Quality Management in Education

2

Self-evaluation for quality improvement

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Contents

Foreword

Quality Management in Education (QMIE), published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) in 2000, set out a framework for self-evaluation of the performance of education authorities in Scotland. It also provided the basis for the first cycle of external scrutiny by HMIE, namely the *Inspection of the Education Functions of Local Authorities* (INEA). All 32 Scottish education authorities have now been subject to external scrutiny through the first cycle of INEA inspections.

After a period of consultation involving education authority representatives, partner organisations and other key stakeholders, a revised evaluative framework has been designed as a support pack for authorities. *Quality Management in Education 2* (QMIE2), has been developed in partnership with key agencies and is designed to assist local authorities, together with their main stakeholders, to develop and implement a rigorous and systematic approach to the self-evaluation of their education functions. The emphasis within the publication is very clearly on the importance of the self-evaluation process and the role it plays in driving continuous improvement. Both self-evaluation and inspection processes will be guided by the revised framework. The second cycle of the statutory *Inspections of the Education Functions of Local Authorities* (INEA2) commenced in June 2005 with pilot inspections of two authorities. Inspection will take a more proportionate approach. The scoping of inspections will be intelligence led and risk based. Existing sources of evidence such as HMIE reports on schools and community learning and development (CLD) provision, and reports by other agencies, such as Audit Scotland and the Care Commission, will inform the depth and breadth of inspections.

We have come a long way since the inception of *QMIE* and *INEA*. The cyclical process of self-evaluation is becoming increasingly well embedded across the Scottish educational landscape, as a means of improving performance and raising attainment and achievement for all learners. Indeed, there is now a clear expectation by HMIE that self-evaluation will have been developed and established across all schools, establishments, services and authorities.

A number of self-evaluation and external scrutiny models have been developed in recent years, including those which pertain to schools, community learning and development and child protection. HMIE is acutely aware of the need for these to fit together in a coherent way. This document represents a unified framework which, through self-evaluation and external scrutiny, evaluates performance against a common set of **six high-level questions**. These questions will form the basis for all INEA2 inspections and, importantly, similar questions will form the basis for other inspections which relate to services for children and young people. They are:

- **What key outcomes have we achieved?**

- **How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?**

- **How good is our delivery of education processes?**

- **How good is our management?**

- **How good is our leadership?**

- **What is our capacity for improvement?**

In recent years, many initiatives have been undertaken to improve the quality of the services we provide for children, young people, their families and adult learners. *For Scotland's Children* brought into sharp focus the need to put children and families at the centre of the public service network and, crucially, to provide better integration of services at the point of delivery. These principles must therefore apply also to the complementary processes of self-evaluation and external scrutiny. It is against this backdrop that the HMIE Services for Children Unit embarked upon a consultation exercise in October 2005 on *A Common Approach to Inspecting Services for Children and Young People*, which proposes that a coherent, intelligence-led system for inspection of services for children and young people should be in place by 2008.

The development of this *QMIE2* support pack and of the associated *INEA2* arrangements has been guided by the need for a coherent approach to self-evaluation and inspection. It is also recognised that an increasing number of education authorities and, specifically, former Directors of Education who now have responsibility for a much wider range of services, including Social Services, Community Learning and Development, Sport, Leisure, Arts, Culture, Libraries, Museums and Housing Services, further underlining the need for an integrated approach to monitoring and evaluation.

One further and very important difference in the approach to self-evaluation through *QMIE2*, is the much clearer focus on impact and outcomes. Self-evaluation should lead to the maintenance of high standards, to further improvement in performance, to targeted action on areas needing to be improved and to continuous improvement in the pursuit of excellence. It is only by rigorous examination of impact, and of outcomes for children, young people, their families, adult learners and communities that the effectiveness of the education functions of councils can be thoroughly and comprehensively evaluated.

I commend this support pack to all authorities and their key partners in their pursuit of continuous improvement through the process of self-evaluation.

GRAHAM DONALDSON
HM Senior Chief Inspector

Acknowledgements

Introduction

This publication has been designed to assist local authorities, together with their partner agencies, in developing and implementing a systematic approach to the self-evaluation of their education functions. The publication provides practical assistance and advice on the process of self-evaluation at both strategic and operational levels. It focuses on the role of self-evaluation in developing a council's capacity to drive continuous improvement and, most importantly, to secure and demonstrate measurable improvement in the quality of learners' educational experience. The clear focus is on impact and outcomes.

The self-evaluation support materials are also provided as an online resource. This will assist authorities in amending or augmenting the materials to suit local needs, priorities and circumstances. Authorities' approaches to self-evaluation will build on existing good practice.

The publication also includes the performance and quality indicators, measures and themes which will provide the basis for external inspection of the education functions of councils in this second cycle of statutory inspections. Each authority will be able, through its own self-evaluation arrangements, to gather management information and evidence that enable it to judge the effectiveness of its performance against **six high-level questions**, which will also form the basis for inspections of the education functions of councils by HMIE. These are:

- **What key outcomes have we achieved?**
- **How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?**
- **How good is our delivery of education processes?**
- **How good is our management?**
- **How good is our leadership?**
- **What is our capacity for improvement?**

Each of these high-level questions can be answered by evaluating the quality of education across ten Key Areas. At the centre of this framework are key performance outcomes and the impact provision is having on service users, the community and staff. Inputs, such as leadership and management, support the effectiveness of education processes and together help us to arrive at an overall evaluation of the council's capacity for improvement. The framework is summarised in figure one on the next page.

This guide aims to provide support for authorities in carrying out the process of self-evaluation through which they can:

- achieve the best outcomes for all learners;
- take action to sustain quality, improve services and achieve excellence;
- meet the responsibilities set out in the relevant legislation; and
- meet the requirements of Best Value and Efficient Government.

The use of performance and quality indicators, for both self-evaluation and external inspection, promotes consistency. Although these two processes may differ in terms of purpose and audience, their language and basis should be the same, enabling open and honest dialogue and consistency across different evaluations.

FIGURE 1 – THE OVERARCHING QMIE2 FRAMEWORK
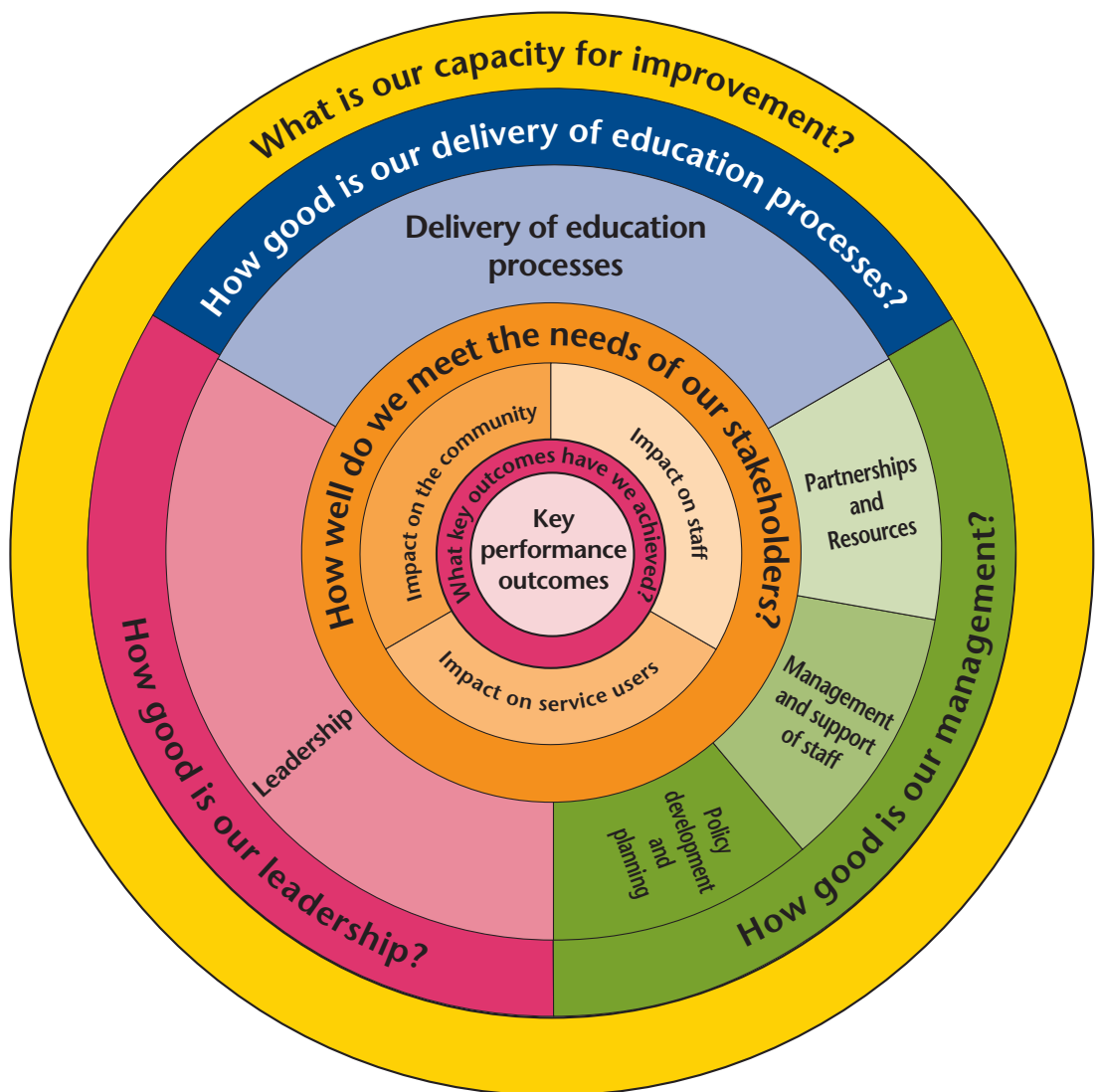
Part 1 – Self–Evaluation in the local authority context

The *Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000* provides a framework for improvement planning that requires education authorities to set out and report on improvement objectives related to national priorities and associated measures of performance. Continuous improvement in education services is central to the work of education authorities. There is a clear expectation by Scottish Ministers that national priorities will be addressed through agreed local education improvement objectives and related targets. To achieve these goals, it is essential for authorities, community services and establishments to work together to achieve these objectives and to raise standards of attainment and achievement within an innovative culture of support and challenge.

The process of self-evaluation should, as a matter of course, generate key management information which results in an evaluation of overall quality and improvement. This evaluation can then be used to create a set of agreed, targeted action points which, in turn, drive further improvement.

The process of self-evaluation is central to the maintenance of quality and the pursuit of excellence. It has become firmly established as the basis on which improvement planning and public reporting on standards and quality are founded. Self-evaluation is complementary to external inspection. Indeed the latter now builds on the results and evidence of self-evaluation across the organisation. Self-evaluation, to be fully effective, is not designed to be a single or periodic event, but rather is an ongoing process which permeates the culture of the council as it strives to maintain and enhance the quality of provision. It is a well-focused means to an end rather than an end in itself.

The concept of self-evaluation is now well embedded across the Scottish educational landscape. In the best examples, it leads to the identification of main strengths and areas in which performance needs to be improved in the pursuit of excellence. The evaluations derived through the self-evaluation process should enable the authority to establish how it is performing against its education improvement objectives, and to plan the next steps in development, in order to maintain quality, secure continuous improvement and aspire to excellence.

There are four main sources of evidence, from which evaluations can be made. These are:

- performance data;
- relevant documentation;
- stakeholders' views and feedback; and
- direct observation of practice.

These sources of evidence are complementary. No single source can meaningfully provide sufficient evidence on its own to enable a reliable or robust evaluation to be made.

The process also involves key stakeholders in full and meaningful discussion of the issues.

Each authority aims to develop a clear picture of its main stakeholders and a protocol for engaging them in ongoing, focused discussion regarding its performance in key areas.

Evidence shows that there is a strong link between effective leadership and management, robust self-evaluation, and development of the capacity for further improvement. To be effective, self-evaluation will:

- be embedded in the culture of the organisation;

- be rigorous, comprehensive, systematic and transparent;

- be focused on identifying strengths and weaknesses or areas for improvement;

- be based on a wide range of evidence;

- involve a wide range of stakeholders;

- lead to targeted action and improvement;

- be recorded and reported; and

- be a continuous, systematic process as opposed to an event.

QMIE, which is now being replaced by QMIE2, has become widely accepted by Scottish councils as a manageable self-evaluation framework. It relates closely to the wide range of functions undertaken and services provided by authorities.

Self-evaluation, inspection and Best Value

The principles of Best Value and a commitment to delivering better public services year on year are now embedded securely within the arrangements for local government in Scotland. The *Local Government in Scotland Act 2003* provides the statutory framework for Best Value and outlines the duties that are placed on local authorities to secure continuous improvement in the performance of their functions. In delivering better public services year on year, local authorities are expected to demonstrate:

- accountability;

- transparency;

- continuous improvement; and

- ownership.

Scottish Ministers have set out a vision of how Best Value should contribute to the corporate goals of local authorities. There is a clear commitment to the highest standards of public probity and responsiveness to the needs of customers, employees and all other stakeholders. In the case of the education and CLD functions of authorities, this responsiveness clearly extends to children, to all other learners and participants and to parents and families. The importance of consultation arrangements, which are open, fair and inclusive, cannot be overstated.

The core Best Value characteristics are now well recognised:

- commitment and leadership;

- responsiveness and consultation;

- sound governance at a strategic, financial and operational level;

- sound management of resources;

- use of review and options appraisal;

- competitiveness, trading and the discharge of authority functions;

- sustainable development;

- equal opportunities arrangements;

- joint working; and

- accountability.

Authorities are expected to operate a framework for planning and budgeting that takes account of national and local priorities and includes detailed and realistic plans linked to available resources. This means making the best use of all public resources including employees, contractual agreements, electronic communications, management information systems, land and property services and sound financial systems. Effective performance management systems, which incorporate the use of external comparisons and benchmarking, play a critical role in maximising the use of public resources.

Best Value also demands a comprehensive approach to service review that is rigorous and robust. It assumes that all services will be subjected routinely to rigorous scrutiny and competition. In the education and CLD services, such benefits would, in addition to maximising the effectiveness and efficiency of resource usage, extend to the achievement of continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and to improving achievement, attainment and other relevant outcome measures for children and adult learners.

Services should be reviewed by using the process of the 4 Cs:

- Challenge

- Consult

- Compare

- Compete.

Each council's approach to Best Value should make a telling contribution to sustainable development in its widest sense, in terms of the social, economic and environmental impact of activities. Essentially, the pursuance of Best Value should lead to the development of a culture which encourages rigorous self-evaluation leading to improving services, and to equality of opportunity through joint/partnership working and corporate service delivery.

For some time now, authorities have been required to have a Performance Management and Planning (PMP) framework which includes Public Performance Reporting (PPR) to account for performance to stakeholders, and to increase public accountability.

The framework of this publication and the indicators themselves deliberately and explicitly reflect the principles, expectations and processes of Best Value. The concept of Best Value is based on the principles of self-evaluation. This publication provides a Best Value self-evaluation structure for education authorities. The Scottish Executive Best Value Task Group advised that self-evaluation should be backed up by external scrutiny. It is against this backdrop that authorities should view the process of external inspection of their education functions under the *Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000* as the formal moderation of their own self-evaluation and the major contribution to Best Value external scrutiny.

The Accounts Commission for Scotland also has a statutory responsibility to secure the audit of local authorities and to achieve the highest standards of financial stewardship and the efficient and effective use of their resources within a Best Value context. The external auditor, once appointed by the Commission, also has separate statutory responsibilities. Their audit framework is based closely on the PMP framework set out by the Best Value Task Group. The PMP audit includes scrutiny of the council's Best Value service reviews and its approach to PPR. HMIE and Audit Scotland (on behalf of the Accounts Commission) have designed and developed a partnership approach to scrutiny, based on the use of the evaluative framework. An inspection of the education functions of councils will cover the requirements of education legislation and the Accounts Commission's statutory external scrutiny of PMP and PPR. Any additional work carried out by the external auditor will feed into the inspection and PMP scrutiny model.

In summary, there will continue to be a comprehensive and increasingly unified structure for self-evaluation and external scrutiny of the education functions of councils.

Part 2 – The framework for self–evaluation explained

2

Structure

The framework for self-evaluation described in this section (and summarised in Figure 2 on page 13) provides a systematic approach for councils to use for self-evaluation. The framework does not assume a particular organisational structure within the council. It can be applied whether responsibility for all education functions is located within a single department or is distributed across a number of different council departments.

The framework has been developed in accordance with the principles of the Excellence Model of the EFQM and can be used in conjunction with other quality models such as IiP, Charter Mark and ISO 9000. See Appendix I. Evidence produced through the use of other models can contribute to overall evaluations.

The framework is based on six high-level questions which can be answered by evaluating the quality of education systematically across ten Key Areas.

- **What key outcomes have we achieved?**

   Key Area 1.   Key performance outcomes

- **How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?**

   Key Area 2.   Impact on service users

   Key Area 3.   Impact on staff

   Key Area 4.   Impact on the community

- **How good is our delivery of education processes?**

   Key Area 5.   Delivery of education processes

- **How good is our management?**

   Key Area 6.   Policy development and planning

   Key Area 7.   Management and support of staff

   Key Area 8.   Partnerships and resources

- **How good is our leadership?**

   Key Area 9.   Leadership

- **What is our capacity for improvement?**

   Key Area 10.   Capacity for improvement

The inputs and processes outlined in Key Areas 5-9 contribute to the outcomes and impact identified in Key Areas 1-4.

Key Areas 1-9 contain indicators and measures, each with themes which focus on specific aspects of the service being evaluated.

Key Area 10 provides guidance which can be used to evaluate the degree of confidence reached by those carrying out the evaluation that the council has the capacity to continue to improve. This evaluation will take into account the evaluations of other Key Areas, its track record in improvements to date and significant aspects of its internal and external contexts.

Using the framework in self-evaluation

Councils can use the framework to provide a systematic structure for self-evaluation.

They can also use the framework as a diagnostic tool. By looking first at the outcomes and impact of the education they provide (Key Areas 1-4), they can identify key issues for further exploration, observation and analysis using the tools provided within Key Areas 5-9.

Finally, councils are encouraged to arrive at an evaluation of their overall capacity for improvement, using the guidance in Key Area 10.

Using the framework in inspection

When engaging in inspection and reporting activities, HMIE will focus on specific Key Areas and indicators selected from the overall framework. Some of these Key Areas and indicators may be used across all or most councils, while others may be used only in particular contexts and will depend on the scope of the inspection. The scope of each inspection will be set using existing evaluations and evidence to determine what is already known about the council. It will build on the self-evaluation already carried out by authorities. The inspection team will always seek to answer the questions:

- What key outcomes has the service achieved?
- How well does it meet the needs of its stakeholders?
- How good is the leadership of the service?
- What is its capacity for improvement?

Indicators drawn from the Key Areas relating to these questions will normally form the core of the set of indicators used during inspection. Beyond this, inspection activities might focus on specific Key Areas and indicators selected from the rest of the framework. The selection will depend on decisions taken during scoping activities and may be determined following evaluation using the core set of indicators.

HMIE will use the guidance in Key Area 10 to arrive at an evaluation of an individual council's overall capacity for improvement.

Answering the high-level questions

What key outcomes have we achieved?

Key Area 1 focuses on the overall performance of a council in relation to its education functions. It provides a structure for councils to use when evaluating their success *as organisations* in delivering **demonstrable** outcomes as outlined in legislation and programmes for development. For example, these could include outcomes in delivering national priorities for education, improvements in attainment in 5-14 levels, Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) results or in achievement through The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, programmes accredited through the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) or Young Quality Scot Awards.

Also important are the improvements made in relation to a council's strategic priorities and distinctive vision, values, aims and targets. These targets will include locally determined targets for social, education, health and care objectives in the context of children's services and other plans. Evidence would appear in reports on strategic and operational plans and as observable improvements. In education, examples could include achievement of targets for participation in adult learning, cultural experiences, residential experiences and outdoor education.

Evidence of demonstrable outcomes includes trends over time and other aggregated data which provide indications of the success of a council in improving the quality of the service it provides, both overall and in comparison with other councils.

Key Area 1 also focuses on the extent to which councils fulfil their statutory duties, meet legislative requirements, follow appropriate codes of practice and are financially secure. Examples include legislation such as the *Race Relations Amendment Act,* the *Disability Discrimination Act* and the *Local Government Scotland Act.* Fulfilling these duties and following relevant codes of practice are key aspects of overall performance.

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

Key Areas 2, 3 and 4 focus on the impact on key groups of stakeholders of the council's delivery of education processes. In other words, these areas look at the benefits which stakeholders derive from the council's education services. Stakeholders include learners who are in direct receipt of the service together with those who support them and who also have a significant interest in the delivery of high-quality services, for example, parents and families.

Stakeholders also include the staff within the council who receive care, support, training and opportunities for involvement in decision-making and career development. Their motivation and satisfaction is of considerable importance if the council is to operate effectively. Evaluations would draw upon the views of staff together with other information, such as rates of absence or retention. The quality of the care and support given to staff can be evaluated by considering evidence of teamworking, rates of involvement in professional development and achievement of qualifications and accreditation of the service as a whole by national schemes like IiP and Scotland's Health at Work (SHAW).

Finally, stakeholders include members of the community. These stakeholders include those from the immediate local community on whose lives and experiences the service has a demonstrable impact. They also include the wider national and international community. The service may make a significant contribution to thinking and practice within a particular area of work. For example, staff may be actively involved in working groups, lead national initiatives and share innovative practice with others. Evidence of the council's impact beyond its immediate context may come from colleagues and peers, from published reports or from other media sources.

When evaluating the impact of the council on the range of stakeholders, consideration should be given to the overall balance of strengths and weaknesses. Those carrying out the evaluation need to be alert to the possibility that in order to bring about improvements in one area of impact, the quality of service delivery in another area could diminish, with an overall detrimental effect on service to stakeholders.

Evaluations of the quality of impact in these Key Areas will take into account direct observation and quantitative data together with evidence of stakeholders' views, in order to arrive at overall judgements of the impact of the service on its key stakeholders. Where evidence from these sources is conflicting or indicates significant weaknesses, evaluators should follow audit trails to identify and address the possible causes, using indicators from other Key Areas in the quality framework. The focus of Key Areas 2, 3 and 4 will be on evaluating the impact on *specific* groups of learners and other stakeholders, and arriving at holistic evaluations of the overall impact on their experiences.

There may be apparent discrepancies between the evaluations given within Key Area 1 and those given within Key Areas 2, 3 or 4. An improving authority may provide considerable evidence of impact on its stakeholders. Significant changes in measurable outcomes such as those included in Key Area 1, however, may take longer to become apparent. For example, young people may indicate through their views and behaviour, that they are learning more effectively. They may show increased motivation and less evidence of disaffection. It may take time, however, for improvements such as these to translate into increases in attainment levels or reductions in offending. In other words, there may be a time lag between improvements in terms of benefits for stakeholders and the overall measurable outcomes of the council. Evaluations of impact may therefore be noticeably more positive than evaluations of outcomes. The opposite may also be true. An organisation such as a high performing school might deliver and maintain very good examination results. However, the experiences of young people may be evaluated less highly. They may not receive sufficient stimulation or challenge or have poor relationships with their peers or with staff. They may have few opportunities for, or little commitment to independent learning. In such circumstances, overall outcomes may be very positive but evaluations of impact on learners less so.

How good is our delivery of education processes?

Key Area 5 focuses on the work of the council in relation to its education functions. This relates to the quality of the curriculum, learning and teaching and relationships with stakeholders. For example, education and health might use the indicators to help them evaluate their processes for working together to reduce rates of teenage pregnancy, and for supporting young women who do become pregnant but wish to continue their education. Key Area 5 provides indicators for evaluating the quality of the authority's services and the extent to which these take account of the need to promote and ensure inclusion and equality.

Key Area 5 also looks at the quality of the council's processes for improving its work and how well it works with its key stakeholders and partners to achieve this. Quality improvement should be built into the core work of the organisation, not be a bolt on. Evidence of the effectiveness of the authority's key processes will be seen in the impact they have on stakeholders and in its overall performance.

How good is our management?

Key Areas 6, 7 and 8 focus on the operational management activities necessary to ensure effective service delivery and to deliver Best Value. These activities include the council's arrangements for developing and updating policies, for involving its stakeholders, for operational planning, for managing staff, finance, information and resources and for developing productive partnerships. Strengths and weaknesses in these areas will normally affect the quality of the key processes delivered (Key Area 5), their impact on stakeholders (Key Areas 2, 3 and 4) and the performance of the council as a whole in relation to its education functions (Key Area 1).

How good is our leadership?

Key Area 9 focuses on the strategic direction of the council in relation to its education functions. It looks at its corporate purpose and the expression and delivery of its aspirations by means of strategic planning with partner agencies and the community.

This Key Area considers the quality of leadership and direction at strategic level, and within teams and organisational units. It looks at the quality of interactions with people within the organisation and with partners in other agencies. It also focuses on the role of leaders in bringing about change and improvement, including innovation and, where necessary, step-change.

Strengths and weaknesses in leadership will reflect the extent to which leaders make a difference to the quality of outcomes achieved by the authority as a whole and to the benefits derived by stakeholders. Evaluation will take account of the impact of leadership on the experiences of learners and other key stakeholders and the extent and quality of the outcomes demonstrated.

The indicators in Key Area 9 should be capable of being applied at more than one level within the organisation. They could, for example, be applied to the work of the chief executive and elected members but also to the work of those who lead specific education departments, services or teams, including project teams and working groups.
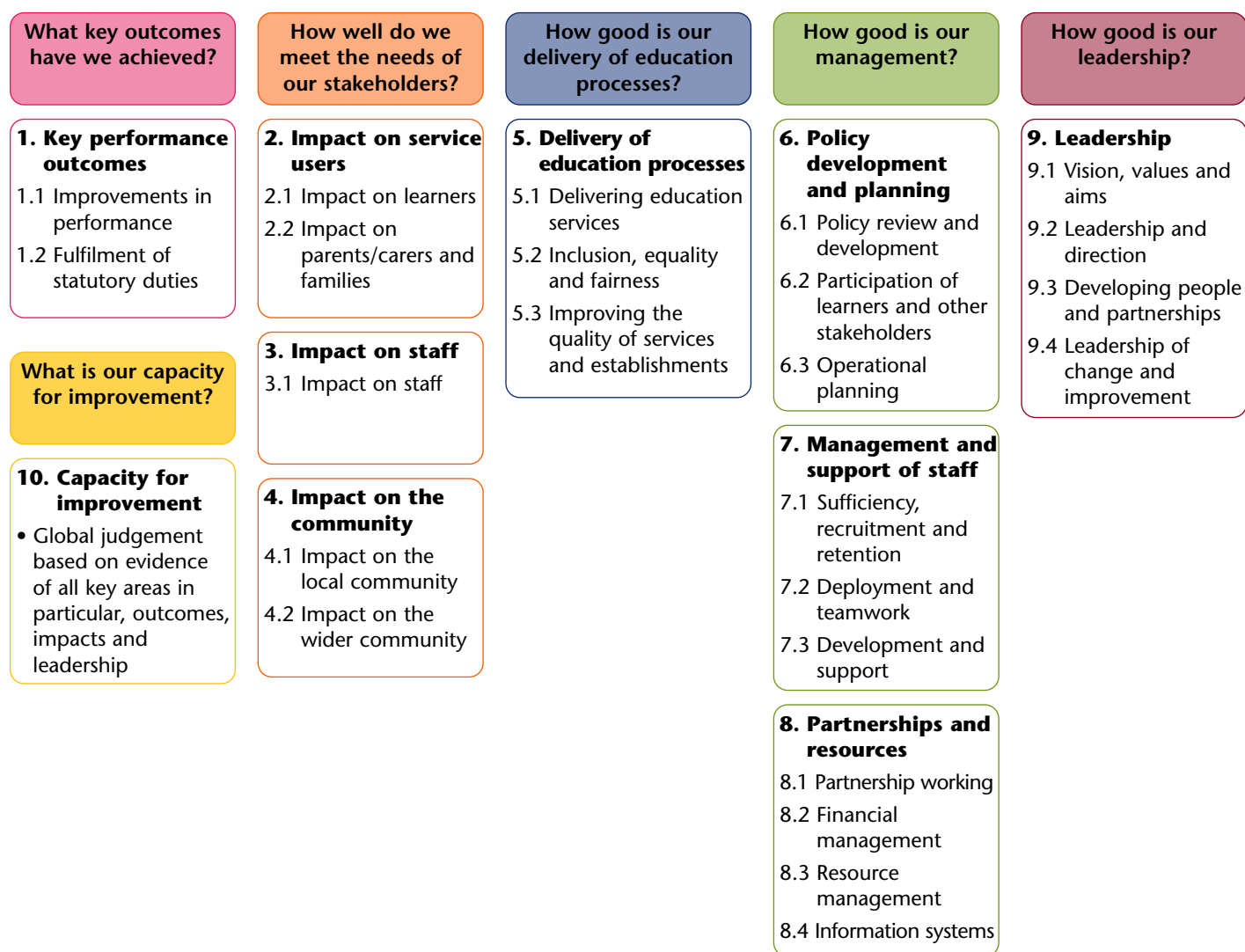
What is our capacity for improvement?

Judgement of an organisation's capacity for improvement takes into account the evaluations arrived at in Key Areas 1-9, with particular reference to the quality of the leadership and management of the council and overall impact and outcomes. The council's focus on improvement and its track record in bringing about improvement are particularly important, as is the accuracy of its self-evaluation, which is used as the basis for planned improvements. The judgement also takes into account any significant aspects of the authority's internal or external context, for example, impending retirements of senior staff, plans to restructure or significant changes in funding. The judgement reviews the past, and looks forward to the future.

Judgements of a council's capacity for improvement could be expressed in terms of **a degree of confidence** that it has the capacity to continue to improve. The judgement may be that the evaluators are **confident that the council has the capacity to continue to improve**. This judgement would be made when highly effective leadership and management have sustained high levels of quality and brought about major improvements to outcomes and impact on learners and other stakeholders. Evidence at the time would indicate that these improvements were sustainable and that improvement would continue. No significant changes in the internal or external context of the organisation would be apparent or predicted at the time the judgement was made.

When there are reservations about one or more of these aspects, the use of other terminology would be more appropriate. For example, those carrying out the evaluation might have only 'limited confidence', or indeed, 'no confidence', that the council has the capacity to continue to improve. It would be important for evaluators to note the nature of their reservations, for example, by pointing to specific aspects of the council's work or its current or future context.

Figure 2 – The QMIE2 framework

What key outcomes have we achieved?

1. Key performance outcomes
1.1 Improvements in performance
1.2 Fulfilment of statutory duties

What is our capacity for improvement?

10. Capacity for improvement
- Global judgement based on evidence of all key areas in particular, outcomes, impacts and leadership

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

2. Impact on service users
2.1 Impact on learners
2.2 Impact on parents/carers and families

3. Impact on staff
3.1 Impact on staff

4. Impact on the community
4.1 Impact on the local community
4.2 Impact on the wider community

How good is our delivery of education processes?

5. Delivery of education processes
5.1 Delivering education services
5.2 Inclusion, equality and fairness
5.3 Improving the quality of services and establishments

How good is our management?

6. Policy development and planning
6.1 Policy review and development
6.2 Participation of learners and other stakeholders
6.3 Operational planning

7. Management and support of staff
7.1 Sufficiency, recruitment and retention
7.2 Deployment and teamwork
7.3 Development and support

8. Partnerships and resources
8.1 Partnership working
8.2 Financial management
8.3 Resource management
8.4 Information systems

How good is our leadership?

9. Leadership
9.1 Vision, values and aims
9.2 Leadership and direction
9.3 Developing people and partnerships
9.4 Leadership of change and improvement

Part 3 – The six-point scale

Self-evaluation for Quality Improvement can be used to evaluate quality against six levels of performance.

In the complex context of education, there are many ways in which provision can merit a particular evaluation. We need to bear in mind that awarding levels will always be more of a professional skill than a technical process. However, the following general guidelines should be consistently applied.

- An evaluation of **excellent** applies to provision which is a model of its type. Learners' experiences and achievements are of a very high quality. An evaluation of *excellent* represents an outstanding standard of provision which exemplifies very best practice and is worth disseminating beyond the council. It implies these very high levels of performance are sustainable and will be maintained.

- An evaluation of **very good** applies to provision characterised by major strengths. There are very few areas for improvement and any that do exist do not significantly diminish learners' experiences. While an evaluation of *very good* represents a high standard of provision, it is a standard that should be achievable by all. It implies that it is fully appropriate to continue to make provision without significant adjustment. However, there is an expectation that the council will take opportunities to improve and strive to raise performance to excellent.

- An evaluation of **good** applies to provision characterised by important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh any areas for improvement. An evaluation of *good* represents a standard of provision in which the strengths have a significant positive impact. However, the quality of learners' experiences is diminished in some way by aspects in which improvement is required. It implies that the council should seek to improve further the areas of important strength, but take action to address the areas for improvement.

- An evaluation of **adequate** applies to provision characterised by strengths which just outweigh weaknesses. An evaluation of *adequate* indicates that learners have access to a basic level of provision. It represents a standard where the strengths have a positive impact on learners' experiences. However, while the weaknesses will not be important enough to have a substantially adverse impact, they will constrain the overall quality of learners' experiences. It implies that the council should take action to address areas of weakness while building on its strengths.

- An evaluation of **weak** applies to provision which has some strengths, but where there are important weaknesses. In general, an evaluation of *weak* may be arrived at in a number of circumstances. While there may be some strengths, the important weaknesses will, either individually or collectively, be sufficient to diminish learners' experiences in substantial ways. It implies the need for structured and planned action on the part of the council.

- An evaluation of **unsatisfactory** applies when there are major weaknesses in provision requiring immediate remedial action. Learners' experience is at risk in significant respects. In almost all cases, staff responsible for provision evaluated as unsatisfactory will require support from senior managers in planning and carrying out the necessary actions to effect improvement. This may involve working alongside staff from other departments or agencies in or beyond the council.

Using the six-point scale in evaluation

The indicators in QMIE2 are designed to be used in conjunction with the six-point scale described above.

The following pages provide examples of the kinds of evidence you should take into account when identifying strengths and weaknesses and assessing the impact of these on learners' experience. For Key Areas 2-9, which use quality indicators (QIs), we have also provided illustrations at Level 5 and Level 2. Key Area 1 uses performance indicators (PIs) and similar measures that can provide evidence to inform evaluations against the QIs.

Part 4 – Performance and quality indicators

Key Area 1. Key performance outcomes

No.	Performance Indicator	Measures
WHAT KEY OUTCOMES HAVE WE ACHIEVED?		
1.1	Improvements in performance	• Performance data and measures showing trends over time • Overall quality of education provided by individual services and establishments • Performance against aims, objectives and targets
1.2	Fulfilment of statutory duties	• Financial performance • Compliance with legislation, and responsiveness to guidance and codes of practice

Key Area 2. Impact on service users

No.	Quality Indicator	Themes
HOW WELL DO WE MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR STAKEHOLDERS?		
2.1	Impact on learners	• Qualitative and quantitative data that demonstrate the extent to which learners are: – included and participating – achieving and attaining – progressing. • The extent to which learners, parents/carers and families report that learners' educational experiences enable them to become: – successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors – safe, nurtured, healthy, achieving, active, respected and responsible and included.
2.2	Impact on parents/carers and families	• Quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate the extent to which parents/carers and families are: – treated equally and fairly – satisfied with the quality of education provided – involved and engaged in their children's development and learning. • Extent to which parents/carers and families report that they are: – treated equally and fairly – satisfied with the quality of education provided – involved and engaged in their children's development and learning.

Key Area 3. Impact on staff

No.	Quality Indicator	Themes
HOW WELL DO WE MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR STAKEHOLDERS?		
3.1	Impact on staff	• Quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate the extent to which staff:
		– are motivated, confident and valued
		– improve their practice through training and development activities
		– have positive experiences of the quality of central services and external/partner agencies
		– work effectively in teams.
		• Extent to which staff report that they:
		– are motivated, confident and valued
		– improve their practice through training and development activities
		– have positive experiences of the quality of central services and external/partner agencies
		– work effectively in teams.

Key Area 4. Impact on the community

No.	Quality Indicator	Themes
HOW WELL DO WE MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR STAKEHOLDERS?		
4.1	Impact on the local community	• Evaluations of quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate the extent to which the council: – engages with and supports organisations in the community – contributes to supporting community influence and representation – contributes to achieving social justice – engages local communities in and contributes to wider developments (e.g. national or international) – supports social and economic development. • Extent to which the community reports that the council: – engages with and supports organisations in the community – contributes to supporting community influence and representation – contributes to achieving social justice – engages local communities in and contributes to wider developments (e.g. national or international) – supports social and economic development.
4.2	Impact on the wider community	• Evaluations of quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate the extent to which the council: – encourages and supports creativity and innovation – learns from and adopts leading-edge practice – influences wider policy or practice – anticipates and responds rapidly and flexibly to change.

Key Area 5. Delivery of education processes

No.	Quality Indicator	Theme
HOW GOOD IS OUR DELIVERY OF EDUCATION PROCESSES?		
5.1	Delivering education services	• Service delivery • Implementation of the council's policies, strategies and plans • Action to meet the needs of children, young people and adults • Recognising achievement in the community
5.2	Inclusion, equality and fairness	• Inclusion, equality and fairness
5.3	Improving the quality of services and establishments	• Arrangements for quality assurance and improvement • Support and challenge • Evaluating outcomes, and feedback from learners, participants and other stakeholders • Planning for improvement and monitoring progress • Reporting progress to stakeholders

Key Area 6. Policy development and planning

No.	Quality Indicator	Theme
HOW GOOD IS OUR MANAGEMENT?		
6.1	Policy review and development	• Range and appropriateness of policies • Coherence with council-wide policy • Links to vision, values and aims • Managing, evaluating and updating policies
6.2	Participation of learners and other stakeholders	• Involvement in policy development • Communication and consultation • Active participation in the work of the service
6.3	Operational planning	• Developing, implementing and evaluating plans • Structure and content of plans • Use of management information • Joint planning with partner organisations and services • Planning for sustainability

Key Area 7. Management and support of staff

No.	Quality Indicator	Theme
HOW GOOD IS OUR MANAGEMENT?		
7.1	Sufficiency, recruitment and retention	• Identifying and meeting human resource needs • Recruitment, appointment and induction procedures • Care and welfare • Equality and fairness in recruitment and promotion • Recognition
7.2	Deployment and teamwork	• Appropriateness and clarity of remits • Deployment to achieve planned priorities • Teamworking • Communication and involvement in decision making
7.3	Development and support	• Processes for staff review and support • Training and development • Joint training with staff from partner agencies

Key Area 8. Partnerships and resources

No.	Quality Indicator	Theme
HOW GOOD IS OUR MANAGEMENT?		
8.1	Partnership working	• Clarity of purposes and aims • Service level agreements, roles and remits • Working across agencies and disciplines • Staff roles in partnerships
8.2	Financial management	• Setting budgets and enterprise in securing funding • Range and implementation of financial procedures and controls • Processes for collecting, evaluating and communicating financial information • Providing Best Value
8.3	Resource management	• Accommodation • Resources and equipment • Efficiency and effectiveness in use of resources • Health and safety
8.4	Information systems	• Data collection, storage and retrieval • Linkages between, and sharing of information • Processes for analysing, evaluating and using information

Key Area 9. Leadership

No.	Quality Indicator	Theme
HOW GOOD IS OUR LEADERSHIP?		
9.1	Vision, values and aims	• Appropriateness and coherence with corporate and community vision, values and aims • Sharing and sustaining the vision • Promotion of positive attitudes to social and cultural diversity
9.2	Leadership and direction	• Strategic planning and communication • Strategic deployment of resources • Evaluation of risk
9.3	Developing people and partnerships	• Developing leadership capacity • Building and sustaining relationships • Teamwork and partnerships
9.4	Leadership of change and improvement	• Support and challenge • Creativity, innovation and step change • Continuous improvement

Key Area 10. Capacity for Improvement

WHAT IS OUR CAPACITY FOR IMPROVEMENT?

This last of the high-level questions requires a global judgement based on evidence and evaluations of all key areas. In answering this question councils should also take into account contextual issues such as impending retirements of senior staff, plans to restructure and significant changes in funding. They should also consider their ability to respond quickly to change and to be creative and innovative in the pursuit of excellence.

The council should be able to make a statement with the following components:

"The council is confident/not confident that the evidence and evaluation to date indicates that:

• overall improvements have been made to key outcomes and to impacts on stakeholders;

• leadership and management are effective; and

• quality improvement arrangements are effective and the council has the capacity to continue improving."

The levels of confidence expressed for each component may be different and may include some reservations or caveats, but should lead to an overall statement of confidence in the council's capacity to improve in relation to its education functions.

For example, the statement could say, "The council is confident that the evidence and evaluation to date indicates that:

• improvements have been made to achieving almost all key outcomes and, overall, improvements have been made to meet the needs of service users but the attainment of secondary school pupils requires further improvement;

• leadership and management are currently effective but key posts will become vacant in the near future; and

• quality improvement arrangements are effective in all areas except youthwork and the council has demonstrated the capacity to continue improving."

Part 5 – Indicators, themes and illustrations

What key outcomes have we achieved?

(KEY AREA 1: KEY PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES)

PI 1.1 Improvement in performance

Themes:

- Performance data and measures showing trends over time

- Overall quality of education provided by individual services and establishments

- Performance against aims, objectives and targets

Evidence of trends in performance will normally include comparative data measured against appropriate benchmarks. Examples of performance data and measures might include:

- trends compared with national attainment levels and awards, including 5-14 levels, SQA awards and the proportion of learners who do not achieve awards;

- measures relating to literacy and numeracy skills;

- improvements in citizenship, enterprise and other important skills as measured by, for example, increases in the achievement of awards and short courses accredited by the ASDAN, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Enterprise awards and Eco Schools awards;

- leaver destinations; and

- measurable outcomes from strategic and operational plans.

Data should also relate to the performance of particular groups of learners.

Analysis of HMIE follow-through arrangements and follow-through inspection reports provides evidence of the capacity for improvement in individual establishments and the extent to which they have maintained high educational standards or have improved.

Performance will also be measured against objectives within individual service/improvement plans or equivalent. It will include progress in meeting local targets for education, health and care in Children's Services and other plans. Evidence will be published in progress reports and public performance reports. Examples could include:

- achievement of targets for the provision of cultural experiences, residential experiences and outdoor education;

- achievement of targets relating to health and well-being;

- achievement of targets for learners' achievements;

- outcomes of curriculum development initiatives which have an impact on learning;

- improvements following service reviews relating to Best Value; and

- awards from the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE), the Convention of Local Authorities in Scotland (COSLA) and other national bodies.

What key outcomes have we achieved?

(KEY AREA 1: KEY PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES)

PI 1.2 Fulfilment of statutory duties

Themes:

- Financial performance
- Compliance with legislation, and responsiveness to guidance and codes of practice

Evaluation of financial performance will be based on financial data and measures derived from Best Value audits carried out by Audit Scotland, and from council budget construction and management systems which are appropriate to the education functions of a local authority.

Compliance with statutory requirements relates to legislation and codes of practice such as the *Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc Act,* the *Additional Support for Learners Act,* the *Race Relations Amendment Act* and the *Disability Discrimination Act.*

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

(KEY AREA 2: IMPACT ON SERVICE USERS)

QI 2.1 Impact on learners

Themes

- Quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate the extent to which learners are:
  - included and participating
  - achieving and attaining
  - progressing.
- The extent to which learners, parents/carers and families report that learners' educational experiences enable them to become:
  - successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors
  - safe, nurtured, healthy, achieving, active, respected and responsible and included.

This indicator relates to the impact of the education service on learners, including pre-school children, school-aged pupils and adult learners, focusing in particular on their current experiences. Some examples of appropriate sources of evidence are given below. They are neither comprehensive nor prescriptive.

The first theme draws on quantitative and qualitative data and evidence from direct observation, documentation and discussions with other stakeholders. Examples may include:

- levels of attendance, retention and exclusion;
- analysis of incidents of violence, bullying and racially-motivated behaviour;
- rates of participation and progression in sporting, cultural and citizenship activities;
- rates of participation in peer support activities, mentoring schemes and community involvement;
- the extent to which the needs of all learners are met, including those of the lowest-performing learners, looked after children and learners from minority ethnic and gypsy/traveller families, as indicated by: rates of progression, achievement of individual targets for learning and social skills, achievement of the council's targets for the performance of groups of learners, including progression through and from school and into further or higher education and employment;
- achievement of customer service awards such as Charter Mark;
- correspondence and contact with the council, including complaints and compliments and the way these are handled;
- access to services, including innovative approaches to encouraging involvement; and
- evidence from HMIE inspection reports relating to specific aspects such as the quality of learning experiences and support for learning and achievement.

The second theme deals with learners' views as reported in responses to questionnaires, surveys, focus groups and in unsolicited comments. These responses provide evidence of the extent of their satisfaction with the education service and may cover aspects such as:

- attitudes to learning;

- engagement in informal and formal learning which enables learners to achieve their full potential, keep themselves safe and healthy and keep others safe;

- opportunities to learn effectively as individuals, in groups and with staff;

- the extent to which they feel valued and supported in their learning; and

- opportunities to express their views, shape education services, set personal objectives and influence planning for their future.

Evaluation should take into account both themes and result in a considered view of the overall impact on learners.

Illustration QI Level 5

Children and young people are included and actively participate in formal and informal learning. The attainment of children and young people at key stages in the primary and secondary sectors shows improving trends. Almost all learners make very good progress from their prior levels of attainment. Particular groups of learners, including those in the lowest performing 20%, looked after children, and pupils from black and ethnic minority groups, achieve or exceed attainment targets set against national education priorities. Participation rates and performance levels in sporting, cultural, citizenship and youthwork activities are high and include people with disabilities. Children and young people progress successfully to the next stage in their education such as from stage to stage with schools or from school to further education, higher education or employment. A high proportion of adult learners are engaged in community-based education and many progress to higher levels of education or into employment.

Learners express high levels of satisfaction with the service. They are positive about the help provided through formal and informal learning opportunities to achieve their full potential and to help keep themselves safe and healthy. Learners consistently feel that they are valued and have appropriate opportunities to express their views, and that these views influence planning for their future.

Illustration QI Level 2

Some groups of children are unable to access the full range of learning opportunities and participation rates in some important areas are low. The attainment of children and young people at key stages in the primary and secondary sectors shows insufficient improvement. Overall, learners do not make sufficient progress from their prior levels of attainment. Particular groups of learners such as those in the lowest-performing 20%, looked after children and pupils from black and ethnic minority groups, do not achieve the attainment targets set against national education priorities. Learners with disabilities are under-represented in cultural activities. A significant number of children and young people experience difficulties when moving on to the next stage in their education. Few adults are engaged in community-based learning and there are insufficient opportunities for progression.

In some areas, learners express low levels of satisfaction with the service. They are not always positive about the support provided to help them achieve their full potential in some important areas. Learners are generally positive about their learning, but do not feel that sufficient account is taken of their views on decisions affecting their future.

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

(KEY AREA 2: IMPACT ON SERVICE USERS)

QI 2.2 Impact on parents/carers and families

Themes

- Quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate the extent to which parents/carers and families are:

  – treated equally and fairly

  – satisfied with the quality of education provided

  – involved and engaged in their children's development and learning.

- Extent to which parents/carers and families report that they are:

  – treated equally and fairly

  – satisfied with the quality of education provided

  – involved and engaged in their children's development and learning.

This indicator relates to the impact of the education service on parents, carers and families themselves, as well as their views of the quality of education received by their children, focusing in particular on their current experiences. Some examples of appropriate sources of evidence are given below. They are neither comprehensive nor prescriptive.

The first theme draws on quantitative and qualitative data and evidence from direct observation, documentation and discussions with other stakeholders. Examples may include:

- rates of attendance at meetings and forums;

- levels of participation in home-school activities and health initiatives;

- rates of response to consultation;

- attendance at family-group conferences and joint assessment team meetings;

- the extent to which the needs of all parents, carers and families are met, including those with children with additional support needs, or from minority ethnic and gypsy/traveller families;

- achievement of customer service awards such as Charter Mark;

- correspondence and contact with the council, including complaints and compliments and the way these are handled, and response to enquiries;

- access to services, including innovative approaches to encouraging involvement;

- evidence from HMIE inspection reports relating to parents, carers and families; and

- placing requests into and outwith the council area.

The second theme deals with the views of parents, carers and families as reported in responses to questionnaires, surveys, focus groups and in unsolicited comments. These responses provide evidence of the extent of their satisfaction with the education service and may cover aspects such as:

- the quality and range of services provided by the authority;

- involvement in their children's learning in both informal and formal contexts;

- the extent to which they feel valued and supported, and are treated fairly, equally and with respect;

- access to and contact with establishments, central-deployed staff and community-based teams;

- access to adult-learning opportunities; and

- opportunities to express their views, shape education services, and influence their children's education.

Evaluation should take into account both themes and result in a considered view of the overall impact on learners.

Illustration QI Level 5

Almost all parents, carers and families are fully satisfied with the quality and range of services provided by the authority. They are positive about their active involvement in the development of their children's learning in both informal and formal contexts. Parents, carers and families express confidence in supporting their children's learning and development. They are respected, treated equally and fairly, and involved in the development of their child(ren). Parents, carers and families are encouraged to contact the schools, central staff and other agencies about relevant issues and to become involved in the life and work of their school and the community. Parents, carers and families of vulnerable children and of those with additional support needs are very well supported, educationally and socially, by the authority. Parents, carers and families are able to access appropriate adult-learning opportunities when appropriate.

Parents, carers and families participate in their children's education through attendance at appropriate meetings and forums. They take direct responsibility, where appropriate, for key aspects of their children's learning as a result of the initiatives developed by the authority. Parents, carers and families engage with confidence in informal and formal surroundings through, for example, home-school activities and health initiatives. They respond positively to planned opportunities for multi-agency support such as attendance at family-group conferences and joint assessment team meetings. Parents, carers and families are kept well informed/up-to-date on the curriculum and learning and teaching. The authority is responsive to complaints and consistently achieves a satisfactory resolution.

Illustration QI Level 2

There are important weaknesses in the level of satisfaction with the quality and range of services provided by the authority. Parents, carers and families are actively involved in the development of aspects of their children's personal and social development but are less involved in their children's learning. They do not feel sufficiently confident in supporting their children's learning and development. Parents, carers and families are respected, treated equally and fairly, but are not sufficiently involved in the development of their child(ren). They are encouraged to contact the schools, central staff and other agencies about any issues but are less encouraged to become involved in the life and work of their school and the community. Parents, carers and families of vulnerable children and of those with additional support needs or disabilities are not supported well enough by the authority. Parents, carers and families often lack the confidence to access adult learning opportunities.

The participation of parents, carers and families in their children's education through attendance at appropriate meetings and forums is low. Parents, carers and families take responsibility, where appropriate, for some aspects of their children's learning but this seldom as a result of the initiatives developed by the authority. They do not engage consistently in informal and formal surroundings through, for example, home-school activities and health initiatives. Parents, carers and families are kept informed on their child's progress and development but less so on the curriculum and learning and teaching. The authority is responsive to complaints but is inconsistent in achieving a satisfactory resolution.

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

(KEY AREA 3: IMPACT ON STAFF)

QI 3.1 Impact on staff

Themes:

- Quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate the extent to which staff:

  – are motivated, confident and valued

  – improve their practice through training and development activities

  – have positive experiences of the quality of central services and external/partner agencies

  – work effectively in teams.

- Extent to which staff report that they:

  – are motivated, confident and valued

  – improve their practice through training and development activities

  – have positive experiences of the quality of central services and external/partner agencies

  – work effectively in teams.

This indicator relates to the impact of the education service on staff, as well as their views of the quality of education within the council. Some examples of appropriate sources of evidence are given below. They are neither comprehensive nor prescriptive.

The first theme draws on quantitative and qualitative data and evidence from direct observation, documentation and discussions with other stakeholders. Examples may include:

- rates of attendance at meetings and forums;

- rates of participation in career review;

- rates of participation in training and development and qualifications gained;

- rates of response to consultation;

- evidence of involvement and empowerment;

- the extent to which the individual support needs of staff are met;

- achievement of awards such as SHAW and IiP;

- access to services, including innovative approaches to encouraging involvement;

- evidence from HMIE inspection reports relating to staff support and development;

- levels of absence, turnover and recruitment;

- recognition schemes; and

- benchmarking data.

The second theme deals with the views of staff as reported in responses to questionnaires, surveys, focus groups and in unsolicited comments. These responses provide evidence of the extent of their satisfaction and may cover aspects such as:

- the quality and range of services provided by the authority;

- career review;

- training and development, including leadership training, shadowing and secondments;

- career development;

- peer and line management relationships, including teamworking;

- the extent to which they feel valued and supported, and are treated fairly, equally and with respect;

- conditions of work, facilities and services; and

- communication and opportunities to express their views and to shape and improve education services.

Evaluation should take into account both themes and result in a considered view of the overall impact on staff. This indicator can be applied separately to centrally-deployed staff and to staff in establishments and community-based teams.

Illustration QI Level 5

Staff are highly motivated, meaningfully involved in the development of the service and professionally satisfied. They are prepared well for future leadership responsibilities by involvement in secondments, projects and programmes. They have good opportunities for career development and a clearly understood and accessible continuing professional development (CPD) programme. They consider that professional development supports their performance effectively and contributes to developing their competence. Staff report positively about the quality of support provided by central services and external agencies. Staff are confident in their ability to carry out their duties and teamwork at all levels is effective. They are appropriately deployed, engaged and valued across the authority.

Staff have a very well-developed sense of the council's vision, values and aims and share its values. They are actively involved in a range of cross-departmental working groups. They are regularly consulted by managers and their participation results in a perception of corporate ownership and a positive impact on the retention of staff. Staff have low absence levels. They are willing to work in flexible arrangements aimed at meeting agreed targets. Staff interaction with children, young people, adult learners and families is very good and is based on an appropriate response to needs. Staff are enabled to deliver high-quality services, including learning and teaching, social, care and health-related aspects. They work effectively in providing well-targeted initiatives aimed at raising attainment and achievement, supporting the care and wellbeing of learners and enhancing their health and self-esteem. They are involved effectively in partnership working and decision-making through applying Best Value principles.

Illustration QI Level 2

There are important weaknesses in levels of satisfaction with the service. Staff are motivated but are not always meaningfully involved in the development of the service. They feel that they have good opportunities for CPD but provision for leadership development is insufficient. Staff have positive perceptions of the quality of support provided by central services and external agencies but do not feel that the support is consistent or proactive. Staff work well in their own local teams but do not identify with the wider team across the authority. They do not feel that authority and establishment provision is making a consistent contribution to enhanced services for learners and their families. On the whole staff deployment is not matched sufficiently to service priorities.

Staff have only a general awareness of the vision, values and aims of the authority. They are aware of, and are involved in supporting the development and implementation of a narrow range of projects. Staff are consulted by managers but this is irregular and ad hoc resulting in an inconsistent response to these consultations and a lack of corporate ownership. Staff are willing to work in flexible arrangements but these are not consistently focused at meeting agreed targets. Staff strive to deliver high quality services, including learning and teaching, administrative support and care and health-related aspects. They are not always supported or challenged by managers to improve performance. Staff contribute to initiatives aimed at raising attainment and achievement, supporting the care and wellbeing of learners and in enhancing their health and self-esteem but these tend to lack focus and direction. Staff are not sufficiently involved in partnership working and decision-making.

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

(KEY AREA 4: IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY)

QI 4.1 Impact on the local community

Themes:

- Evaluations of quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate the extent to which the council:
  - engages with and supports organisations in the community
  - contributes to supporting community influence and representation
  - contributes to achieving social justice
  - engages local communities in and contributes to wider developments (e.g. national and international)
  - supports social and economic development.

- Extent to which members of the community report that the council:
  - engages with and supports organisations in the community
  - contributes to supporting community influence and representation
  - contributes to achieving social justice
  - engages local communities in and contributes to wider developments
  - supports social and economic development.

This indicator relates to the impact of the education service on individuals and groups in the community, focusing in particular on their current experiences. Some examples of appropriate sources of evidence are given below. They are neither comprehensive nor prescriptive.

The first theme draws on quantitative data and evidence from direct observation, documentation and discussions with other stakeholders. Examples may include:

- provision of work experience placements, and involvement in schemes such as Take your Child to Work Day;
- support for staff involvement in voluntary community activities such as the Prince's Trust Volunteer Programme;
- support for staff involvement in activities that support community participation in decision making such as community forums;
- impact on local employment;
- effectiveness of environmental actions such as recycling schemes and management of waste;
- achievement of awards relating to community service and sustainable development;
- responsiveness to enquiries and complaints;

- access to services and facilities;

- contributions to national and international developments and working groups;

- contributions to developments in other local councils, with further education colleges and in the international community, including the developing world;

- hosting of visits by educationalists from other councils and other countries; and

- evidence from HMIE inspection reports relating to links with the community.

The second theme deals with the views of members of the community as reported in responses to questionnaires, surveys, focus groups and in unsolicited comments. These responses provide evidence of the extent of their satisfaction with education services and may cover aspects such as:

- the reputation of the council's education services and the extent to which it meets the full range of stakeholders' needs;

- its provision of informal and formal learning which enables learners to achieve their full potential, keep themselves safe and healthy and keep others safe; and

- opportunities for members of the community to express their views and shape education services.

Evaluation should take into account both themes and result in a considered view of the overall impact on the community.

Illustration QI Level 5

Almost all members of the community have a consistently high level of satisfaction with the services provided by the authority and its partners. Community members have access to high-quality services. Community representatives, including those from the voluntary sector, are fully informed about and able to influence the activities and services being provided in schools, early years centres and other authority services in the community. The authority supports and engages with them in building capacity within the community and includes them appropriately in decision-making activities. The authority encourages stakeholders to engage in supporting children, young people, adult learners and community groups.

The authority engages with members of the community, including the voluntary sector, appropriately in improving local services. This includes, where appropriate, providing services directly to children, young people and their families and adult learners. The authority actively involves community members in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of community planning objectives. The authority and its schools and services, work collaboratively with community organisations, further education colleges, social, health and care professionals to ensure priority needs are being met, particularly those of socially excluded groups. The authority is successful in achieving very high levels of engagement with them on issues of local concern and on wider policy issues. Members of the community consider that the provision offered by the authority has led to a positive impact on the motivation and engagement of children, young people, adult learners, families, disadvantaged groups and the community.

Illustration QI Level 2

There are important weaknesses in levels of satisfaction with the service provided by the authority and its partners. Community representatives, including the voluntary sector, are informed about the activities and services being provided in schools, early years centres and in the community, but have insufficient opportunities to influence these activities and services. The authority's support for and engagement with them in building capacity within the community is inconsistent and lacks focus. They are not always sufficiently included in decision-making activities. The authority provides insufficient opportunities for stakeholders to engage in supporting the learning and development of children, young people and adults.

The authority does not engage community members, including the voluntary sector, regularly and systematically in improving local services. Where it does engage them it may not do so appropriately. The authority involves a narrow range of community members in the development and implementation of community planning objectives. It offers insufficient opportunities for involvement in monitoring and evaluation. While the authority, and its schools and services, work collaboratively with community organisations, further education colleges, social, health and care professionals, they do not always ensure priority needs are being met, particularly those of socially excluded groups. The authority successfully engages with local stakeholders but it does not focus sufficiently on issues of local concern or on wider policy issues. Most members of the community consider that the provision offered by the authority has had insufficient impact on the motivation and engagement of children, young people, their families, disadvantaged groups and the general community.

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

(KEY AREA 4: IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY)

QI 4.2 Impact on the wider community

Themes

- Evaluations of quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate the extent to which the council:

  – encourages and supports creativity and innovation

  – learns from and adopts leading-edge practice

  – influences wider policy or practice

  – anticipates and responds rapidly and flexibly to change.

This indicator focuses on the impact the council has on the wider educational community. It deals with the culture of the organisation in encouraging and supporting creativity and innovation, being open to new ideas and proactive. It is about being an organisation that deals well with change. It also relates to the influence and impact of the authority on wider developments.

The theme draws on quantitative and qualitative data from direct observation, documentation and discussions with stakeholders. Examples may include:

- a range of innovative strategies and programmes that impact beyond the services delivered by the council;

- programmes that have origins in national or international best practice;

- staff who have made major influential contributions to national developments; and

- anticipating demographic, economic or social changes and responding with the re-allocation of resources and services.

Illustration QI Level 5

The council has initiated a range of innovative programmes, many in partnership with other public, charitable and commercial organisations. These have led to major improvements in services for residents. Staff are actively encouraged to innovate and any associated risks are managed well. There are many examples of leading-edge practice from other councils and countries being adopted and adapted within the authority. Managers at all levels serve on a range of national advisory groups and committees. Some of these have had a major impact on national policy and practice. The council places great emphasis on forecasting change, assessing probable impacts and responding swiftly to provide appropriate service to meet changing needs. This ability to respond rapidly and creatively is keeping the council close to the leading edge of national and international development, and ensuring that children, young people, adult learners and other residents receive consistently good services.

Illustration QI Level 2

The council provides educational services that broadly meet the needs of residents but is seldom innovative and rarely learns from good practice in other councils or from abroad. Creativity is not encouraged and change tends to be evolutionary. Few managers serve on national committees or advisory groups. Consequently, the council makes little impact beyond its own locality. The council responds slowly to change. It does not attempt to predict major changes or respond proactively to the changing needs or aspirations of children, young people, their families or other residents.

How good is our delivery of education processes?

(KEY AREA 5: DELIVERY OF EDUCATION PROCESSES)

QI 5.1 Delivering education services

Themes:

- Service delivery
- Implementation of the council's policies, strategies and plans
- Action to meet the needs of children, young people and adults
- Recognising achievement in the community.

Illustration QI Level 5

The council is successful in sustaining the quality of service delivery at a high level and can demonstrate that it has a clear strategy, based on its vision, values and aims, and planned approaches for improvement. The structure for the delivery of education and support services within individual teams, units and establishments is very well planned and includes aspects of innovative practice. The council provides clear guidance on the provision of appropriate curricula and programmes and on the management of learning and support for learners. It reviews and revises this guidance through systematic analysis of stakeholders' views, reference to up-to-date national advice, analysis of best practice and evaluation of measurable outcomes and impact. Flexible provision of the curriculum and learning opportunities is very well planned and monitored. The council delivers statutory services in a highly effective way.

There are clear systems in place for implementing the authority's policies. These provide clear lines of responsibility and accountability with timescales and measurable targets. They take account of resource implications and include procedures for evaluation/review. Central to the implementation of the authority's policies is its clear focus on outcomes and the impact on children's and adults' learning, attainment and achievement.

The authority places the learning, care and development needs of children, young people and adult learners at the forefront of its work. It ensures the health and safety, security and well-being of learners and other key stakeholders. Service delivery provides effective support for transition between units and establishments at key stages. The council engages systematically with learners, parents, staff, external agencies and other key stakeholders to identify the specific needs of learners. Targeted and effective actions are taken to provide for these, and these actions are regularly monitored and reviewed.

The council provides a range of opportunities to promote and support achievements through participation in award schemes, voluntary work, environmental projects, the arts, sports and other creative pursuits. Suitable arrangements are in place to ensure that all community-based initiatives are recognised and celebrated within the council, for example, through special events, newsletters and award ceremonies.

Illustration QI Level 2

The quality of service delivery is inconsistent across the council. While some good-quality and innovative practice exists, it is developed by individual teams, units and establishments rather than by means of a strategic approach. Individual improvements and innovations may be effective, but they are not always delivered as part of a planned approach across the council. While there are examples of good guidance on appropriate curricula and programmes and on managing learning, these are not developed as part of a coherent and comprehensive approach. Some of the guidance is out of date or developed without reference to stakeholders' views, national advice, best practice and measurable outcomes and impact. While there are some effective arrangements for flexible delivery of the curriculum and learning opportunities, they do not form part of a coherent and well-planned approach.

The authority's key policies on improving quality are not implemented consistently. Individual policies do not give a clear enough indication of their practical application. They are uneven in terms of specific elements such as roles, responsibilities, procedures, and expectations of quality or evaluation process. There is a lack of clear systems to drive the consistent implementation of the authority's policies. While examples of good practice are evident in discrete areas of the service, there are no clear arrangements for routinely monitoring the effectiveness of policy implementation.

Insufficient attention is given to formally identifying and reviewing the learning, care and development needs of learners. Staff and other key stakeholders do not have a clear picture of priorities for meeting learners' needs. Discussions involving learners, staff and support agencies do not lead to focused and targeted actions. There is insufficient consistency and rigour in the authority's approach to measuring and analysing the impact of the action taken to meet learners' needs.

The authority gives insufficient priority to promoting, supporting and celebrating the achievements of individuals and community groups.

How good is our delivery of education processes?

KEY AREA 5: DELIVERY OF EDUCATION PROCESSES

QI 5.2 Inclusion, equality and fairness

Themes:

- Inclusion, equality and fairness

Illustration QI Level 5

A strong ethos and practice of inclusion permeates the work of the authority at all levels. Staff at all levels and other key stakeholders are clear on council policies and strategies and their own responsibilities. A range of clear and appropriate written guidance is readily available to all staff. The authority promotes learning opportunities for all learners and reaches out to potentially excluded individuals and groups. It provides effective services for vulnerable learners and learners in need, including arrangements for early intervention and support within universal services and targeted additional support where required. Managers use outcome and impact information to identify under-represented and under-performing groups, and take appropriate action to improve their participation and achievement. Managers also consult regularly with members of, and those that represent, minority groups. There are effective systems in place across the authority for tracking and supporting potentially vulnerable or under-performing learners including looked after children, traveller children and young people who are being supported through alternative curricular provision. Staff consistently demonstrate good practice in promoting equality and addressing areas of concern.

Illustration QI Level 2

Staff and stakeholders are not always clear about the authority's vision for, and approach to, inclusion, equality and fairness. Staff are aware of the existence of policy statements in these areas, but are less clear about how to translate them into practice. The authority does not place a sufficiently high priority on these areas. The key principles and values underpinning them have been subject to only limited consultation with a narrow range of key stakeholders. Stakeholders are generally positive about their relationship with the authority but some groups feel that their views are not fully recognised. Minority groups and those with specific interests, such as gender and race groups, disability forums and those representing the interests of children and adult learners with additional support needs, sometimes feel disenfranchised or excluded. Systems for tracking potentially vulnerable pupils are not fully effective in ensuring that their needs are being addressed. The authority receives a number of complaints from stakeholders about their lack of involvement in key decisions with regard to inclusion, equality and fairness issues. Many of these complaints are not addressed.

How good is our delivery of education processes?

KEY AREA 5: DELIVERY OF EDUCATION PROCESSES

QI 5.3 Improving the quality of services and establishments

Themes:

- Arrangements for quality assurance and improvement

- Support and challenge

- Evaluating outcomes and feedback from learners, participants and other stakeholders

- Planning for improvement and monitoring progress

- Reporting progress to stakeholders

QI Illustration Level 5

The authority provides clear advice to establishments and services on quality improvement, development planning, standards and quality reporting, and professional review and development. There is rigorous validation of establishment self-evaluation. The roles and responsibilities of key staff in ensuring quality improvement and monitoring and evaluating the work of establishments and services are clearly understood.

There is a well-developed culture of support and challenge across all services and establishments. Robust discussions on performance lead to the identification of strengths and areas of underperformance. The authority provides strong advice and support to staff in establishments to help them make improvements. Identified strengths are routinely celebrated and built upon by the authority and its establishments. Equally, identification of areas of underperformance or those requiring attention result in the development of detailed action plans that impact positively on the quality of provision. Officers provide strong support through direct input and targeted resources.

Effective procedures are in place for carrying out rigorous audits to inform the planning, design and delivery of services. These are based on a range of appropriate measurement and monitoring techniques. The council has developed systematic approaches to gathering and analysing stakeholders' views. Results are used to identify issues for further investigation and action. Information is also gathered from regular visits to establishments and CLD provision, standards and quality reports and HMIE reports. Senior managers are confident and accurate in their use of and interpretation of a wide range of performance data.

Quality indicators and accreditation schemes are used as a sound basis for self-evaluation and planning for improvement. The information from performance data and stakeholders' views are used to set priorities and targets for improvement. These targets are included in service and improvement plans and result in effective action. The authority rigorously evaluates the effectiveness of its improvement strategies in relation to their impact on the quality of the learning and achievements of children, young people and adult learners, and its services to children and families.

QI Illustration Level 5 – continued

There is an overarching strategy to record and report publicly on performance standards. The information is provided to key stakeholders in a form that is accessible, evaluative and well presented. The timing of reports informs decision-making and leads to improvements in planning and provision. Reports are appropriately linked to agreed priorities. Strengths and areas for further improvement are clearly identified. There are many examples of significant improvements to learner outcomes and impact that have resulted from the authority's arrangements for self-evaluation and quality improvement.

QI Illustration Level 2

The authority's advice on self-evaluation and quality improvement is insufficiently clear. As a result, the roles and responsibilities of key staff in monitoring and evaluating the work of the authority are not clear. There is too much variation in the quality of development planning, standards and quality reporting, and professional review and development.

Approaches for supporting and challenging establishments are not applied consistently. Discussions take place between senior managers, headteachers, CLD managers and other responsible officers but these do not always enable staff to identify strengths or result in well-targeted plans and action for improvement.

The authority has a range of systems for monitoring performance and seeking views from stakeholders but the information gathered does not sufficiently inform future planning. Staff make insufficient use of some sources of evidence such as benchmarking or comparative data when planning for improvement. The rationale for selection of Best Value service reviews is unclear. Managers have not fully involved stakeholders in contributing to a systematic approach to evaluating the quality of the service.

A few senior managers have a good understanding of the information available and how it contributes to planning but a majority have little awareness. The authority has not clearly identified what should be measured or set well-defined targets for improvement. Its effectiveness in assisting establishments and CLD services to identify and plan future improvements is limited. In evaluating the effectiveness of school and CLD improvement strategies, the authority does not focus sufficiently on the impact on the learning and achievements of children, young people and adult learners, and services to children and families.

Procedures for recording and reporting on performance standards are not rigorous or consistently in place. Reports are not fully linked to agreed improvement priorities. Information provided is insufficiently evaluative and not always presented in a suitable form for the range of stakeholders. Only a few improvements have been made to outcomes and impact for learners as a result of quality assurance activities.

How good is our management?

(KEY AREA 6: POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING)

QI 6.1 Policy review and development

Themes:

- Range and appropriateness of policies
- Coherence with council-wide policy
- Links to vision, values and aims
- Managing, evaluating and updating policies

A successful, modern organisation will have a systematic and well-documented approach to management. This will be supported by a range of effective policies and advice that inform and impact on practice throughout the education service and which in turn are linked to the wider policies of the council. These policies provide clear strategic direction and help to ensure consistency in practice across the education service and improved outcomes for children, young people and adult learners.

Illustration QI Level 5

The education service's work is directed by a straightforward policy framework which covers all its main areas of activity and responsibility. This policy framework sets clear expectations for effective service delivery. Policies reflect national and local priorities and related improvement objectives. Policy advice is wide ranging and very well balanced in its coverage of strategic and operational matters. Individual policies are supported by specific information about roles, responsibilities and procedures, expectations of quality, outcomes and evaluation processes. The range of policies provides clear guidance to establishment and service staff and helps to ensure consistency in practice across the education service and achieve continuous improvement.

The education service's policy framework is coherent with the community, corporate and integrated children's services' planning aspirations and outcomes. The links among cross-cutting policy initiatives, and the education service's contribution to these, are indicated clearly and are reflected in policy and practice at establishment and service levels.

Key service objectives and key policies are based on the council's vision, values and aims. These provide a very sound basis for policy making and service delivery and relate well to the national priorities for education and CLD. They are also directly reflected in establishment policies and have a significant impact on the development of integrated services for children across the council. The vision, values and aims serve as useful criteria against which structures, policies and practices are regularly reviewed and evaluated.

There is a clear procedure in place for the coherent development and review of individual policies. Policies are regularly reviewed and updated taking into account the views of stakeholders.

Illustration QI Level 2

The education service has policies in most but not all, of its main areas of activity and responsibility. Areas of the service plan have been developed independently from these policies and the links are not always clear or explicit. Individual policies do not give a clear enough indication of their practical application and are uneven in terms of specific elements such as roles, responsibilities, procedures, and expectations of quality or the evaluation process. Operational practice occasionally develops separately from the policy itself, largely in response to individual situations, producing some inconsistency.

Education and CLD service policies do not sufficiently reflect corporate policy. The policy framework does not systematically inform the structure and content of the strategic service plan and children's services plan and has little influence on outcomes and impacts. The links among cross-cutting policy initiatives, and education's contribution to these, are unclear and have insufficient impact on policy and practice at establishment level.

The vision, values and aims of the council do not systematically inform the construction and development of policies. The links between aims and policies are not always clearly perceived. The authority and individual establishments develop their policies in isolation from each other. This results in a lack of coherence between authority and establishment policy development. Education and CLD managers do not display full commitment to the corporate vision or values and do not use these consistently as criteria against which policies and practices can be regularly reviewed and evaluated.

Policies are not implemented consistently across the education service and its establishments. The service does not review and amend policies on a sufficiently regular basis. Many policies are not updated to take account of changing circumstances and national and local priorities. The authority takes steps to monitor the implementation of its policies, but often the mechanisms are too informal and establishments do not always feel that the authority has a clear picture of the impact of its policies on continuous improvement. The engagement of stakeholders in the process of reviewing and updating is limited.

How good is our management?

(KEY AREA 6: POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING)

QI 6.2 Participation of learners and other stakeholders

Themes:

- Involvement in policy development

- Communication and consultation

- Active participation in the work of the service

To fulfil the requirements of Best Value, and to conform to accepted good practice in local government, mechanisms need to be in place to link management decisions to the needs of the community. There is, therefore, an expectation that all stakeholders (including learners, parents, members of the wider community, staff, partner agencies and, as appropriate, children and young people) should be actively involved in the education authority's development. This will require a range of approaches and mechanisms that can be applied across the authority's areas of activity. To complement consultative mechanisms, there needs to be an effective approach to communication. This will recognise that there are a number of different audiences which have a right to be informed of the authority's activities. There should also be a PPR framework to communicate clearly and simply with various stakeholders. Again, this will require a variety of approaches that are suited to the audiences concerned and will therefore involve a range of communication media.

Level 5 QI Illustration

A broad range of cost-effective consultation processes, involving a wide range of stakeholders, shapes the education service's policies and helps to drive planning for improvement. The education service has appropriate stakeholder and learner representation on groups undertaking policy development. Such arrangements result in a high level of ownership of changes to policy and services, and have a clear impact on establishing improvement in performance and service quality at establishment level.

The authority has a planned framework for communication and consultation. This provides clear strategic and operational advice and identifies key stakeholder groups. The authority is committed to effective communication and full consultation with all learners and interacts regularly with a wide range of consultative groups. There is a clear overall policy framework for communication and for public performance reporting. Where there is a legal requirement to consult, this is done effectively. Consultation services provide value for money and very good feedback to stakeholders on outcomes.

Senior managers encourage and enable the active participation of stakeholders and learners in the work of the authority. Effective structures and systems are in place to support and encourage participation. Staff at all levels engage with learners and stakeholders. The authority has effective procedures and processes to enable sharing of information within and across inter-agency teams.

Level 2 QI Illustration

Identification of stakeholders omits some important groups. The views of some of the education service's stakeholders are sought but not on the full range of services. The process of involvement is not sustained beyond the early stages of a development or conversely is at too late a stage to have significant impact. It draws too heavily on the input of staff and does not sufficiently involve other stakeholders.

Information given to stakeholders about the outcomes of the authority is generally sound but not consistently systematic or comprehensive. There is no clear overall policy framework for communication and for public performance reporting. Only a limited range of communication methods is used. While a number of consultation mechanisms are used, some of them are not well matched to the context or differentiated sufficiently to the needs of groups. Those being consulted have only an incomplete understanding of the rationale, intended outcomes or processes of the exercise.

The active empowerment of participants does not feature strongly in the work of the authority. Participants do not always feel consulted about the nature of the activity in which they are participating. There are insufficient structures and systems in place to support and encourage participation. Although a majority of staff are committed to engaging with learners and stakeholders, staff attitudes towards learners and stakeholders are not consistently positive. There are insufficient procedures in place to enable effective communication and sharing of information within and across inter-agency teams.

How good is our management?

(KEY AREA 6: POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING)

QI 6.3 Operational planning

Themes:

- Developing, implementing and evaluating plans

- Structure and content of plans

- Use of management information

- Joint planning with partner organisations and services

- Planning for sustainability

At the heart of the education service's performance management and planning will be the service plan, its equivalent, or a series of mutually consistent plans including joint plans with other services such as CLD. The existence of documents in themselves can only be a partial reflection of effective management and planning, since the processes that surround both the development of the plan and its implementation are of obvious and critical importance. Improvement should be the explicit purpose of operational planning and guide its focus, methodologies and mechanisms for reporting and future action. Service planning will be embedded within the council's approach to community planning and clear links should exist between the community plan, children's services plan and other service plans.

Illustration QI Level 5

The education service has a clear framework for quality development including advice on school development planning, standards and quality reporting, and professional review and development. Performance planning and service planning are integral to the work of the service. A very well-managed planning cycle matches corporate and establishment work cycles and meets national requirements. The service rigorously evaluates delivery options taking account of challenge and competition.

The children's services plan fully reflects local and national priorities and covers the range of work of the education service. The presentation and structure of the plan, or different versions of the plan, are clear and precise and immediately accessible to the various users. The plan is informed by national and local priorities in education and CLD, and analysis of establishment development plans, Best Value reviews and quality audits. The service plan is taken forward very effectively through a series of action plans, drawn up by specific teams or individuals responsible for each major development. These action plans identify resources and indicate the links between planning and budget-setting procedures.

Illustration QI Level 5 – continued

Senior officers demonstrate a commitment to joint planning with partner organisations and services. Education service planning is structured in a way that supports integrated working. There is an appropriate focus on a multi-disciplinary approach to achieving the seven outcomes for children and young people and the four capacities for learners. Operational planning for integrated services is well articulated and coordinated to ensure the involvement of all partners. Partners are fully involved in planning, and where appropriate, implementation. Inter-agency planning has a positive impact on the quality of provision within establishments.

The approach to service planning is well understood and there is a clear, succinct format for each service to report on progress in addressing priorities and achieving outcomes. The service plan clearly sets out objectives in precise terms, linked well to criteria for success and identifies the person with lead responsibility for performance measures. Staff are clear about their roles in the monitoring and evaluation process. Members of the Directorate and other senior officers make systematic use of the service-planning process to monitor and manage the work of the service as a whole through a regular cycle of evaluation and reporting. The education service fulfils its statutory requirement to report annually on its success in meeting its improvement objectives as laid out in the service plan or equivalent. This reporting process is consistent with the requirements for public performance reporting under Best Value. Operational planning is undertaken with a view to ensuring the sustainability of provision.

Illustration QI Level 2

There is a process of performance management and planning but it has limited coherence. The planning cycle is unhelpful to some of the key users. Although supportive of quality development activities, the senior managers tend not to be actively involved. Performance management and service planning are not integral to the work of the department nor are they seen as key mechanisms to bring about continuous improvement. When planning, delivery options have not been fully considered.

The presentation and structure of the plan or different versions of the plan are not clear or sufficiently detailed. The plan includes too many or too few improvement objectives and is not central to the quality improvement work of the service. Education service planning is only partially linked to relevant plans and to local and national priorities. It is not sufficiently informed by appropriate and clear aims, priorities and statements of planned action.

The database of knowledge of the overall performance of the education service is accurate but some sources of evidence are not used or benchmarking is not always appropriate. Files are not up to date or knowledge is held too much in the head of an officer or with different aspects dispersed among too many officers. Officers' evaluations of establishment

Illustration QI Level 2 – continued

performance are generally accurate but lack convincing detail, or knowledge of establishments is inconsistent. There is a range of systems for monitoring and measuring performance but they do not always combine together effectively to provide comprehensive audit information.

Partner organisations and agencies have limited input into decision-making processes and areas of joint actions are not always fully effective. Where education service objectives involve working with other departments or agencies, partners are not always fully aware of their respective roles in implementation. Education service planning does not have a significant influence on joint or integrated service delivery at a neighbourhood level. It has a limited focus on multi-disciplinary and partnership approaches to service provision. Operational planning is only partially successful in coordinating services and partner organisations and agencies, including working with key partners from the community and the voluntary sector. There is a lack of consistency in involving partners in identifying and addressing needs. There is insufficient activity to ensure the long-term viability of projects.

How good is our management?

(KEY AREA 7: MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT OF STAFF)

QI 7.1 Sufficiency, recruitment and retention

Themes:

- Identifying and meeting human resource needs

- Recruitment, appointment and induction procedures

- Care and welfare

- Equality and fairness in recruitment and promotion

- Recognition

This indicator relates to the education service's effectiveness in managing the recruitment, appointment, induction and care and welfare of its staff. To provide a high quality service to its community, the education service will need to have a clear understanding of its human resource requirements and effective procedures to recruit, retain, support and develop its staff to a high level. This will entail the establishment of proactive and imaginative recruitment procedures and clear staffing standards. The principles of equality and fairness, together with a commitment to recognise and celebrate achievement, will underpin the education service's philosophy and practices in its management and support of staff.

Illustration QI Level 5

The council has sufficient staff to deliver its services. The education service has an overall human resource management framework, supported by a comprehensive range of clear policies covering all key areas. The service has established clear staffing standards for all areas including centrally-deployed staff, teachers and support staff in pre-school centres, schools and establishments, and staff in all other services under its management.

The education service has established effective recruitment procedures. All staff appointment procedures have been developed in partnership with the relevant trade unions/professional associations and are clearly stated and publicly available. In appointing members of staff to posts within the education department, due regard is paid to the skills, aptitudes and experience of all applicants and of the relationship of these to the stated selection criteria, job outlines and person specifications for each post. The service has an effective induction policy and procedures for all new staff.

The education service has clearly established a positive culture in which staff are aware of their rights and responsibilities. Every manager is aware of the service's duty of care to its employees and an appreciation of what that entails. Within its human resources policy framework, the education service has a range of policies and procedures which set out clearly the standards of conduct, care and welfare which all staff in the service can expect and which are expected of them.

The council has a well-established equal opportunities policy relevant to the needs of those who work in and use the education service. There is a clearly defined set of principles and procedures which underpins the education service's approach to recruitment and support of its staff. Issues of equality and fairness including race, religion, ethnicity, disability and gender are fully addressed and effectively monitored, including through statistical methods.

The education service has established an ethos of positive recognition and celebration of achievement, within which all staff are encouraged and supported to do their best. Senior managers regularly communicate with the workforce to identify staff successes, examples of best practice and innovative practice. Staff achievement and success are appropriately recognised by the council or the education service.

Illustration QI Level 2

The council has not been successful in recruiting staff to several key posts. This has a negative impact on the quality of aspects of provision and creates excessive work loads for some staff. The education service has produced a number of personnel policies but there are important gaps in key policy areas. While staffing standards have been produced for the education service's establishments, the council has not yet developed such standards for all areas of service provision or for all groups of staff. This leads to cases of confusion, misinterpretation or challenge.

The education service's recruitment procedures generally operate satisfactorily but tend to be reactive rather than planned and proactive. Appointment procedures are inconsistent, open to interpretation or fail to recognise or align the skills, aptitudes and experience of applicants to clearly defined selection criteria. Staff induction courses are available but senior managers have not systematically customised these to support the induction and development needs of different groups of staff.

Staff are not always fully aware of their rights and responsibilities. Managers are sometimes uncertain about the parameters of the education service's duty of care to its employees. Personnel policies do not adequately specify the standards of conduct, care and welfare which staff can expect or which are expected of them.

The council has produced a written policy on equality and fairness but this has not adequately influenced or been built into staff recruitment and appointment procedures nor has it been customised to meet the needs of those who work for or make use of the education service. The education service's job advertisement, recruitment and appointment procedures contain clear statements about its commitment to equality and fairness but these procedures do not always meet the needs or expectations of minority groups, nor are relevant statistics routinely monitored. Staff with disabilities find it difficult to access and work in many venues operated by the authority.

Staff sometimes feel that senior managers are remote and that their own achievements frequently go unnoticed or feel that there is, within the department, a blame culture rather than an ethos of reward for success. Senior managers do not formally and systematically identify examples of best or innovative practice or are, in the main, not well aware of staff achievements across establishments and services.

How good is our management?

(KEY AREA 7: MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT OF STAFF)

QI 7.2 Deployment and teamwork

Themes:

- Appropriateness and clarity of remits
- Deployment to achieve planned priorities
- Teamworking
- Communication and involvement in decision-making

This indicator is concerned with the effectiveness of individual and team contributions. The main asset of any education service is its people. In order to achieve its objectives and to implement the service plan, staff need to be deployed effectively and develop effective teamwork and communication. Their work should be focused on the achievement of the education service's planned priorities and improvement objectives whilst also responding to key stakeholders' needs.

Illustration QI Level 5

All members of staff, including those deployed centrally by the education authority and those employed in pre-school centres, schools, establishments, and services, or by partner agencies, have been provided with clearly stated job descriptions and remits. Remits relate clearly to the improvement objectives of the authority. The council has developed clear lines of communication and accountability for its staff, in line with its scheme of delegation. Staff are appropriately empowered, challenged and supported.

The job remits and activities of all staff employed by the education authority articulate clearly with the authority's statement of improvement objectives. Staff are generally well aware of the authority's service plan or equivalent and have a good understanding of the role they play in the organisation.

An ethos of teamworking has been established within the education service. Each team has a clear structure, composition and task-focused approach. Clear remits, lines of communication and accountability define the education service's approach to teamworking. Each team within the education service has produced a development plan/improvement plan. This plan relates the team's activities clearly to the stated priorities of the education service. Each team leader regularly monitors team and individual performance against achievement of agreed priorities, outcomes or targets. Senior managers meet regularly with team leaders to monitor and evaluate team performance.

Illustration QI Level 5 – continued

Staff deployed centrally and those located in schools, establishments and services across the education authority are very positive about the frequency, sufficiency and quality of information they receive. In general, they feel well consulted on major issues which affect their working practices. Staff feel that they have good opportunities to raise concerns or constructive suggestions with senior managers and that such are considered seriously. Staff generally consider senior managers to be visible and accessible. To take forward a range of developments, initiatives and innovations, the department has established a systematic network of working groups (or equivalent).

Illustration QI Level 2

Most staff have detailed job descriptions and remits but there are important gaps or they do not always relate clearly to the improvement objectives of the authority. As a consequence, some staff do not always carry out their duties in an appropriately focused fashion. While the education service has established clear lines of communication and accountability for most staff, some feel isolated or uncertain about their roles and responsibilities. Senior managers lack confidence or demonstrate a reluctance to empower their staff to take decisions, and generally take such decisions themselves.

Staff remits and job activities do not always align with the education service's improvement objectives. Staff do not always understand the main improvement objectives of the education service, the context of its work and the importance of their contribution to achieving priorities, outcomes and targets.

While staff are, in the main, employed in teams, some individuals do not relate to a specific team, or teamworking is generally not well developed across the education service. Deployment of teams and of individual team members is not always linked to agreed priorities. Not all departmental teams have produced a development plan/improvement plan or, where these are in place, staff and stakeholders have not been suitably engaged. Performance monitoring within some teams, and of teams by senior management, is lacking in focus, consistency and rigour.

Ineffective communication or inadequate consultation on major issues sometimes give rise to complaints from staff. Senior managers can seem to be distant or remote. There are few opportunities to raise concerns or put forward constructive suggestions for service improvement. The education service has established a good range of working groups (or equivalent). However, staff sometimes feel that few opportunities exist to become involved in the work of these groups. Selection criteria for being invited to join a working group are sometimes unclear.

How good is our management?

(KEY AREA 7: MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT OF STAFF)

QI 7.3 Development and support

Themes:

- Processes for staff review and support

- Training and development

- Joint training with staff from partner agencies

This indicator relates to the education service's management of its review processes and to the provision of training and development opportunities for its staff. This includes multi-disciplinary training and development for all education service and partner agency staff involved in the delivery of integrated children's services. It evaluates the education service's effectiveness in monitoring and reviewing the performance of its staff against agreed criteria, and facilitating their personal and professional development. All staff must be able to develop their skills to maximum effect in order to achieve continuous improvement in children's and young people's learning, attainment and achievement and in the quality of services to the community. Staff have an entitlement to receive a formal programme and record of professional review and development (PRD) or CPD.

Illustration QI Level 5

The education service has a formal CPD/PRD framework for all staff deployed centrally and in its schools and services. Senior managers have translated the framework into clear and user-friendly procedures and processes, all of which are well supported by relevant documentation and initial training for staff at all levels. The review process leads to the identification of strengths, skills and development needs.

The education service demonstrates a clear commitment to developing its entire staff. Training and development programmes arise from formal identification of staff development needs through the PRD/CPD processes, and from authority-driven developments aimed at achieving national or local priorities. The education service has a comprehensive catalogue of staff development opportunities, based on an audit of development needs arising from the staff review process and the education service's key priorities.

Senior managers from the education service and relevant partner agencies have a joint forum which meets on a regular basis to discuss the provision of joint/inter-agency training. Senior education officers and their partner agency colleagues create opportunities to bring their respective staff together, on a regular and planned basis, to provide joint training and development on shared priorities and inter-agency practices. Evidence is available to demonstrate that joint training and development for education service and partner agency staff has led to quantifiable improvements in identified, stated and measurable aspects of children's services.

Illustration QI Level 2

Most staff employed by the education service participate in a PRD/CPD programme, but an overall framework does not exist across the service as a whole. A significant number of staff are not reviewed on a regular basis. The PRD/CPD process can sometimes be open to misinterpretation and its application varies in quality and rigour across the education service. Associated documentation is not always clear or user-friendly and some staff may not have received initial PRD training. The review process does not clearly identify individuals' strengths, skills and development needs.

The education service provides a good range of in-service courses and development opportunities for staff, but they do not always derive from or relate clearly to identified staff development needs or education service priorities. Provision is patchy and groups of staff have needs which are sometimes omitted. Senior officers have produced an in-service catalogue which many headteachers and other managers use, but the catalogue does not systematically take account of identified staff development needs or education service priorities. As such, it is limited in its use or usefulness.

Meetings take place involving senior staff from the education service and its partner agencies, but these are neither programmed regularly nor characterised by shared agendas. Joint training is seldom discussed or viewed as a priority. The education service and its partners have created few opportunities to bring their respective staff together for training and development purposes. There is no evidence to demonstrate that inter-agency training and development has led to quantifiable improvements in the provision of children's services.

How good is our management?

(KEY AREA 8: PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCES)

QI 8.1 Partnership working

Themes:

- Clarity of purposes and aims

- Service level agreements, roles and remits

- Working across agencies and disciplines

- Staff roles in partnerships

This indicator refers to the role of the education service in promoting and encouraging effective partnership working with learners, staff, other stakeholders, services and partner agencies. A central role of the education service is to secure and sustain cohesive and meaningful partnerships which will take forward its strategic vision, values and aims. To encourage and support this process the service will require to bring key partners together at the strategic decision-making level. To fulfil the requirements of Best Value and to conform to accepted good practice, there must be mechanisms in place to link leadership and management decisions to the needs of all learners and the community at large. There is, therefore, an expectation that all stakeholders including, as appropriate, other partners should be actively involved in service development. This will require a range of approaches to consultation and communication that can be applied across the service's areas of activity. There should also be in place a PPR framework to communicate clearly with the full range of stakeholders and partners.

Illustration QI Level 5

The education service establishes a strategic framework with all key partners within which joint working can be established and can flourish. To achieve sustainability and measurable impact, meaningful partnership working is built into strategic planning at the highest levels. It is monitored rigorously through the service's structures for accountability. A culture is established which encourages all education staff, learners and partners to be involved. Service level agreements are established at strategic level and are monitored and evaluated at operational levels, within the education service and all partner agencies, to ensure that each has a positive impact. Consultation and communication with partners and agencies is regular, structured, supportive and efficient.

The education service works effectively in a range of multi-disciplinary partnerships. Productive partnerships exist with key services, voluntary and community organisations and other public and private sector bodies. The education service encourages, develops and secures the commitment of key partners to multi-disciplinary working. It engages partner agencies in the planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of joint projects and multi-disciplinary working. Multi-disciplinary working contributes effectively to the achievement of the vision, values and aims of the education service and to meeting the needs and aspirations of learners, stakeholders and partners.

Illustration QI Level 5 – continued

Staff from the education service and partner agencies are very effective in a wide range of partnerships. They demonstrate or support leadership within the context of partnership working. They consistently seek opportunities for improvement and development in all partnerships. Education managers plan their engagement with partners to ensure the active participation of all relevant people and agencies. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities, what matters most and how their time will be best spent.

Illustration QI Level 2

The education service has made little progress in establishing a strategic framework with all key partners within which joint working can be established and can flourish. Partnership projects are frequently built into operational rather than strategic planning and often lack the necessary focus. Although a range of monitoring and evaluation techniques is used, methods are not applied rigorously nor are they part of the service's structures for accountability. Insufficient effort is made to encourage partners and stakeholders to be involved in meaningful joint working. Service level agreements tend to be established at operational level and are not part of strategic planning. There is little evidence of a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluation of the impact and outcomes. Consultation and communication with partners and agencies is not always efficient or supportive in nature.

Partnerships with key services, voluntary and community organisations and other public and private sector agencies produce limited results. The education service has not yet secured the commitment of key partners to multi-disciplinary working. The education service is inconsistent in its approach to the engagement of partner agencies in the planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of joint projects and multi-disciplinary working. Multi-disciplinary working has an insufficient impact on the achievement of the vision, values and aims of the education service and does not have a clear focus on meeting the needs and aspirations of learners, stakeholders and partners.

Education staff are not key members of partnerships or those representing education are not at the appropriate level of seniority. They are engaged in a small range of partnerships. Their leadership of partnerships, or support to those leading partnerships, is indecisive and lacks focus. They are insufficiently proactive in seeking opportunities for involvement and development in partnerships. They may not have allocated sufficient time for the tasks involved. Education managers undertake insufficient planning for engaging with partners to ensure the active participation of relevant people and agencies. Within partnership working senior education managers are unfocused in their day-to-day practice and management of time. There is little evidence of a commitment to continuous improvement through partnership working. There is a lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities, what matters most and how to make the best use of available time.

How good is our management?

(KEY AREA 8: PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCES)

QI 8.2 Financial management

Themes:

- Setting budgets and enterprise in securing funding
- Range and implementation of financial procedures and controls
- Processes for collecting, and communicating evaluating financial information
- Providing Best Value

This indicator relates to the capacity of the education service to deliver planned national and local priorities. This will require the education service to have developed a rigorous, thorough and imaginative approach to financial management. Such an approach will require high level managerial planning and control coupled with rigorous operational management, monitoring and review of a wide range of financial systems and procedures. The working relationship between the education service and the finance department will be critically important. The indicator also relates to the education service's capacity to deliver Best Value through its approach to financial management.

Illustration QI Level 5

The council's budget construction process is corporately driven by elected members and the chief executive and is based on a three-year budget cycle which has the delivery of national and local priorities at its core. This budgeting process demonstrates clear links to the service planning process. Budgets and financial matters are discussed regularly and rigorously at all management levels including, where appropriate, corporate level. There are clear procedures in place to deal rigorously with budgetary variances. Elected members are kept well informed of budgetary matters. The council and its committees routinely receive from officers, both financial reports and reports with a financial implication, in line with the scheme of delegation.

The council regularly receives high quality financial reports from senior finance and education service staff and actively monitors budgetary performance across all service areas, making well-informed decisions as appropriate. The education committee (or equivalent) regularly receives and considers high quality financial reports from senior officers and makes clear financial decisions in line with its delegated powers. There is a systematic and well-organised approach to budgetary administration which provides senior education staff with easily interpreted, accurate and reliable data to allow well-informed decisions to be taken. This process is routinely supported by the production of regular budget reports which are designed to monitor committed expenditure. Arrangements for financial planning and expenditure are transparent, dynamic in nature and fully utilise a wide range of management and performance information. Financial procedures are well known to budget holders and all other staff with financial responsibilities, all of whom are supported by clear and comprehensive procedures. The authority has established a fully effective scheme of devolved school management (DSM).

Illustration QI Level 5 – continued

Senior managers in the education service have established fully effective working practices with their colleagues in the finance department. This results in a two-way flow of reliable, accurate financial information to enable key decisions to be taken where appropriate. Fully effective financial and administrative procedures have been developed to plan and manage both mainline and non-mainline (specific grant and external funding) budgets. These procedures allow both planned and committed expenditure to be tracked.

The council has established a clear policy on Best Value which informs all departments generally and the education service specifically of its expectations. The education service has set out a comprehensive programme of Best Value reviews (or equivalent) covering all aspects of educational and support services. The education service's financial planning and management regime is characterised by efficiency, effectiveness, elimination of duplication and the provision of high quality services and value for money. All aspects are governed by the principles of Best Value. Likewise, all education service budgets, systems and procedures are formally reviewed on a regular basis, with the aim of securing continuous improvement and Best Value. Financial planning and decision making are characterised by the principles of option appraisal and Best Value.

Illustration QI Level 2

The council's budget construction process is almost exclusively driven by the current financial year's budget and makes only marginal provision for the delivery of national and local priorities. Links to the service planning process are tenuous. There is regular discussion of financial matters by senior management but such discussions lack a clear focus and do not necessarily form a basis for well-informed financial decisions to be taken. Elected members receive reports containing financial information but these are often general in nature and frequently lack reliable, issue-specific information on which to base decisions. They are not always presented in a user-friendly format which is easily interpreted and understood by members.

The council receives reports of a financial nature, but these are limited in frequency, detail, specificity or reliability. As a result elected members are not always well enough briefed to make informed decisions. Likewise, the education committee (or equivalent) receives financial reports which sometimes lack the quality of information and advice required by elected members in arriving at informed decisions. The education service has established financial procedures. Although sound in themselves, they have neither been fully integrated with the council's and the finance department's corporate financial systems nor well supported by user-friendly, clear and accurate documentation, staff development and training. Arrangements for financial planning lack rigour and are not flexible enough to accommodate financial trends or a range of management and performance information. There is no formal system in place rigorously and systematically to monitor, review and improve financial management and performance within the education service. The education service has established a DSM scheme but its terms are not always clear to central and establishment-based staff. These are open to interpretation and inconsistent application, or the scheme is limited in its range and implementation across the education service.

Although liaison takes place between education and finance staff on financial matters no clear and consistent working practices have been agreed. The transfer of information is reactive and issue-specific rather than planned and proactive or it lacks reliability, accuracy and rigour. The education service's financial and administrative procedures do not make sufficient provision for the planning and management of non-mainline budgets with the result that expenditure in this area is reactive, creating potential for underspends or overspends.

The council has established a Best Value policy but this has only minimal relevance to the education service which has not yet set out clearly its plans to review all services. While a number of specific service reviews have been carried out within the education service, these have not emerged formally from a rigorous self-evaluation of its performance. Such reviews are therefore reactive and do not necessarily relate to those services in most need of examination or they lack rigour and focus. Financial planning and management within the education service is well organised in itself but lacks any means routinely to assess its efficiency and effectiveness. As a result inefficiencies, including over/under provision and over/underspends, sometimes occur. There are no formal systems in place routinely to review departmental, establishment and service budgets and financial procedures. The education service does not routinely employ the principles of option appraisal and Best Value in its financial planning and management.

How good is our management?

(KEY AREA 8: PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCES)

QI 8.3 Resource management

Themes:

- Accommodation

- Resources and equipment

- Efficiency and effectiveness in use of resources

- Health and safety

The management of finances is closely linked to the wider management of resources. This indicator sets out to evaluate the effectiveness of the education service's approach to the management of its resources in the widest sense. The education service will need to demonstrate that it is fully aware of the range of resources at its disposal, from both internal and external sources, and that it has developed a planned, proactive approach to resource management. This provides a firm base from which to promote service development and continuous improvement.

Illustration QI Level 5

The council has developed, in line with national guidance, a comprehensive asset management strategy/plan which makes provision for the management and development of its school building estate. There are clear links at corporate and education service level between resource management/development and both the service planning and budget processes. Elected members and senior officers have assessed and made provision for resource allocation in the short, medium and long term. Resource planning, development and management operate on the principles of option appraisal and Best Value. This approach has yielded significant service improvements.

The education service's approach to resource management ensures that resources are allocated to meet national and local improvement objectives and priorities. The education service's performance is routinely reported to elected members. The principles of Best Value underpin the education service's approach to resource management and it has developed a clear programme of Best Value reviews (or similar). These use performance information linked to benchmarking and other relevant parameters, to deliver continuous improvement in efficiency and effectiveness. Senior managers regularly review resource management information, performance and proposals for performance improvement.

Illustration QI Level 2

There is no clear corporate rationale for allocation of resources to education or, alternatively, it does not match closely the national guidance on resource allocation. Senior managers have a generalised view, lacking in detail and specificity, of the resources which are at the disposal of the education service. This partial view may derive from incomplete or unreliable information or from informal systems and sources. The council has developed an asset management strategy/plan but it is neither comprehensive in its coverage of the education service's school estate nor sufficiently detailed, for example on proposed rationalisation or planned capital investment plans relative to schools and other building stock. Links between resource allocation and the service planning and budget processes are tenuous at best. Elected members and senior officers have only made provision for resource allocation in the short term. The education service's management of resources provides only limited evidence of adherence to the principles of option appraisal and Best Value. As a result enhanced efficiency and effectiveness cannot be delivered consistently. There is limited evidence of the education service's approach to resource management yielding discernible service improvements. Many of the authority's buildings are insufficiently accessible to people with disabilities.

Resource management and allocation are not linked closely enough to national and local improvement objectives. Management information on resources is incomplete or variable in quality, accuracy and reliability. The education service has initiated some Best Value reviews (or similar) but its approach is one of reacting to prevailing circumstances rather than being planned and comprehensive. The range of management techniques and tools used in such reviews is limited. The education service's approach to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of its resource management is inconsistent and unplanned.

How good is our management?

(KEY AREA 8: PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCES)

QI 8.4 Information systems

Themes:

- Data collection, storage and retrieval

- Linkages between, and sharing of information

- Processes for analysing, evaluating and using information

A management information system (MIS) is a system used to enter, store, manipulate and retrieve information about the education authority, its services, establishments, staff and pupils. A well-run, computerised management and administration system supports the key business processes of a modern organisation and provides the means of monitoring provision and improving effectiveness. A MIS should be seen in the context of helping an education authority to deliver its services and achieve its improvement objectives. Analyses of the data can give managers (including those based in establishments), staff and stakeholders a more informed view of current practice in the education service. It can provide information needed to help staff to raise the achievements of children and young people. Because data sharing is a central aspect of the MIS, security is clearly important. Different levels of security are appropriate for different user groups.

Illustration QI Level 5

A structured and rigorously observed system is in place for central and coordinated collection, analysis and evaluation of educational data. The MIS provides the education service and establishments with access to robust information to inform planning for improvement and to target support and resources more effectively. The education service promotes the effective use of the MIS through agreeing and defining core sets of data and providing training in the use of the system as a management tool. The use of the MIS is a major contributor to the effective delivery of services and the achievement of improvement objectives.

The council has in place an information and communication technology (ICT) strategy for education. Good links and working relationships are maintained with the corporate ICT section. The MIS is part of the council ICT strategy which allows the education service to communicate electronically information such as budgets directly to establishment MIS systems. The system gives managers a comprehensive overview of the work of establishments. It also enables the education service and establishments to focus on the outcomes for individual learners and groups of learners. The education service provides very effective support to establishments and services in the systematic collection, collation and analysis of data on budgets, staffing, attainment, attendance and exclusions.

Illustration QI Level 5 – continued

The system of access controls is tailored to the needs of the users, allowing quick access to address needs. The education service and establishments use information generated for administration, planning and monitoring. The storage, filing and retrieval of information complies with the *Data Protection* and *Freedom of Information Acts.* There are clear agreements and protocols shared with staff, partner agencies and stakeholders regarding the confidentiality of data and the requirements of legislation. Protocols have been agreed with establishments, partner agencies and other services for data exchanges.

The education service provides effective central coordination and interpretation of data. It collates and analyses a range of data to monitor and demonstrate improvements in performance. The MIS is used to identify trends, and provide benchmark and comparative information for establishments and officers to use in planning for improvement. Well-established and very effective report formats facilitate identification of high and low performing aspects of the work of establishments and departments so that support and challenge can be targeted. Effective systems are in place to track learners' attainment, including that of vulnerable children and young people, such as looked after children. The system enables high performance to be recognised and under-performance to be quickly identified and addressed. Headteachers and officers have access to effective training in the analysis of attainment data.

Illustration QI Level 2

A MIS is in place for central collection of educational data but it is not coordinated and as yet provides limited data for analysis. It provides the education service and establishments with access to information but this has limited impact on planning for improvement or in assisting in targeting support and resources more effectively. The education service has not yet reached agreement on the core sets of data nor has there been sufficient training of key staff. The range of data which is maintained is limited and this prevents the use of the MIS from impacting positively on the achievement of improvement objectives.

The council has in place an ICT strategy for education. However, the links and working relationships with the corporate ICT section are ineffective. This leads in some cases to frustrations and delays for central staff and establishments in the electronic communication of information such as budgets and administrative returns. The system is not yet sufficiently developed to give managers a comprehensive overview of the work of establishments. The education service's support to establishments and services in the collection, collation and analysis of data is not sufficiently focused to engender confidence in working practices.

Illustration QI Level 2 – continued

The system of access controls is cumbersome and does not always meet the needs of the users. The education service and establishments make limited use of the information generated for administration, planning and monitoring. The data held does not meet the full range of information requested nor is this information always readily available in an appropriate form. Written protocols on the exchange and confidentiality of data and the requirements of legislation are not generally well understood by staff, stakeholders or partners.

There is limited evidence of the education service providing the necessary central coordination and interpretation of data. The education service collates and analyses a range of data but this is insufficient for staff to monitor and demonstrate improvements in performance. Some important information is not included in the collation and analysis. The MIS does not play a major role in identifying trends, and providing benchmark and comparative information for establishments and officers to use in planning for improvement. Systems are in place to track pupils' attainment, but these tend to be paper based or depend on software packages developed in establishments in isolation from the education authority. The system does not provide reliable enough evidence to identify high or under-performance. Analysis and evaluation of statistical data held within the MIS does not play a significant role in self-evaluation and continuous improvement. Headteachers and officers have access to limited training in the analysis of attainment data.

How good is our leadership?

(KEY AREA 9: LEADERSHIP)

QI 9.1 Vision, values and aims

Themes:

- Appropriateness and coherence with corporate and community vision, values and aims
- Sharing and sustaining the vision
- Promotion of positive attitudes to social and cultural diversity

This indicator relates to the corporate leadership of the authority and to the way in which it exercises its functions through unity of purpose. This will be expressed through the authority's effectiveness in establishing direction through its wider community vision. To demonstrate good practice, the authority will have to ensure that this vision actively influences practice at the point of delivery. This indicator focuses on the extent to which vision, values and aims guide planning for and impact on maintaining and improving the quality of services for learners, their families and the community.

Illustration QI Level 5

The aims convey a distinctive picture of the aspirations for, and expectations of the service. There are clear links between the vision, values and aims contained within the community plan, the council's corporate plan and the education authority's strategic, improvement and operational plans. Clear and comprehensive statements of this vision, along with values and expectations, direct the work of the local authority, the education service and its partner agencies. These statements encompass the purposes of education, as well as national priorities and national expectations for children, young people and adult learners.

Leaders have established a shared vision for the authority. The council's vision, values and aims for the education service provide a widely recognised and shared set of aspirations and expectations for all stakeholders. Establishments, services and partners have a very good awareness of the authority's vision, values and aims and of their own specific roles in their delivery. The aims have been developed through involving a wide range of stakeholders and clearly set out the authority's commitment to a culture of empowerment, improvement, innovation and service excellence. The vision, values and aims are continually revisited and reinforced in events and activities which result in a strong sense of common purpose.

The aims and vision set out clear expectations for equality and social justice. Elected members and senior officers demonstrate commitment to and provide a clear lead in emphasising equality issues. Education managers and all heads of establishments and services are strongly committed to the aims and vision for equality and promote social and cultural diversity. Plans at all levels address the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Illustration QI Level 2

Leaders in the authority have established a vision which directs the work of the education authority but does not significantly impact on processes or outcomes of the authority and its partner agencies. The respective aims within community, corporate and departmental plans are insufficiently linked. Education managers do not always demonstrate the same level of commitment to corporate priorities. The purposes of education and national expectations and aspirations are insufficiently emphasised or explained. The vision, values and aims of the authority have only limited relevance to the main activities of the department and to its establishments and services.

Leaders have established a vision which directs the work of the authority but it has not been communicated sufficiently well to stakeholders. The authority's aims convey only a partial picture of the aspirations of local elected members for the authority. In developing the authority's aims, involvement of stakeholders has been insufficient and, consequently, understanding and ownership of the aims is limited. The aims are not sufficiently embedded in the work of the authority and do not emphasise a commitment to a culture of improvement, service excellence and innovation.

The aims and vision set out expectations for equality and social justice. These are not yet fully embedded in an appropriate range of operational policies and procedures. Education managers and heads of establishment are committed to promoting social and cultural diversity but this commitment is not always translated into action.

How good is our leadership?

(KEY AREA 9: LEADERSHIP)

QI 9.2 Leadership and direction

Themes:

- Strategic planning and communication

- Strategic deployment of resources

- Evaluation of risk

This indicator is fundamentally about strategic planning for future sustainable development. It focuses on the mapping out of future developments which are challenging, realisable and sustainable. This indicator also relates to the success of senior managers in linking the authority's vision to strategic deployment of resources to deliver services, secure Best Value and manage sustainable development. Significant current and planned organisational activities will take place within a culture which supports and enables effective risk management.

Illustration QI Level 5

Senior elected members provide officers with strong political leadership and direction and demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement. Together, they communicate and demonstrate a very clear view of what the council is aiming to achieve. Senior officers develop effective and strategic business plans and identify key actions, intended outcomes and major targets. Planning documents are accessible, succinct and set out key priorities within a well-managed planning cycle. Planning leads to sustainable change. Channels of communication are effective. There is strong leadership and direction on corporate priorities. Staff take full account of the need for succession planning, securing accountability, making appropriate use of data for informed decision-making and evaluating impact and outcomes. Strong leadership helps to steer individuals and teams successfully through the difficulties and challenges associated with strategic planning.

Senior elected members make transparent and evidence-based decisions on the allocation of resources to education from the local authority budget. Senior managers provide strong leadership in targeting resources at key agreed objectives and achieving Best Value. They have developed a clear Best Value approach to deliver continuous improvement. The authority has in place a very clear strategic planning framework which takes account of finances, asset management and human resources and which articulates well with its service planning cycle. The culture is one that is aware of risks. Risks are balanced against the benefits that may arise from taking these risks. Systems are in place to consult relevant partners and stakeholders in relation to risk management.

Illustration QI Level 2

Senior elected members and senior officers of the education service do not have a consistently clear view of the strategic role of the education service in planning for improvement. As a result the work of the authority is taken forward mainly at an operational level and change is often not sustainable. Elected members and officers do not always demonstrate a clear or mutual understanding of the national context or local priorities. Officers are sometimes unclear about political priorities while members feel that they are not always provided with consistently high-quality advice and support. The service director does not systematically inform the department's senior management team of identified community and corporate priorities. The department operates in isolation from the corporate team. Insufficient account is taken of the need for careful succession planning, securing accountability, making appropriate use of data for informed decision-making and evaluating impact and outcomes.

Resource allocation is not closely enough linked to key agreed objectives. The rationale for the strategic deployment of resources to education is not transparent nor does it match closely national guidance. The department has initiated some Best Value reviews but its approach is one of reacting to prevailing circumstances rather than being planned and comprehensive. While it has in place a strategic planning framework, this does not take full account of finances, asset management and human resources and it only articulates to a limited extent with its service planning cycle. Financial decision-making pays insufficient attention to sustainability. The department secures improvement through effective project management and resource management but does not consistently manage financial risk effectively and efficiently.

How good is our leadership?

(KEY AREA 9: LEADERSHIP)

QI 9.3 Developing people and partnerships

Themes

- Development of leadership capacity

- Building and sustaining relationships

- Teamwork and partnerships

This indicator relates to the effectiveness of the authority in building capacity for leadership at all levels and securing positive working relationships and successful outcomes with stakeholders and partner agencies. The indicator relates to the ethos and culture of the service and beyond, through its operations corporately within the council and in joint working with its partner agencies. The effectiveness of the senior management team, their deployment, responsibilities and co-working in relation to organisational requirements and key strengths are relevant. Delegation to and empowerment of staff and partners are important features, alongside the development and support of effective teamwork.

Illustration QI Level 5

Leaders model a wide range of effective leadership skills and motivate others to give of their best. The range and balance of skills, personal qualities and experience make for a very effective senior management team. The service director and the senior management team exemplify the authority's approach to quality improvement through active leadership and personal involvement in improvement strategies and activities. There is an empowering culture of improvement and an understanding that all staff, at whatever level, have a key role to play in taking forward the work of the authority. Staff feel able and confident to exercise initiative, share responsibility and adopt lead roles in their own areas. They understand their own leadership roles and those of others. The structures in place draw upon the collective knowledge, experience and personal interests of a wide range of staff and create opportunities for staff to lead projects. Effective systems are in place to promote and evaluate the impact of leadership programmes, sustainable developments and succession planning.

Leaders have developed a supportive work environment in which people share a sense of responsibility to improve the quality of services. Talents are identified and promoted. Working relationships are built on trust and reflect a genuine concern for staff and relevant partners. Systems are in place to help people tackle challenging problems, share information and deal with difficulties. Staff and partners have regular opportunities to share ideas, review their work and learn from each other. There are regular opportunities to give and receive constructive feedback. Staff are encouraged and supported to do their personal best. Their achievements are recognised.

There is a high level of commitment to partnership working and team development. Leaders are proactive in establishing strong links with establishments, stakeholders, partners, agencies and other council services and lead joint improvement activities. They are successful in mobilising and focusing the commitment and enthusiasm of staff in establishments and services and of key partners and stakeholders to secure continuous improvement. There is effective multi-disciplinary working and a positive impact on service users.

An ethos of teamwork and collegiality is evident at all levels of the organisation. There is a high level of participation and engagement by relevant partners. Team performance is regularly evaluated against agreed objectives and targets. Staff at all levels have developed and participate in a range of teams throughout the service each having a clearly focused role and remit.

Illustration QI Level 2

Individual members of the senior team demonstrate leadership skills in a few areas but there are important weaknesses in others which are key to the effective leadership of the authority. There are some important gaps or weaknesses in the range and balance of the skills, abilities and experience within the senior management team, impacting on the overall effectiveness of the team. The culture of the department, although positive, does not convey a full sense of challenge, change or progress. Senior elected members and senior officers of the education service do not have a consistently clear view of their own leadership roles and those of others. The service director and his/her management team are not always successful in gaining the commitment of key staff in establishments and services or external agencies and other key stakeholders. As a result there is confusion about who is leading what, and a lack of ownership of key initiatives. There is a dependency culture where staff feel inhibited about taking the initiative and are overly-dependent upon others. Insufficient account is taken of the need for leadership training and development and succession planning.

The quality of relationships and the culture of the work environment are too variable across the authority and within departments and/or establishments. Staff in some departments are not fully supported in their work and their contributions go unrecognised. Relationships with senior staff are inconsistent and interactions with other staff and/or partners inhibit the delivery of quality services. Staff have opportunities to meet and discuss programmes of work but these are insufficiently frequent. Systems are in place for giving and receiving feedback but the atmosphere is not conducive to open and honest dialogue. As a result, the outcomes of such meetings are not well focused and have little impact. The achievements of staff and partners are not regularly recognised or celebrated.

Managers have built and sustain effective working relationships with a narrow range of key partners but other relevant potential partnerships are under developed. There are some examples of effective partnership working but the overall picture is inconsistent. Senior staff do not systematically demonstrate a commitment to partnership working nor focus strongly enough on collaborative working and shared responsibility. They do not sufficiently evaluate their own performance individually or as a team. They maintain effective communication with a narrow range of interested partners, agencies and stakeholders. They undertake insufficient planning with partners to ensure effective multi-agency working. Relationships and interaction with colleagues, service users, partner organisations and the public can be inconsistent and punctuated by misunderstandings, lack of clarity and tensions. Departmental teams may work well as individual units. In general, teamwork is not well established and, where teams are in operation, objectives and targets lack specificity or team performance is not routinely evaluated against agreed criteria.

How good is our leadership?

(KEY AREA 9: LEADERSHIP)

QI 9.4 Leadership of change and improvement

Themes:

- Support and challenge

- Creativity, innovation and step change

- Continuous improvement

This indicator is concerned with the effectiveness of the leadership of the education authority to maintain high levels of quality, deliver continuous improvement, and work towards achieving excellence in the quality of provision for all learners. A critically important component of the leadership function is the need for senior managers, heads of establishment and stakeholders to challenge staff continuously to improve the quality of provision for learners, by setting demanding but realistic performance targets and by providing high-level support to assist them to achieve these. The indicator also relates to the ability and success of the senior management team systematically to encourage and support innovative and effective practices which bring about positive step changes in learners' experiences.

Illustration QI Level 5

Senior managers actively and systematically take leading roles in ensuring appropriate support and challenge. They set demanding performance targets for the service. They challenge staff and teams to improve their performance, including their own team, monitor performance and outcomes and support continuous improvement and the pursuit of excellence. They align people, structures and systems to secure improvement.

Senior managers have a very good strategic overview of what constitutes best practice within the organisation and regularly explore, research and adopt innovative practice being taken forward in other organisations. They routinely use the results of self-evaluation exercises, Best Value and other service reviews to consider new methods of service delivery and innovative approaches aimed at enhancing the quality of provision. Senior managers welcome and support innovation. They lead and challenge staff at all levels in schools and services. They encourage staff to contribute suggestions to enhance the quality of learning and teaching and of service provision. Senior managers and heads of establishment apply the principles and practices of risk management to proposed changes and innovations. Examples of excellence and innovative practice are celebrated widely. Innovative practice has led to qualitative improvements in learning and teaching and in service delivery. Senior managers lead and manage change effectively and strategically by prioritising and focusing on a manageable number of high priority initiatives and communicating them to staff at all levels.

Illustration QI Level 5 – continued

The service director plays a very strong and focused leading role in leading the authority's commitment to continuously improving performance, service quality, impact and outcomes. He or she is well supported by the senior management team, all of whom have clearly focused quality improvement roles and responsibilities. Heads of establishments and other key managers replicate such leadership in the authority's drive towards continuous improvement across schools and services. The authority constantly explores ways to create more capacity for improvement. It builds capacity through developing talents and skills providing opportunities for shared and distributed leadership and nurturing expertise in its staff. Heads of establishments act as a collective collaborative group in support of the authority's vision values and aims and work constructively with senior managers thereby increasing its capacity for improvement.

Illustration QI Level 2

The senior management team does not consistently support and challenge its schools and services. Roles and responsibilities for senior managers do not focus sufficiently on setting performance targets and challenging staff and learners to improve their performance. Senior managers do not place sufficient emphasis on monitoring performance and outcomes and supporting continuous improvement. There is insufficient emphasis on achieving excellence.

Senior managers are aware of a range of examples of good practice within schools and services but have not yet established a strategic overview. They seldom look externally to identify or consider new approaches. The department has conducted a number of self-evaluation exercises and service reviews but these lead to improvements in only a few instances. Innovative practice is not systematically identified, supported, evaluated or disseminated across the authority. Senior managers do not consistently celebrate examples of excellence or innovative practice. Senior managers do not consistently manage change effectively and strategically and as a result the focus tends to be on often unrelated initiatives which are of varying degrees of importance and priority. Communication on change to staff is often insufficient to enable them to understand the reasons for or the anticipated benefits from implementing change.

The senior management team discusses quality and continuous improvement on a fairly regular basis, but senior managers do not consistently drive these forward. In the implementation of their remits they tend to focus on systems, functions and processes rather than on quality development or improved outcomes and impact. While the authority has a plan for improvement and supports its implementation, it does not have a strategic approach to develop capacity for improvement. Key staff and partners generally work hard, but their talents and skills are not recognised and developed. Senior managers meet regularly with heads of establishment as a group but this has little impact on cooperative working. Some heads of establishment do not consistently operate as officers of the authority.

What is our capacity for improvement?

(KEY AREA 10: CAPACITY FOR IMPROVEMENT)

Global judgement based on evidence of all key areas, in particular, outcomes, impact, and leadership

This last of the high-level questions requires a global judgement based on evidence and evaluations of all key areas. In answering this question councils should also take into account contextual issues such as impending retirements of senior staff, plans to restructure and significant changes in funding. They should also consider their ability to respond quickly to change and to be creative and innovative in the pursuit of excellence.

The council should be able to make a statement with the following components:

"The council is confident/not confident that the evidence and evaluation to date indicates that:

- overall improvements have been made to key outcomes and to impacts on stakeholders;

- leadership and management are effective; and

- quality improvement arrangements are effective and the Council has the capacity to continue improving."

The levels of confidence expressed for each component may be different and may include some reservations or caveats, but should lead to an overall statement of confidence in the council's capacity to improve in relation to its education functions.

For example, the statement could say, "The council is confident that the evidence and evaluation to date indicates that:

- improvements have been made to achieving almost all key outcomes and, overall, improvements have been made to meet the needs of service users but the attainment of secondary school pupils requires further improvement;

- leadership and management are currently effective but key posts will become vacant in the near future; and

- quality improvement arrangements are effective in all areas except youthwork and the council has demonstrated the capacity to continue improving."

Part 6 – Using performance and quality indicators for self-evaluation

Measures and Indicators

The process of self-evaluation employs three main types of measures and indicators:

- QIs;

- ethos indicators and perception measures; and

- PIs and outcome measures.

The following commentary outlines the purpose and function of each within the self-evaluation process.

Quality Indicators

All education authorities are now well experienced in the use of QIs. They are important management tools that assist an organisation in checking whether its aims and expectations are being met. They can be used to evaluate the organisation's overall performance and effectiveness, or to examine specific aspects of performance in more detail. This assists the evaluators to develop a clear picture of the effectiveness of such complex organisations as educational establishments or local authorities. When used most effectively, therefore, the QIs become objective reference points against which judgements can be made by experienced practitioners. Consequently, areas of strength and those in which improvement is required can be identified and action taken. This is the essence of effective self-evaluation. The aim for all authorities should be to develop and embed a culture at all levels, where systematic, robust and ongoing self-evaluation permeates every establishment and every service.

The prudent evaluator will always recognise the complexity of the system that is being reviewed, and the interplay of organisational factors, competing priorities and local circumstances. It is important that QIs should not be used as simple checklists or in isolation from other evaluation techniques or processes. Self-evaluation should be able to focus on the organisation's mission or central purpose, which must always be the key reference point for contextualising the QIs and suggesting features to examine.

Local authorities are complex organisations and are subject to change. The QIs in the new *QMIE2* framework provide a flexible structure for evaluating key inputs such as:

- leadership;

- policy development and planning;

- management and support of staff; and

- partnership and resources.

The QIs in the framework also address the delivery of key educational process and the impact on stakeholders such as:

- learners;

- parents, carers and families;

- staff; and

- the local and wider community.

Ethos indicators and perception measures

Ethos indicators and perception measures provide a structure for evaluating the views or perceptions of key stakeholders, who include:

- children and learners of all ages;

- their families;

- staff, whether temporary or permanent, full-time or part-time, in substantive posts, on secondment or working as volunteers;

- partner organisations and external agencies; and

- members of the wider community and other stakeholders.

Ethos indicators and perception measures are used to evaluate the **impact** on stakeholders of education services provided by the authority. They draw on evidence from a range of sources such as stakeholder surveys, satisfaction questionnaires, focus group discussions and a range of quantitative indicators such as learners' attendance rates, staff absence rates and attendance by parents at meetings.

Performance indicators and outcome measures

Performance indicators measure the **key outcomes** of the service. They measure the extent to which the authority has achieved its vision, values, aims and targets, as expressed within its local service and/or improvement plans. They also measure the extent to which the service is delivering those outcomes established through the national priorities and national improvement agenda. When judging performance in these respects, authorities will rely on increasingly sophisticated analysis of a wide range of quantitative management and performance data such as examination results, Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) and benchmarking with comparator schools, services and authorities.

It is important not to concentrate on one type of indicator at the expense of others. While good processes do, in the main, tend to lead to good outcomes, the direct relationship may not be quite as simple to observe. For example, there may well be a time lag between improving a process and being able to identify evidence which demonstrates that this has had an impact or has led to improved outcomes. Equally, where outcomes are weaker, it is important to evaluate which processes require to be improved to impact positively on these outcomes. A further and very important step is to benchmark those inputs which are being used in the process, for example staffing levels, costs and time allocations, so that performance can be compared with that of similar organisations and Best Value judgements made.

Finally, it may be misleading to look at any one key area of the framework or at isolated QIs without cross-referencing these with others in order to corroborate evaluations. A much more considered and holistic approach is essential to develop a clear picture of the authority's effectiveness.

The self-evaluation cycle

In developing a systematic and manageable approach to self-evaluation, it is likely that each authority will plan its work across a rolling period or cycle. In the course of this cycle each authority might aim to evaluate the evidence available to it in order to judge the effectiveness of its performance against the six high-level questions:

- **What key outcomes have we achieved?**

- **How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?**

- **How good is our delivery of education processes?**

- **How good is our management?**

- **How good is our leadership?**

- **What is our capacity for improvement?**

Through systematically keeping these high-level questions and their component parts under review over the lifetime of the self-evaluation cycle, the authority should be able to identify, celebrate and build on areas of strength and address areas of underperformance, thereby identifying key priorities for improvement. It is expected that, in addition to using national frameworks of performance and quality indicators, authorities will wish to use a range of other tools and measures, for example, through their involvement in quality schemes such as Charter Mark, IiP or EFQM, through benchmarking activities in Best Value, or by using their own local measures and targets.

Scoping the self-evaluation programme

The self-evaluation programme needs to be planned and resourced systematically. One way to decide on the most relevant and appropriate activities across the cycle is to carry out a scoping exercise, which takes account of the following:

- Previous inspection evaluation evidence and reports including external inspections of the authority, its schools and CLD provision.

- Progress against previous inspection or self-evaluation action points.

- Progress against other action points and targets, such as national priorities, local improvement objective and social justice milestones.

- Analyses of attainment/achievement data (including performance in national examinations).

- Outcomes of Best Value audits and reviews.

- Standards and Quality and associated public performance reports.

- Progress against targets in Children's Services Plans.

- Evidence available from relevant quality models, such as Charter Mark, IiP and EFQM.

- Evidence of local or national quality awards, such as council-recognised schemes and COSLA quality awards.

- The context, background, demographics, economy and characteristics of the local authority area.

- Outcomes of stakeholder satisfaction exercises such as surveys, questionnaires and focus groups.

- Evidence from other council departments and external partner agencies.

- Assessment of capacity for improvement (including facilitating and constraining factors).

The scoping exercise should establish how the six high-level questions and their component parts are to be addressed across the self-evaluation cycle and the indicators and measures to be used in each case. **However, the impact of meeting the needs of children and families and adult learners and the achievement of key outcomes need to be kept under close review on a regular basis.**

The rolling programme should be subject to review every year and should, if appropriate, be adjusted to take account of such factors as new inspection evidence, Best Value audits, the outcomes of improvement plans and activities, changes to national or local policy and rising or falling trends across a range of performance measures, particularly those most closely associated with learners' attainment and achievement. It is important to view the self-evaluation programme as an ongoing, organic and dynamic process with a clear focus on impact, outcomes, continuous improvement and the pursuit of excellence.

The external inspection process

An inspection of the education functions of a council is a major exercise which can be carried out through:

• evaluation by HMIE, using the *QMIE2* framework;

• Best Value council review by Audit Scotland; and

• evaluation by external assessors, using the criteria or standards of another quality system, such as *EFQM* or *Charter Mark*. The extent to which such a framework covers the full range of inputs, processes and outcomes will vary according to the system deployed.

Taking a high-level view and taking a closer look

To answer the six high-level questions, authorities will wish to take a proportionate approach to **taking a high-level view** and **taking a closer look** in terms of using relevant indicators and/or measures. In reaching an evaluation of performance across a service, some indicators/measures may only be used to gain a high-level view, while others will be used to take a closer, more focused look at specific areas of service delivery. A balance of high-level views and taking-a-closer-look activities, using appropriate indicators and measures, should allow an authority to:

• provide a good range of telling evidence;

• judge how well it is performing and meeting the needs of stakeholders;

• establish how favourably it performs in relation to the most comparable authorities; and

• identify those actions required to make further improvements.

On a regular basis, authority personnel can take a **high-level view** by scanning across selected indicators and outcome measures and assigning one of the six levels to each, on the basis of considered professional judgement, using evidence that has been gathered in the normal course of work. This will provide an ongoing impression of areas of perceived major strength and of those where more attention is required. The focus and emphasis should always be on impact and outcomes, which can then direct appropriate audit trails into selected inputs and processes. It is neither necessary nor practicable to audit all inputs and processes on an annual basis.

It is important to bear in mind that:

• such a high-level exercise, while providing a fairly reliable, general overview of the authority's performance, is to an extent superficial;

• performance in specific areas can rise or fall from year to year and thus, for example, a Level 5 evaluation against a specific indicator one year may not necessarily be sustained the following year; and

• the importance of tracking processes through to impact and outcomes cannot be over-emphasised.

In addition to taking this broad, high-level view, authorities will also wish to **take a closer look** at specific areas, which might include:

- areas not covered thus far within its regular audit cycle;

- areas in which impact and outcomes are identified as cause for concern, in order to identify the causes of and solutions to weaknesses;

- areas where impact and outcomes are particularly strong, in order to investigate the inputs or processes that are lending to these strengths; and

- areas relating to local priorities.

It is properly a matter for each authority in its scrutiny of performance through the close examination of impact and outcome measures to identify those areas in which a closer look is required.

Identifying the evidence

The process of gathering evidence at establishment or service level is essentially the same as that at authority level. However, there will be considerable differences in the range and sources of evidence that might be used. The following are examples of the sources of evidence which might inform an authority's self-evaluation, but it is stressed that this list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive:

Authority self-evaluation:

- using *QMIE/QMIE2*

- using other relevant quality frameworks, such as, *EFQM* or *Charter Mark*

- collated from *How Good is Our School? 2* (*HGIOS?2*), *How Good is Our Community Learning and Development? (HGIOCLD?), How Good is Our Community Learning and Development? 2 (HGIOCLD?2),* and a range of associated self-evaluation evidence

- collated from *The Child at the Centre*

- using other relevant self-evaluation exercises and sources of evidence.

Performance Data:

- analysis of examination results (national qualifications and 5-14)

- analysis of a range of key performance data, such as, finance; pupil attendance; pupil exclusion rates; CLD participation rates; progression rates; leavers' destinations

- statutory performance indicators (Accounts Commission SPIs)

- thematic performance evaluations, for example, child protection; educational provision for Looked After and Accommodated Children; psychological services

- national priorities' progress reports

- a range of public performance reports.

Documentation:

- standards and quality reports

- council and service committee reports

- Children's Services Plans

- community plan, corporate plan and other relevant cross-cutting reports

- service plans

- quality improvement plans

- cross-departmental and inter-agency strategy and operational plans

- agendas and minutes of meetings, for example, council; committee; partnership groups; corporate and departmental management teams; meetings of headteachers and School Board Chairpersons; CLD managers; community organisations; pupil councils.

Stakeholders' Views:

Stakeholders might include:

- children, young people, adult learners and participants in community capacity-building activities

- Parent Associations

- parents, guardians, carers and families

- community groups, including voluntary organisations

- teaching and support staff in schools and other establishments

- centrally-deployed staff and those in all related direct provision or support services

- staff in other council departments and services

- staff from external partner agencies

- elected members

- the council's corporate management team or equivalent

- trade unions and professional associations

- members of the general public.

A range of forums, procedures and techniques can be used or accessed to gather stakeholders' views. These often include:

- council and committee meetings

- focus groups

- questionnaires and surveys to gauge satisfaction and to elicit suggestions for improving effectiveness

- one-to-one discussions

- consultations on single issues, for example, policy development

- cross-sectoral working groups

- targeted consultation groups

- Pupil Councils or equivalent and young people's forums

- joint partnership groups

- suggestion boxes or equivalent

- inter-agency training forums

- Joint Negotiating Committees for Teachers (JNCTs) / Local Negotiating Committees for Teachers (LNCTs)

- corporate council complaints procedures

- staff complaints procedures

- Additional Support for Learners (ASfL) mediation and dispute resolution procedures

- visits by senior staff to schools and services, providing opportunities to engage in discussions with pupils, adult learners, CLD participants, staff, parents and other key stakeholders.

Direct Observation:

- council and service committees

- inter-agency strategy groups (political and officer)

- interaction with direct service providers, staff, learners, external agencies and a range of other key stakeholders through, for example, interviews; focus groups; conferences and seminars; staff meetings, pupil councils; voluntary group meetings; local area networks

- management team meetings

- quality improvement meetings.

The selection of evidence should be kept to manageable proportions by, for example, a process of sampling. The extent and nature of sampling should be thought through carefully and systematically, taking into account considerations of **depth** and **breadth**. For example:

The principle of *triangulation* has been tried and tested over many years by HMIE, by other independent external evaluators and by authorities themselves. In essence, triangulation involves the scrutiny of one source of evidence, backed up by another and corroborated by a third line of enquiry. A good example would be an evaluation based on the examination of a key policy document, the implementation of which was then discussed with senior authority staff and corroborated in further discussion with relevant stakeholders such as school staff, parents or young people. Through this process of triangulation, it should then be possible to evaluate the impact of policy in meeting the needs of key stakeholders.

The self-evaluation questions

Part 7 contains a few selected practical examples of questions which local authority personnel might ask themselves and their staff to help them arrive at evaluations for certain indicators. These relate to features of an organisation that may be present in whole or in part if that particular theme is being delivered effectively. The suggested questions are designed to support the evaluator in the search for evidence.

The questions provided are intended to be neither comprehensive nor prescriptive. They are not designed to be used as a checklist. It is properly a matter for each authority to determine for each indicator the relevant questions to ask and the appropriate features to look for.

In asking these or other relevant questions and in considering the Level 2 and Level 5 illustrations of evaluations against the QIs, it is also important to recognise that it is not necessary for an aspect of provision to exhibit all of the features in a particular illustration before it is deemed to be "good practice". It is expected that evaluators will bring their own knowledge and experience to make a significant and important contribution to the evaluation process.

Recording and reporting

The authority will wish to develop a clear and reliable system to record the outcomes of all activities within the self-evaluation programme. The range of such activities will be broad and the management and administration of the programme itself and of its component parts will be important. The evidence from self-evaluation will have a very important place in external inspections, such as *INEA2* inspections and Best Value audits. It is important that the whole self-evaluation process is viewed as complementary to the external inspection process, with the authority's self-evaluation report potentially having a major influence on the scope of the external inspection. The ongoing process of self-evaluation and reporting on outcomes will assist the authority in providing HMIE with an evaluative statement on its performance in addressing the high-level questions at any given time prior to the scoping of an external inspection. Given the ongoing cyclical nature of self-evaluation and the potential for generating statistical and written evidence, maximum use should be made of ICT systems.

Part 7 – Self-evaluation questions and sources of evidence

What key outcomes have we achieved?
PERFORMANCE MEASURES
1.1 Improvements in performance
1.2 Fulfilment of statutory duties

Questions you might ask
What measures of outcomes do we have?
What trends do they reveal?
What targets have we achieved or not achieved?
How do we compare with other similar authorities?
What evidence do we have that our work complies with statutory requirements?

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?
INDICATORS
2.1 Impact on learners

Questions you might ask

What evidence do we have that learners are:

- included and participating
- achieving and attaining
- progressing?

How do we know that participants' educational experiences are contributing to them becoming:

- successful learners
- confident individuals
- responsible citizens
- effective contributors?

How do we know that our provision is helping participants to be:

- safe
- nurtured
- healthy
- achieving
- active
- respected and responsible
- included?

How do we know that learners are progressing in the core skills of:

- communication
- number
- ICT
- working with others
- problem solving?

Questions you might ask – continued

To what extent can we state that learners are:

- satisfied with the quality of their education and care

- confident in expressing their opinions and views

- included in all aspects of education and care

- positive about meeting or exceeding their learning potential

- satisfied that they have opportunities to contribute both in school and community

- aware of the health-promoting values of their school and of the importance of developing healthy lifestyles

- aware of how to access information/advice on a range of health-related matters?

What do these things tell us about the impact of our provision?

What does the data tell us about under-participating and under-performing groups?

Some ways of finding out

- Completed questionnaires, surveys, satisfaction surveys

- Focus groups of young people in school outwith school and in the evenings

- Availability of independent advice, support and/or advocacy to young people and adults on health and others areas

- Arrangements to provide support, information and advice to excluded young people and adults

- Accessibility of specialist services

- Management of pastoral care and pupil guidance

- Staff training programmes related to supporting all young people but especially the more vulnerable

- Breadth and flexibility within the school curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils and the availability of activities and experiences outwith the formal school curriculum

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?
INDICATORS
2.2 Impact on parents/carers and families

Questions you might ask
What evidence do we have that parents/carers and families are: • treated equally and fairly • satisfied with the quality of education provided by the authority • involved and engaged in their children's development and learning? To what extent can we state that parents/carers and families are: • confident that they will be treated equally and fairly by the school and the authority • aware of any complaints procedures • satisfied with the way the school or the authority dealt with complaints or queries • satisfied with the quality of education provided by the authority • involved and engaged in their children's development and learning?
Some ways of finding out
• Parents/carers focus groups • Parents' forums • Availability of advice and support to parents and carers • Completed questionnaires, surveys, satisfaction surveys • Survey of complaints and satisfactory outcomes • Survey of establishments on parental involvement • Survey of parents/carers views on particular aspects, e.g. homework

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?
INDICATORS
3.1 Impact on Staff

Questions you might ask
To what extent can we state that staff: • are motivated and committed   • feel confident and valued?   What range of mechanisms is in place to evaluate staff perceptions, experience and satisfaction?   What evidence to we have that staff: • improve the impact of their practice through training and development activities   • are aware of the authority's policy and programme for CPD   • are confident that they can access CPD opportunities as appropriate   • are supported by central services and the work of partner agencies   • work well in teams   • are meaningfully involved in service development?
Some ways of finding out
• Staff focus groups   • Formal agendas, minutes and other relevant documentation   • Survey of staff views   • Procedures for dealing with staff suggestions and complaints   • Programmes of visits to educational establishments, by senior authority managers, to engage with staff

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?
INDICATORS
4.1 Impact on the local community

Questions you might ask
How do we know that we help members of the community to develop their skills, abilities and confidence?
To what extent does our provision empower members of the community to shape developments in their local area?
To what extent has our provision resulted in communities developing self-help and social enterprise initiatives?
To what extent has our provision resulted in increased civic involvement?
How do we know that attitudes and behaviour in relation to social and cultural diversity are improving?
To what extent has our provision resulted in increased networking and learning amongst members of the local community?

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?
INDICATORS
4.2 Impact on the wider community

Questions you might ask
To what extent do we encourage and support innovation in the wider community?
To what extent do we learn from and adopt leading-edge practice?
To what extent do we influence wider policy and practice?
To what extent do we anticipate and respond rapidly and flexibility to change?

How good is our delivery of education?
INDICATORS
5.1 Delivering education services

Questions you might ask
To what extent can we show that we have a clear strategy for the delivery of education services?
To what extent do we provide clear guidance on the curriculum and programmes to schools and centres?
To what extent do we provide clear guidance on learning and teaching to schools and centres?
To what extent do we provide clear guidance on support for learners to schools and centres?
How effectively do we review and revise our guidance in these areas?
To what extent do we have clear systems in place for implementing our policies?
To what extent do we ensure health and safety, security and the well-being of learners?
How well do we ensure that we provide effective transition between units and establishments?
What systems do we have to ensure that we engage with learners and stakeholders to identify and meet the specific needs of learners?
How do we celebrate learners' achievements and successes?

How good is our delivery of education processes?
INDICATORS
5.2 Inclusion, equality and fairness

Questions you might ask

What evidence do we have that :

- staff at all levels and key stakeholders have a clear understanding policies relating to equality and inclusion and their own responsibilities in this regard

- we have a range of written guidance for staff

- we promote learning opportunities for all learners

- we provide effective services for vulnerable learners?

How effective are our systems for:

- tracking and monitoring the achievements of vulnerable learners and those requiring additional support

- recording, analysing and addressing any under representation or under achievement of groups of learners?

How good is our delivery of education processes?
INDICATORS
5.3 Improving the quality of services and establishments

Questions you might ask

How effective are our methods for evaluating our services and establishments?

How clear and effective is our advice to services and establishments on self-evaluation, quality improvement and standards and quality reporting?

How effectively do we gather and use information from learners, participants and other stakeholders to improve our services and establishments?

How do we ensure that the roles and responsibilities of key staff ensure quality improvement in our services and establishments?

To what extent do we carry out regular and rigorous audits of our services?

How effectively do we moderate establishments' and services self-evaluation?

How effectively do we use information from self-evaluation to plan for improvements?

To what extent do we have a clear strategy for recording and reporting on our standards to our stakeholders?

How good is our management?
INDICATORS

6.1 Policy review and development

Questions you might ask

What evidence do we have that:

- our policy framework guides our activities and is relevant, comprehensive and appropriate

- our policy framework is clearly presented and able to be understood at all levels

- our policies are linked to our strategic vision, values and aims

- the policy framework and the range of policies cohere with corporate and broader policies?

To what extent are our policies well implemented, evaluated and updated?

Some ways of finding out

- service plan

- local improvement plan

- establishments' plans

- statement of vision, values and aims

- policy framework

- planning cycle

- interrogation of policies

- key corporate documents

- audit information

- minutes of meetings

- reports on visits to establishments

How good is our management?
INDICATORS

6.2 Participation of learners and other stakeholders

Questions you might ask
To what extent can we state that: • we communicate and consult effectively with learners and stakeholders about our aims, provision and performance • learners and stakeholders are involved in shaping the development of policies • learners and stakeholders actively participate in the work of the service • we work in partnership with other services in the local authority and with partner agencies, for example NHS services? To what extent are our policies well implemented, evaluated and updated?
Some ways of finding out
• focus group, working groups, targeted consultation groups • area and local forums • joint working groups • service level agreements • consultation framework, policy and procedures • communication framework, policy and procedures • agendas and minutes of meetings • questionnaires and feedback from service users • policy and procedures for complaints • policy and procedures for inter-agency working

How good is our management?
INDICATORS
6.3 Operational planning

Questions you might ask

What evidence do we have that:

- we have effective mechanisms for developing, implementing and evaluating plans

- the service plan fits and inputs to local planning

- the service operational plan articulates with the service strategy and community plan

- the work of the service is systematically monitored and evaluated by senior officers

- we use management information effectively to inform planning

- senior officers plan jointly

- staff at all levels are involved effectively in planning and evaluation

- that plans are sustainable?

Some ways of finding out

- Best Value reviews

- performance management and planning audits

- education service website

- minutes of meetings

- membership of groups

- questionnaires to stakeholders on the quality of provision

- quality assurance policy

- outcomes of self-evaluation processes

- outcomes from a range of audits (internal and external)

- performance monitoring strategy

How good is our management?
INDICATORS
7.1 Sufficiency, recruitment and retention

Questions you might ask
Are there sufficient staff to deliver agreed outcomes?
How effective are our procedures for ensuring that we have suitably qualified and skilled staff?
How effective are our arrangements for ensuring the care and welfare of staff?
How effective are our procedures for ensuring equality and fairness in staff recruitment and promotion?
How well do we recognise and celebrate the achievements of our staff and volunteers?

How good is our management?
INDICATORS
7.2 Deployment and Teamwork

Questions you might ask
How clear are all our staff, both those employed centrally and those employed in schools, centres and services, about their roles, responsibilities and authority?
How clear are staff about lines of communication and accountability?
How well do we deploy staff to meet planned priorities?
How well do staff teams work collaboratively with other teams to achieve common aims?
How good is our communication with staff and how well do we involve them in decision making?

How good is our management?
INDICATORS
7.3 Development and support

Questions you might ask
How well do our induction procedures support all new staff to become effective as soon as possible?
To what extent do our arrangements for staff review and development result in enthusiastic, well motivated, confident and competent staff?
How well do our training and development activities equip our staff and volunteers to work effectively and meet new challenges?
To what extent do shared training and development opportunities result in improved inter-disciplinary relationships and work practices?

How good is our management?
INDICATORS
8.1 Partnership working

Questions you might ask
How clearly have the purposes and aims of the partnership been communicated?
How useful and clear are partnership documents such as service level agreements, protocols and other forms of agreement?
How effectively do we work together across agencies and disciplines?
How well do our staff work with others in partnerships?

How good is our management?
INDICATORS
8.2 Financial management

Questions you might ask
How comprehensive and effective are our financial procedures and controls?
How well equipped are budget holders to implement financial procedures and controls?
How well do we allocate budgets in line with planned priorities?
How enterprising are we in securing additional funding?
How consistent are our budget allocations with local and national priorities?
How well do we work with finance and other services to ensure effective budget management?
How effective are our procedures to ensure Best Value?

How good is our management?
INDICATORS
8.3 Resource management

Questions you might ask
How well does accommodation in the school and CLD estates meet the needs of learners?
How appropriate are our plans to manage and develop the school and CLD estates?
To what extent do we know that resources and facilities meet the needs of all learners?
How do we ensure that resources are allocated to meet local and national needs?
How do we know that all staff are applying health and safety and risk management procedures effectively?

How good is our management?
INDICATORS
8.4 Information systems

Questions you might ask
How effective are our arrangements for collecting, storing and retrieving data?
How effective are our processes for analysing and evaluating data?
To what extent do our protocols and procedures meet legislative requirements and service needs?

How good is our leadership?
INDICATORS
9.1 Vision, values and aims

Questions you might ask
How do we ensure that vision, values and aims are reflected in our key strategic documents? How effectively have leaders established a shared vision for the authority? What actions do we take to demonstrate our understanding of and commitment to equality and diversity?

How good is our leadership?
INDICATORS
9.2 Leadership and direction

Questions you might ask

To what extent do leaders:
 	
   • develop effective and strategic business plans
 	
   • identify key actions, intended outcomes and major targets?
 	
How effectively do leaders communicate with stakeholders and staff at all levels?
 	
How well do we ensure effective and efficient deployment of resources?

How good is our leadership?
INDICATORS
9.3 Developing people and partnerships.

Questions you might ask
To what extent do our leaders model a wide range of effective leadership skills and motivate others to give of their best?
To what extent is there a balanced range of skills and personal qualities evident in our leadership team?
How effectively have we developed a supportive work environment in which staff share a sense of responsibility to improve the quality of services?
How effectively do we identify and promote talent?
How effectively do we develop working relationships which are built on trust and reflect a genuine concern for staff and relevant partners?
To what extent are systems in place to help people tackle challenging problems, share information and deal with difficulties?
To what extent do leaders proactively establish strong links with establishments, stakeholders, partner agencies and other council services and lead joint improvement activities?

How good is our leadership?
INDICATORS
9.4 Leadership of change and improvement

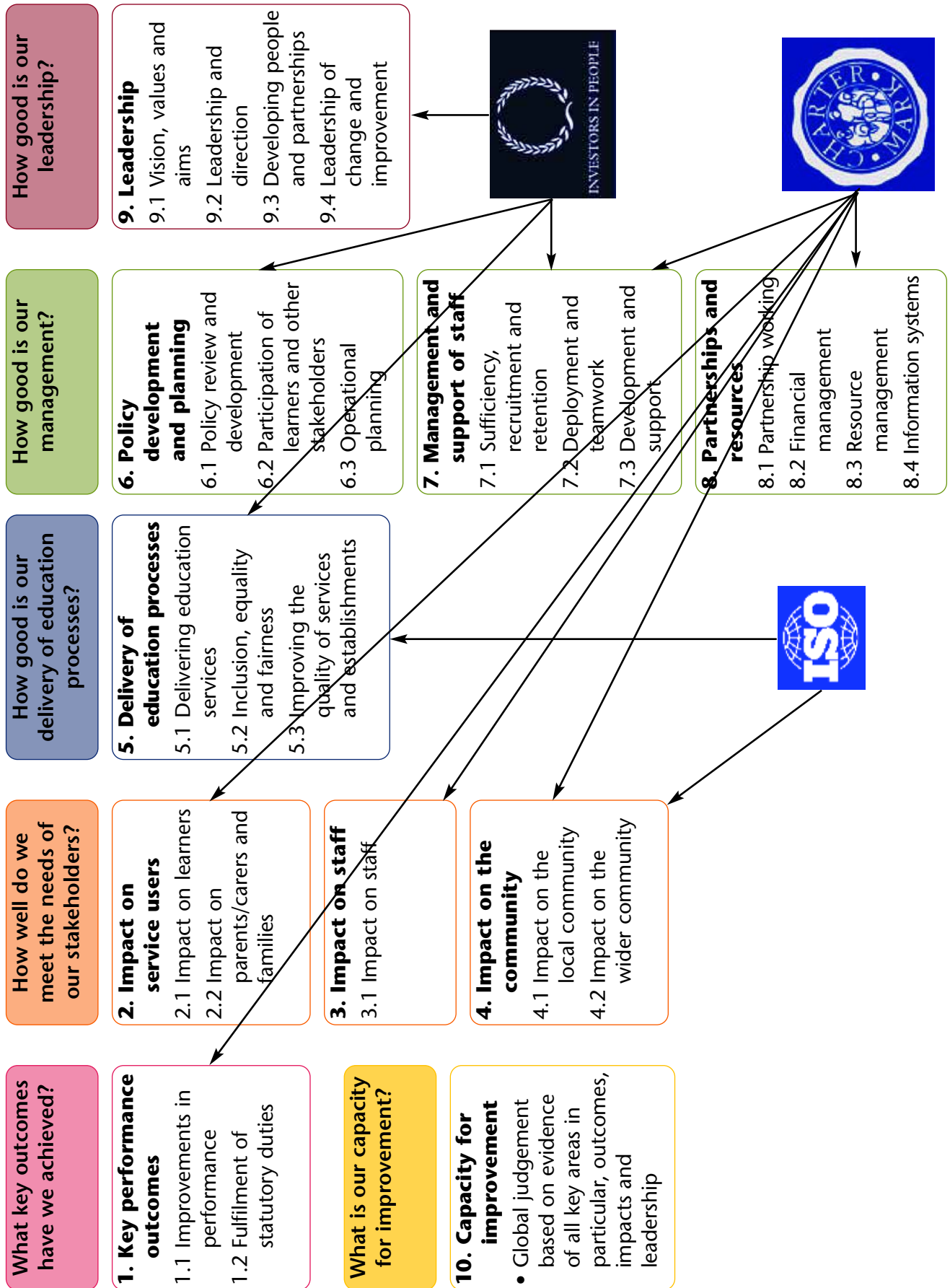| Questions you might ask |
|---|
| To what extent have senior managers embedded challenge and support of staff as a means of securing continuous improvement? |
| To what extent have senior managers encouraged and supported innovative and effective practices which result in a qualitative step change in learners' experiences? |
| How have senior managers succeeded in building a strong capacity for improvement within the organization? |
| **Some ways of finding out** |
| • Quality assurance policy |
| • Protocols for annual/triennial reviews |
| • CPD online database |
| • Attainment data analysis |
| • National Data performance targets and measures |
| • Reports to council |
| • Standards and quality reports |
| • Stakeholder questionnaires |
| • HMIE inspection reports |
| • Protocols for follow-through |
| • Education service improvement objectives |
| • Education service progress reports on improvement objectives |
| • All sector and sector meetings – agendas and minutes |
| • Liaison group agenda and minutes |

Appendix I – The relationships between QMIE2 and other quality frameworks

How good is our leadership?

9. Leadership
9.1 Vision, values and aims
9.2 Leadership and direction
9.3 Developing people and partnerships
9.4 Leadership of change and improvement

How good is our management?

6. Policy development and planning
6.1 Policy review and development
6.2 Participation of learners and other stakeholders
6.3 Operational planning

7. Management and support of staff
7.1 Sufficiency, recruitment and retention
7.2 Deployment and teamwork
7.3 Development and support

8. Partnerships and resources
8.1 Partnership working
8.2 Financial management
8.3 Resource management
8.4 Information systems

How good is our delivery of education processes?

5. Delivery of education processes
5.1 Delivering education services
5.2 Inclusion, equality and fairness
5.3 Improving the quality of services and establishments

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

2. Impact on service users
2.1 Impact on learners
2.2 Impact on parents/carers and families

3. Impact on staff
3.1 Impact on staff

4. Impact on the community
4.1 Impact on the local community
4.2 Impact on the wider community

What key outcomes have we achieved?

1. Key performance outcomes
1.1 Improvements in performance
1.2 Fulfilment of statutory duties

What is our capacity for improvement?

10. Capacity for improvement
• Global judgement based on evidence of all key areas in particular, outcomes, impacts and leadership

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