

MINUTE of MEETING of the EDUCATION (QUALITY ASSURANCE) COMMITTEE of WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE on 22 APRIL 2014.

Present – Councillors Stuart Borrowman (Chair), David Dodds, Alexander Davidson, Lawrence Fitzpatrick, Dave King, Danny Logue, John McGinty, Anne McMillan, Andrew Miller, George Paul and Jim Walker; Appointed Members John Hendrie, Lynne McEwen and Myra MacPherson.

Apologies – Councillor Carl John.

Absent – Councillor Tony Boyle and Appointed Member Eric Lumsden.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

2. MINUTE

The Committee approved the Minute of its meeting held on 11 March 2014 as being a correct record. The Chair thereafter signed the Minute.

3. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee resolved that items 4-7 undernoted be taken in private (exempt under Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973).

4. VALIDATED SELF EVALUATION: EASTERTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Quality Assurance) which provided details of the Validated Self Evaluation (VSE) report and the identified actions arising. The VSE Report and the school's Standards and Quality Report were attached as appendices to the report.

The report recalled that the VSE was carried out to support, extend and challenge the school's own self-evaluation and validate the accuracy of the self-evaluation. It was led by the school and involved staff from within the school working together with the Quality Improvement Team to validate the judgements made in answering the key questions of the self-evaluation, which were:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we know?
- What are we going to do now?

The VSE was carried out in Eastertoun Primary School in December 2013. The Head Teacher had been in post since 1996 and was supported by a Depute Head Teacher and Principal Teacher. At the time of the VSE the school roll was 333. Details of the focus of the VSE were outlined in the report.

The Education Officer went on to advise the Committee that regular meetings were held between the Head Teacher and members of staff to ensure that targets for improvement were being met. Robust self-evaluation was carried out by members of staff which demonstrated their ability to reflect on how recent developments were impacting on learning. He advised that one area in which the school had capacity to improve was the curriculum.

The Head Teacher, Mr Cowan, then advised the Committee that staff welcomed the validated self-evaluation and found it to be a very positive process. He also advised that work would continue to build staff capacity in a structured and supported way within a manageable programme to ensure that the curriculum meets the requirements of the enhanced expectations.

It was noted that the curriculum was re-evaluated taking account of Curriculum for Excellence, National Expectations and Inspections. The VSE visit at Eastertoun Primary School enabled the school to reflect on its performance through the benefit of gathering and analysing evidence within a wider team. Senior managers demonstrated a deep knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.

In conclusion, the school's arrangements for self-evaluation would continue to develop tracking and monitoring systems to ensure consistency across all curricular areas, building staff capacity to ensure that the curriculum meets the requirements of the enhanced expectations regarding Programmes and Courses, Rationale and Design.

The Committee was asked to note the contents of the report and the school's Standards and Quality report.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the Head Teacher for attending the meeting and congratulated him and the staff team at Eastertoun Primary School for the excellent work carried out in school and the progress made under his leadership.

Decision

Noted the terms of the report.

5. VALIDATED SELF EVALUATION: ST KENTIGERN'S ACADEMY

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Quality Assurance) which provided details of the Validated Self Evaluation (VSE) report and the identified actions arising. The VSE Report and the Standards and Quality Report were

attached as appendices to the report.

The Head of Education (Quality Assurance) advised the Committee that the Head Teacher had retired prior to the Easter holiday and an acting Head Teacher had started in post on 22nd April 2014. The VSE in St Kentigern's Academy took place in November 2013. At the time of the VSE the Head Teacher had been in post since 2006 and the school roll was 1,195 with 97 members of teaching staff including those designated to support pupils with additional learning needs.

The VSE visit to St Kentigern's Academy enabled the school to reflect on its performance through the benefit of gathering and analysing evidence within a wider team. The Head Teacher, together with the extended management team and staff had a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The process affirmed the accuracy of the Standards and Quality Report of June 2013 with minor amendments and evaluated the four focus areas, details of which were outlined in the report.

The school has developed effective arrangements for self-evaluation and was well-placed to continue to improve. Overall, the school made accurate judgements about its performance against the quality indicators using these to identify appropriate priorities for continuing improvement. The Head of Education (Quality Assurance) went on to provide the Committee with an update on the revised table of evaluations following the VSE and confirmed that the school had a very good capacity for continued growth based on the accuracy of the self-evaluation. Significant improvements had been made in driving forward the curriculum, working with the three schools within the cluster group, stakeholders, agencies and employers to enhance the pupils' experiences. There was on-going evaluation of the impact the developments were having on learner's achievements with the Head Teacher and staff team working closely with the Education Officer on a more focused monitoring and tracking system.

In response to a question raised in relation to the number of teaching staff in school being recorded in the report as 97 compared to the number recorded in the Standards and Quality Report as being 102, the Head of Education (Quality Assurance) agreed to investigate the anomaly and update Members following the meeting.

Overall, the school made accurate judgements about its performance in almost all of the quality indicators and used these to identify appropriate priorities for continuing improvement. The VSE confirmed that the school had a very good capacity for continued growth based on the accuracy of the self-evaluation.

The Chair acknowledged that although improvements had been made the school should continue to show signs of improvement.

The Committee was asked to note the contents of the report and the school's Standards and Quality Report.

Decision

1. Noted the terms of the report; and
2. Agreed that an update would be provided to Members following the meeting on the number of teaching staff in school at the time the VSE was carried out.

6. VALIDATED SELF EVALUATION: OUR LADY OF LOURDES PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Quality Assurance) which provided details of the Validated Self Evaluation (VSE) report and the identified actions arising. The VSE Report and the school's Standards and Quality Report were attached as appendices to the report.

The report advised that the VSE enabled the school to reflect on its performance through the benefit of gathering and analysing evidence within a wider team. The VSE was carried out in Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School in January 2014. The school was part of St Kentigern's Cluster and served the communities of Blackburn and Seafield. The Head Teacher had been in post for eight years and was supported by a Principal Teacher who had been in post for five years. At the time of the VSE the primary school roll was 130. The VSE process challenged and strengthened the accuracy of the standards and quality report of June 2013. Details of the focus of the VSE were outlined in the report.

The Education Officer then advised the Committee that during the course of the VSE professional discussion took place between the VSE team and teaching staff. At the end of the process the team agreed that QI evaluations 1.1, 2.1, 5.1 and 5.3 detailed on page 2 of the VSE report be changed to more accurately reflect the position in the school.

The Head Teacher, Mrs Paterson, stated that the VSE was found to be a valuable process. Rigorous and systematic evaluation was carried out within the revised national and local expectations. Overall, almost all pupils have made progress from their prior levels of attainment. There was also clear evidence in the Nurture group of pupils being engaged and motivated. Staff members demonstrated a better understanding of the self-evaluation standards and would continue to develop through on-going professional dialogue. The Head Teacher also advised that collaboration with cluster schools had taken place with on-going discussion and information sharing, which was found to be very positive.

In conclusion, the report advised that the curriculum would continue to be developed to ensure all pupils received their full entitlements for the broad general education. Senior managers had an improved understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The updated Standards and Quality Report reflected the school more accurately and the school would continue to revise its improvement plan to ensure

actions were planned to address the areas identified through VSE.

The Committee was asked to note the contents of the report and the school's Standards and Quality Report.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the Head Teacher and Education Officer for attending the meeting and acknowledged that actions would be taken to ensure continued improvement by addressing the areas identified.

Decision

Noted the terms of the report.

7. VALIDATED SELF EVALUATION: WINDYKNOWE PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Quality Assurance) which provided details of the Validated Self Evaluation (VSE) Report and the identified actions arising. THE VSE Report and the school's Standards and Quality Report were attached as appendices to the report.

The report advised that the VSE was carried out in Windyknowe Primary School in late February 2014. The school served the western area of Bathgate. The Head Teacher had been in post since October 2011 and was supported by an acting Depute Head Teacher who had been in post since January 2012 and two principal teachers. At the time of the VSE the primary school roll was 370 and the nursery class 60/40. Details of the focus of the VSE were outlined in the report.

The Education Officer stated that the VSE team worked closely with members of staff under the strong leadership of the Head Teacher. Collegiate working by all parties was on-going to ensure quality improvements enabling staff to develop and validate their Standards and Quality Report. Information was gathered from the school staff team, pupils and parents as well as the VSE team with a robust self-evaluation carried out. High quality professional dialogue took place with standards being raised by increasing children's capacity to learn effectively.

The Head Teacher, Mrs Angus, then advised the Committee that since being in post her aims were to raise attainment in core subjects in school and build curriculum, enhancing current practice with agreed aims and values to ensure the highest level of teaching for all children. The school was in a strong position to move forward and embrace change to continue to provide opportunities. Challenging professional discussion also helped staff develop and grow. The Head Teacher highlighted that the school made accurate judgements about its performance across the nursery and primary classes in all but QI 5.1 (Curriculum) which was judged to be very good. However, in view of the range of evidence gathered during the VSE it was agreed that this would be changed from good to very good.

In conclusion, the school's arrangements for self-evaluation were very effective. The school had robust self-evaluation processes and was well-

placed to continue to improve. Senior managers and staff had a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the Head Teacher and Education Officer for attending the meeting. Members congratulated the Head Teacher and the staff team at Windyknowe Primary School for their achievements made in school under the strong leadership of the Head Teacher.

The Committee was asked to note the contents of the report and the school's Standards and Quality Report.

Decision

Noted the terms of the report.

8. TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS 2014-2015

The Committee considered the timetable of meetings for 2014-2015 (copies of which had been circulated).

Decision

Noted the contents of the timetable of meetings for the period 2014-2015.

9. WORK PLAN

The Committee considered the contents of the work plan (copies of which had been circulated).

Decision

Noted the contents of the work plan.