

Kirsty Williams AM/AC
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: MA–(P)/KW/0988/17

Lynne Neagle AM
Chair
Children, Young People & Education Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

14 March 2017

Dear Lynne,

Thank you for your letter dated 21 February. I would like to thank the Children, Young People and Education Committee for their work reviewing Estyn's Annual Report 2015/16 and Teachers' Professional Learning and Education.

The Committee has requested an update on Key Stage 4 Performance Measures. We have made some initial changes. The reduction in emphasis on the revised Capped Points Score as the headline indicator will result in a greater variety for pupils in terms of programmes of study. The decision to reduce the focus of the Capped Point score, but to retain it alongside other measures such as the Level 2 inclusive, as part of a whole range of performance measures, will enable us to maintain a better perspective on pupil attainment. It will also give us some insight into achievement of higher level awards, above those currently indicated by the threshold measures alone.

However I have concerns with the current accountability system with issues on coherence, unintended consequences and the relationship between teaching assessments and accountability. These have been shared with us by head teachers.

I have announced a fundamental review of our accountability system which will be shaped by the teaching profession and other stakeholders. I want an accountability system that is:

- Fair – so that we promote equity, inclusion, choice, individual pathways to learning and never losing sight of the children
- Coherent – to allow each part of the system to work together without overlapping, with clear roles and responsibilities

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

- Proportionate – ensuring that the implementation of the new system and process is manageable and makes a difference and subsidiarity allowing responsibility for accountability for schools to be local, led by self-aware schools
- Transparent – recognising the breadth of learning experience across schools and the value added by teachers in class
- And a system based on our shared values for Welsh education – advocating and helping to realise the four purposes of education described in Successful Futures.

This review will result in a system that has clear roles and responsibilities, which promotes inclusion and equity, and recognises the value that is added by teachers in the classroom, across the system. Revised accountability processes and performance indicators will provide evidence for, and drive improvement in the attainment and progress of every learner.

I will provide progress updates to Assembly Members.

The committee also requested an update into teacher education incentives following the publication of the Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers. This is a key time for us to consider all aspects of teacher recruitment, retention and development and the incentives that are in place both to attract and retain quality teachers in Wales. As part of their wider work programme, supporting the implementation of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) reform in Wales, our ITE Expert Forum Chaired by Professor John Furlong will be reviewing aspects of teacher recruitment, retention and development.

I recently received an internal review on the operation of teaching incentives which I have referred to the ITE Expert Forum for consideration. I have agreed that the existing ITE financial incentives scheme will continue in 17/18. The Expert Forum will also review evidence of best practice for alternative routes into teaching, exploring in full their potential to support teacher recruitment and retention.

The new curriculum is now under construction in Wales and we will be rooting professional learning for all in the best practice available, building the future upon professional standards that inspire teachers to work together towards excellence – we need to continue to build our unique offer to attract the best into teaching and make it a life long career.

Yours sincerely



Kirsty Williams AM/AC
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education