Thematic inspection of personal and social education/health and wellbeing in Scotland's schools and early learning and childcare settings
August 2018

Feedback from Development Officer for Personal Support (retired)

General comments

1. The page reference at the foot of the contents page is in Roman numeral format. Also, should this not be page 2?
2. There are a number of pages which have no page references 6, 9, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20 and 22 – all of which are referenced on the contents page.
3. Phase 2 is not only about PSE/HWB but includes sections on universal guidance. This is not always reflected in references within the document as a whole.
4. Although the intention of this review is to report on findings, there are recommendations scattered through the different sections. Is this not the purpose of Phase 3 in which consideration of final recommendations will be made on the basis of the findings of Phase 2?
5. References are made to 'guidance/pupil support/pastoral care teachers'. It would perhaps be simpler to reduce this lengthy title to a shorter version which could have been explained in an early footnote.
6. Paragraph numbering would facilitate referencing different points

Comments on sections:

Page 4:

The section at the foot of page 4 on PSE/HWB is very helpful; a description of universal support in all sectors would have been a valuable addition.

Page 6:

Appendix 2 is very helpful, however, what is meant by 'sometimes' in the second bullet point is unclear, notwithstanding the qualification made regarding 'common English usage'.

The point made in the third bullet point regarding widely varying approaches to delivering PSE is something which needs to be considered more fully in Phase3.

It would have been useful to have had subheadings at the start of each description of current practice within the different sectors e.g. after the fourth bullet point 'Early learning and child care settings' and similar for the other two sectors.

Page 7

Comments from primary children are impressive.

Again, reference is made to widely varying approaches in the delivery of PSE in the secondary sector.

Reference is also made in the paragraph which follows to a 'significant minority'. It might have been useful to have this category defined in Appendix 2.

Page 8:

Why is the paragraph starting with 'Relevant themes…' indented and does it refer to all sectors or only secondary schools?

The comment on this page regarding the status of PSE by a young person from the secondary sector is highly pertinent. The whole question of status indicators needs to be fully explored. This is a critical point.

Page 9

Although there is an appreciable difference between the title of this section and the previous section, there must be some overlap.

The points made at the foot of page 10 and the top of page 11 must have more general relevance. In other words, the role of tutor time, its relationship to universal support and its overall effectiveness needs more consideration.

Page 11:There is a preposition missing in the sub-heading 'Secondary young people's etc.……..'

Page 12:

The four bullet points on this page are very positive and encouraging. Clearly, practitioners offering universal support are fulfilling a very valuable role in the education and personal development of children and young people in Scottish schools.

This section includes a paragraph on the experience of secondary schools visited. However, the secondary school experience is also covered in section 4 with the unavoidable overlap between the two sections e.g. approachability or otherwise of support staff.

The reasons for pressure being experienced by some support staff needs to be explored.

Page 15

The point made regarding a range of post-school destinations is important and highlights the need for an integrated and comprehensive approach to vocational guidance.

There does not seem to be any reference to special schools on page 15. The indented paragraphs are, presumably, quotes from secondary school practitioners.

Page 16

This section highlights the importance of partnership working with 'a range of partners'. Coordinated and integrated working with these agencies is essential if children's/young people's welfare is to be effectively addressed.

Page 17:

Reference is made on this page (and on page 20) to 'a few of the special schools'. On page 26 only four special schools are listed and on page 27 'a few' is defined as less than 15%. Does there not need to be more schools in this category to allow for a definition of 15%? Maths isn't my strong point!

Page 18:

The focus of this section is prejudice and understanding of different groups. It would be useful to identify a range of other groups who may experience prejudice e.g. people of faith, colour, racial origins, different abilities, social class and other sources of prejudice. The root cause of this problem is a set of values which colours attitudes to different groups of people,

Page 23:

The heading on this page excludes a reference to universal support.

This section identifies perceived 'strengths' and 'aspects for improvement'. Is this the role of Phase 3?

Point 11 on page 24 needs to be clarified.

Areas for further consideration:

- Models for the delivery of PSE/PSD and also universal support in all sectors to ensure efficient delivery and effective outcomes

- Support structures which incorporate the distinct (if overlapping) roles of Behaviour Support, Learning Support and Personal Support and ways in which integration would maximise the quality of support

- Full-time staffing models for pastoral care

- Partnership working with support agencies focused on the welfare of children/young people

- The effective and efficient use of IT systems

- CPD requirements for both PSE/HWB and universal support, given the critical importance of these roles in the lives of children and young people..