Improving School Governance

Strengthening school governance is a priority for Education within the new Corporate Plan, Education Development Plan and Estyn Action Plan.

The main areas of work being progressed are:

1) Reducing the number of governing body vacancies, in particular LA Governor vacancies.

Overall, governor vacancies have reduced from 12% to 9.14% (175 governor positions). Local Authority vacancies have reduced from 9% to 7.95% (31 governor positions). Work is continuing to recruit candidates to fill the Local Authority vacancies and to support schools and the Diocese in appointing to the remaining governor positions.

2) Improving the selection process for LA Governors to ensure quality appointments are made.

A new process and LA governors selection panel was approved by the Constitution Committee in March 2015 and by full Council. The first meeting of the LA Governor Appointment Panel will be held in August and the second in September in preparation for the September Full Council Meeting.

3) Developing approaches to broker opportunities for positions on governing bodies, for leading businesses, sports and cultural organisations in conjunction with Economic Development.

Work is continuing and a number of appointments (eight) have been made to schools, the majority of which are schools in need of greatest improvement.

4) Improving the skills and understanding of governors through a refreshed training programme and bespoke training provision supported by Central South Consortium Challenge Advisers where schools are identified as in need of support.

Refreshed training programme prepared for new academic year and includes the option of on-line training for the four mandatory elements of governor training. The Head of Achievement and Inclusion works closely with the Challenge Advisers to identify where additional support for governance is required. Training and support for governance is then provided for identified schools in a bespoke package. This may involve the identification of training for individual governors or training for the whole governing body which will be provided by the Challenge Adviser team.
5) Adopting and promoting a quality standard to demonstrate good governance in school governing bodies, the Quality Mark Bronze Award, as agreed with Governors Wales and the Cardiff Governors Association.

43 schools have registered for the Quality Mark Bronze Award and 5 have achieved the Award to date. The Quality Mark Bronze Award will eventually be replaced by a self evaluation tool kit to be used by all governing bodies to improve the quality of school governance.

6) Working in partnership with the Central South Consortium to build the capacity of governors to contribute to the development of a self-improving school system.

Twelve consultant governors have been appointed from across the five authorities (4 from Cardiff) and will begin work with the Central South Consortium in the autumn term. The consultant governors will work with the Challenge Adviser to provide support to other governors and governing bodies, usually where weak governance has been identified.

31st July 2015