



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Response to the Estyn thematic review on leadership and primary school improvement

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.



Digital ISBN 978 1 4734 7187 0
© Crown copyright September 2016
WG28054

Report title: Leadership and primary school improvement

Report details:

The advice was commissioned by the Practitioner Standards and Professional Development Division of the Department for Education and Public Services. The purpose of the report is to exemplify how leadership and the development of leadership capacity in primary schools are fundamental to improving school performance.

The report builds on the findings of *Best practice in leadership development* which was published by Estyn in 2015.

Summary of main findings:

There is scope for all schools to improve, and effective leaders adapt their leadership styles according to the school's position on its improvement journey.

There are common tasks that all schools need to address, regardless of the level of improvement sought. These are identified as:

- Define clearly the **vision and strategic direction** of the school; this vision evolves as the school improves
- Establish and maintain a culture where **improving standards and wellbeing** for all pupils is the main priority
- Make **improving teaching** the key process that contributes to improving standards
- Deliver a **curriculum** that fully **meets the needs of all pupils**
- Sustain a consistent focus on improving pupils' **literacy and numeracy** skills, including higher-order thinking and reasoning skills
- Make sure that **continuous professional development** of staff improves the quality of provision and outcomes for pupils
- Make all staff, especially those in management roles, **accountable** for their areas of work
- Make sure that **self-evaluation** outcomes derive from **first-hand evidence** and are **linked closely to school improvement priorities**
- Provide **governors** with clear, understandable and honest analyses of how well the school is performing and encourage them to challenge underperformance

The report identifies an improvement journey model which is exemplified in detailed case studies of schools at different stages of development and is commended to practitioners, schools, local authorities and consortia as a valuable resource to inform effective leadership development. The report does not contain recommendations.

Publication details:

The report is published on Estyn's website at www.estyn.gov.wales