

## **DELIVERY PLAN UPDATE - FOR INFORMATION**

### **Purpose**

1. To provide the Teacher Panel with an update on the number of actions which have been taken forward since their first meeting, and a forward look to some upcoming actions, as detailed in the [Delivery Plan](#).
2. A number of these items will be discussed separately during the second meeting of the Panel.

### **Update**

#### *Publication of CfE Statement and Benchmarks*

3. The CfE Statement together with a covering letter from the Deputy First Minister (available [here](#)) and Benchmarks for literacy and numeracy (available [here](#)) were published on Monday 29 August.
4. The CfE Statement provides key messages about what teachers and practitioners are expected to do to effectively plan learning, teaching and assessment. The Benchmarks set out what learners need to know and be able to do to achieve a level and are intended to support teacher professional judgement in assessing learners' progress.
5. The Benchmarks were published in draft and Education Scotland are engaging with teachers and practitioners to learn from their experience of using these. The Benchmarks for the remaining curriculum areas will be published by the end of the year.

#### *Changes to Unit Assessments*

6. The proposed changes to unit assessments at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher were discussed with member of the Panel by teleconference on Tuesday 13 September. The changes will remove the mandatory requirement for unit assessment at National 5 (from 2017-18), Higher (from 2018-19) and Advanced Higher (from 2019-20), and replace this with enhanced course assessment (including final examination and course assignment, depending on the subject) to ensure appropriate course coverage. The unit structure of the National Qualifications will remain, but without the mandatory assessment of each unit.
7. SQA will retain the availability of units as individual, free standing units for those learners who wish to take these rather than an entire course. This will support flexibility and alternative pathways to meet the needs of a range of young people.
8. The removal of mandatory unit assessments is intended to significantly reduce assessment workload, allowing more time for teachers to focus on learning and teaching, while maintaining the core principles of Curriculum for Excellence.

9. The proposals have now been endorsed by the Curriculum for Excellence Management Board (News Release available [here](#)). SQA is now taking forward the new approach and will publish more detail for teachers as soon as this is available. Furthermore, SQA will suspend the random sample element of unit verification for a further year (2017-18).

#### *Report on local authorities' actions to tackle workload in schools*

10. Education Scotland published its report on its "*Review of local authorities' actions to tackle unnecessary bureaucracy and undue workload in schools*" (available [here](#)) on Monday 19 September.

11. Whilst the review found that all local authorities were committed strongly, in principle, to tackling bureaucracy and reducing unnecessary workload for their staff, the extent and the effectiveness of their actions to achieve this varied significantly. The report highlighted that many authorities need to do more to speed up progress in ensuring consistent good practice across schools in their areas.

12. In particular, inspectors found that:

12.1 15 local authorities have been proactive in providing support and guidance that minimise workload demands for staff in their schools,

12.2 14 local authorities have provided support and guidance that places reasonable workload demands on staff, and

12.3 3 local authorities have not yet given sufficient support and guidance to prevent or reduce undue workload demands on staff, and further improvement is required.

13. The Deputy First Minister has written to all local authorities requesting action plans are put in place to address the issues raised in the review. Education Scotland will be following up with all local authorities and reporting any situations where local authorities are not taking robust action to the Deputy First Minister.

#### *Governance Review*

14. On 13 September, the Deputy First Minister launched "*Empowering teachers, parents and communities to achieve excellence and equity in education: A Governance Review*". The Review starts from a fundamental presumption that decisions about a child's education should be made at school level where possible and asks questions about responsibilities and functions at every level of the education system and how these can be improved. It also asks about how funding for education can be made fairer through the development of a needs based funding formula for schools.

15. The Review is open until 6 January and Panel members can access the Review and submit a formal response [here](#). A number of regional engagement events are also being held, details of which can be found [here](#).

### *Review of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006*

16. The National Parent Forum of Scotland (NPFS) is midway through its review of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006. The review looks at the impact and success of the 2006 legislation and wider policy framework on parental involvement.

17. Research fieldwork is now underway; telephone interviews were held with parents during the summer and further focus groups will take place in the autumn term. NPFS have issued a call for evidence which includes questionnaires for parents, parent council representatives, educationalists and organisations (available [here](#)).

18. The research aspects of the review are due to be complete by December with a report to Ministers published in February 2017.

### *Progress with the National Improvement Hub*

19. An update on progress with progress with streamlining guidance and the work on the National Improvement Hub is provide in Paper 5 and will be discussed under Agenda Item 5.

### **Forward Look**

20. There are some upcoming publications which are due to be released prior to the next quarterly meeting of the Teacher Panel which are intended to reduce bureaucracy and workload in schools. As a result, it would be helpful to get feedback from the Panel on the following items by correspondence, once available.

### *Publication of further benchmark guidance*

21. As discussed above, Benchmarks are being developed for the remaining curriculum areas, namely:-

- Expressive Arts
- Gaelic (learners)
- Gaelic (native speakers)
- Health and Wellbeing (Food & Health)
- Health and Wellbeing (Personal & Social Education)
- Health and Wellbeing (Physical Education)
- Modern Languages
- Religious & Moral Education
- Religious Education (Roman Catholic)
- Sciences
- Social Studies
- Technologies

22. The new Benchmarks will be published before the end of the year. The timeline for implementation of these is available [here](#).

23. The Panel will have the opportunity to provide some initial thoughts on the consultation arrangements, publication and messaging for the new Benchmarks as part of a wider discussion on assessment in BGE generally, at Agenda Item 3.2. However, Education Scotland would also welcome detailed comments and feedback on the content of the Benchmarks. If you would like to provide feedback for your specific interests please email [EDSCFE@EducationScotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:EDSCFE@EducationScotland.gsi.gov.uk), indicating which Benchmarks you are interested in.

*Guidance on school improvement planning and reporting*

24. Work is underway to provide support and guidance to ensure that schools, parents and communities are effectively involved in school improvement planning. This will be mindful of the need to tackle bureaucracy and will focus on how, through focusing upon the National Improvement Plan (NIP) priorities, all schools can work towards achieving excellence and equity.

25. The National Parental Strategic group is being consulted and following this, a short-life working group will be set-up to co-develop advice and guidance to support schools, parents and local communities.

26. This guidance will focus upon three key elements of school improvement: self-evaluation, annual reporting and improvement planning. Emphasis will be placed on the importance of schools, their stakeholders and communities focusing upon school improvement in relation to their local context based on high quality self-evaluation for self-improvement. This will ensure they are best placed to address and meet the need for improvement in relation to their own particular context. The guidance will be developed from "[How good is our school?](#)" and existing good practice.

27. The guidance will provide clarity to schools about a more streamlined approach to school improvement planning and how it can be achieved. A draft of the guidance will be available at the end of November, and views of the panel sought at that time by correspondence.

**Learning Directorate  
Scottish Government  
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