
Report To:	Education and Communities Committee	Date:	01 November 2016
Report By:	Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/65/16/RB
Contact Officer:	Ruth Binks	Contact No:	01475 712824
Subject:	Tackling unnecessary bureaucracy and undue workload in schools		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Education and Communities Committee with an update on the review by Education Scotland of Inverclyde Education Services' actions to tackle unnecessary bureaucracy and undue workload within schools.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 A review of all education authorities in Scotland was undertaken in August 2016 to identify the actions taken by each authority to tackle unnecessary bureaucracy and workload in schools.
- 2.2 Inverclyde Council's Education Services received a visit from a team of three inspectors on 19 August 2016.
- 2.3 Based on the outcome of the visits, inspectors allocated all authorities into one of three groups.
- 2.4 Inverclyde Council was placed in the top group and inspectors found that the local authority has been proactive in providing support and guidance that minimises workload demands for staff within their schools.

Amongst the key strengths identified by the inspectors was the strong sense of collegiality promoting effective collaborative working and open professional dialogue supported by positive relationships.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members of the Education and Communities Committee are asked to note the contents of this report.

Ruth Binks
Head of Education

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In June 2016, the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills asked Education Scotland to undertake a focused review of the demands placed on schools by local authorities in relation to Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), particularly around their arrangements for curriculum, planning, assessment and reporting in schools. This review was planned as one strand within a wider set of actions announced in the Government's 'Delivery Plan' designed to eliminate unnecessary workload demands associated with the implementation of CfE.
- 4.2 In carrying out the review, HM Inspectors took account of aspects of CfE which had been identified as causes of unnecessary bureaucracy and undue workload by the Ministerial Group on Tackling Bureaucracy; the CfE Management Board 'Reflections Group' which reported on the first two diets of new national qualifications; and the Ministerial Working Group on Assessment and National Qualifications.
- 4.3 The key themes identified were:
- Forward and curriculum planning
 - Assessment
 - Self-evaluation and improvement planning
 - Tracking, monitoring and reporting
 - IT systems

Inspectors explored the expectations, guidance and support which the local authority had in place for its schools in each of these areas. They were particularly interested in the actions the local authority had taken to ensure that unnecessary bureaucracy was avoided, and that effective, streamlined practice was in place across all of their schools. After the visit each authority was to be given one of four grades and the grades would be published in September 2016.

1. The local authority has been proactive in providing support and guidance that minimise workload demands for staff in their schools
2. The local authority has provided support and guidance that places reasonable workload demands on staff
3. The local authority has not yet given sufficient support and guidance to prevent or reduce undue workload demands on staff, and further improvement is required
4. The local authority has not provided any support or guidance

5.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 5.1 The review took place on 19 August 2016. A team of three inspectors visited Inverclyde Council for a day. They met with the Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development, Heads of Service and local authority officers, representatives of teachers' professional associations through the Local Negotiating Committees for Teachers (LNCT), primary and secondary head teachers; and primary and secondary teachers. Inspectors looked at arrangements, expectations and associated workload requirements for Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) placed on schools by the local authority, as well as any guidance and support provided by the authority to help minimise bureaucracy and workload. This report sets out the findings of the review.
- 5.2 Before the visit, the inspection team was issued with a comprehensive overview of actions taken by the authority in recent years to reduce workload and bureaucracy. During the visit, the inspectors talked to identified groups about arrangements, expectations and associated workload requirements for Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) placed on schools by the local authority, as well as any guidance and support provided by the authority to help minimise bureaucracy and workload.
- 5.3 The report was published in September 2016. Fifteen authorities were placed in the top

category. Fourteen were placed in the second category and three were placed in the third category. No authorities were placed in the fourth category. The national report can be accessed at:

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Review-of-Local-Authorities.pdf>

5.4 As well as the national report, individual feedback was received from the inspection team and the following key strengths were highlighted for Inverclyde:

- A shared view of the need to reduce bureaucracy and a willingness by all parties to work together to achieve this goal
- The local authority, working with the LNCT, has been proactive in making a commitment to address bureaucracy
- Planned programmes of meetings with heads of establishments are facilitating the sharing of practices and the addressing of common issues
- The local authority is achieving a balance of offering guidance while retaining a measure of autonomy within schools which is being viewed positively by teaching groups and association representatives
- Positive relationships are supporting open professional dialogue
- The strong sense of collegiality is promoting effective collaborative working
- The sharing of the initiatives being taken forward within the attainment challenge and the willingness of staff in other schools to engage with this is supporting schools in refining their own practices

Areas for development were:

- Continue to work, in partnership with the LNCT, to address the issues being identified as giving rise to bureaucracy and workload
- The local authority should look to disseminate very specific exemplars/advice, drawing on best practice, to illustrate how colleagues have managed successfully to reduce bureaucracy

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

6.1 There are no financial implications from this report.

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

Legal

6.2 There are no legal implications from this report.

Human Resources

6.3 There are no Human resources implications from this report.

Equalities

6.4 Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

Yes See attached appendix

No

This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Repopulation

6.5 N/A

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

7.1 N/A

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Education Services will continue to work with head teachers, teaching groups and their representatives to address issues which are identified as giving rise to bureaucracy and workload.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 N/A