



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

27 JANUARY 2016

Report by: GwE Managing Director

Subject: Estyn Regional Consortium Inspection arrangements (April 2016)

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To inform Joint Committee members of the Estyn Regional Consortium Inspection arrangements.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Welsh Government asked Estyn to report on the progress being made nationally by consortia in improving schools. Estyn's report was published in June 2015. While it does refer to individual consortia where relevant, the report was a primarily a report on national progress. The Auditor General for Wales asked Wales Audit Office to report on progress on the consortia too, and a separate report was published at the time. Estyn and Wales Audit Office worked closely together in producing their reports.

2.2 The Welsh Government has asked Estyn to follow-up their report by inspecting and reporting on each consortium individually. All four consortia will be inspected during the period February 2016 to July 2016.

2.3 The National Model for Regional Working sets out the government's expectations about the role and responsibilities of consortia and the relationship they have with local authorities. All statutory responsibilities for education remain with local authorities. Estyn's approach to inspecting consortia is based on the relevant aspects of the Common Inspection Framework.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 The GwE on-site inspection will take place during 18-29 April 2016.

3.2 Week 1 will be used to gather evidence from across the region about its work at school level. Inspectors will meet headteachers, governors and local authority service managers. Inspectors will

also meet with a range of staff involved in school-to-school support, both as providers and beneficiaries. Inspectors will meet challenge advisers and other consortium staff who provide direct services to schools (e.g. literacy advisers, Foundation Phase advisers). Inspectors will review a range of evidence about schools, such as reports about schools by challenge advisers (including pre-inspection reports and progress reports for schools in follow-up). Due to the geographical reach of the consortia, inspectors may use more than one base for interviews during this week. At the end of week 1, inspectors will begin to evaluate the quality of services provided by the consortium and develop hypotheses to work from in week 2.

3.3 Week 2 will be used to focus on the leadership and management of the consortium. Inspectors will use the consortium's self-evaluation along with early evaluations of services from week 1 as a starting point for discussions with senior leaders. Inspectors will meet the consortium managing director, other senior staff of the consortium, joint committee or company board members, advisory board members, local authority chief education officers, local authority chief executive officers, council cabinet members, chairs of scrutiny committees and any other significant partners. For week 2, inspectors will be based in, or close to, the central office for the consortium.

3.4 Estyn will not make overall judgements on current performance & prospects for improvement due to the evolving nature of consortia.

3.5 There will not be judgements for key questions, only for six relevant quality indicators: 1.1 (Standards); 2.1 (Support for school improvement); 3.1 (Leadership); 3.2 (Improving Quality); 3.3 (Partnership Working); 3.4 (Resource Management).

3.6 Follow-up inspections (after approximately 12 months) will take place to review the progress being made against the recommendations.

3.7 Prior to the inspection, Estyn will seek the views of significant stakeholders through the use of an electronic perception survey. This perception survey will collect the views of headteachers & chairs of governing bodies about their consortium & Estyn will compare the findings across the consortia and use the findings to inform lines of enquiry. The survey is open until 5pm Friday 29 January 2016 & can be accessed via the Estyn website: <http://www.estyn.gov.wales/education-services-survey>

3.8 The self-evaluation report against the following quality indicators is being prepared & will be presented at the next meeting of the Joint Committee (24/02/16): 1.1 (Standards); 2.1 (Support for school improvement); 3.1 (Leadership); 3.2 (Improving Quality); 3.3 (Partnership Working); 3.4 (Resource Management).

3.9 The Nominee training took place on 8 December 2015 & was attended by the two GwE Assistant Directors.

3.10 It is during the second week (w/c 25/04/16) that inspectors will wish to hold discussions with Joint Committee members.

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 The GwE Management Board & Advisory Board are aware of the latest developments & are being consulted with regard to the preparations & development of the self-evaluation report.

9.0 Appendices

9.1 Estyn: Improving Schools through Regional Education Consortia – June 2015

<http://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-reports/improving-schools-through-regional-education-consortia-june-2015>

OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer: No observations in relation to propriety

Statutory Finance Officer: Observations will be made, if appropriate, in the meeting