

REPORT A

Department for Education and Children

Heads of Service Overview

**This is a brief overview of performance
from each Head of Service who report
data to this Scrutiny Committee**

Gareth Morgans - Chief Education Officer
Alan Walters - Head of School Effectiveness
Aeron Rees - Head of Learner Programmes

School Improvement/Education through Regional Working (ERW):

All aspects of school-based 'Regional Working' continue to be centrally coordinated through the ERW Delivery Board and Heads of School Effectiveness. Our Chief Education Officer, Head of School Effectiveness (Western Hub- Carmarthenshire & Pembrokeshire) and Principal Challenge Adviser have full representation on the ERW Delivery Board which ensures the opportunity to guide and influence key priorities for Carmarthenshire.

The 2014-15 academic year witnessed success with both Welsh Government and Estyn Autumn reviews acknowledging the progress and impact of our work. The role of Challenge Advisers in brokering appropriate support and challenge for schools has developed well. This key role continues to gain momentum, producing effective results and outcomes within a range of schools and circumstances. In particular, we have undertaken the following defined activities to further support and challenge standards, provision and leadership across all of our schools:

ERW Core Visits- the Head of School Effectiveness, with the support of the Challenge Adviser Team and Inclusion Officers, ensured the effective implementation of the two scheduled ERW Core Visits:

ERW Autumn Core Visit One: this visit focuses on analyses of school performance data and brokered support, challenge and intervention for future school performance targets and improvement priorities. In addition, the visits enable discussion at individual school level on the implementation of the National Categorisation model. All schools are now categorised within one of four categories of varying levels of support*. This is based on analyses and discussion of both their performance data and capacity to improve (as evidenced through their leadership and provision). Processes for reporting all findings from the visit have recently been updated (September 2015) via the provision of a valuable electronic resource. This welcome resource enhances the process of reaching and recording a collaborative, agreed view of the school's performance and support category. Core Visit One also continues to support the Headteacher Performance Management programme in partnership with school governors.

*National Category Levels of Support:

GREEN SUPPORT CATEGORY

A highly effective school which is well run, has strong leadership and is clear about its priorities for improvement. These schools have a track record in raising the standards that pupils achieve and have the capacity to support other schools to do better.

YELLOW SUPPORT CATEGORY

An effective school which is already doing well and knows the areas it needs to improve. By identifying the right support and taking action, it has the potential to do even better.

AMBER SUPPORT CATEGORY

A school in need of improvement which needs help to identify the steps to improve or to make change happen more quickly. Through discussions with the regional school improvement service and local authority, the school will receive a tailored package of support.

RED SUPPORT CATEGORY

A school in need of greatest improvement and will receive immediate, intensive support. Progress will be closely monitored to make sure that the necessary improvements take place as quickly as possible.

ERW Spring/Summer Core Visit Two: the 2015 visit maintained a clear focus on standards via the scrutiny of provision and leadership within our schools. Challenge Advisers and school-based leaders collaborated on an analysis of standards and provision through detailed scrutiny of 'children's work.' Such work was evidenced through a range of media including children's books, portfolios and electronic resources. Detailed scrutiny of this nature enhances each school's self-evaluation practice and in particular, enables all partners to take stock of standards, leadership and provision within the individual setting. All key messages and recommendations for improvement, including the sharing of good practice as agreed during these visits are then shared with all governors via the Headteacher's Report to the Governing Body.

The Head of School Effectiveness and Western Hub Team also facilitated further 'School-to-School Support.' We have emphasised the development of the national agenda for a 'self-improving school system'. Our work has included:

- a) the commissioning of experienced, effective Headteachers and senior practitioners (leading specific interventions, ERW core visits etc) in support of both individual school needs and those of particular clusters
- b) enhancing school collaboration through 'Triad Working' (clusters of schools collaborating together on an agreed set of improvement issues and benefiting from recognised 'good practice' within the system)

Ensuring quality and consistency across Hub working:

Challenge Advisers continue to participate in national and regional training activities to ensure high levels of quality and consistency across their work. The revised National Standards for Challenge Advisers form an integral part of each adviser's professional development programme and have been used as a common theme within all new appointment processes. Quality Assurance activities across both the Hub and Region have continued to support both 'good and best practice' providing useful systems and materials for the benefit of officers and therefore our schools. Recent ERW secondments have included officer provision for overseeing standards and quality assuring work within the region. Key features of this work for 2015-16 will continue to be ensuring consistency of reports to Estyn and scrutiny of Challenge Adviser Core Visit One reports.

Inclusion Section

In August 2015, Carmarthenshire had 906 learners with Statements of Special Education Needs (SEN). This has decreased since August 2014 when we had 1,023 statements. Approximately half of these statements are amended every year.

The Inclusion Panel considers requests for statutory assessments of special educational needs and requests for amendments to existing statements. In the last 6 months up until August 2015, the Inclusion Panel considered 260 cases, 26 of which were requests for statutory assessments. In the same 6 month period in 2014, 44 new statements were issued whereas in this same period in 2015, 25 new statements were issued.

The Minority Ethnic and Traveller Achievement Service

In Carmarthenshire there are over 1,105 pupils on the English as an Additional Language (EAL) register. 324 primary school pupils and 165 secondary aged pupils are in receipt of support in 45 Primary schools and 10 Secondary schools.

There are currently 166 Gypsy/Traveller children on roll in schools across the county. The service works with 6 secondary schools and 8 primary schools to raise the attendance and achievement of eligible Gypsy and Traveller children and young people. Close working with families and other agencies helps to support with these key areas.

Behaviour Support:

The Behaviour Support Community Team (BSCT) works with schools to support them in changing the behaviour of individual pupils by working with the pupil, their parents/carers and school staff. The Team provide advice and support on group/whole class management techniques and whole-school policy development. The Team provides training and professional development opportunities. It works with individual schools to devise bespoke training in response to need.

During the 2014/15 Academic Year 68 cases were worked with either directly or in an advisory capacity with 99 referrals in total (80 referrals from primary schools and 19 from secondary schools).

In addition to supporting schools currently using the interventions, members of the BSCT have undertaken-

- Training in 13 schools for Thinking Detectives
- Three schools are using Thinking Detectives strategies rather than the whole package
- 18 schools have had an introduction to Positive Play
- Another 15 schools have been supported with setting up the location.

Education Otherwise than at School (EOTAS):

During Academic Year 2014/15 there were 6 new referrals to the KS3 Centre at Pwll, 10 new referrals to the KS4 Centre at Llwynhendy and 42 new referrals for the Home Tuition Service. The provision for pupils with emotional difficulties at Canolfan y Gors had 15 new referrals and now caters for 24 pupils.

The EOTAS Service monitors the education of children whose parents choose to educate them at home (Elective Home Education). In January 2015 there were 137 children being educated by their parents. The geographical spread is fairly even across the county.

So far this year we have had the following number of referrals:

- For Behaviour Service Community Team- 68 primary
- For Home Tuition- 7
- For Secondary Teaching & Learning Centre (PRU KS3 and KS4)- 2
- For Canolfan y Gors- 0

Adult Community Learning (ACL)

The emphasis of the Authority course provision continues to be the long-term personal development of learners to enable them to progress to further education, training or employment. This includes support for literacy, numeracy and English for Speakers of Other Languages.

- As of October 2015 the **Adult Community Learning Service** has 261 enrolments, of which 244 are individual learners enrolled on approximately 26 courses.
- The Welsh for Adults provision currently has 228 individual learners enrolled on 26 courses. Welsh for Adults provision across Wales will be subject to major change in the 2016-2017 year, with a new all Wales entity established to oversee provision, replacing the existing four regional centres.
- The changes in enrolments match a decreasing trend in learner numbers across Wales in this sector. Local factors affecting enrolment include the current economic climate and the provision of free courses by some providers particularly for IT provision.

This service is subject to a significant decrease in budget for the 2015-2016 year due to Welsh Government grant cuts, including to Coleg Sir Gar franchise grant for ACL provision. These cuts have meant that the planned transfer of ACL provision to Coleg Sir Gar as agreed by elected members will not take place in September 2015 as originally planned.

Services for Young People

- By March 2015, the **Youth Service** had provided support services for 29% of Carmarthenshire young people aged 11-19 and 19% of the 11-25 population.
- Young people gained 665 Duke of Edinburgh Awards (DofE) in 2014/15 with approximately 4.0% of all eligible young people taking part in the Award.
- The overall percentage of Year 11 leavers who became “NEET” (not in education, employment or training) rose to from 3.0%/65 young people (2013) to 3.4%/69 young people for the 2014 year (Wales average 3.1%). This increase is due to a range of factors including significant structural changes to the staffing of the youth service and an increasing number of parents choosing to electively home educate pupils studying in Years 10 and 11.
- The percentage of Year 13 pupils becoming NEET has risen from 5.5%/40 young people in 2013 to 6.0%/46 young people in 2014 (Wales average 4.9%).
- There is on-going development of partnership working to increase the number of young people in employment, education and training linked to a shared action plan with Pembrokeshire to implement the Welsh Government’s Youth Engagement and Progression Framework.

Youth Offending and Prevention Service (YOPS)

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 established Youth Offending Teams by creating a duty for local authority Chief Executives to secure the cooperation of statutory partners, Police, Probation Service and Health, to contribute resources to create a multi-disciplinary team with the primary aim of preventing offending by children and young people.

In Carmarthenshire we have seen a trend develop over a number of years which confirms that fewer children and young people are committing less crime, year on year. This reflects the investment and focus on prevention of youth crime and the YOPS has developed strong partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders who all recognise the contribution they can make to preventing youth offending. The consequences of this trend are wide-ranging and include, a falling number of young people, entering the youth justice system, attending the youth court and being sentenced to custody, and importantly fewer victims.

When children and young people first come to the attention of the police for an offence, the response in Carmarthenshire is now a multi agency one, which allows the YOPS to assess young people, engage with all victims and parents/carers, in order to put in place interventions and support that will prevent further offending.

This continued investment in prevention and effective early intervention is critical to ensure that young people experience their adolescence without drifting into crime and antisocial behaviour and thereby sabotaging their own futures and creating misery for victims and parents alike.

Since April 2015, the YOPS and the Youth Service have been accountable to a single Service Manager who has created an integrated management structure to promote an ethos of working together to deliver targeted youth support to those young people who are in greatest need and who present the highest likelihood of engaging in anti social behaviour and youth offending.

School Governance and Admissions

School Governance Services:

- Revised the system of monitoring compliance with statutory training for Governors.
- Advised Clerks and Chairs of Governing Bodies of the outcome of the monitoring review.
- Ensured Governing Bodies are constituted, and governors appointed/ elected correctly.
- Supported Federation process. Prepared revised Articles and Instruments of Government.
- Provided advice and guidance to Governing Bodies across a broad range of areas.
- Helped bring to a successful conclusion a number of difficult and complex complaints.
- Commenced consultation with Governors to develop a new and focussed training package
- An audit of the admissions function was undertaken with no areas of concern identified.

School Capacity Calculations:

- Supported reorganisation proposals through modelling revised capacity/admission Numbers.
- Re-calculation undertaken in instances where there are specific difficulties.
- Revision of 3-11 capacity calculation on going .
- New Updated Block Plans produced for all secondary school commissioned. .

Admissions:

- The section processed and delivered its statutory obligations within the statutory timescales for admission of pupils to schools placing some 4,000 pupils in 117 schools.
- All School Admission Appeals have been held within the statutory timescales.
- To avoid duplication the process has commenced of examining the possibility of changing from equal preference to a priority based application system has commenced.
- The composite prospectus has been revised achieving a 50% cost reduction.
- System changes have improved availability of information for the SEN section.
- An audit of the admissions function was undertaken with no areas of concern identified.

School Organisation and Modernisation

Dinefwr Transformation:

Work has progressed well on **Ysgol Dyffryn Amman** during the year and were completed in readiness for the new school term in September 2015.

Construction at **Ysgol Maes Y Gwendraeth** has progressed well since it commenced in April 2014. The new sports hall was handed over in January 2015, the new science block was handed over in April 2015 and the bus bays were completed by the start of the new Autumn Term. The scheme continues at pace in readiness for occupation by the school in September 2016.

Construction at **Ysgol Bro Dinefwr** has progressed very well since it commenced in January 2014. The scheme continues at pace in readiness for occupation by the school in early 2016. Pantycelyn campus and Garreglwyd pupils will transfer to the new school premises in February 2016 with pupils currently on the Tregib campus transferring in readiness for September 2016.

21st Century Schools/MEP:

The Authority's Modernising Education Programme (MEP) is making good progress. The biennial review of the MEP is currently ongoing. A draft version of the updated programme has been discussed with Officers, a consultative group of Headteachers and a Member's seminar was planned for the 5th October. The revised MEP will be presented for approval via the democratic process.

Carmarthenshire's Band A Programme continues at pace with development progressing well. Since April, two business cases have been approved by the Welsh Government and two have been submitted awaiting approval.

This has enabled construction to commence on the **Coedcae** and **Llanelli Vocational Village** schemes and full business cases can be submitted for the **Seaside** and **Trimsaran** during the Autumn Term.

The programme for the construction of a multi extension project at **Ysgol Y Strade** as a central part of the County Council's Strategy to meet increasing demand for Welsh medium education in Llanelli has been completed.

Construction has been completed on the **Burry Port** scheme and the building handed over to the school and **Carreg Hirfaen** construction scheme is progressing well for occupation by the end of the financial year.

Whilst the MEP is making good progress with business case submissions there are still delays in their consideration and their subsequent approval by WG. This has the potential to significantly delay the Carmarthenshire Band A programme.

The MEP capital plan is on target to invest around **£38 million** across school infrastructure improvement projects in 2015/16, in varying stages of project development or delivery.

Additional temporary accommodation to address immediate space pressures have been installed at two schools and another one is in planning for installation in 2016.

School Rationalisation:

The County Council determined to discontinue **Llanfynydd Voluntary Aided School** with effect from 12th April 2015. The Authority completed statutory procedures under the New School Organisation Code to legally discontinue **Cilycwm Voluntary Controlled School and Llansawel CP School**.

The Authority has formally consulted on a proposal to reorganise **Copperworks** and **Lakefield** Schools in Llanelli as part of the Seaside project. County Council has approved the publication of a statutory notice.

Pupil Forecasting:

An annual exercise to predict the number of pupils expected to attend each of the County Council's maintained schools in the coming years has been in place since 2002. Since then the forecast numbers for the primary sector as a whole compared to actual numbers have varied between +0.05% and -0.4%, a very reliable statistical outcome. The actual FTE number of primary pupils for January 2015 exceeded estimated numbers by 0.73% (110.5 pupils). In the secondary sector the forecast pupil population for January 2014 exceeded actual numbers by 0.9% (101 pupils). Pupil forecasting methods are continually monitored and reviewed with comparisons made between different methods and actual numbers.

Stefan Smith - Head of Children Services

Children in Need and Prevention:

We are continuing to focus on our preventative services, including Team Around the Family (TAF), Family Support Service, Flying Start, and Child and Family Unit (CFU) model of working which is being piloted in our Dinefwr childcare team.

The Families First programme has developed 14 commissioned projects for 2015-2017 which are now in operation. All vacant posts should be filled by the autumn. The projects are utilising the JAFF (Joint Assessment Families Framework) common assessment across the programme whether responding as a single agency provider or multi-agency TAF providing consistency for families, providers and agencies.

TAF is continuing to be implemented across the authority. A support team are in place with three co-ordinators, two of which are working within the 2-16 age group and one within the 16-25 age group. It is their role to support, guide and train, along with networking with schools, organisations and anyone who has contact with children and their families. Over the summer period the service focused on raising the profile of TAF within the department and among our partner agencies. The TAF Handbook is also being updated and will be available on the website.

Our Family Support Workers service is continuing to evolve with an increase in posts. Over recent months twenty cases have been stepped-down from statutory services across the teams.

Flying Start is continuing to expand to provide services to an additional 178 children on top of the CAP target of 1654. It remains particularly difficult to recruit Health Visitors, which is a similar story across all of Wales. Our capital programme is progressing well. The expanded service will continue to offer its early intervention programme to 1,654 target number of children as well as offering a range of parenting groups and courses.

An implementation plan is in place to extend the systemic social work approach (CFU model) across a social work team. Dinefwr child care team will be using this approach from 1st September 2015, with its progress and effectiveness being evaluated.

Assessment and Safeguarding:

As part of our Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) / duty service we are now taking Domestic Abuse Conference Calls (DACC) as part of a pilot since 1st July 2015. This is to allow appropriate information to be shared at an early stage and provide early intervention in respect of domestic abuse cases, with the aim of reducing future risk.

Our Central Referral Team (CRT) continues to work well enabling referrals to the department to come through one central point. Senior Managers, Assessment Team Managers and the CRT /Duty Manager meet regularly to review the process and highlight any concerns. We are currently reviewing our thresholds for intervention to ensure preventive services are utilised wherever possible.

A Corporate Safeguarding Group has been formed as a result of a Wales Audit Office review last year, the group reports to the Corporate Management Team. A Corporate Safeguarding Policy has been drafted, covering Adults and Children in order to raise the profile of safeguarding in all departments. An e-learning package is also being rolled out to all school staff and elected members.

Looked After Children and Care Leavers:

Our Fostering recruitment service has been busy with 'Fostering Fortnight' (which took place during June) which is an event over two weeks aimed at recruiting new foster carers, plus an information evening, with another planned for September. The team are working hard at trialling different venues, events and means of trying to reach potential foster families. We remain one of the best authorities in Wales at keeping looked after children with our foster carers within county. Regular support meetings are helping improve placement stability, along with improved matching of children with foster carers.

A new model of Pathway Planning and consulting with care leavers is being piloted within one of our child care teams, and so far feedback has been positive among staff and care leavers.

The Mid and West Wales (MWW) adoption service, with Carmarthenshire as lead authority, has been up and running for over a year. The profile of adoption services has increased considerably in Wales with the Welsh Government taking a very active role in raising expectations with the aim of further improving adoption services nationally. Wales National Adoption Service (NAS) has published its first annual report based upon the performance management framework in place amongst all Wales regions. MWW has performed consistently well e.g. April to June 2015 - % of children receiving Life Journey Materials by 2nd adoption review is 83% (NAS target 75%). Average time for child with plan for adoption from most recent looked after episode to placement in adoptive placement is 355 days (NAS target 395 days). We have regular meetings to develop working across the region. One priority is to streamline the adoption enquiry process. Currently our average time from initial enquiry to agency decision to approve is 246 days (NAS target 243). As from June 2015, WW Adoption panel became paperless - saving admin time, photocopying and postage costs.

The length of time to complete Assessments of Adopters and linked to that length of time between the child having a plan for adoption and being placed for adoption is an issue.

Children and young people with Disabilities:

A Senior Practitioner has recently been recruited to the Children's Disability Team who will have a specific focus on overseeing the work with older children to ensure our transition planning is effective. We have consolidated our Business Support arrangements enabling us to develop a support team covering both Children's Disability and Transition Teams. We have also recruited to the Inclusion Co-ordinator role developed through Families First grant which will assist in ensuring services are inclusive to disabled children and young people, identifying unmet need and informing our commissioning process. Our Service Allocation Meetings (SAM) have been re-established providing a regular forum to ensure we make the best use of services for disabled children and their families. We are also reviewing our eligibility criteria.

The PINS (Peripatetic Intervention Service) has been re-commissioned as part of the Families First programme and is now being delivered in-house as from 1st May.

A joint development day was held in June with our partners including Cole Sir Gar, Careers Wales, and Education, with further meetings planned for the autumn.

Our multi-agency Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) steering group has re-established, a stakeholder day was held on 1st July, with more dates planned. The Real Opportunities project is being brought into the 'Cynydd' project, a regional project led by the Youth Service with pathways being developed to ensure the needs of disabled young people are being met.

As at 30th June 2015 we were working with **234** Looked After Children, **105** children on the Child Protection Register, plus **947** Children in Need and their families.

Dave Astins - Strategic Development Manager

A minor restructuring of the central Catering Services team is underway following the departure through severance of the Catering Services Manager. Following the school meal price increase in April 2015 the team is carefully monitoring take-up to see if the higher prices are having an impact, data from the summer term shows a slight decrease in primaries and a slight increase in secondaries.

A cashless catering system will be installed at Ysgol Gyfun Emlyn during October half term, and active consideration is being given to the implementation of online payments for school meals, making the service potentially truly cashless, in the near future. We are also piloting new electronic ways of working in 12 schools as part of a TIC (Transform, Innovate, Change) mobile working project. New Service Level Agreements are being developed for the 11 secondary schools that use the LA service as they currently expire in March 2016.

A Children & Young People's Participation Strategy & Action Plan, along with a Children's Rights Promise, has been developed and discussed at Education & Children Scrutiny. The documents will now go before Executive Board and full Council and will drive the Authority's approach to engaging children and young people and ensuring we deliver the rights they are entitled to. As part of the action plan we are developing a comprehensive survey of young people's views on Council services.

New Management Information Systems are now in place in all schools, Teacher Centre (primary) and SIMS (secondary), with extensive support provided to schools. Much work still needs to be done to further develop the systems, their functionality, and use within schools and the LA. Linked to these developments we are continuing to develop and enhance our approach to data management and analysis.

We are heavily involved in a number of efficiency projects, including a TIC Back Office review which is being piloted at St. David's Park, and is looking at areas such as mail, travel and creditor processes. The Managed Print Solution project is being rolled out corporately which is building on internal reviews of our current printing patterns and future requirements with a view to achieving further savings. We are close to achieving all applications for Free School Meals being made online, saving paper, postage and time for the applicant and the LA.

We have worked with corporate colleagues to develop the Departmental presence on the new corporate web-site, and will now begin work to streamline and modernise the Intranet.

In June we co-ordinated our bi-ennial survey of schools to find out what they think of services and support provided by the LA. The findings will be presented to Headteachers during October and priority areas for improvement agreed.

ACRONYMS

ACL	Adult Community Learning
CEP	Complimentary Education Programme
CFU	Child and Family Unity
CYSUR	Children and Youth, Safeguarding and Unifying the Region
DofE	Department of Education
EAL	English as an Additional (Second) Language
Estyn	Inspection body overseeing compliance to WG learning policy and delivery requirements
EOTAS	Educated Otherwise Than At School
ERW	Education through Regional Working
EWS	Education Welfare Service
FBC	Full Business Case
FIS	Family Information Service
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
IFST	Integrated Family Support Team
JAFF	Joint Assessment Family Framework
KS2 / KS3 / KS4	Key Stage 2 / Key Stage 3 / Key Stage 4 (National Curriculum Stages)
LA	Local Authority
LAC	Looked After Children
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children's Board
MASH	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
MEP	Modernising Education Programme
MIS	Management Information Systems
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
PLASC	Pupil Level Annual School Census
RAG	Red, Amber, Green Status
SEN	Special Education Needs
SNUG	Safeguarding Network Uniting Generations
TAF	Team Around the Family
TIC	Transformation Innovation Change (programme team)
YOPS	Youth Offending and Prevention Service
WG	Welsh Government