued provision of quality education services to the residents of Flintshire.

The overall conclusion of the self-evaluation report is that education services in Flintshire are strong, effectively support children and young people and provide good value for money.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To review the outcome of the Education Portfolio's annual self-evaluation report on the quality of education services for the period 2021-2022.
2	To provide any observations to the Portfolio Team on the report.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE SELF EVALUATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION SERVICES
1.01	<p>The prime purpose of self-evaluation is to lead service improvements within the Education and Youth Portfolio to secure the best possible outcomes for children and young people. Only by robustly evaluating the strengths of the current provision and identifying areas for further improvement can the portfolio continue to refine the manner in which it delivers services to secure better outcomes.</p> <p>At the heart of self-evaluation are three questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How well are we doing and what impact are our services having?• How do we know?• How can we improve things further?
1.02	<p>The new Estyn framework for the inspection of Local Authority Education Services was introduced in 2018 and recently refreshed following national changes to the use of education performance data and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. It focuses on three inspection areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Outcomes<ol style="list-style-type: none">1.1 Standards and progress overall1.2 Standards and progress of specific groups1.3 Wellbeing and attitudes to learning2. Quality of Education Services<ol style="list-style-type: none">2.1 Support for School Improvement2.2 Support for Vulnerable Learners2.3 Other education support services3. Leadership & Management<ol style="list-style-type: none">3.1 Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers3.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning3.3 Professional learning3.4 Safeguarding arrangements3.5 Use of resources <p>The portfolio's self-evaluation report is structured in this way.</p>

1.03	<p>The inspection programme of Local Authority Education Services began in 2018 with the intention that all local authorities would be inspected over a four year cycle. Due to COVID-19 this has been severely disrupted and so Estyn will now inspect between four and six local authorities per year to complete the cycle by the summer of 2024.</p>
1.04	<p>Education services in Flintshire were inspected under this framework in June 2019. The report was positive and there was no requirement for any Estyn follow up. The report identified four recommendations for improvement which the service has continued to focus on since 2019, despite the interruptions caused by the pandemic, and these are embedded in the Council Plan and Portfolio Business Plan.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <p>R1 Improve outcomes for learners in key stage 4</p> <p>R2 Reduce exclusions and increase attendance in both primary and secondary schools</p> <p>R3 Improve the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the few front line education services identified in the report in order to provide more accurate information about the impact of the local authority's work</p> <p>R4 Manage the reduction in school budget deficits more effectively</p>
1.05	<p>The suspension of learner assessments, public examinations as well as other data collections by Welsh Government during the pandemic and its decision not to collect and report on pupil assessment data below the national level has resulted in many of the key performance indicators by which the portfolio traditionally measured its progress and referenced in its annual self-evaluation report now not being available.</p> <p>The focus is now on schools using their own performance data to drive improvements for all their learners at an individual level. The role of the local authority's education service and the regional school improvement service is to rigorously challenge schools and provide targeted support where needed to ensure that schools are using their own evaluation processes effectively to continuously improve and by doing so, secure pupil progress and improved outcomes for all.</p>
1.06	<p>Section 1 of this self-evaluation report describes the portfolio's current view of 'outcomes' within this context. It uses evidence from Estyn reports on its schools over the last five years where it is available. It is also based on first hand evidence of working closely with school leaders and reviewing every individual school in Flintshire with the school improvement advisers from the regional school improvement service, GwE.</p> <p>Section 2 provides a detailed overview of the range of education services within Flintshire and how they contribute to securing positive pupil outcomes.</p>

	Section 3 provides an evaluation of the quality of the leadership and management of education services at a whole council level as well as specifically within the Education and Youth portfolio.
1.07	The full self-evaluation report is included at Appendix 1.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	There are no revenue or capital resource implications as a result of this report.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	The Education Portfolio has a detailed risk assessment document which outlines the key risks related to the delivery of education services. It is regularly reviewed by the Portfolio's Senior Management Team and is regularly reported to the appropriate Council committee.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	N/A for this report.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Self Evaluation Report Education Services 2021-22

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>Estyn Report Flintshire Education Services 2019 https://www.estyn.gov.wales/system/files/2021-08/Inspection%20report%20Flintshire%20County%20Council%202019.pdf</p> <p>Estyn Framework for the Inspection of Local Government Education Services 2021 https://www.estyn.gov.wales/system/files/2021-11/What%20we%20inspect%20-%20Local%20government%20education%20services%20for%20inspections%20from%202021.pdf</p>

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Claire Homard, Chief Officer Education & Youth Telephone: 01352 704190 E-mail: claire.homard@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>Estyn – the Education and Training Inspectorate for Wales.</p> <p>GwE – Regional School Improvement Services for the 6 Education Authorities of the North Wales region.</p> <p>SEREN – Welsh Government programme for the most able students to improve access to Oxford, Cambridge and Russell Group universities.</p>