

EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 21st JANUARY 2016

Education & Children Scrutiny Committee – Site Visit Activity Report 2014/15

To consider and comment on the following issues:

- That the Committee considers and comments on the attached activity report.

Reasons:

- At its meeting in on the 9th June 2014, the Committee resolved to continue with its programme of visits to schools and children's services settings during the 2014/15 academic year, as part of its forward work programme.
- The visits also contribute to the Committee's role in monitoring of key front-line services.

To be referred to the Executive Board for decision: **NO**

Executive Board Member Portfolio Holders:

- Cllr. Gareth Jones (Education & Children)

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| Directorate: Chief Executive's | Designations: | Tel Nos. / E-Mail Addresses: |
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 21st JANUARY 2016

Education & Children Scrutiny Committee – Site Visit Activity Report 2014/15

During the 2008/09 municipal year, the Education & Children's Services Scrutiny Committee (as it was formerly known) established a Task & Finish Group to review Access, Inclusion and Support Services to Schools.

As part of the Task & Finish Group review, members undertook a series of site visits to schools within the county in order to speak to head teachers and staff. The Group found these visits invaluable but timescales prevented the members from visiting more schools. Therefore, in its final report the Group recommended that a programme of structured school visits be developed for all members of the Education & Children's Services Scrutiny Committee. The programme of visits has continued since this time and as of May 2015, the Committee has now visited 131 schools (and other facilities such as children's centres and special units).

A total of **15** schools/children's centres were visited between October 2014 and May 2015. All local members, in addition to those members who are school governors at the relevant schools, were invited to join the Committee on its visits. Occasionally, other governors were also in attendance.

To date, the visits have been invaluable in informing members' discussions at committee meetings. However, Committee members are eager to develop the visits further by changing the focus to include school performance and standards. It is envisaged that future visits will be linked with the work of the Committee's School Improvement Panel and ESTYN inspections and members are now provided with more detailed information on schools' performance, prior to each visit.

Committee feedback sessions were also held on 25th November 2013, 11th April 2014 and 8th July 2014 in order for members and officers to discuss and review the visits undertaken. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee also meet with the Executive Board Member for Education & Children, as well as the Director of Education & Children and the Head of Education Services on a quarterly basis. The purpose of these meetings is to provide an opportunity to discuss the strategic issues and concerns arising from the visits.

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| 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: Linda Rees-Jones Head of Administration & Law

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

CONSULTATIONS

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

Signed: Linda Rees-Jones Head of Administration & Law

1. **Local Member(s)** – Local members, in addition to those members who are school governors at the relevant schools, were invited to join the Committee on its school visits.
2. **Community / Town Council** – N/A
3. **Relevant Partners** – N/A
4. **Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations** – Officers from the Education & Children’s Services and Technical Services Departments attended the school visits.

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 |
|---|--|
| E&C Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme 2014/15 (E&C Scrutiny Committee, 9th June 2014) | <p>Report http://online.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/agendas/eng/EDUC20140609/REP07.HTM</p> <p>Minutes http://online.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/agendas/eng/EDUC20140609/MINUTES.HTM</p> |
| E&CS Scrutiny Committee (8th May 2009) | <p>http://online.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/agendas/eng/ECSS20090508/MINUTES.HTM</p> |