

## SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT

Date Written	19 <sup>th</sup> December 2022
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Committee Date	23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2023

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

### New Curriculum

#### 1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides a response to legislative duties placed upon local authorities by Welsh Government and is part of MTCBC's challenge framework to hold Central South Consortium (CSC) to account for our schools' preparation and readiness for the new curriculum.
- 1.2 An update on progress by CSC is provided in Appendix 1.

#### 2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members discuss and debate the content of the report, reflecting on school visits, and identifies if there are further aspects of this agenda that need scrutinising.

#### 3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1 As Members are aware in September 2022 the Curriculum for Wales was rolled out for all primary schools.
- 3.2 Secondary schools who wished to roll out the curriculum to Year 7 were encouraged to do so, but this will not be mandatory until 2023, with roll out to Years 7 and 8 together.
- 3.3 In Merthyr Tydfil only Pen y Dre High School chose not to introduce the curriculum in September 2022.
- 3.4 Improving education is key to the Welsh Government's national mission and is embedded in the Council's Raising Aspirations Raising Standards (RARS) Strategy.
- 3.5 The Curriculum for Wales guidance clearly states what is important in delivering a broad and balanced education.
- 3.6 It is based on four core purposes which are the shared vision and aspiration for every child and young person.

- 3.7 Each school's curriculum develops learner experiences in pursuit of the four purposes. It is not about what is taught, but how and why is it taught.
- 3.8 The curriculum should seek to raise standards for all, tackle the attainment gap, and ensure an education system that is a source of national pride and enjoys public confidence.
- 3.9 The Curriculum for Wales guidance forms part of the Curriculum for Wales.
- 3.10 Framework – the Framework is determined nationally and includes both the curriculum requirements set out in legislation and a range of supporting guidance.
- 3.11 A defining feature of the Framework is that it requires schools to design their own.
- 3.12 Curriculum and assessment arrangements – it is acknowledged that this is a challenge for many schools and an even greater challenge given the circumstances schools have found themselves in over the last two years.
- 3.13 Schools are required to work in collaboration to realise the curriculum with a focus on the role of leadership in enabling high-quality learning and teaching.
- 3.14 Based on six areas of learning, which each incorporate a range of specific subject areas, there are also mandatory elements to the curriculum – Relationships & Sexuality Education (RSE), Religion, Values & Ethics (RVE), Careers and work-related experiences and specific cross-curricular skills.

## **4.0 WHERE WE WERE**

- 4.1 The previous curriculum was more content driven despite the various iterations and emphasis on skills.
- 4.2 Based on individual subjects there was little emphasis on developing links between subjects and specific schemes of work for each subject were in place in most schools.

## **5.0 WHERE WE ARE NOW**

- 5.1 All primary schools have introduced the Curriculum for Wales.
- 5.2 Three out of the four secondary schools, plus Ty Dysgu and Greenfield Special school have introduced the curriculum in Year 7.
- 5.3 Council approved the new RVE agreed syllabus for implementation in all schools using the Curriculum for Wales in September.
- 5.4 Further developments in the Business and Education Together Partnership (BETP) will focus on how this agenda can support the curriculum more effectively.

## **6.0 WHERE WE WANT TO BE**

- 6.1 Clusters of schools (primary through to secondary and where possible non-maintained settings) working together to create bespoke fluid curricula which meets the needs of their community.
- 6.2 BETP supporting curriculum development across the County Borough.
- 6.3 Through the Community Focused Schools agenda, engage community groups in supporting learner experiences through wider opportunities, both during and outside the school day.

## **7.0 WHAT WE NEED TO DO NEXT**

- 7.1 Receive first-hand evidence that all schools are developing their curriculum and engaging in the principles of co-construction across clusters.
- 7.2 Ensure partners are aware of the changes to the curriculum and how their work may impact positively on learner experiences.
- 7.3 Develop opportunities for Governors and Parents to understand the changes and how their work supports the curriculum and the learning journey of children and young people.

## **8.0 CONTRIBUTION TO RAISING ASPIRATIONS RAISING STANDARDS STRATEGY**

- 8.1 The contents of this report relate to the following RARS Themes and Goals.
- Partnership & Collaboration; Pandemic Recovery
  - Performance Management & Systems Governance, Improving achievement and progression

## **9.0 CONTRIBUTION TO WELLBEING OBJECTIVES**

- 9.1 The contents of this report relate to the following Wellbeing Objectives:
- Best Start to Life
  - Living Well

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<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>		
<b>Title of Document(s)</b>	<b>Document(s) Date</b>	<b>Document Location</b>
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>		