



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

15 SEPTEMBER 2020

Report by: Arwyn Thomas - GwE Managing Director

Subject: Estyn Thematic Review

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To present information to the Joint Committee members on the planned Estyn Thematic Review as noted in Appendix 1.

2.0 Background

2.1 Welsh Government have asked Estyn to do a thematic review of local authorities and regional consortia's approaches to supporting learning and vulnerable learners during the COVID-19 period.

2.2 The review will focus on the quality and impact of the provision, support and guidance for vulnerable learners and the work to secure schools' implementation of the teaching and learning guidance from September 2020.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 Estyn will be engaging with schools in the local authorities and carrying out some national stakeholder surveys. Direct engagement in relation to the work will not start until after the full return to schools on 14 September 2020 and most of the evidence gathering will take place in late September/early October. The work to gather evidence will be done remotely.

3.2 The work will focus on two aspects, both of which will consider any bespoke or different support provided for Welsh-medium schools to support the continuity of language development:

- Promoting learning – what quality assurance work has been done to improve the quality of the learning offer and how has this been used to develop further guidance and professional learning? How effective is the early planning and implementation of the 'catch-up' learning programmes across schools and what are the next steps for this work?

- Supporting vulnerable learners – how has the local authority targeted services and support to vulnerable learners to support them to engage in learning, what barriers still exist?

3.3 The work will also consider how well the overall leadership of the local authority and the regional consortia responded in a timely and proportionate way to the range of challenges and how well ongoing learning was used to inform actions.

3.4 Estyn are working with a small group of directors to refine how to approach the review with more detail to follow soon.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 The Joint Committee is asked to note the content of the report.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6.0 Equalities Impact

6.1 There are no new equalities implications arising from this report.

7.0 Personnel Implications

7.1 There are no new personnel implications arising from this report.

8.0 Consultation Undertaken

8.1 Consultation with the GwE Management Board.

9.0 Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 – Estyn letter - Thematic review

OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

Nothing to add from a propriety perspective.

Statutory Finance Officer:

I note that part 5.1 of the report above confirms that there are no financial implications arising from this report, hence I presume that this thematic review of approaches to supporting vulnerable learners is to be prioritised from within GwE's existing resources.