

REPORT TO: EDUCATION COMMITTEE - 27 JANUARY 2014

REPORT ON: VALIDATED SELF-EVALUATION

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

REPORT NO: 44-2014

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is to inform elected members of the outcome of the recent Validated Self-Evaluation (VSE) activity carried out by a team of HM Inspectors from Education Scotland and to provide the feedback received as part of the VSE process.

2.1.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Education Committee is recommended to note the contents of this report.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

- 4.1 The Education Department invited Education Scotland to work on a validated self-evaluation (VSE) activity as part of its strategy to drive continuous improvement for learners and to ensure it is delivering best value. During the first phase of the VSE in April 2013 it became apparent that a number of staff were due to retire in July 2013 and that a number of new appointments would be made. As a result, it was agreed with the Director of Education that the VSE should continue into September 2013 to enable the new senior officer team to build on the good work undertaken in April. As a result a team of HM Inspectors spent a total of two weeks working with departmental staff to evaluate the quality of its work and produce a report on the impact and outcomes. (Appendix 1)
- 4.2 A core aspect of Education Scotland's mission is to work with others to secure improvements in the education and wellbeing of the people of Scotland. It promotes public accountability for the delivery of high quality education for all learners, and services for children. The traditional inspection model used to evaluate the performance of education departments at council level was referred to as 'The Inspection of Education Authorities' (INEA.)The INEA model was replaced by a more proportionate approach to evaluating and reporting on educational functions with each education department.
- 4.3 Validated self-evaluation (VSE) is not a traditional inspection model. It is a process which aims to support and challenge the work of education authorities to improve the quality of provision and outcomes for learners. To this end, it is led by the education authority and involves a partnership model in which Education Scotland works alongside the authority and applies its knowledge of educational delivery and expertise in evaluation. The purpose of this is to support, extend, challenge and validate an education authority's own self-evaluation and to strengthen outcomes for learners.
- 4.4 The VSE model acknowledges that the responsibility for improving services and outcomes lies with the education authority. It recognises that self-evaluation is increasingly well embedded across the Scottish educational landscape and that high quality self-evaluation can lead to continuous improvement for learners and the achievement of excellence in practice and provision. In summary, VSE seeks to:

- build the capacity of education authorities to evaluate their own performance
- improve the quality of services and outcomes for learners
- promote and develop good practice and best value in education authorities
- provide information to Scottish Ministers and the public on the quality of provision in education authorities
- offer independent evaluation and validation
- contribute to a reduction in external scrutiny at service level where possible, taking account of risk, and provide high quality and robust information for shared risk assessment.

4.5 As part of the VSE process, the team of HM Inspectors focussed on four specific areas identified as key developmental priorities within the education department service plan. These were to evaluate:

- the impact of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities and approaches offered to Early Years practitioners and settings across the public, private and voluntary sectors;
- how well we meet the needs of young people, identified as More Choices More Chances, into positive and sustained destinations;
- the quality and impact of parental engagement in children's learning for pre-school and primary education; and
- the impact on school improvement of the support and challenge provided through the departmental extended review.

4.6 The feedback from the VSE activity was very positive and the published letter and evaluation templates affirmed confidence in the quality and rigour of self-evaluation within the education department. This included the statement that,

“Education Scotland are confident that the quality of Dundee City Council's Education Department's self-evaluation is accurate and robust. The Director of Education set a clear agenda at the beginning of the VSE demonstrating strong leadership and a clear vision.”

Full VSE documentation and theme templates are included for reference within Appendix 1 of this report.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of sustainability, strategic environment assessment, anti-poverty, equality impact assessment and risk management. There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic and Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.

Validated self-evaluation



**Dundee City Council
3 December 2013**

Validated self-evaluation in Dundee City Council: Education Department

Commentary by Education Scotland

Introduction

As part of its strategy to drive continuous improvement for learners and to ensure it is delivering best value, Dundee City Council Education Department, invited Education Scotland to work with them on a validated self-evaluation (VSE) between April and September 2013. During the first phase of the VSE it became apparent that a number of staff were due to retire and that new appointments would be made. As a result, it was agreed with the Director that the VSE should continue into September to enable the new senior officer team to build on the good work undertaken in April. The VSE was conducted as part of the Education Service's planned approach to self-evaluation. Further details on the themes examined through the VSE can be found in the Dundee City Council Education Department's VSE report.

<http://www.dundeecc.gov.uk/education/>

What has the VSE achieved?

Education Scotland are confident that the quality of Dundee City Council's Education Department's self-evaluation is accurate and robust. The Director of Education set a clear agenda at the beginning of the VSE demonstrating strong leadership and a clear vision. During the VSE, officers demonstrated an increasing ability to use evidence more effectively to identify gaps in service delivery, data collection, and performance. Officers used this information to drill down further into their themes to ask more challenging questions and to interrogate the evidence with greater clarity and focus. As a result of the challenge from Education Scotland, the VSE teams identified important areas for improving their self-evaluation. Amongst these was the need to gather more impact and outcome data, to better triangulate evidence to test for reliability and validity. The VSE led officers to achieving a more robust evidence base and as such, to a clearer set of reliable actions for further development.

Looking ahead

The VSE built on the existing enthusiasm and teamwork of the officers involved in the process. During the week, officers were constantly changing their areas for improvement, modifying existing practice in light of the evidence gathered, and looking ahead to how they could improve their approaches to self-evaluation. Self-evaluation statements were updated during April to September, each providing an increasing level of precision and refinement, leading to a clearer set of priorities. It is planned to build on this momentum with the new management team and to further develop self-evaluation skills and processes across the Education Department and Council. Indeed, this has already been undertaken and significant progress has been made in, for example, refining the School Review process. As a result of the work undertaken by Education Scotland in partnership with Dundee City Council's Education Department, the authority is now better placed to take forward their improvement plans and to build further capacity in officers and staff in self-evaluation for improvement. Looking ahead, senior officers are keen to develop creative approaches to evidence gathering so that they can plan for the future and learn from what they know about themselves now, to what they need to know about themselves in the future. It is planned that such transformational thinking will lead to a more holistic and integrated assessment of impact and outcomes for children, families and communities.

Next steps

As a result of the VSE, Dundee City Council has planned a number of improvements which are detailed in the authority's VSE report. The Council will continue to work in partnership with the Area Lead Officer and other Education Scotland staff to further develop the actions identified across each of the themes. This work will be incorporated into the Local Partnership Agreement between Education Scotland and the Dundee City Council Education Department.

Dr Laura-Ann Currie
HMI
Education Scotland

Dundee City Council: Education Department

Validated Self Evaluation Template

Theme: Early Years' CPD and Training

Task: To evaluate the impact of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities and approaches offered to Early Years practitioners and settings across the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Background: Dundee City Council's Education Department operates 29 pre-five settings across Dundee comprised of 8 stand alone nursery schools, 20 nursery classes or Early Years Centres located in Primary schools and a birth-to-2 provision in Menzieshill High School which provides childcare to school-aged parents, allowing them to continue with their secondary education studies.

In addition to this, the Education Department commissions places for children aged 3-5 years from 21 private nurseries and one voluntary sector provider. The Department also supports 170 active child minders together with a range of early years' services delivered by other agencies and groups from Health or the voluntary sector. To ensure the highest possible quality of service delivery and care and early learning experiences for children the Education Department also provides CPD and training to voluntary and private sector personnel.

The delivery and support of early years' services together with appropriate CPD is influenced by national guidance such as *The Early Years Framework (EYF)* policy document, the *Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)* agenda and, more recently, the *Early Years Collaborative (EYC)* initiative. Our locally produced guidance, *Learning Together in Dundee, Early Years - Birth to Six Years* underpins recommended practice and service delivery across the city. This guidance was published in 2009, has been made available to all who work with young children in the public, private and voluntary sectors and is supported by related in-service training to all these sectors.

What were we evaluating? 3 Strands:

- (a) **Responsive Planning at the Early Level of Curriculum for Excellence**
- (b) **Pre-registration training for prospective registered Child Minders**
- (c) **Access to training for private and voluntary sector partners**

<u>What is working well?</u>				
The very good mutually respectful and effective relationships between education staff and private nurseries in partnership with DCC Education Department.				
The wide range and very good quality of early years' services currently supported and guided by Education department staff which will provide a firm foundation on which to take forward the work of the recently formed Dundee Early Years Collaborative.				
The very good effectiveness and approaches of Early Years Team members.				
The positive culture and relationships which foster and support Quality Assurance across sectors. Participants in all activities, regardless of role or setting displayed an openness and confidence attesting to an ethos of mutual respect and of feeling valued. All demonstrated good abilities at reflecting on practice and on children's learning.				
The well planned interactive approaches which allow for systematic and effective collaborative working practices across agencies and sectors.				
<u>What do we have to do next?</u>				
<u>Aspect for development</u>	<u>What do we have to do? (what do we actually have to develop / revisit / improve?)</u>	<u>What are the resource implications? (human / practical / financial)</u>	<u>Who will take this forward? (who will take the lead / what is the timescale?)</u>	<u>What will improvement look like? (how will we measure this?)</u>
Build on effective Quality Assurance (QA) approaches to ensure all stakeholders aspire to the highest standards. The shift from <i>good</i> to <i>great</i> .	Introduce planned and timetabled focus groups and telephone sampling into QA calendars to gather more robust self-evaluation information.	No additional cost financially. Existing staff implement and support.	Early Years QIO (lead) EY team members Take stock and review progress in February 2014	Information gathered indicates improved learning and care experiences for children. Data systems effectively and efficiently record QA feedback and progress. Analysis of data

	<p>Introduce and develop data gathering systems.</p> <p>Analyse gathered data to determine future improvement needs.</p>			<p>identifies future training/CPD needs, gaps.</p> <p>Systems indicate that quality CLPL is embedded in both Early Years and the wider Education sector.</p>
<p>Offer more tiers of training to allow experienced staff to engage in deeper learning and improved skills development.</p>	<p>Plan and write course content to meet differentiated needs of staff.</p> <p>Seek (and audit) external training providers who can deliver an appropriate range of CPD to meet the diverse needs of the workforce.</p>	<p>Plan and write course content which addresses a range of abilities and experience.</p> <p>Training Coordinator with support from the Workforce Development Group to seek training which meets a range of skills and experience.</p> <p>Costs for external trainers.</p> <p>Time for writing, seeking and auditing materials and course content.</p>	<p>Early Years QIO (lead)</p> <p>EY team members</p> <p>EYCC Training Coordinator</p> <p>Workforce Development Group members</p> <p>Take stock and review progress in February 2014</p>	<p>Staff across sectors and at various levels of responsibility attend CPD that more appropriately differentiates and meets their CLPL needs.</p> <p>Children engage on a daily basis with well informed and skilled adults.</p> <p>Data systems are in place to effectively and efficiently record QA feedback.</p> <p>Data Analysis identifies future training/CPD needs and gaps.</p> <p>QA systems determine that high quality CPD is embedded in Early Years - and in the wider Education sector.</p>
<p>More effectively engage with regulators to ensure the appropriateness of Quality Assurance processes, procedures and CDP content.</p>	<p>Make contact more regularly with regulators to facilitate shared understanding, vision and values.</p>	<p>No financial implications</p> <p>Efficient time and planning arrangements</p>	<p>Educ. Manager, EY (lead)</p> <p>EY QIO</p> <p>EY Team members</p> <p>Review within 12 months</p>	<p>Parents are confident that their children receive high quality early learning and care in line with recommended practice and local and national guidance.</p>

Dundee City Council: Education Department

Validated Self Evaluation Template

Theme: To evaluate how well we meet the needs of young people, identified as MCMC, into positive and sustained destinations.

Background: Young people face significant challenges when they leave school one of which is attaining a positive destination. This challenge becomes even more significant when young people are vulnerable or have been identified as MCMC. Opportunities for All builds on and adds impetus to 16+ Learning opportunities and commits to supporting youth employment by offering a place in learning or training to every 16-19 year old in Scotland who is not currently in employment, education or training. Opportunities for All partners work with schools in ensuring that there is early identification and tracking of those young people at risk of not progressing to a positive destination. Data resulting from the tracking process is then used to allow specific interventions to take place.

Partnership working between the Education Department, schools, 16+ Learning Choices, SDS and other partners provides the opportunity for early identification and tracking to ensure that support is provided for those young people most likely not to attain a positive destination. Schools are supporting young people by ensuring skills for learning life and work are becoming more explicit throughout the curriculum and there are increasing opportunities for young people to learn through a range of providers, including college, partner agencies and Community Learning and Development.

What were we evaluating?

- the impact of the support young provided to young people identified as MCMC into positive destinations;
- the impact of partnership working to support post school transitions for young people identified as MCMC.

<u>What is working well?</u>				
Enthusiastic, reflective and committed practitioners were in evidence across all partner agencies. There was an obvious passion amongst those involved in the VSE to ensure that best efforts were in place to provide the appropriate and relevant support to the young people.				
Strength of partnership working was evident. Schools know their partners and work closely with them. There is a shared understanding of services and roles.				
There is a strong and successful focus on identifying, tracking and supporting young people from S4 onwards into positive destinations. This is jointly undertaken by Skills Development Scotland and the Opportunities for All team in conjunction with school staff.				
The transition from, in particular, the offsite provision to Dundee College (Pace) or to Helm (Pathways). Young people, in the main, engage well with the partner providers and are receptive to the support that they provide.				
Individuals and individual parts of the system are working well.				
<u>What do we have to do next?</u>				
<u>Aspect for development</u>	<u>What do we have to do? (what do we actually have to develop / revisit / improve?)</u>	<u>What are the resource implications? (human / practical / financial)</u>	<u>Who will take this forward? (who will take the lead / what is the timescale?)</u>	<u>What will improvement look like? (how will we measure this?)</u>
Develop a shared vision to ensure a consistency of approach to Opportunities for All.	Development of a process map to ensure all partner agencies are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities and where and how these link to each others activities. This will provide shared planning opportunities	One or two nominated senior staff from secondary schools, QIO (or a seconded Opportunities for All Staff Tutor) and partner representation.	Education will take the lead responsibility over the course of academic session 2013/2014.	All partners will be aware of their roles and responsibilities and therefore improved, coherent support for the most vulnerable young people

Strengthen aspects of schools' responsibility to deliver an appropriate curriculum by ensuring that skills development is a key aspect.	Develop a skills strategy which can be easily adopted by teaching staff to ensure that the curriculum is relevant to local employment opportunities.	A DHT, a guidance teacher employer, engagement officer, QIO (or a seconded Opportunities for All Staff Tutor) and, if possible, an employer representative. Provision of CPD to support the strategy.	QIO will lead on this over academic session 2013/2014 for the development of the strategy. Employer Engagement Officer will develop and deliver the CPD programme over academic session 2014/2015.	All young people will be aware of the skills that they require to learn, to seek for and to sustain employment.
Earlier intervention at the P7/S1 transition stage.	Research the use made by schools of the client tracking system and the actions, if any, which result from its use.	Use of the information from CTS to ensure that vulnerable young people are provided with the most appropriate curriculum and other elements of support. QIO (or a seconded opportunity for a Staff Tutor). Partner agency commitment.	QIO, HT/DHT and appropriate partners.	Appropriate and targeted support at an earlier stage will mean that young people are better placed to enter a positive destination post 16. All of the above could link into either the extended review or the annual review process.
<u>Aspect for development</u>	<u>What do we have to do? (what do we actually have to develop / revisit / improve?)</u>	<u>What are the resource implications? (human / practical / financial)</u>	<u>Who will take this forward? (who will take the lead / what is the timescale?)</u>	<u>What will improvement look like? (how will we measure this?)</u>
Develop joint CPD events for all partners.	A scoping exercise in conjunction with CLD, SDS, Dundee College, Opportunities for All etc. to ascertain the type of CPD which would be most beneficial to all partner agencies.	QIO (or a seconded Opportunities for All Staff Tutor), partner agency involvement and the cost of hosting the events.	This would be a joint venture, coordinated by the Education Department, with as much partnership involvement as possible. Possibly this could link to the Local Learning partnership development and roll out. An initial event in the summer term 2013/2014 then followed up by a series of local events either cluster or LLP based.	This will link to the first aspect for Development and ensure a common understanding of roles and responsibilities. It will also ensure a consistency of approach to supporting the most vulnerable young people.

Dundee City Council: Education Department

Validated Self Evaluation Template

Theme: PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT IN CHILDREN'S LEARNING (PRE-SCHOOL AND PRIMARY)

Background: There have been appropriate policies and strategies in place for many years and much good work has been done, by a number of agencies and Councils Departments, to empower and support parents in Dundee. Recently, in line with a shift in national focus, the emphasis has been on 'Getting it Right' in Early Years. The focus is now on strengthening the strategic direction and developing a coherent and co-ordinated approach which supports parents to be effectively involved in their children's learning. The recently formed, Early Years Collaborative provides a context for much of this work.

The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 covers three broad levels of engagement with parents. Key areas covered by the Act are: Learning at home, Home/School Partnership, Parental Representation. In order to comply with the Act and taking account of national priorities such as GIRFEC and The National Parenting Strategy, specific actions are outlined in the current Education Service Plan.

Education Service Plan 2012 -2017

Intermediate Outcome 4a: Ensure Effective and Efficient Partnership Working

Projects:

- i continue to review and improve parental engagement;
- ii review and extend the opportunities for pupils' views and opinions to be heard; and
- iii continue to support the implementation of effective integrated working across agencies and with parents.

Lead Officers include: Director of Education, Head of Service, Education Managers, Quality Improvement Officers, Parental Involvement Officer, Development Officers, Family Information Service Co-ordinator, Advice, Information & Support Manager. Family Support Officers are to be appointed by 1 August 2013. The lead Education Group is the IPAA Communication and Consultation Group.

At a time of efficiency savings, it is important to be reassured that all resources are being deployed effectively and are having an impact as well as demonstrating value for money. The Validated Self-Evaluation (VSE) process will focus on the information that parents receive and how this supports them to participate in their children's learning. For the purposes of this exercise the following specific areas will be scrutinised to assess how effectively parents are supported to be involved in their children's learning.

What were we evaluating?

- How information shared with parents has helped them to understand their important role in supporting children's learning.
- Which kinds of shared information have impacted most on parental engagement and on children's learning

What is working well?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental engagement and involvement as a priority for Education Department. • Commitment of SMT to support parents to support their children's learning at all levels from pre-birth to adult learning. • Evidence of resource realignment to support this priority egg the enhancement of core resource through the appointment of Family Support Workers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of Early Years Collaborative, ICS, Lochee Pathfinder, Being a Parent in Dundee (BAPID) etc. • Improved mapping of interventions which has resulted in a decrease in duplication and clear identification of gaps in services to parents

- Strong evidence of a wide range of high quality engagement activities with positive impact at project/operational level.
- A well regarded Parental Engagement Team and committed and dedicated staff at all levels
- An ethos of learning from each other and the development of learning communities around Parental Involvement. Sharing practice through web-site, showcases and meetings
- Data from projects and other operational work being used well to inform future work
- Emphasis on the involvement of parents in children's learning rather than only pastoral involvement
- Engagement activities designed to meet the needs of specific groups of people and support many vulnerable families
- Partnership working at project level within the Education Department is good. Interventions such as DEPS input to parents across the city have been very positively received and parents involved certainly feel more confident and better informed. They tell others and so the engagement is strengthened. They can build upon this confidence and increased knowledge about child development to be further engaged in their children's learning. One of the key principles behind DEPS input is that the parents are given the opportunity to take responsibility for these events and to shape the way forward in their school.
- Beginnings of Community Learning Partnerships show promise
- High levels of satisfaction expressed by parents through Focus Groups, surveys and low numbers of complaints
- Parents and pupils feel empowered through opportunities to work together, being consulted and informed

What do we have to do next?

Aspect for development	What do we have to do? (what do we actually have to develop / revisit / improve?)	What are the resource implications? (human / practical / financial)	Who will take this forward? (who will take the lead / what is the timescale?)	What will improvement look like? (how will we measure this?)
Improve linkage between priorities, strategic plans and funding streams at all levels	High level discussions with senior officers and elected members to identify how the National Agenda can be translated into unambiguous messages which lead to changed behaviours. Consider issues of deprivation, poverty etc. and triangulate data and evidence of impact of current policies Clarify the place of BAPID within the strategic plans Ensure that data gathered at operational level informs discussions around Single Outcome Agreements	No additional cost financially Existing staff to engage in discussion	Senior Officers Heads of Service A revised and clear articulation of strategies and plans to be outlined to all staff November 2013	Clear linkage of plans at all levels within Council and with partners. Linkage described in a joint vision. A balance between universal and targeted support and appropriate allocation of resources Employee Survey, Focus Groups/ surveys of parents and staff to check consistency of understanding
What do we have to do next?				
Aspect for development	What do we have to do? (what do we actually have to develop / revisit / improve?)	What are the resource implications? (human / practical / financial)	Who will take this forward? (who will take the lead / what is the timescale?)	What will improvement look like? (how will we measure this?)

Partnership working towards shared outcomes across and beyond the Council	Develop a shared understanding of the breadth of Parental Involvement with partners outwith the Council through joint CLPL HT Seminar to explore a shared understanding of key aspects of Parental Involvement such as enablement and empowerment Build on and share good practice	With parents, plan a seminar or series of workshops to explore what creates the most effective parental engagement. PIO to lead. Minimal costs to run workshops.	Heads of Service, Managers, QIOs, PIO Early Years Collaborative (EYC) Parents are keen to be involved in seminars and other engagement activities to explore how they can be empowered to support their children's learning Review May 2014	Strengthened partnership working based on a common understanding of key aspects of Parental Involvement Improved consistency of expectations and outcomes
	Use data to clearly define specific groups of parents with whom to work and intended outcomes for each intervention stage of the developments	No financial implications	Heads of Service, Managers, QIOs, PIO Information Analysis Officer Education Department and Partner staff at operational level.	A wide range of groups of parents having specific needs met through targeted work which is based on agreed outcomes.
What do we have to do next?				
Aspect for development	What do we have to do? (what do we actually have to develop / revisit / improve?)	What are the resource implications? (human / practical / financial)	Who will take this forward? (who will take the lead / what is the timescale?)	What will improvement look like? (how will we measure this?)
Selection, use and analysis of data in ways which inform policy and lead to improvement	Ensure that all plan the ways in which work will be evaluated at an early Through CLPL, develop a shared understanding of the range of evidence sources and data which can contribute to improvement Increase use of data which may be held by partners. Consider the use of evaluation and improvement methodologies as used in the EYC and VSE	No financial implications Use Review and Planning days to undertake some of this work	Information Analysis Officer, QIOs BAPID group which has planned to develop a toolkit to measure outcomes and give a richer set of data than is currently available Heads of Service QIOs Partners Elected members Senior Officers All staff	Focus groups, surveys Consistent and coherent policies across and beyond the Council which inform work which can be measured in terms of impact and outcomes. Workstreams informed by careful analysis of data and integrated evaluation. All projects will be clear from the outset how the impact will be measured. Data held by partners will be taken into account in this analysis
What do we have to do next?				

Aspect for development	What do we have to do? (what do we actually have to develop / revisit / improve?)	What are the resource implications? (human / practical / financial)	Who will take this forward? (who will take the lead / what is the timescale?)	What will improvement look like? (how will we measure this?)
	<p>Use carefully selected qualitative and quantitative evidence to demonstrate added value and sustainability in a climate of efficiency savings</p> <p>Make the Plan Do Review cycle more robust.</p>		Review May 2014	<p>Effective tracking of children and young people to inform early intervention at all stages.(links with MCMC theme)</p> <p>Measured and tracked through department improvement plans</p>

Dundee City Council: Education Department

Validated Self Evaluation Template

Theme: The impact on school improvement of support and challenge through the extended review incorporating evaluation of processes.

Background: Given the demands and expectations of the new curriculum and given the authority's statutory duty to secure continuous improvement at a time of curriculum change, there continues to be a need to achieve greater consistency and build greater capacity in relation to the management of self-evaluation and 'raising standards' activities across Dundee schools.

An Outcome of the Education Service Plan 2012-17 is to ensure: Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local need. The Intermediate Outcome identifies the need to revise and implement the authority's quality improvement strategy. One of the main Projects identified is the implementation of revised school review procedures.

An initial task during July/August 2012 was to evaluate current processes. The strategy had been in place for some years and was no longer current to local and national priorities.

The review showed there was a need to take a dedicated look at the extended review process. A small, focussed team was established. Exemplification of the framework in a number of establishments was analysed; this highlighted areas for improvement. This necessitated a broader approach to the information gathered and a more structured approach to the process itself. The HR department was consulted and a close liaison was formed to produce the relevant parts of the paperwork. The Framework for School Improvement in Dundee was revised and implemented from August 2012.

The revised strategy has been implemented and, through initial feedback, it has become apparent that there are areas which could be improved. To this end it is important that the revised Framework for School Improvement is evaluated and the information gathered is used to inform future policy development and implementation.

What are we doing?

Extended Reviews start with each establishment's own self-evaluation. These intensive review exercises are designed to complement not replace the schedule of formal quality improvement visits made by the authority's Quality Improvement Officers.

Extended School Reviews are carried out with the direct involvement of staff of the school being reviewed in planning and conducting all associated work. The review team, which always includes a peer head, looks for evidence on 5 key quality indicators: improvements in performance, learners' experiences, meeting learning needs, the curriculum and improvements through self evaluation and leadership of improvement and change taking cognisance of the Increased Expectations Advice Note from Education Scotland.

The review team comprises of an Education Manager, Quality Improvement Officers and a Peer Head Teacher. While the Head Teacher of the school is not a member of the review team, he/she is crucially involved in discussions to agree the scope of the review exercise and, following the conclusion of the review, is also involved in discussions to agree the terms of the draft review report as well as individual reports prepared in the light of observation visits to the classes of individual teachers which may be shared with those teachers.

The establishment provides a range of evidence to support its self-evaluation. This can include, amongst other pieces of evidence, pupils' work, forward plans, and minutes of staff meetings either in hard copy or on DVD. The focus groups provide robust information on the performance of the establishment and this is used to support and challenge the establishment's self evaluation. The team studies the evidence provided by the establishment, makes classroom visits, meets with focus groups and evaluates the same quality indicators.

Information and evidence gathered in the course of the review is used to assist team members to answer the following key questions which are at the heart of inspection activity undertaken by Education Scotland (HMI) during school inspection:

- how well do young people learn and achieve?
- how well does the school help young people to learn?
- how well does the school improve the quality of their work?

At the culmination of the review there is an in depth and robust discussion of individual findings which are moderated against professional judgements before a report is produced which includes strengths and areas for improvement. This now follows the style of Education Scotland's (HMI) RIF. This is shared directly with SMT who cascade the information to staff and provide insights into the findings to parents through a range of communication channels. The establishment will subsequently construct a set of action plans to address areas for further development. These are monitored through quality improvement visits and the establishment's self-evaluation processes.

Establishments which have had an extended review, and have been subsequently inspected by Education Scotland (HMI), commented positively on the impact of the review in preparing for inspection. There was a strong correlation between the establishment's self evaluation and the evaluation provided by the review team. The review serves the purpose of supporting the establishment's drive for improvement and also to confirm for them where their key strengths lie.

What were we evaluating?

Overarching purpose of this review is to evaluate progress and highlight accountability at all levels in utilising the revised extended review process.

<u>What is working well?</u>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The review process has been adapted to fit the needs of all the participants ensuring a more efficient process. • Schools are encouraged to undertake rigorous and focussed self-evaluation for the review, followed by regular and informed updating of evidence. This has helped to develop a more structured and rigorous approach to self evaluation. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools have found it a supportive but challenging process. In the majority of schools it has proved to be an affirmation of good practice. The review has challenged complacency and raised awareness of what is needed to move the school forward. • The position of peer head teacher has had a positive impact on personal development and practice. Support networks have been developed and head teachers are sharing good practice across their clusters. In school peer buddying is being taken forward in one cluster. 				
<u>What do we have to do next?</u>				
<u>Aspect for development</u>	<u>What do we have to do? (what do we actually have to develop / revisit / improve?)</u>	<u>What are the resource implications? (human / practical / financial)</u>	<u>Who will take this forward? (who will take the lead / what is the timescale?)</u>	<u>What will improvement look like? (how will we measure this?)</u>
Measurable agreed key targets for improvement from the review, with an indication of how these will be evaluated. These would be distinct from the aspects for development in the report and would represent a	Authority format of action plans should be unified and shared as part of SIP– tasks on line amended to reflect agreed Action Points with specific evaluation dates and agreed criteria for 'disengaging'. QIO to plan focussed visits to evaluate	SLWG established to undertake task	Morag Cooney/Tracey Stewart Initiate October 2013 Ongoing	Improvement will be demonstrated through increased accountability through easily measured and evaluated targets.

distillation of key aspects to improve the school.	identified action points – follow up and dated – planned improvements to be targeted and measurable. QIOs to complete dated and detailed record of follow up visit...look at ways of incorporating this within on line process.			
Officers should look across the review reports citywide for key messages of issues common to the authority and take subsequent action to address these.	Identify specific areas for support and analyse impact on school improvement with a solution focussed approach.	QIO Time	Initiate October 2013 QIO Teams Ongoing	This will impact positively on the pace of improvement across all sectors as support will be targeted.
Unannounced visits to evaluate progress on specific areas targeted for action at classroom level to be undertaken e.g. Learning Intentions and Success Criteria.	QIO to undertake classroom visits.	QIO time.	QIO Team Ongoing	Impact of improvement in areas highlighted in actioned targets.
Feedback and report to be formalised.	EA to deliver feedback. The summary report to be issued by the Director with a covering letter sporting DCC logo.	EA time.	Education Authority	Raised profile of significance of areas for development.
CLPL	-Training in taking forward the review process: logistics and evaluation -CPD for peer reviewers – expanded peer team to include DHTs/PTs – peer members of team to be given specific remit – expand role of peer head teacher to attainment review. -Feedback training to be given to EA staff and SMT.	SLWG/QIO time	Morag Cooney/Tracey Stewart QIO Team Initiate October 2013 Ongoing	-Improved efficiency in undertaking the review process and evaluation of such. -peer reviewers more well versed in the process and the task at hand. -personal development for peer reviewers will be an integral part of the process. -feedback will be focussed and effective
To develop a more systematic approach to including partners in the process and the further involvement of school staff in the	Partners to be part of review team. DHTs and PTs to be more fully involved in discussions and classroom	Secondary and primary Review teams	QIO Team Initiate October 2013 Ongoing	The review process will be a more holistic approach

process.	evaluations.			
Schools to take increased responsibility in evaluating their setting.	School to provide a pre review paper (reflecting HMle's requirement) highlighting high level messages.	School SMT	QIO Teams Initiate October 2013 Ongoing	This will provide a more focussed scoping meeting with a more positive impact across the school.
Parents to be more widely informed both prior to and after the review.	Introductory leaflets to be formatted and issued to all parents. Questionnaires in the style of Education Scotland (HMle) to be issued to all parents. A more detailed extract of feedback to be issued to parents.	School Staff	SLWG School Staff Initiate October 2013 Ongoing	Increase in parental participation.