

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT

CAPTURING PROGRESS AND IMPACT - BASELINE VISIT AUTUMN 2021

In order to support the defining and planning of a support programme that will allow us to meet the system expectations set for 2024, together with the determined milestones along the way, we will work closely with schools over the first half term to capture progress and impact of implementation thus far and to ensure that all institutions have an appropriate improvement plan in place...

The visits will further build on the support provided prior to the summer as schools identified their achievements and aspects requiring further attention.

Our involvement with leaders across schools will see us focusing discussions on the priorities of both the school and cluster in their preparations for delivering the Curriculum for Wales. This will allow opportunity to discuss and verify initial curriculum design plans, intentions in terms of continuing to improve pedagogy, ALN transformation priorities and how joint accountability can be developed within a cluster collaboration model.

This will also serve as an opportunity to observe how schools have been further engaging with the guidance and support materials shared by GwE via the training workshops, and to see how they are engaging in the work of the established regional and local networks across the AoLEs and in the areas of curriculum design and assessment.

This will put us in a stronger position to ensure suitable and appropriate support at a school, cluster and authority level, via professional learning programmes, various forums and networks or specific support plans. The visits will also be used to collate information about developing good practice that should be celebrated and rolled out.

The school's evaluation and knowledge of what has worked well, together with the aspects identified for further attention, will be the starting point of all discussions. Engagement and discussions will take place over a series of visits and will be regarded as a process rather than a single butterfly touch visit. This will not be a process of 'doing something' to the school either but rather a joint diagnostic evaluation, identification and planning exercise with leaders. It will involve 'quality enrichment' rather than 'quality assurance'. This approach to the work is very much welcomed by school heads.

In the primary, we will also see this engagement to check how schools are capturing and measuring progress in areas such as literacy, numeracy, basic skills, wellbeing, and support for learners vulnerable to learning.

In our involvement at secondary, there will be an additional focus on insights from the school's evaluation of centre assessments 2021. In a written statement (dated 21 June 2021), the Education Minister confirmed:

'the suspension of Key Stage 4 and legacy sixth form performance measures will be extended to the 2021/22 academic year. Qualification awards data will not be used to report on attainment outcomes at a school, local authority or regional consortium level and must not be used to hold schools to account for their learners.'

However, he also highlighted that all schools would be required to use the range of information available from this year's processes to conduct a self-evaluation and to identify improvement priorities.

We will therefore use the information held by the school at a pupil level to initiate discussions about this year's GCSE and A Level results. Those discussions can be based on enquiries such as:

- what evidence from last year's teaching and learning validates your centre grades?
- what lessons have been learned about the resilience of the school's standardisation and moderation procedures? To what extent will processes be further refined?
- how confident is the school that all departments have identified robust and focused action priorities for 2021-22? What plans have been adopted to support subject leaders with this work if any concerns have been raised?
- what areas have been identified as key strengths? What plans have been adopted to roll these out across the school?
- are there any areas/subjects where the accuracy of tracking and assessment needs to be tweaked? What plans have been adopted to support subject leaders/teachers with the work so that the school's variance levels can be effectively addressed?
- What plans are in place to further support vulnerable groups of pupils, including FSM learners?
- what plans are in place to work with other regional schools to support and assist with further improvements? To what extent will collaboration involve middle leaders and teaching staff?

