

## Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION County Council

**REPORT TO:** Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**DATE:** 30 March 2023

**LOCATION:** Hybrid

**TITLE:** Update from the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Workstreams

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:** To provide feedback on the work of the workstreams

**REASON SCRUTINY HAVE REQUESTED THE INFORMATION:**

**BACKGROUND:**

The Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee established four workstreams for raising awareness, training purposes, exploring topics in greater detail and for identifying aspects which require further scrutiny at its meeting on 11 October 2012 as part of the forward work programme planning process. The workstreams have been reviewed and updated during 2022. The members of the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee are divided between the workstreams and the Chairman and Vice Chair attends and contributes to all three.

<b>Ensure that local and national priorities are delivered effectively</b>	<b>Ensure equity for all pupils</b>	<b>Ensure an effective and efficient infrastructure to meet our priorities</b>
Councillor: Endaf Edwards Chris James Euros Davies Rhodri Davies Elizabeth Evans	Councillor: Endaf Edwards Chris James Paul Hinge Marc Davies Amanda Edwards Mark Strong Ann Bowen Morgan	Councillor: Endaf Edwards Chris James Meirion Davies Eryl Evans Gareth Lloyd

## **CURRENT SITUATION:**

### **Ensure equity for all pupils**

The 'Ensure equity for all pupils' workstream met on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2023 to consider Attendance and Elective Home Education. Gillian Evans, Corporate Manager ALN, Inclusion and Wellbeing, and Catrin Petcher, Team Leader Education Inclusion Service delivered a presentation to the workstream. The legal background was explained to the Members. The number of children that are home educated, including the number who have never attended mainstream were explored. Members were informed that there was an increase of around 10% in the number of home-educated children across Wales (36% last year). In Ceredigion the number of home-educated children has fallen by -6%. Ceredigion still has the highest rate in Wales of home-schooled children with 28.2 per 1,000 pupils (30.6 per 1,000 last year). Ceredigion has more children who have never been on a school roll compared to Wales. 38% have never been to a school in Ceredigion compared to 15% in Wales. Ceredigion has visited 63% of home-educated children during the year - compared to 34% in Wales. 61 pupils in Ceredigion have returned back to school in the previous 12 months ( 27 the previous year).

Examples of how the Welsh Government Grant has been used over the last three years was shared with the workstream. The duties of the School and Local Authority were explained. Whether in school or home schooling, the wellbeing and safeguarding of all children should be everyone's priority. Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. There is strong and clear communication between Children's Services, School Services and the Child Protection Designated Person e.g. when notification comes via "Operation Encompass" , or if a MARF referral has been received from Children's Service there will be communication and agreement on who and how we will operate.

The process of School Attendance Orders was explained to the workstream which applies in cases when a parent of a child of compulsory school age fails to prove that the child is receiving suitable education and where the authority believes the child should attend school.

### **Ensure that local and national priorities are delivered effectively**

The 'Ensure that local and national priorities are delivered effectively' workstream met on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023. The workstream undertook visits to two primary schools within the County. The workstream spent the morning at Plascrug School, Aberystwyth. Aled Rumble delivered a presentation on the Introduction to Curriculum for Wales. This was followed by a presentation by Headteacher Berian Lewis about the school's journey in adopting a Curriculum for Wales. The workstream Members were taken on a tour of the school, visiting a class from each year from reception to year 6 where they had an opportunity to observe

lessons and speak to teachers and pupils. Members then had an opportunity to discuss what they'd seen and ask any further questions of the head teacher and deputy head teacher.

The workstream visited Ysgol Bro Sion Cwilt in the afternoon. They received a presentation by Headteacher Nia Thomas about the school's journey in adopting a curriculum for Wales. The workstream Members were taken on a tour of the school, visiting each class from reception to year 6 where they had an opportunity to observe lessons and speak to teachers and pupils. Members then had an opportunity to discuss what they'd seen and ask any further questions of the head teacher and deputy head teacher.

The workstream Members were grateful for the opportunity to visit Plascrug School and Ysgol Bro Sion Cwilt where they gathered an insight into the schools and the journey of adopting the curriculum for Wales, including the lessons learnt along the way. Key points noted were:

- Encouraged schools to question what they did,
- Build on good practices,
- The focus on the individual child,
- The importance of the pupil voice,
- Thankful for the support provided by the Council officers,
- Allows teachers the freedom to know their children,
- Allows flexibility,
- Better opportunities for the individual, preparing them for life.

**WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS:**

**Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If, not, please state why**

**Summary:**

**Long term:**

**Integration:**

**Collaboration:**

**Involvement:**

**Prevention:**

**RECOMMENDATION (S):**

To note the work of the workstreams.

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION (S):**

**Contact Name:** Lisa Evans  
**Designation:** Scrutiny and Standards Officer  
**Date of Report:** 17/2/23  
**Acronyms:**