

Education Matters

1. **Embedding the recommendations of the Donaldson Report into school practice.**

Welsh Government Dysg pre-11 and post-11 eNewsletters since the last meeting have focused primarily on exemplifying good practice with regard to the National Competence Framework and subject development. Updating guidance and improvement in Additional Learning Needs provision has also been the focus for discussion recently.

2. **Consultation for the accreditation of ITE programmes in Wales.** The closing date for this consultation was 4th May and I enclose the report I sent to the Welsh Government for your information.

3. I have regularly sent **Welsh Government Dysg eNewsletters** to the Rev. Hywel Richards.

4. **Estyn's Annual Report**, published on 24 January notes two of the main messages are that **standards of provision remain 'variable'** with the gap between Wales' best and worst performers 'still too wide', and that **teaching is currently the 'weakest aspect'** across most areas of education in Wales. This is all the more stark given the Chief Inspector concurs with most other educational discourse that the standard of **teaching is the 'biggest influence'** on how well children and young people learn. To this end Estyn appears to reinforce the need for the **reforms that the Welsh Government is making to teachers' training and professional development**. Other key observations are: performance is more polarised at secondary school level than primary school level; there is a growing trend of entering pupils early for exams, which can be beneficial in certain subjects but if applied more broadly to larger cohorts of pupils it can be detrimental; the system is not doing enough to enable more able and talented pupils to fulfil their potential. The Chief Inspector also reported that regional consortia do not sufficiently analyse the progress of pupils and tackle variability in standards, particularly between secondary schools.

5. **Free Church Committees**

I had hoped to attend the meeting of the **Free Church Education Committee** (England and Wales) at Westhill College, Birmingham on the 15th and 16th March, 2017, but due to a heavy cold, I was unable to attend.

Although I am unable to attend your meeting today I do hope to attend the next **Free Church Council for Wales** meeting on 14th November.

Vaughan Salisbury 16/05/2017