

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Committee

14th January 2016

Report of the Head of Participation- Chris Millis

Matter for Monitoring

Wards Affected: ALL

Monitoring of schools standards by the School Standards Partnership Group.

Purpose of the Report

To report on the progress of the Schools Standards Partnership Group. The aim is to enhance monitoring of standards of individual schools by Elected Members. The proposal to establish a Schools Standards Partnership Group was considered and endorsed by the Modernisation Group on December 10th 2014.

Scrutiny of educational standards in individual schools has been acknowledged as needing to be strengthened. It was also a recommendation made by Estyn in their 2010 Inspection of the Council:

‘...to further refine and strengthen scrutiny arrangements.’

The capacity and capability of the Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Committee to provide an effective role in service improvement is

developing. The Committee has a good level of awareness of the work of the education service and the performance of the Council's schools. Research in Wales recognised good practice was to establish a Member-led Schools Standards Monitoring Group which conducts detailed monitoring of schools standards outside of the formality of the committee system but with the outcomes of that monitoring being reported back to the relevant Scrutiny Committee. In this case, the Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Committee and this is the first report to do so.

Executive Summary

In total, nine schools have presented to the Schools Standards Partnership Group (Alltwen Primary, Catwg Primary, Blaenbaglan Primary, The Federated Schools of the Upper Afan Valley, Tonnau Primary, Cefn Saeson Comprehensive, Ysgol Hendrefelin Special School, Llangatwg Comprehensive and Awel Y Mor Primary).

Representatives have included Head Teachers, Governors and pupils.

During the power point presentations received, common themes have occurred;

- Budget
- Safeguarding
- INCERTS and tracking systems
- Estyn Common Inspection Framework (attendance)
- Grants (Education Improvement Grant EIG and Pupil Deprivation Grant PDG)
- Paperwork overload and information requests
- HR (Human Resources) including recruitment, sickness, advice, training etc.
- School Development Plans (SDP or SIP)
- School Self Evaluations (SSE)

- Challenges of the new curriculum (including digital)
- End of Key Stage results and performance data (teacher assessment)
- Multi-Agency working (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services-CAMHS etc.)
- Special Needs and Behaviour (Additional Learning Needs-ALN)
- Dealing with difficult people or situations (staff, parents, pupils etc.)

This in turn has led onto opportunities for further training of Members by key officers;

- Budget (Julie Merrifield)
- Safeguarding (Amanda Hinton)
- INCERTS and tracking (Mike Daley)
- Estyn Common Inspection Framework (Mike Daley)
- Grants (Chris Millis)
- School Development Plans (Mike Daley and Chris Millis)
- School Self Evaluations (Mike Daley and Chris Millis)
- Special Needs and Behaviour (Haley Lervy)
- Attendance (Huw Roberts)
- HR (Carla Davies / Karen Holt)

These training sessions will occur in the second half of the academic year and will be open to all Members of the Schools Standards Partnership Group and the full Membership of the Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Committee.

Background

Neath Port Talbot School Standards Partnership Group was set up in January 2015 as a working party to support the improvement of school standards. The Group gives Head-teachers and Chairs of Governors the opportunity to discuss the performance and standards of a school with Councillors and Senior Officers in a non-public forum in an informal and flexible manner.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications.

Equality Impact Assessment

There is no requirement for an Equality Impact Assessment

Workforce Impacts

None

Legal Impacts

None

Risk Management

None

Consultation

There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

That the progress of the work undertaken by the School Standards Partnership Group and training opportunities be noted.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

Matter for monitoring, no decision required.

Implementation of Decision

Matter for monitoring, no decision required.

Appendices

1. Power Point Presentation of key points

List of Background Papers

Establishment and Terms of Reference of Schools Standards Partnership Group.

<https://democracy.npt.gov.uk/documents/g600/Public%20reports%20pack%2014th-Jan-2015%2014.30%20Council.pdf?T=10>

Membership of the Schools Standards Partnership Group.

<https://democracy.npt.gov.uk/documents/b16618/Addendum%20Report%20of%20the%20Head%20of%20Corporate%20Strategy%20and%20Democratic%20Services%20re%20Schools%20Standards%20Monit.pdf?T=9>

Officer Contact

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Appendix 1

School Standards Support Group

Update

Terms of Reference for Group

Neath Port Talbot School Standards Support Group was set up in 2014 as a working party to support the improvement of school standards.

The Group gives Head-teachers and Chairs of Governors the opportunity to discuss the performance and standards of a school with Councillors and Senior Officers in a non-public forum in an informal and flexible manner.

Schools that have presented

1. Alltwen Primary
2. Catwg Primary
3. Blaenbaglan Primary
4. The Federated Schools of the Upper Afan Valley
5. Tonnau Primary
6. Cefn Saeson Comprehensive
7. Ysgol Hendrefelin Special School
8. *Llangatwg Comprehensive*
9. *Awel Y Mor Primary*

Common Themes

- Budget
- Safeguarding
- INCERTS
- Estyn Common Inspection Framework (attendance)
- Grants (EIG and PDG)
- Paperwork overload
- HR (Human Resources)
- School Development Plans (SDP or SIP)
- School Self Evaluations (SSE)
- Challenges of the new curriculum
- End of Key Stage results and performance data (teacher assessment)
- Multi Agency working (CAMHS etc.)
- Special Needs and Behaviour (ALN)



Training issues

- Budget (Julie Merrifield)
- Safeguarding (Amanda Hinton)
- INCERTS and tracking (Mike Daley)
- Estyn Common Inspection Framework (Mike Daley)
- Grants (Chris Millis)
- School Development Plans (Mike Daley and Chris Millis)
- School Self Evaluations (Mike Daley and Chris Millis)
- Special Needs and Behaviour (Haley Lervy)
- Attendance (Huw Roberts)
- HR (Carla Davies)

Next Steps

- What are the key lines of enquiry about their school?
- Are we asking the right questions?
- Standards?
- Teaching?
- Leadership?
- Do we have the balance right between support and challenge?
- What structure do you want for the next meeting?
E.g. 2 schools plus training or a pure training session