



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

24 FEBRUARY 2021

Report by: Arwyn Thomas, GwE Managing Director

Subject: Estyn Thematic Review

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 Present Estyn thematic report 'Local authority and regional consortia support for schools and PRUs in response to COVID-19' to Joint Committee members (see Appendix 1).

2.0 Background

2.1 In response to a request from the Minister for Education, Estyn was asked to undertake a thematic review of local authority and regional consortia approaches to supporting learning and vulnerable learners during the COVID-19 period.

2.2 The report focuses on the period from the end of the summer term to the end of October 2020. An overview is given of how local authorities and regional consortia have worked with schools and pupil referral units (PRUs) to promote learning and support vulnerable learners during COVID-19 between June and November 2020, which is the period when schools re-opened following lockdown. It captures how local authorities and regional consortia have adapted their work in response to challenges as a result of COVID-19.

3.0 Matters for consideration

3.1 The scope of this thematic report includes the extent of the support provided to schools and PRUs by local authorities and regional consortia during this period. The report focuses on two specific aspects:

- Promoting learning – the quality of the learning offer and how has this been supported through further guidance and professional learning?
- Supporting vulnerable pupils – how did the local authority targeted services and support to vulnerable pupils to support them to engage in learning? What barriers still exist?

3.2 In addition, consideration is given to early planning and implementation as regards the 'Recruit, Recover and Raise Standards: accelerated learning programme' grant across schools and PRUs, and next steps for this work.

3.3 The report includes cameos of local authorities and regional consortia. These have been included to show examples of points raised in the report, giving an indication of the work undertaken across Wales.

3.4 The report outlines the main findings and recommendations for Welsh Government to work with regional consortia, local authorities and other partners and providers. GwE will respond to these recommendations when planning and implementing its work programme.

4.0 Recommendations

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

5.0 Financial implications

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. GwE will operate within current financial resources.

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 took place with GwE Management Board and the Joint Committee.

9.0 Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 - Estyn Thematic Review

OPINION OF STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

Nothing to add from a propriety perspective.

Statutory Finance Officer:

I note that part 5.1 of the above report confirms that there are no financial implications arising from this report, therefore I assume that any response to the recommendations within this thematic review will be prioritised within GwE's existing resources.