

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 JANUARY 2015

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

ANNUAL SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present the Committee with detail and analysis of the 2013-14 school performance for schools within the county borough.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities.

- 2.1 The key improvement objectives identified in the Corporate Plan 2013–2017 have been embodied in the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes. The amended Corporate Improvement Objectives adopted by Council on 19 February 2014 formally set out the improvement objectives that the Council will seek to implement between 2013 and 2017. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees engage in review and development of plans, policy or strategies that support the Corporate Themes.

3. Background.

- 3.1 Supporting School Improvement is one of the main functions of a Local Authority and performance monitoring is an essential part of this. The Committee have therefore continued to include the Annual School Performance Report on their Forward Work Programme to consider educational attainment within the county borough.

- 3.2 The Committee received last year's performance report at its meeting in April 2014, from which Members made the following observations and suggestions:

- a) *Following discussion on the ways in which data is collected, and how this takes account of the number of pupils within a school who have Additional Learning Needs or Special Educational Needs, the Committee welcomed the news that debate was taking place on this issue at a national level. The Committee expressed the hope that this debate would lead to the development of a more sophisticated method of assessing school performance that takes into account the number of pupils with SEN or ALN, and does not therefore appear to penalise those schools with a high number of such pupils.*
- b) *Due to the persistent gap in boys' and girls' achievement, the Committee recommends that the Central South Consortium examines the evidence regarding segregating boys and girls for specific lessons, and the impact this has on achievement, with a view to piloting this, depending on the results of the evidence.*

- c) *The Committee is concerned that the Authority, and implicitly our primary schools, were not adequately prioritising attainment in the science subject area at KS2. Based on the Committee's discussions around KS2 CSI outcomes and the rapid deterioration of Bridgend's rank position in Wales (from 6th authority in 2011 to 18th in 2013) the Committee would want Cabinet to instruct the Central South Consortium to ensure an equal priority is given in our schools to science alongside literacy and numeracy at KS2.*
- d) *The Committee raised concerns regarding the reliability of KS2 assessment as it remains a teacher assessment that is ultimately subjective. The Committee welcomed the introduction of a national, objective assessment at KS3 but accepted that it would need to be in place for a few more years before robust analysis of the data over time could occur.*
- e) *With regard to those schools whose targets were significantly over or under actual performance, the Committee noted that in smaller schools, a seemingly significant percentage difference could relate to a very small number of actual pupils. For this reason, the Committee consider that in future, figures should be expressed as both a percentage difference and as an actual number.*
- f) *The Committee recognise that there are many areas of good practice within the County Borough and welcome those arrangements and processes, such as the use of the school cluster fora, which allows schools to share good practice.*

4. Current Situation / proposal.

- 4.1 Final data on school performance for 2013-14 is now available and has been collated for members into the report of the Corporate Director – Children's, which is attached at Appendix A. The report itself contains a number of further appendices which contain statistical information to assist members in their consideration of this topic.
- 4.2 When considering the report, the Committee may wish to bear the following points in mind:
 - a) *What are the key areas of concern in school performance within the county borough?*
 - b) *What are the key areas for prioritisation and school improvement within the county borough?*
 - c) *What is being done to support Looked After Children and other vulnerable groups, whose attainment, as stated in the report, continues to be generally below that of their peers?*
 - d) *How has 2013-14 school performance been used:*
 - i. *to inform strategic planning for schools and school improvement; and*
 - ii. *to identify and increase the sharing of best practice across schools in Bridgend?*
 - e) *According to the targets set out in the report, Bridgend is not likely to achieve the national target of 65% for Level 2 including English and Maths by 2015.*

How does this compare with other local authorities both within the consortium and across Wales?

f) How is the data presented in the report used to inform the work of schools, the local authority and the Consortium?

g) Do Members feel that the information presented to them enables them to carry out their Scrutiny role in monitoring and challenging school performance effectively?

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

5.1 The work of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Policy Framework and consideration of plans, policy or strategy relating to the power to promote or improve economic, social or environmental well being in the County Borough of Bridgend.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 The equality implications are outlined in the officer's report attached as Appendix A.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 Any financial implications are outlined in the officer's report attached as Appendix A.

8. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- i. Consider and discuss the information within the attached report;
- ii. Explore issues consistent with its challenge and support role;
- iii. determine whether it wishes to make any comments or recommendations relating to these reports.

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Background Documents:

None