Estyn | Dros ddysgwyr, dros Gymru
For learners, for Wales

Communications & Engagement Strategy 2026 - 2030

Estyn: For learners, for Wales
Our vision is to improve the quality of education and training, and outcomes for all learners in Wales.

Vision Statement:
"We will communicate clearly, engage meaningfully, and work collaboratively with partners to support improvement for all learners in Wales."

1. Executive Summary:
This strategy sets out how we will use communications and engagement to:
- Build trust and confidence in our work
- Improve understanding of inspection and improvement
- Strengthen two-way engagement with partners
- Support system-wide improvement for learners in Wales

Our approach will be insight and evidence-led, partner-focused and collaborative.

Our role requires us not only to report on quality, but also to:
- Explain findings clearly
- Engage partners meaningfully
- Support improvement through insight and communication

2. Strategic Objectives:

I. Build Understanding

Ensure all partners clearly understand:
- Our role and purpose
- How inspection works
- What our findings mean in practice

II. Strengthen Trust and Credibility
- Communicate openly and transparently
- Clearly explain decisions and findings
- Demonstrate impact and value

III. Enable Meaningful Engagement
- Create structured opportunities for dialogue
- Actively listen and respond to partner feedback

- Broaden engagement beyond senior leaders

IV. Support System Improvement
- Share best practice and insight
- Translate evidence into usable content
- Influence practice through targeted communications

3. Our Partners:
We will take an audience-first approach, recognising different needs and ensuring underrepresented voices are targeted.

Core partner groups
- Learners
- Parents and carers
- Practitioners (teachers, support staff)
- Middle leaders
- Senior leaders
- Local authorities and system leaders
- Policy makers

4. Engagement Principles:
Our approach will be:
- Learner-focused – always linked to impact on learners
- Clear and accessible – plain English and Welsh
- Transparent – open and evidence-based
- Collaborative – working with partners, not broadcasting to them
- Inclusive – bilingual and representative
- Responsive – acting on feedback

5. Key areas of focus:
Over the next three years, we will focus on three priority areas:
- Driving an insight-led review and development of the inspection framework across all sectors through a mid-cycle review and proposals informed by feedback and consultation for 2030 implementation.
- Raising awareness of our enhanced focus on reading and driving improvement in reading standards through inspection, capacity building and communication activity.
- Increasing engagement with middle leaders and practitioners to raise awareness of the work of Estyn, improve understanding of inspection, and drive the use of our improvement resources.

6. Our Engagement Model:
It's important that our partners trust our work and see it as transparent. That's why we use a wide range of communication channels to inform and involve partners, as well as collaborating with them,

and influencing to drive improvement in the system.

We will adopt a four-stage model:

INFORM	• Inspection reports • HMCI's Annual report • National thematic reports • Website content • Social media updates • Datgan newsletter • Annual plan and annual reports and accounts	Clear, accessible, timely information updates
INVOLVE	• Pre and post inspection questionnaires • Local government education services pre-inspection surveys • Meetings with parents, governors, staff and learners. • Management committees for PRUs • Professional dialogue with providers to build a national picture of strengths and weaknesses • Annual peer inspector training (around 1000 trained annually to support inspection) • Our work with senior leaders as nominees on inspections • Annual perceptions survey • Framework consultations • Partner forums and reference groups • Parents and carers	Gathering insight and feedback

	community • Communication feedback surveys • Estyn live webinars covering a variety of key topics • Communication campaigns	
COLLABORATE	• Partner reference groups • Incorporate feedback in the design of our frameworks & guidance • Co-creation of improvement resources e.g.: podcasts, Estyn lives • Regular engagement with the UK and Irish Inspectorates and with national and regional inspectors of education in Europe who are members of the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI)	Shared ownership and co-construction
INFLUENCE	• External event & conference participation • Campaigns driving key priorities • Effective practice sharing • Thematic reports & recommendations • Estyn representation at steering groups and committees • Information sharing with School Improvement Services and Local Authorities	Supporting changes in practice

	• Supporting providers in the improvement process through discussions during inspection and interim visits • Dedicated Link Inspectors visit each further education, adult learning in the community and work-based learning provider annually. • Local Authority Link Inspectors (LALIs) monitor and challenge local authorities about the performance and progress of their schools and education services. • Our Ethnic Minority Leaders Development Programme supports the development of underrepresented leaders in education.	

7. Strategic Pillars

- Transparent & Trusted Communication
- Publish clear, accessible, audience specific reports
- Provide consistent messaging across all channels
- Targeted Partner Communication
- Segment communications by partner group
- Tailor tone, format and content
- Develop targeted newsletters and content streams
- System Engagement
- Build on established partner reference groups
- Involve partners early in development
- Strengthen relationships across the system
- Insight-led Campaigns
- Deliver 2–3 priority campaigns annually
- Focus on key improvement areas (e.g. reading, Interim visits, AI, supporting middle leaders)

- Use data and insight to shape messaging

8. Channels and Approach

Core channels

- Website (primary information hub)
- Email (segmented communications)
- Social media (engagement and amplification)

Engagement channels

- Estyn conferences and national events & representation at external conferences.
- Estyn lives and workshops
- Regular sector-specific partner forums, held at least once a year.

Content approach

- Clear summaries and explainers
- Visual and accessible formats
- Practical “what this means for you” content

9. Measurement and Evaluation

We will measure success through:

Reach

- Website traffic and engagement
- Social media metrics

Engagement quality

- Our annual perceptions survey
- Partner satisfaction (anecdotal feedback and targeted surveys)

Impact

- Increased understanding of our work
- Improved trust and confidence
- Evidence of changes in practice

10. Delivery Plan (Year 1: 2026/27)

Priority 1: Improve understanding of inspection

- Build on explainer content
- Launch targeted communications for middle leaders

Priority 2: Strengthen partner engagement to drive the next inspection framework

- Continue to collaborate at our partner reference groups
- Continue to develop our annual perception survey

Priority 3: Establish campaign approach

- Campaign 1: Reading: For learners, for Wales
- Campaign 2: Refresh Ready Already (Understanding inspection)
- Campaign 3: Mid cycle review and development of new framework

11. Governance

- Communications team leads delivery
- Close alignment with inspection and CS teams
- Senior leadership oversight
- Annual review and refresh

Annex 1: External partner analysis

This analysis broadly groups partners which share a similar interest in education and/or training. This helps us to target and prioritise our messages.

Interest	**Type of partner (a few examples)**
Directly influenced by our work	Headteachers, principals, directors of education, teachers, lecturers, support staff, practitioners, governing bodies and school governors/trustees, youth work managers and leaders, Work-based learning providers and managers
Directly benefits from our work	Schools and non-maintained settings, post-16 providers, work-based learning providers, local authorities, school improvement partners, initial teacher education (ITE) providers, education services in prisons, adult learning, Welsh Government, Medr, Education Workforce Council (EWC)
Indirectly benefits from our work	Learners, parents/carers, general public, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) and Qualifications Wales, Association of Schools & College Leaders (ASCL), Association of Directors of Education in Wales (ADEW), Children's Commissioner for Wales
Directly contributes to our work	Internal and external inspector workforce, Audit Wales, Care Inspectorate Wales, Healthcare Inspectorate Wales, HM Inspectorate Probation, HM Inspectorate Constabulary, HM Inspectorate Prisons, Welsh Government, Medr
Indirectly contributes to our work	The Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Education Scotland, The Education and Training Inspectorate (Northern Ireland) and Ofsted, Cwlwm

Interested in our work but is not directly or indirectly affected	The media, education commentators, research companies, education consultants and academic bodies

Annex 2: Partner groups

We regularly review the organisations and people that we engage with.
All of the sectors we inspect have partner forums which meet on a termly basis.
In addition to this, we engage with the following audience groups:

Individuals:

- Headteachers
- Principals
- Senior leaders
- Practitioners in non-maintained settings
- Newly qualified teachers
- Learners (all ages)
- Lecturers
- Teachers
- Classroom assistants
- Inspectors – peer, additional, school improvement partners, lay, RgI, RgNI
- Parents and carers
- Governors

Providers:

- Nursery schools and settings that are maintained by, or receive funding from, local authorities;
- Primary schools
- Secondary schools
- All-age schools
- Special schools
- Pupil referral units
- Independent schools
- Further education
- Independent specialist colleges
- Adult learning in the community
- Local government education services
- Initial teacher education
- Welsh for adults
- Apprenticeships
- Learning in the justice sector
- Welsh language arrangements in local authorities
- Youth Work Services

Organisations

- Atebol
- Action for Children
- Adult learning in the community partnerships network
- Agored Cymru
- Association of Directors of Education in Wales (ADEW)
- Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)
- Cabinet Secretaries with responsibilities for Education
- Canolfan Dysgu Cymraeg Genedlaethol
- Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)
- Careers Wales
- Children, young people and education committee
- Children in Wales
- Children's Commissioner for Wales
- The Catholic Education Service
- Church in Wales Advisory Council for Education
- Church in Wales and Catholic Diocesan Directors of Education in Wales
- Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol
- Colegau Cymru
- Confederation for British Industry (CBI)
- Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services (CWVYS)
- CYDAG
- Cwlwm
- Dysgu
- Early Years Wales
- Education Workforce Council (EWC)
- English as an Additional Language Association of Wales (EALAW)
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Field Studies Council
- Future Generations Commissioner for Wales
- Girlguiding Cymru
- Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW)
- HMI Prisons
- HMI Probation
- Learning and Work Institute
- The Learned Society of Wales
- Local authorities
- Medr
- Mudiad Meithrin
- National Association for Able Children in Education
- National Society of Apprentices
- National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)

- National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT)
- National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)
- National Training Federation for Wales (NTfW)
- National Education Union
- NUS Cymru
- North Wales Association of Special Schools Headteachers
- Principal Youth Officers (PYO)
- Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years Cymru (PACEY)
- Prospect
- Parentkind
- Qualifications Wales
- Regional Skills Partnerships
- Rhieni Dros Addysg Gymraeg (RhAG)
- School Improvement Partners
- Scouts Cymru
- Senedd Research
- Sector Skills Council
- SNAP Cymru
- Social Care Wales
- The Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE Wales)
- South Wales Association of Special Schools Headteachers
- The Standing International Conference of Inspectorates
- Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)
- UK Ministry of Justice Inspectorates
- Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (UCAC)
- Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET)
- University and College Union (UCU)
- Urdd Gobaith Cymru
- Voice Cymru
- Audit Wales
- Wales Centre for Public Policy
- Wales Primary Schools Association
- Welsh Independent Schools Council (WISC)
- Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC)
- Welsh Language Commissioner
- Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA)
- Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research and Data (Wiserd)
- Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA)
- Young Women’s Trust
- Youth Justice Board
- Youth Work Strategy Implementation Board