
Ymateb i Ymgynghoriad / Consultation Response

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Pwnc / Subject:	Relaxation of school reporting requirements 2021

Background information about Estyn

Estyn is the Office of Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales. As a Crown body, Estyn is independent of the Welsh Government.

Estyn's principal aim is to raise the standards and quality education and training in Wales. This is primarily set out in the Learning and Skills Act 2000 and the Education Act 2005. In exercising its functions, Estyn must give regard to the:

- Quality of education and training in Wales;
- Extent to which education and training meets the needs of learners;
- Educational standards achieved by education and training providers in Wales;
- Quality of leadership and management of those education and training providers;
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners; and,
- Contribution made to the well-being of learners.

Estyn's remit includes (but is not exclusive to) nurseries and non-maintained settings, primary schools, secondary schools, independent schools, pupil referrals units, further education, adult community learning, local government education services, work-based learning, and teacher education and training.

Estyn may give advice to the Assembly on any matter connected to education and training in Wales. To achieve excellence for learners, Estyn has set three strategic objectives:

- Provide accountability to service users on the quality and standards of education and training in Wales;
- Inform the development of national policy by the Welsh Government;
- Build capacity for improvement of the education and training system in Wales.

This response is not confidential.

Response

Introduction

We agree with the Welsh Government that during this time when we are all responding to the coronavirus pandemic, schools, local authorities and governing bodies may be unable to comply with certain statutory requirements. We agree with all of the principles that the Welsh Government is proposing to bring into force in amending regulations that will modify or disapply a number of current local authority, school governors and school reporting requirements. By relaxing the requirements specified, the Welsh Government will reduce the administrative burden on those responsible.

Removing the requirement to include data on authorised and unauthorised absences the 2020/21 school year in any school prospectus

The severe disruption to education over the last year has made accurate analysis of pupils' absence unlikely and incomparable to previous years. Therefore, we agree that provision be made to exclude data on authorised and unauthorised absences in respect of pupils registered at the school in the 2020/21 school year from being published in any school prospectus.

Amending the School Governors' Annual Report (Wales) Regulations 2011

We agree the statutory duty for governing bodies to produce a report remains, but it would be inappropriate for that report, produced in respect of pupils registered at schools in the 2020/21 school year, to include performance and attendance data, as it will not be comparable to previous years. We also agree that it is inappropriate for schools to be required to report against targets previously set for this academic year or to set targets for next year based on outcomes that may be unreliable. The target setting cycle occurs over a three year period, so the current disruptions for performance and absence data makes reviewing, finalising and reporting against targets in previous years, as well as setting, reviewing and finalising targets for future years difficult for schools.

Amending the Headteacher's Report to Parents and Adult Pupils (Wales) Regulations 2011

We agree that in order to provide assurance of progress to parents and adult pupils, the provision of reports in respect of all learners will remain an absolute duty. The continuing situation linked to the coronavirus pandemic will make it difficult for headteachers to make meaningful and reliable reports available to all parents or adult pupils about the educational achievements of pupils for this academic year, but they must draw on teachers' knowledge of their pupils and the information available to them, to do so. We agree in principle that headteachers' duties are treated as discharged if they have used "reasonable endeavours" to comply with them but that the term "reasonable endeavours" is ambiguous and needs to be exemplified to avoid misunderstandings. In addition, we recommend that headteachers are provided with guidance containing minimum requirements.

Amending The School Performance Information (Wales) Regulations 2011 ("the Performance Regulations")

We agree that school closures caused by the coronavirus pandemic have made it difficult, or impossible, for schools to complete appropriate teacher assessments during the 2020/21 school year. We agree that regulations be amended to remove the duties on governing bodies and local authorities to provide data to local authorities and Welsh Ministers, respectively, on teacher assessment and national test outcomes for the pupils registered at schools in the 2020/21 school year. We also agree with the proposal for

retaining provision that allows Welsh Government to receive results of approved qualifications, for other purposes not related to school performance or accountability.

Related policy amendments

We agree with Welsh Government's proposal to continue the suspension of the reporting of school performance outcomes and the inclusion of performance measures in the All Wales Core Data Sets for schools and local authorities, Summary of Secondary School Performance, and relevant aspects of the My Local School website, for the 2020/21 school year. We also agree with the proposal, currently for the 2020/21 school year only, not to use qualification awards data to report on attainment at school, local authority or regional consortia level.