

**REPORT TO CABINET
17 DECEMBER, 2013**

Cabinet Member: Deputy Leader of the Council, Sian Gwenllian

Subject: The Education Quality Scrutiny Investigation

Contact Officer: Arwel Jones

The decision sought

To accept the recommendations of the Scrutiny Investigation for inclusion in a broader work programme to raise educational standards in the county

Views of the local member

Not a local issue

Introduction

Because of the need to give attention to the issue of quality standards in education, I decided to commission work by the Services Scrutiny Committee to look at the area. As a result of discussions with the Scrutiny Committee, an investigation was commissioned working to the following brief:-

- Why did **polarisation** occur in the KS4 performance of schools?
- Achievement standards in **Mathematics** and the impact of this on the TL2+ indicator
- Why were the quality standards and **KS3** provision generally robust across all the authority's schools?
- Foster a fuller understanding of the **performance of pupils receiving FSM** and the degree to which the achievement of this group of learners impacts on KS4 performance
- The impact of **leadership** on the performance of schools and the way leadership skills are nurtured and developed.

Reasons for the Recommendation

The work of the Scrutiny Investigation is work of quality that has taken advantage of evidence from several directions, including the most significant data, professional advice

from individual schools and the wider educational world but also, very importantly, from children and parent-governors, as key stakeholders.

Relevant Considerations

Whilst the investigation has been underway, I have been considering the standards agenda more broadly and, as part of the commitment in the Strategic Plan, have been developing proposals to ensure that the educational standards for children and young people improve. Much of this work is underway and there is early evidence of progress.

In developing these proposals further, we will be considering the recommendations of the Estyn Report and the Services Scrutiny Committee after the completion of the Scrutiny Investigation into Education Quality.

By now, a project resource to support the work has been secured and over the coming months I will be developing specific proposals to improve the standard of education within the county. The work and recommendations of the Scrutiny Investigation will be of great benefit to me in doing so.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Cabinet accepts the recommendations of the Scrutiny Investigation for inclusion in a broader work programme to raise educational standards in the county.

Statutory Officers' Observations

The Chief Executive

The work of the investigation is thorough and astute and addresses an area that is of great importance for the Council, the raising of educational standards. The challenge from the investigation is for the Cabinet Member to include the report's proposals in a co-ordinated work programme to address the challenge over the coming years.

Y Swyddog Monitro

It is important that the Cabinet gives proper consideration to scrutiny committee recommendations and responds to proposals in due course. This is part of the arrangements to build an effective working relationship between the two bodies and acknowledges the roles of the two. This report is one of the first opportunities for the Cabinet to do so.

Y Pennaeth Cyllid

I appreciate this thorough scrutiny work. In responding to the Scrutiny Investigation recommendations, the Cabinet Member will, no doubt, wish to consider carefully any possible resource implications. If any elements lead to higher costs, in the current financial climate, I would suggest that it be funded by prioritising within current schools resources.
