

EDUCATION SCOTLAND – SCRUTINY PROGRAMME FOR 2021-22

1.0 INTRODUCTION

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, HM Inspectors of Education (HMIE) took the decision to pause all inspection activity on 13th March 2020.

In September 2021, HMIE agreed with the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills the arrangements to resume a programme of scrutiny activities for session 2021-22. This programme and how HMIE will approach scrutiny is outlined in section 3.0 of the Report.

HMIE acknowledge the ongoing challenges faced by local authority staff, education staff, learners and communities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. They are also aware of the complex and changing situation regarding COVID-19 and note that plans set out by them may change depending on public health advice and local circumstances.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Community Services Committee:

- a) Note the proposed programme of HMIE engagement including Phase One: late September 2021 to December 2021 and Phase Two: January 2022 onwards. Details of which are noted in section 3.0 of the report.
- b) Agrees that we will resume the arrangements for reporting Inspection outcomes that were in place pre COVID-19 ie

- Details of all inspections carried out on a quarterly basis will be presented to Community Services Committee as a standing item;
- The quarterly report will detail all establishment inspections conducted and published by Education Scotland within that period; and
- That Ward members will receive copies of school inspection reports for schools within their area as published by Education Scotland.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 The planned programme of scrutiny activities for session 2021-22 includes two phases. These are outlined below:

Phase One: late September 2021 to December 2021

During this phase HMIE will engage with those establishments, settings and CLD services awaiting the outcome of further inspection or a progress report following an inspection before the pandemic. Given the current context, HMIE will undertake a 'visit' to each of these establishments/services. Visits may include a blend of virtual and in-person engagement.

During the visits, HMIE will discuss with staff progress on the areas for improvement, identified from earlier scrutiny activity, recognising that some areas for improvement will have been impacted by COVID-19.

In addition, HMIE will review the establishment approaches to safeguarding and child protection.

HMIE will also explore with staff and the local authority the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the establishment/service. HMIE want to learn from practitioners about the work underway to address the impact of COVID-19 and support recovery.

Following each visit, HMIE will publish a brief report. This report will be shared in advance for comment and, once quality assured, it will be published on the Education Scotland website.

As part of Phase One HMIE will be undertaking a visit to the following schools and services in Argyll and Bute:

- Gigha Primary School
- Lochnell Primary School
- Glassary Primary School
- Achahoish Primary School
- St Andrews Primary School
- Campbeltown Grammar School
- Hermitage Academy

- Community Learning and Development

In addition, HMIE is requesting a progress report from the schools listed below:

- Dunoon Primary School
- Tiree High School

3.2 In parallel with Phase One, HMIE are undertaking a programme of national thematic inspections focused on themes relevant to COVID-19 and recovery.

The first three national thematic inspections will be undertaken by December 2021 and will focus on the following:

- Approaches to supporting children's and young people's wellbeing
- Outdoor learning
- Local approaches to recovery.

Local Authorities will agree with HMIE which schools will participate in the national thematic inspections. Once the national thematic inspections are concluded, holistic Reports will be written and identified areas of good practice within a Local Authority may be highlighted within them. Again, once quality assured, these National Thematic Reports will be published on the Education Scotland website.

3.3 Phase Two: January 2022 onwards.

The programme of ELC and school inspections will resume from January 2022. HMIE will continue to take account of COVID-19 recovery and the context in which establishments and settings have been working. As a result, inspections will focus on a reduced number of areas. As required for the National Improvement Framework, HMIE will continue to report on the following quality indicators (QIs):

- QI 1.3 – leadership of change
- QI 2.3 – learning, teaching and assessment
- QI 3.1 – ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion
- QI 3.2 – raising attainment and achievement

HMIE will continue to have a focus on safeguarding and child protection in each inspection.

Further advice on individual establishment and ELC inspection will be provided by HMIE in due course.

3.4 In Argyll and Bute schools in Phase One and Phase Two are being supported by the following members of the Education Central Team:

- Education Officer with responsibility for supporting school improvement
- Education Officer with responsibility for supporting learning, teaching and assessment
- Lead Teacher for Recovery and Renewal

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 This report presents a summary of HMIE's programme of scrutiny activities for session 2021-22. It identifies the establishments involved in Phase One of the programme and the support being provided to them.

4.2 A further report on the outcomes of the scheduled Inspection visits will be presented to the Community Services Committee in March 2022.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Policy – The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 places a duty on Education Authorities to provide children and young people with school education and (in terms of raising standards) requires Authorities to endeavor to secure improvement in the quality of that school education.

5.2 Financial – None

5.3 Legal – None

5.4 HR – None

5.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: – None

5.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – None

5.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – None

5.5.3 Islands – None

5.6 Climate Change – None

5.7 Risk – Reputational risk to the Education Service following a weak report.

5.8 Customer Service – The outcome of establishment inspections of the Education Service of Argyll and Bute Council may significantly enhance or detract from the Council's reputation and attractiveness as an area to work and live in.

Douglas Hendry
Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne Mcneilly
Policy Lead for Education

Louise Connor
Chief Education Officer
Head of Education: Learning and Teaching

For further information please contact:-

Victoria Quinn, Education Officer
Telephone: 01631 567942
Email: Victoria.Quinn@argyll-bute.gov.uk.

15 November 2021