

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATION ADVISERS

UPDATE: THE NEW ROLE AND REMIT OF EDUCATION SCOTLAND

PAPER BY EDUCATION SCOTLAND

Introduction

'Next Steps'

1. The [Education Governance – Next Steps](#) paper was published in June 2017 setting out the Scottish Government's vision for education, including a new, significantly enhanced, role and purpose for Education Scotland:

“Education Scotland will have a strengthened inspection and improvement function. Inspection will be a crucial tool that supports the system-wide goal to continuously improve. Education Scotland will have a renewed focus on professional learning and leadership, providing clarity and coherence to the national landscape. Delivery via the new Regional Improvement Collaboratives will mean that hands on advice, support and guidance can flow directly to schools to support improvement.”

Evolving the Education Scotland offering

2. The publication of 'Next Steps' in June 2017 coincided with announcements on temporary changes in the leadership team at Education Scotland. As new Interim Chief Executive and Interim Chief Inspector of Education respectively, Karen Reid and Graeme Logan worked with colleagues at all levels to start the transition planning process.

3. Those plans have been developed further following the appointment of Gayle Gorman as Chief Inspector of Education/Chief Executive in December 2017. The organisation is moving forward with a clear focus and vision of building an organisation that is *'for Scotland's learners, with Scotland's educators'*.

4. We are currently working on our new Strategic Plan for the period 2018-2021, which will detail how we fulfil our newly defined role, for example through:

- A strong focus on learning, teaching and leadership
- National collaborative professional learning networks
- Getting it Right for Every Child
- Best use of high quality evidence
- Effective partnerships

5. The plan will take account of a wide range of education policies and strategies including: Curriculum for Excellence; the national Digital Learning and Teaching

Strategy; expansion of early learning and childcare; STEM Strategy; and Developing the Young Workforce.

6. The new Strategic Plan will set out how Education Scotland will work to support and drive improvement in education. Much of our work will be delivered through the newly created Regional Improvement Collaboratives (RICs) and we will deploy most of our education staff to work alongside leaders and other frontline practitioners through the RICs, motivating change and providing specialist support. We are moving to a regional delivery model, with a collective and collaborative approach at national, regional and local levels.

7. Full-time Regional Advisors have been appointed for each of the six RICs. These Advisors are working alongside Regional Improvement Leads to develop planning, and to broker support. They are coordinating an early support offer and will play a central role in leading regional support teams going forward.

8. Each RIC submitted a phase one plan in January 2018. Each of these has been reviewed by the Chief Inspector. Phase two plans are due to be submitted in September 2018. In the interim, the Chief Inspector is meeting with each of the Regional Improvement Leads to discuss the review of phase one plans and clarify expected next steps/support. This will also be an opportunity to emphasise the requirement for each RIC to develop a detailed workforce plan.

9. In addition, our Regional Advisors will broker any short term support required from the agency up until phase 2 plans are submitted in September 2018, and will provide ongoing support and challenge to Regional Improvement Leads as they take forward the next stage of their planning.

10. Staff across Education Scotland are currently developing a generic offer of support for the RICs. The offer includes elements from a broad range of our current provision. This offer will develop and evolve over time as new staff are recruited and the organisation has increased capacity to deliver its enhanced role and remit.

11. In addition to the generic offer of support, Regional Advisors are working in close partnership with Regional Improvement Leads to ensure that Education Scotland provides bespoke areas of support, for example around capacity building for improvement and effective use of data.

12. 'Next Steps' states that 'inspection will be a crucial tool that supports the system-wide goal to continuously improve'. In autumn 2017 we announced a significant increase of over 30% in school inspection, moving from 180 to 250 schools per year, initially from the 2018/19 academic year.

13. We have published a new [Standards and Evaluation Framework](#) which sets out the way in which inspection supports improvement; our approaches to inspection and more detail about the focus and frequency of school inspections.

14. Education Scotland is committed to ensuring approaches to inspection focus on the quality of learning that all children and young people experience. Last year, Education Scotland published findings from inspection and review in the ['Quality and](#)

[Improvement in Scottish Education 2012-2016 report](#). This report included key aspects of education provision and practice which should be prioritised for improvement across many or all of Scotland's education sectors. The report highlighted that the quality of learning and teaching was too variable.

15. Since August 2016 HM Inspectors have evaluated a new quality indicator 'Learning, Teaching and Assessment' as part of a sample of inspection which contributes evidence to the National Improvement Framework evidence report. We will continue to ensure our approaches to inspection focus on childrens and young people's learning experiences within and beyond the classroom; their achievements; and how a school ensures these are of the highest quality.

16. Education Scotland has recently launched 'How Good is OUR school?'¹- a framework to support children and young people's participation in their learning and school life. It was developed in partnership with stakeholders and children and young people themselves and is designed as a tool to support pupil participation and engagement.

17. In addition, work is underway to deliver a young inspector's programme, involving children and young people in inspection. This programme is being co-designed with young people and the development of a pilot is due to be delivered in August.

18. The additional recruitment of Associate Assessors has taken place and continues to support self-evaluation and engagement from and with schools. Planning is underway for the recruitment of depute headteachers/ leaders to extend and widen those involved in inspection.

19. Joint planning with the Care Inspectorate on a revised joint Early Years Inspection framework is nearing completion.

20. The Scottish approach to bringing about improvement is based on providers evaluating their own work and then taking action to plan for any necessary improvements. Education Scotland staff use evidence, gathered through a wide range of evaluative activity and partnership working to promote improvement at a local and national level.

21. Education Scotland staff provide Scottish Ministers and their officials with evidence-based advice to help inform policy development and encourage improvement throughout the Scottish education system. Through observing learning, teaching and assessment, staff are very well-informed to comment on the effectiveness of implementation of national policy and programmes, such as the focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap.

22. 'Next Steps' states that the improved regional focus for Education Scotland's curriculum support will mean that we are best placed to co-ordinate at national level the hands-on professional learning and leadership development for practitioners through improvements that work in local circumstances.

¹ 'How Good is OUR School' document to be published on Wednesday 25 April 2018

23. A scoping exercise gathering the views of teachers and stakeholders to better define professional learning at a national level and help identify priorities for curriculum support at a local level is now complete. This work will contribute to the development of agreed national guidance on professional learning as part of the work of the Strategic Board of Teacher Education and will also help inform Education Scotland's next steps in our leadership of professional learning.

24. The 'Next Steps' announcement also stated that the roles and functions of the Scottish College for Education Leadership (SCEL) would transfer to Education Scotland. This transfer is now complete and the team, as part of Education Scotland, are taking forward an enhanced leadership development offering and extending the work to encompass wider professional learning across Scotland.

25. SCEL's existing suite of leadership programmes have been transferred and work is already underway to enhance this offer, for example through the extension of the Excellence in Headship programme and the launch of Leading Systems Change, a programme developed in partnership with the Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES) to support the development of those in system leadership roles.

26. The SCEL team are leading on Education Scotland's own professional learning strategy, staff engagement and induction programmes as part of their new role.

Transforming Education Scotland

27. The focus on supporting the new RICs will involve significant changes to the way we organise our work, how we deploy our people and the systems and processes that support our work.

28. A new business delivery model is in place based on our current commitments, including 250 school inspections and a ministerial commitment to have a named attainment advisor for each local authority area.

29. Reflecting that enhanced remit, it has been agreed that Education Scotland recruit for a significant increase in staff. A major recruitment campaign is now underway for curriculum specialists, attainment advisors and HM Inspectors of Education, as well as assistant and strategic directors.

30. The organisation's strategic leadership capacity has been strengthened with the temporary appointment of an acting Strategic Director for Governance and Assurance and the arrival of the Chief Executive from SCEL, now Strategic Director for Leadership and Professional Learning.

31. A review of the current programmes of work is complete and exit strategies are being deployed to ensure staff are freed up to re-focus on new priorities.

32. The organisation is about to undergo a restructure to move to clear specific core areas for improvement, and consultation is underway with both professional associations and staff regarding the new structure.

33. The Council is asked to consider:

- **what it sees as the challenges facing Education Scotland in creating a clear, coherent approach to the availability of professional learning across the curriculum and leadership development?**
- **the risks and challenges to Education Scotland in achieving its strengthened improvement function?**

Education Scotland
April 2018

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