

EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 14th MAY 2018

TASK AND FINISH REVIEW 2015/16 ACTION PLAN MONITORING MAY 2018

To consider and comment on the following issues:

To note the contents of the report and key actions stemming from the findings of the Elected Members' 2015/16 Task and Finish Group – Narrowing the attainment gap: learners eligible for free school meals.

Reasons:

The Education and Children's Scrutiny Committee have requested a report pertaining to the developments stemming from the above Task and Finish Group. In addition, further developments in this area of provision are suggested for Members' consideration.

To be referred to the Executive Board for decision: NO

Executive Board Member Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Glynog Davies (Education & Children)

Directorate:
Education & Children

Name of Head of Service:
J. Aeron Rees

Report Author:
Aeron Rees

Designations:

Head of Curriculum and
Wellbeing

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 14th MAY 2018

TASK AND FINISH REVIEW 2015/16 ACTION PLAN MONITORING

At its meeting on 24th September, 2015, the Education and Children Scrutiny Committee resolved to earmark improving the performance of those learners eligible for free school meals as one of its priorities for 2015/16.

The Committee agreed to progress this matter by establishing a task and finish group to research and review the attainment gap for e-FSM learners.

This report provides brief background regarding:

- the scope and objectives of the Group's work;
- it's methodology;
- the Group's recommendations;
- actions taken following the publication of the report allied to the recommendations;
- possible future actions for further developing themes identified in the report.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED	YES
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IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

Signed: J. Aeron Rees Head of Curriculum and Wellbeing

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	NONE	YES	NONE	YES	YES	NONE

POLICY, CRIME & DISORDER AND EQUALITIES

'*Education in Wales: Our National Mission*', launched in October 2017, sets out how the school system in Wales will move forward over the period until 2021 to secure the effective implementation of the new curriculum for Wales. There are four enabling objectives. Objective three is of particular relevance, namely 'Strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and wellbeing' which underlines Welsh Government's determination that the education system takes account of, and responds to, the unique challenges that present themselves to individuals (including those who've experienced a number of Adverse Childhood Experiences – ACEs). This section of the plan builds on '*Rewriting the future: Raising ambition and attainment in Welsh Schools*' which delivered the Pupil Deprivation Grant, now known as the Pupil Development Grant – to break down barriers faced by learners from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The PDG has been expanded from April 2017 to improve life chances of the most deprived younger learners, aimed to improve the first thousand days of our most vulnerable children.

FINANCE

Pupil Development Grant is allocated to every school, proportional to need. The impact of spend is monitored by Challenge Advisors during core visits and its deployment is integral to decisions pertaining to the school categorisation system.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Not closing attainment gaps pose a number of risks: primarily it will serve to undermine life chances of disadvantaged learners; will *potentially* propagate a divided society and *may* have implications for young people who, by virtue of unfulfilled potential, struggle in the jobs market, drift into criminality, alcohol/substance abuse etc.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

Closing achievement gaps is hard work and demands favourable adult:pupil ratios (be they teachers and/or teaching assistants). Maintaining favourable ratios, let alone improving them, is proving to be a challenge in the current fiscal climate. In addition, creative and innovative use of PDG is essential in order to genuinely add value.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below:

Signed: J. Aeron Rees Head of Curriculum and Wellbeing

1. Local Member(s) – N/A
2. Community / Town Council – N/A
3. Relevant Partners – N/A
4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations – N/A

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW:

Title of Document	File Ref No. / Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
TASK & FINISH REVIEW 2015/16: FINAL REPORT <i>Narrowing the Attainment Gap: Learners eligible for free school meals</i>	\\ntcarmcc\cfp\Education & Skills\Learner Programmes\ECSScrutinyT&F\Task_Finish_Final_Report_FV_inc_EB_rec.docx
Next Steps for Equity and Inclusion in Carmarthenshire's Learning Communities	\\ntcarmcc\cfp\Education & Skills\Learner Programmes\ECSScrutinyT&F\Equity_proposalsynopsis.pptx
Letter to Cabinet Secretary (August 2017)	\\ntcarmcc\cfp\Education & Skills\Learner Programmes\ECSScrutinyT&F