



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

11 September 2019

Report by: GwE Managing Director

Subject: Discussion paper – Reporting on performance from September 2019 onwards

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 The paper outlines the national changes in the reporting of teacher assessments, and the new interim KS4 measures that have been introduced for 2019 as part of the significant education reform programme in Wales.

1.2 This paper describes the issues raised in the joint statement between Welsh Government, the WLGA and Estyn and how we will be potentially reporting on performance across North Wales from September onwards whilst adhering to the WG guidance.

2.0 Background

2.1 The WG alongside several partners and experts has undertaken a fundamental review of the accountability system for schools in Wales.

2.2 Findings highlighted that the existing system and its use of performance measures has many negative unintended consequences, such as:

- narrowing curriculum choice;
 - disproportionate focus on particular groups of learners;
 - the way in which benchmarking is used driving competition between schools rather than encouraging collaboration;
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- an increased and unnecessary workload for teachers and others in the system, without the necessary impact or benefit for learners; and
- an aggregation of data for *accountability* purposes where it was designed for *improvement* purposes.

3.0 Considerations

- 3.1** A joint communication from Welsh Government, the WLGA and Estyn to Chairs of Scrutiny, Cabinet Members, Directors of Education, Chief Executive Officers, and Managing Directors of Regional Education Consortia, published on 16 July 2019 stated that:

“It is counter-productive for schools to be placed under disproportionate pressure on the basis of individual measures. It is not in the interest of school improvement and risks undermining the ongoing change in culture that we are working together to achieve. We expect local authorities and regional consortia to support schools to make appropriate decisions about their curriculum to avoid narrowing choice for learners.

Collectively, we have agreed that this is the right approach to take and strongly advise you to use a broad range of un-aggregated data and information to enable you to discharge your duties when reporting on school performance. Evaluating the performance of individual schools rather than generating aggregated data at local authority level will be more helpful to supporting and challenging individual schools with their improvement.”

- 3.2** In this context, the data should be analysed on a local level and as a starting point to question local priorities.
- 3.3** Although 2019 data is currently available on historical performance measures (L1, L2, L2+ and 5A*-A), comparison with previous years is not valid because of the first entry counting rather than best outcome.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1** The Joint Committee is asked to accept the principles noted in the paper.
- 4.2** Await for further guidance from Welsh Government, WLGA and Estyn on how performance data and information can be best used to improve learner and school performance.

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 development of a new evaluation and improvement arrangements have been co-constructed with colleagues in schools, Estyn, local government, regional consortia, and taken international research into consideration.

9.0 Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 - Reporting on performance from September 2019 onwards.

OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

Nothing to add from a propriety perspective.

Statutory Finance Officer:

Nothing to add to the report from a financial propriety perspective.