Education Scotland
Foghlam Alba

Career Information, Advice and Guidance services delivered by Skills Development Scotland in Stirling

A report by HM Inspectors

24 August 2018

Transforming lives through learning

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1. Introduction

The external review

The external review by Education Scotland took place between 11–15 June 2018. The review focused on Career Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) services delivered by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) in Stirling.

We examined activities that impact on the quality of customer experience. We evaluated these against the three key principles of Outcomes and Impact, Service Delivery and Leadership and Quality Culture, using the 13 reference quality indicators outlined in External quality arrangements for the review of Career Information Advice and Guidance services delivered by Skills Development Scotland, published in May 2015. Further details can be found at: https://education.gov.scot/what-we-do/inspection-and-review/about-inspections-and-reviews/Careers%20service%20reviews

The external review team talked with customers, staff at all levels in the organisation, external agencies and other users of the service.

2. The service area and its context

In carrying out the external review of services delivered in Stirling, Education Scotland took the following area context fully into account.

The Stirling Council area stretches from Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park in the north-west, to Killearn and Strathblane in the south-west, and former mining villages in the south-east. Around two-thirds of Stirling Council's population live in Stirling city, and its neighbouring communities of Dunblane and Bridge of Allan. The rest of the population live in rural parts of the area. The city of Stirling is the main urban centre and economic driver for the area.

The Council area covers an area of 2,187 square kilometres, but the population is amongst the smallest in Scotland. The current population of the Stirling Council area is 93,750 but is projected to increase to over 101,000 by 2039.

The percentage of the area's Scotland's Index of Multiple Deprivation datazones in the most deprived 20% has increased between 2012 and 2016. Conversely, within the same timeframe, the least deprived 10% of datazones has shown a significant increase. This indicates that the deprivation gap between the least and most deprived is widening.

Overall, however, Stirling is more affluent than the Scottish average. It has a high concentration of employment in a few sectors, including the finance, accommodation and food sectors. A high proportion of commuting professionals also live within the Stirling area.

The recent announcement that the area will benefit from the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Deal has emphasised the need to support skills pathways to take advantage of new economic developments. These include the redevelopment of the harbour area and the creation of a digital district in the city. Total employment in Stirling is expected to rise to almost 60,000 by 2027, an increase of almost 2,000 currently. This is equivalent to growth of 0.4% per annum, just above the Scottish average of 0.3%

There are seven mainstream secondary schools in Stirling. There is an Additional Support School and also a residential school for children of service personnel.

3. Outcomes of external review

Judgement of Grades

Section A: Grades

The review team awarded grades for each of the six key themes based on the following criteria:

excellent:	**Outstanding and sector leading**
very good:	**Major strengths**
good:	**Important strengths with some areas for improvement**
satisfactory:	**Strengths just outweigh weaknesses**
weak:	**Important weaknesses**
unsatisfactory:	**Major weaknesses**

Key theme	Grade
Customer progression and achievement of relevant high quality outcomes	**good**
Meeting the needs of stakeholders	**very good**
Delivery of key services	**very good**
Management of service delivery	**very good**
Strategic leadership	**very good**

Section B: Customer progression and achievement

Areas of positive practice

- The Participation Measure for Stirling has improved by 2.2% in the last year, and is above the national average.
- The percentage of 16-19 year olds with an 'unconfirmed' status reported in both the 2016 and 2017 Participation Measure, was lower than the level reported nationally.
- All schools are showing an improvement in positive destinations over a three year period.
- The percentage of young people entering a positive destination on leaving school over the previous three years has improved, and overall, is now above the national average.
- The percentage of 'Next Steps' customers progressing to learning, training or work, and sustaining for six months, is significantly higher than the national average.
- The percentage of young people in Stirling with a My World of Work (MyWoW) registration is above the national average. In three secondary schools, the level of MyWoW registrations has increased significantly.
- Over the past three years, the number of young people whose destination on leaving school was unknown, has reduced significantly.
- The percentage of 'Next Steps' customers who have received a Career Management Skills (CMS) Assessment, showing improved CMS, is significantly above the minimum expectation and has exceeded the national average.

Areas for development

- In four of the seven secondary schools in Stirling, the percentage of young people progressing to a positive destination on leaving school is below the national average.
- The percentage of S3 pupils, requiring enhanced support and receiving coaching guidance, is significantly below the minimum expectation and the national average.
- In three of the seven secondary schools, the percentage of MyWoW registrations is below the national average.

Section C: Meeting the needs of stakeholders

Areas of positive practice

- SDS deliver a wide range of appropriate services to customers across the area from a variety of well-located and easily accessible centres.
- All young people in schools have good access to highly proactive and flexible careers staff. Young people's service needs are accommodated promptly.
- In all schools, careers staff deliver the services offer from welcoming accommodation, usually co-located with the school's Pupil Support Team. This has increased young peoples' awareness of SDS staff and their work.
- In each secondary school, a mini-team, consisting of a Career Adviser, a Work Coach, a post-school Career Adviser and a Personal Adviser, work well together to meet a diverse range of young people's needs.
- An SDS 'Rurality Champion' is helping to make SDS services more accessible to rural customers, by helping to overcome rurality constraints for customers.
- SDS staff contribute well to a range of events and activities with partners which promote the service offer, such as Future Pathways events, careers events and Scottish Apprenticeships week.

- SDS staff compile a useful opportunities bulletin on a weekly basis, which helps the team, customers and partners keep up-to-date with current opportunities.
- Through one to one engagements with careers advisers, all customers are setting goals and discussing the development of their CMS. For example, all post-school customers are able to identify their career goals and the routes they should follow to achieve them.
- All partners express high levels of satisfaction with SDS services and the quality of engagements with careers staff.

Areas for development

- Within Stirling schools, the implementation of the MyWoW Ambassadors programme is at an early stage. Schools have either just begun to appoint ambassadors or have only recently done so, and many of the young people who have volunteered to take on the role, are unsure of what it will involve.

Section D: Delivery of key services

Areas of positive practice

- Working closely with key partners, SDS delivers services flexibly to meet the range of contexts and needs of different customer groups across the area. For example, using postcards to promote and target services and support to customers with whom it is difficult to engage with. As a result, some customers have re-engaged with SDS.
- Careers services are promoted well by SDS staff in schools and pupils receive support from advisers out-with planned group work and one-to-one activities.
- Staff work closely with partners, including third sector organisations, to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable adults and young people are met. Staff track and support the young unemployed and help customers to make successful transitions and progress to a positive outcome.
- Staff use the School Partnership Agreement (SPA) process well to help schools to identify and act upon current and projected issues and concerns. For example, SDS staff use the SPA process to focus discussions and attention on areas such as implementing the Career Education Standard (CES) and increasing the registration of pupils on MyWoW.
- SDS has developed a joint action plan with Forth Valley College which establishes the different services and levels of support for college learners and is helping to meet the specific needs of this customer group.
- Strong links between schools and SDS staff in the development of curriculum initiatives, are effective in promoting opportunities for pupils. For example, the promotion of Foundation Apprenticeships at St Modan's, has made pupils more aware of apprenticeship pathways.
- Employers and those customers facing redundancy, are supported well by SDS through the delivery of Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) and Transition Training Fund services.
- SDS staff develop and build good relationships with customers. Customer feedback indicates that team members are valued highly for their knowledge and skills and the personal support they offer.

- SDS staff work effectively with a range of partners including the Department of Work and Pensions and the Opportunities for All lead, to support unemployed adults and young people to progress to a positive destination.
- One-to-one engagements with customers are consistently strong and effective across all settings. Staff make good use of resources during these activities to engage customers and increase their capacity to develop their CMS.
- SDS staff use the Data Hub well to collate, access and analyse data to inform service delivery for customers. They have established effective partnership working with Stirling Council which is resulting in improvements to positive outcomes of all young people.
- SDS staff have helped school staff in Stirling to plan for the delivery of over fifty Foundation Apprenticeship places in the next academic year. This is a significant increase from the previous year.
- SDS staff regularly use reflective practice to develop and improve the delivery of the service offer. The Stirling team engage well in the self-assessment process and use this to identify areas for improvement in their Continuous Improvement Action Plan.
- The views of customers and stakeholders are gathered regularly by SDS, both formally and informally, and are used well by staff to inform improvements in service delivery.
- The Stirling team make effective use of the 'champion' roles within the team to support staff awareness and understanding of key priorities and develop services to meet identified needs.

Areas for development

- The quality of delivery within group work sessions is variable. The majority of sessions are not sufficiently engaging to meet the needs of all customers.
- Most subject staff in schools are not embedding CMS or CES (Career Education Standard) sufficiently in the curriculum.
- While many young people engage in CIAG activities which meets their needs well, they are generally unaware of their entitlements within the CES.

Section E: Management of service delivery

Areas of positive practice

- SDS staff are well represented on a number of key strategic and operational groups within the area, and are valued highly by partners. For example, SDS staff are very involved in the introduction of multi-agency strategies, such as the implementation of the new City Deal programme.
- SDS staff have productive links with senior staff from the Local Authority, and are jointly delivering on actions to support the Children's' Services plan.
- SDS and key partners, including schools and the local college, are working well together to promote opportunities to young people, resulting in an increased awareness of apprenticeship opportunities and their value amongst young people in schools.
- Highly productive working between the SDS staff and their partners includes working with Stirling Library Service to deliver CIAG services in outlying communities. Productive working with the Through Care Team, Social Work and Barnardo's helps to meet the needs of care-experienced young people led by the SDS Corporate Parenting Champion.
- SDS staff are responding well to the Scottish Government's priorities within Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy. They work proactively with partners and, in particular, with schools, to work towards a shared understanding of these priorities. For example, SDS

staff promote the comprehensive Regional Skills Assessment (RSA) report and analysis with the Local Authority to help it plan future services and curricular models.
- Data Hub information is being used well by SDS staff and partners to support an intelligence-led approach to targeting customers and revising the needs matrix according to individual customer's needs and circumstances.
- The SDS team respond promptly in delivering PACE Services to customers in Stirling. One employer reported that over 85% of the staff facing redundancy had been successfully supported into employment as a result.

Areas for development

- Although a few teachers in secondary schools are increasingly using Labour Market Information to promote career pathways, this is not yet consistently embedded across all subjects.

Section F: Strategic leadership

Areas of positive practice

- The delivery of services in Stirling align well with the SDS 2020 Vision for improving skills throughout Scotland. SDS staff work closely with partners to implement this vision and ensure they are well informed about relevant SDS strategic priorities for Stirling.
- SDS staff have an important presence in the area and are valued partners in shaping strategies. They are involved at a strategic level with the Local Authority.
- SDS local managers communicate clearly the key priorities for the delivery of SDS services to the local team. Staff at all levels are involved in the design and planning of services and managers ensure all staff can contribute to the workplan and actions for improvement.
- SDS managers are supporting education staff in the local authority to make connections between the local and national economy and the skills required by employers, and the curriculum.
- Although at an early stage, the new SPA arrangements are improving the quality and focus of engagement with head teachers and school Senior Management Teams. The Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) leads' in schools meet regularly with SDS staff and the DYW authority lead, to discuss initiatives to support creative approaches to the school curriculum.
- All SDS staff are very motivated and committed to the services they offer, with a clear sense of their role and contribution. They collaborate effectively to meet the needs of their customers and feel empowered to make decisions to improve the service to customers.
- The management team works well together. Managers adopt an inclusive leadership style, to which all staff respond well and this creates a strong culture of everyday leadership.
- Managers plan activities well to engage targeted cohorts in a balanced way to ensure they are able to cover rural and urban areas with the resources available. For example, staff have joint caseloads for school and post-school customers, such as in Dunblane.
- The leadership team encourages staff to make effective use of My Contribution. Through these monthly conversations, team members have clarity around their performance and are given the opportunity to identify areas for their development. Staff feel trusted and respected.

- Managers and staff have a strong commitment to developing a culture of quality improvement which leads to the enhancement of service delivery. For example, the introduction of school mini-teams has helped to improve the effectiveness of service delivery within schools and also aids transitions for school customers.
- Staff use the Business Excellence Approach to devise a continuous improvement action plan, in which actions are assessed and evaluated to ensure progress. In general, they reflect on their service delivery well, and use the outcomes from this to inform future service design.
- Overall, staff use customer feedback on activities effectively to meet the needs of customers and to improve services. The views of customers and stakeholders are gathered regularly, both formally and informally, and are used well by staff to inform improvements to service delivery.
- In general, staff make good use of opportunities from Team-time and other activities to discuss good practice, disseminate ideas and make improvements.
- Staff members are empowered and encouraged by managers to adopt a solution-focused approach to improvement and enhancement of service delivery. This has resulted in a number of initiatives which are improving services and outcomes for customers.

Areas for development

- Changes to council structures in education and social work limited the opportunities for partnership working at a strategic level, impacting negatively on the environment in which SDS is operating.
- In a few cases, schools are over-reliant upon the services of SDS to embed CMS and CES in their own internal activities.
- Arrangements for the review of group-work activity are not wholly effective and the use of the Observation Framework and feedback mechanisms by staff and managers do not lead consistently to improvement.

Section G: Capacity for improvement

The Participation Measure for Stirling has improved by 2.2% in the last year and is above the national average. Overall, all schools are showing an improvement in positive destinations over a three-year period. The percentage of young people entering a positive destination on leaving school over the previous three years, has improved, and overall, is now above the national average. However, in four of the seven secondary schools in Stirling in the last year, the percentage of young people progressing to a positive destination on leaving school is below the national average.

SDS delivers a wide range of appropriate services to customers across the area from a variety of well-located and easily accessible centres. All young people in schools have good access to highly proactive and flexible careers staff and young people's service needs are accommodated promptly. In each secondary school, a mini-team, consisting of a Career Adviser, a Work Coach, a post-school Career Adviser and a Personal Adviser, work well together to meet a diverse range of young people's needs.

An SDS 'Rurality Champion' is working to make SDS services more accessible to rural customers, by helping to overcome rurality constraints for customers. All partners express high levels of satisfaction with SDS services and the quality of engagements with careers staff. Employers and those customers facing redundancy, are supported well by SDS

through the delivery of PACE and services. However, the implementation of the MyWoW Ambassadors programme is at an early stage.

SDS staff use the Data Hub well to collate, access and analyse data to inform service delivery for customers. Working closely with key partners, SDS delivers services flexibly to meet the range of contexts and needs of different customer groups across the area. Careers services are promoted well within schools and pupils receive support from advisers out with planned group work and one-to-one activities. For example, SDS staff have helped schools in Stirling to plan for the delivery of over 50 Foundation Apprenticeship places in the next academic year. However, most subject staff in schools do not have a comprehensive understanding of how to develop CMS within the curriculum and teaching staff's awareness of the entitlements and expectations within the Career Education Standard is low.

One-to-one engagements with customers are consistently strong and effective across all settings. However, the quality of delivery within group work sessions is variable. The majority of sessions are not sufficiently engaging to meet the needs of all customers. SDS staff regularly use reflective practice to develop and improve the delivery of the service offer. The views of customers and stakeholders are gathered regularly, both formally and informally, and are used well by staff to inform improvements in service delivery. The Stirling team makes effective use of the 'champion' roles within the team to support staff awareness and understanding of key priorities and develop services to meet identified needs.

SDS staff are well represented on a number of key strategic and operational groups within the area, and are valued highly by partners. SDS staff are responding well to the Scottish Government's priorities within Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy. They work proactively with partners and, in particular, with schools, to work towards a shared understanding of these priorities. For example, SDS staff promote the comprehensive RSA report and analysis with the local education authority to help it plan future services and curricular models.

The delivery of services in Stirling aligns well with the SDS 2020 Vision for improving skills throughout Scotland. SDS staff have an important presence in the area and are valued partners in shaping strategies. They are involved at a strategic level with the local authority.

SDS local managers communicate clearly the key priorities for the delivery of SDS services to the local team. The management team work well together. Managers adopt an inclusive leadership style, to which all staff respond well and this creates a strong culture of Everyday leadership. Staff at all levels are involved in the design and planning of services and managers ensure all staff can contribute to the workplan and actions for improvement.

All SDS staff are very motivated and committed to the services they offer, with a clear sense of their role and contribution. They collaborate effectively to meet the needs of their customers and feel empowered to make decisions to improve the service to customers.

Managers and staff have a strong commitment to developing a culture of quality improvement which leads to the enhancement of service delivery. However, arrangements for the review of group-work activity are not wholly effective and the use of the Observation Framework and feedback mechanisms by staff and managers do not lead to consistently to improvement.

Section H: Main points for action

- The local authority should ensure that teaching staff in Stirling secondary schools embed Career Management Skills and the Career Education Standard effectively within the curriculum.

- SDS and the local authority should continue to work together to raise the level of MyWoW registrations within the area's secondary schools.

- SDS and the local authority should continue to work collaboratively to ensure that school leaver destinations statistics, in all schools, continue to improve.

- The Stirling team should develop arrangements to review and improve the delivery of group work sessions.

4. Examples of excellence

There were no Examples of excellent practice identified during the external review.

5. What happens next?

Following publication of this report, SDS and partners are expected to produce an action plan to address the main points for action and/or areas for development in the report and other quality assurance and enhancement activities.

A follow up visit will be carried out involving SDS and partners 18 months after the initial review to determine if satisfactory progress has been made towards the main points for action.

Peter B Connelly
HM Inspector

6. Further information

The review and judgements relate to the service area as a whole. For further information about Education Scotland, the external review methodologies, or other information about reviews, see https://education.gov.scot/

For further information about Skills Development Scotland, see http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/

APPENDIX 1

Glossary of terms

CES	Career Education Standard
CIAG	Careers Information, Advice and Guidance
CMS	Career Management Skills
DYW	Developing the Young Workforce
IESS	Integrated Employment and Skills System
MyWoW	My World of Work
PACE	Partnership action for continuing employment
RSA	Regional Skills Assessment
SDS	Skills Development Scotland
SPA	School Partnership Agreement

APPENDIX 2

The external review process

HM Inspectors undertake an independent review of the quality of provision of CIAG delivered by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) on behalf of the Scottish Government under a service level agreement between the Scottish Government and Education Scotland. External review teams include HM Inspectors and associate assessors.

During external reviews, members of the review teams observe group activities, one to one coaching sessions and hold discussions with customers, staff and stakeholders. They consider information on the quality of career information, advice and guidance. They meet with recipients of the service and obtain feedback from groups, partners and staff who work for SDS.

The purpose of this report is to convey the main outcomes arising from the external review, to acknowledge service's strengths and to provide a clear agenda for future action to improve and enhance quality.

This external review results in judgements of **grades** that express the external review team's overall evaluation of Outcome and Impact, Service Delivery and Leadership and quality culture and a judgement on capacity to improve based on the evidence from all key areas, in particular Outcomes, Impact and Leadership.

The report also uses the following terms to describe numbers and proportions:	
All	100%
almost all	over 91%-99%
most	75-90%
majority	50-74%
minority/less than half	15-49%
few	up to 15%

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E-mail: hmsolicensing@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk

APPENDIX 3

Policy context

SDS all-age career information, advice and guidance services aim to support young people and adults to make a positive transition into continued education, training or the world of work. SDS achieves this by supporting customers in their development of CMS which lay the foundations for success in their future careers.

The services provided by SDS in schools are driven by the ambitions of Curriculum for Excellence. Accordingly there are significant interdependencies between the roles and responsibilities of schools and wider partners, the design and delivery of school curriculum and the services provided by SDS. Planning for successful service delivery through SPAs requires effective collaboration between SDS and its partners.

In March 2011, the Scottish Government published a framework for the redesign and improvement of CIAG services. As the largest provider of CIAG services in Scotland, SDS has a lead role in implementing this change. This change has been implemented through an integrated service involving face to face meetings, communication through contact centre and an online CMS environment, MyWoW.

In December 2014, the Scottish Government published Developing the Young Workforce – Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy. The recommendations of this strategy set out further changes to CIAG services, specifically in relation to the collaborative design and implementation of the Career Education Standard (3-18) with SDS, Scottish Government and Education Scotland. These changes have resulted in earlier intervention with school pupils through SDS CIAG services and focused support around key transition points for pupils. The CES builds on advice and guidance in Curriculum for Excellence and in particular, Building the Curriculum 4: skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

Underpinning service delivery is the commitment of SDS to work with partners in schools, local authorities and Education Scotland to build capacity to deliver the ambitions of Curriculum for Excellence - Building the Curriculum 4, in particular development of CMS. This partnership approach supports schools to deliver this component of Curriculum for Excellence, whilst creating a learning context for young people that is compatible with and builds upon the service delivery commitments of SDS. As a result, much of the work of SDS requires effective collaboration with a range of partners at national and local levels.

Currently, this service is delivered on-site in Scotland's 364 secondary schools. Services include a blend of one-to-one careers coaching support, facilitated group sessions, drop in sessions, and supported access to MyWoW. The level of intensity of support is determined by an assessment of pupil needs made in discussion with schools. The greatest proportion of careers coach support is provided to those young people who have been identified as requiring an enhanced level of support to promote progress towards securing and sustaining a place in education, training or work. This means those individuals would receive a 'medium' or 'maximum' service offer.

SDS has a key role to play in the delivery of the Scottish Government's Opportunities for all initiative, under which all 16-19 year olds will receive an offer of a place in learning or training. SDS work in this area has been reinforced with the passage of legislation allowing SDS and key

partners, including Local Authorities, schools and Further Education Institutions to share data on all the young people they work with. The Post 16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013 and the statutory guidance mandate SDS and key partners to share data in order to support young people in their post school transitions.

APPENDIX 4

Background information

Terminologies used in this report.

The term 'service area' is used to describe the geographical area referred to in this report. SDS uses a variety of approaches to deliver CIAG services. This is often referred to as a blended service. SDS promotes a Universal Offer to support all secondary school pupils. In addition, a Targeted Service Offer is aimed at young people who have the greatest need and who require enhanced support to progress them towards entering or sustaining a positive destination. SDS offers access to a range of services for post-school customers. The different offers are shown below:

SDS School Universal Service Offer consists of:

- Access to MyWoW web service
- Group-work sessions on:
  - Transition support at P7/S1 transition
  - Subject choices and Career Management Skills in S2/S3
  - Senior phase group sessions
- Drop-in clinics for career management and employability
- Opportunity for any pupil to request a face to face session

SDS School Targeted Service Offer consists of:

- Targeted one-to-one support in S3 for those with the greatest need (and optional group activity where appropriate)
- Structured programme of one-to-one career guidance throughout the senior phase
- Senior Phase supported transition to a dedicated post-school team member for those who require on-going support towards positive participation

SDS Post-school Targeted Service Offer (Next Steps) consists of:

- Open access to public centres (47 locations throughout Scotland)
- Access to MyWoW web service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Structured programme of one-to-one careers guidance
- Employability support and group activity
- Partnership approach including structured referral arrangements with DPW/JCP
- Telephone access to SDS contact centre

SDS All age Service Offer (universal) consists of:

- Access to MyWoW web service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Access to one-to-one career guidance
- Telephone access to SDS contact centre
- PACE
- IES joint work activities with JCP
- Open access to public centres (47 locations throughout Scotland)

Further information on Skills Development Scotland's services to individuals and employers can be found at www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk. MyWoW web service can be accessed at www.myworldofwork.co.uk.

Staff roles

SDS uses a number of titles to describe the roles of the staff. These include Careers Adviser, Work Coach, Trainee Careers Adviser and Personal Adviser. Throughout this report, the term careers staff is used to refer to all staff involved in delivering CIAG services.

Contact Details

Education Scotland
Denholm House
Almondvale Business Park
Almondvale Way
Livingston EH54 6GA

T +44 (0)131 244 4330
E enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk

https://education.gov.scot/

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