



SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT

Date Written	21 st June 2021
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Service Area	Learning
Committee Date	12 th July 2021

To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen

Update on Education Data

1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report gives members an update on progress towards a local authority approach to accountability measures.
- 1.2 This reports considers what performance measures will be used in the future.
- 1.3 This report continues to demonstrate how schools, the local authority (LA) and Central South Consortium (CSC) will work together to demonstrate sustainable progress for all learners.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 The content of this report to be discussed and performance information scrutinised.
- 2.2 Scrutiny Committee Members further consider how performance of schools may be scrutinised in the future and what Key Performance Indicators might be appropriate.

3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1 As previously reported a series of performance measures have been published in previous years which have allowed local authorities to measure outcomes against other local authorities and in some cases measures outcomes against similar schools.
- 3.2 In 2018/19, changes were made to published data which removed school level data for Key Stage 2 & 3 and the Foundation Phase which meant year on year comparative data could not be made.
- 3.3 For the last academic year and this academic year there will be published data for NEET figures.

- 3.4 There is limited data for Key Stage 4 – current data for Key Stage 4 indicates that across nearly all indicators performance at a local authority level is below national averages.
- Numeracy is the strongest subject area for the local authority with only a 0.4% gap at A*-C from the national average.
 - The gap between the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals and those not eligible for free school meals at A*-C is similar to the gap across Wales.
 - Literacy at A*-C is the weakest area across the local authority with a 14.1% gap at A*-C from the national average.
- 3.5 There is no performance data for Key Stages 2 & 3 or the Foundation Phase.

4.0 WHAT WE HAVE DONE

- 4.1 Meetings have been held with Headteachers, Governors, senior leaders in the Council as well as the joint workshop for Scrutiny members from both this committee and Governance Scrutiny.
- 4.2 A summary of the finding of those meetings can be found in Appendix 1.

5.0 WHERE WE WERE

- 5.1 Whilst inspections outcomes and categorisation are in the main positive, standards at the end of Key Stage 4 have been erratic for the past four years and **three out of the four secondary schools** have performed below modelled outcomes in key areas during this time.
- 5.2 Attendance across the County Borough is unsatisfactory which also impacts on attainment.
- 5.3 Whilst permanent exclusion figures are low, there are too many young people excluded for a fixed term. This does vary from school to school and impacts heavily on the number of learners being placed on special tuition and in Ty Dysgu.

6.0 WHERE WE ARE NOW

- 6.1 With no national benchmarking figures, it is difficult to track progress against performance of our schools.
- 6.2 We need to consider alternative ways of ensuring our children and young people make appropriate progress (see Appendix 1).
- 6.3 We can measure exclusion figures once all learners are back in school.
- 6.4 We can measure persistent absenteeism once all learners are back in school and Welsh Government set the expectation for all learners to attend with no excuse for absence.

7.0 WHERE WE WANT TO BE

- 7.1 It is the ambition of the local authority to be closer to or above the modelled outcomes in all performance measures by 2022, and at or above the modelled outcomes in 2024.

However, given the changes in data publication, there is no way of measuring performance against Welsh averages, as Welsh Government is no longer publishing this data. Additionally, the collecting and publication of various measures including attendance data, has been suspended as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic.

8.0 WHAT WE NEED TO DO NEXT

- 8.1 Roll out the progress framework of measures to schools.
- 8.2 Develop a reporting mechanism for members to ensure they are able to understand progress of learners at a local authority level.
- 8.3 Through focussing on improving teaching and learning ensure schools focus on improving outcomes for all children in all age phases. This will be achieved. The LA in partnership with the CSC has continued to provide effective monitoring, challenge, support and intervention for all schools across the Borough, which is bespoke to the needs of each school.
- 8.4 Deliver on the key objectives set out within the RARS Strategy by continuing to work collaboratively with CSC and our key stakeholders.
- 8.5 Continue to work with schools and Corporate Communications to promote the importance of attendance.
- 8.6 Carry out a review of the School Support Service (incorporating Behaviour Support and Greenfield Outreach Service) to secure a robust service which support the needs of learners who are struggling with managing behaviour.
- 8.7 Through clear action planning, training and support for all providers ensure Flying Start providers continue to strive for excellent outcomes for all children.
- 8.8 Develop closer links with Families First to ensure parents are supported to focus on good attendance at school.

9.0 CONTRIBUTION TO RARS

- 9.1 This report links to the following themes and goals within the RARS strategy.
 - Partnership and Collaboration
 - Post Pandemic Recovery
 - Improving Achievement and Progression

10.0 CONTRIBUTION TO OUR WELLBEING GOALS

- 10.1 The improvement activities identified in this report directly contribute to our wellbeing objective:

Best Start to Life: Children and young people get the best start to life and are equipped with the skills they need to be successful learners and confident individuals.

SUE WALKER
CHIEF OFFICER, LEARNING

COUNCILLOR LISA MYTTON
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
CABINET MEMBER FOR LEARNING

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?		No