



# City and County of Swansea

## Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

### Scrutiny Performance Panel – Education

**At:** Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS Teams

**On:** Thursday, 23 November 2023

**Time:** 4.00 pm

**Convenor:** Councillor Lyndon Jones MBE

**Membership:**

Councillors: A Davis, A M Day, F M Gordon, B Hopkins, Y V Jardine, S M Jones, S Joy, J D McGettrick, F D O'Brien, A J O'Connor

Co-opted Members: Beth Allender and Elizabeth Lee

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#### Agenda

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|----------|--|----------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.</b><br><a href="http://www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests">www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests</a>   |                |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips</b>   |                |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Minutes</b>   | <b>1 - 4</b>   |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Letter/s</b>  | <b>5 - 8</b>   |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Public Questions</b><br>Questions can be submitted in writing to <a href="mailto:scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk">scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk</a> up until noon on the working day prior to the meeting. Written questions take precedence. Public may attend and ask questions in person if time allows. Questions must relate to items on the open part of the agenda and will be dealt with in a 10-minute period. |                |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Reducing disadvantage in school, including pupil development grant, roll out of free school meals, cost of the school day and school uniform</b><br>Cllr Robert Smith Cabinet Member (Education and Learning and Skills), Helen Morgan Rees (Director of Education) and Kelly Small (Head of Planning and Resources Team)   | <b>9 - 17</b>  |
| <b>7</b> | <b>School Improvement Service Annual Update</b><br>Cllr Robert Smith Cabinet Member (Education and Learning and Skills), and Helen Morgan Rees (Director of Education) and David Thomas (Principal School Improvement Officer)   | <b>18 - 22</b> |

- |          |   |                |
|----------|---|----------------|
| <b>8</b> | <b>Cookery in Schools</b><br>Cllr Robert Smith Cabinet Member (Education and Learning and Skills), Helen Morgan Rees (Director of Education) and Rhodri Jones (Head of Achievement and Partnership Service) | <b>23 - 26</b> |
| <b>9</b> | <b>Work Plan for 2023/2024</b>  | <b>27 - 28</b> |

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, 14 December 2023 at 4.30 pm



**Huw Evans**  
**Head of Democratic Services**  
**Thursday, 16 November 2023**  
**Contact: Scrutiny Officer**

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# Agenda Item 3



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel – Education**

**Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS Teams**

**Thursday, 14 September 2023 at 4.00 pm**

**Present:** Councillor L R Jones (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

A Davis  
S Joy

**Councillor(s)**

F D O'Brien  
J D McGettrick

**Councillor(s)**

B Hopkins

**Co-opted Member(s)**

Beth Allender

**Co-opted Member(s)**

Elizabeth Lee

**Co-opted Member(s)**

**Other Attendees**

Mike Durke  
Robert Smith

**Officer(s)**

Helen Howells  
Sarah Hughes  
Helen Morgan-Rees  
Michelle Roberts

Team Manager for Pupil Support  
Team Manager for Education Strategy  
Director of Education  
Scrutiny Officer

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): A M Day, F M Gordon, S M Jones, S E Keeton and A J O'Connor

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**84 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.**

None

**85 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips**

None

**86 Minutes**

The minutes of the Panel meeting on the 13 July 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

**87 Letter/s**

The Panel received the letter and Cabinet Member response following the Panel meeting on the 13 July 2023.

**88 Public Questions**

No public questions were received.

**89 Looked after Children, support and progress in school**

The Panel thanked Councillor Robert Smith (Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills), Helen Morgan Rees (Director of Education and Helen Howells (Team Manager Pupil Support) for attending the Panel and presenting a written report giving details on looked after children support and progress in school. The discussion covered:

- Current position including data
- Personal Education Plans (PEP)
- Support and provision in schools including
  - literacy and numeracy interventions
  - nurture and welling facilities and equipment
  - transition activities
  - use of dedicated grant
  - looked after children designated teacher
- Additional learning needs provision
- Education performance
- Training and future developments

The following issues/questions were raised by the Panel. A summary of the Panels views on progress made and the responses to their questions, will form part of the letter to the Cabinet Member following the meeting.

- Children placed out of county and provision in Swansea
- Children receiving home tuition and hours of learning provided
- Maintaining contact with pupils and how progress is followed up upon
- Power of language and new language guide

**90 Following up on the 10 Cabinet Development Committee Recommendations**

The Panel thanked Councillor Robert Smith (Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills), Helen Morgan Rees (Director of Education and Sarah Hughes (Head of Education Strategy) for attending the Panel and presenting a written report giving details on the 10 Cabinet Development Committee recommendations, as referred to the Panel for follow up. The discussion covered:

- Current position including data
- Personal Education Plans (PEP)
- Support and provision in schools including

- literacy and numeracy interventions
- nurture and welling facilities and equipment
- transition activities
- use of dedicated grant
- looked after children designated teacher
- Additional learning needs provision
- Education performance
- Training and future developments

The following issues/questions were raised by the Panel. A summary of the Panels views on progress made and the responses to their questions, will form part of the letter to the Cabinet Member following the meeting.

- Involvement of local area co-ordinators
- Engaging with communities and social media
- Vocational Strategy
- Library membership by children and young people
- Inclusion Strategy
- Language guide

The Panel were pleased to see good progress with a number of the recommendations, with those remaining requiring longer-term solutions. The Panel look forward to hearing about progress in relation to those that have not yet been progressed, when they received a further update in 12 months' time.

**91 Feedback from Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group**

The Panel noted the letter arising from the most recent Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group on the 19 June 2023.

**92 Work Plan for 2023/2024**

The work plan was noted. The next meeting of the Panel will be an informal in person only meeting with and at Gorseinon Primary School.

**93 For Information - Recent Individual School Inspection Outcomes List**

The Panel noted the recent individual school inspections.

The meeting ended at 4.50 pm

**Chair**



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel – Education – Informal meeting**

Gorseinon Primary School, 40 Brynawel Road, Gorseinon, Swansea, SA4 4UX

Thursday, 19 October 2023 at 4.00 pm

**Present:** Councillor L R Jones (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

A Davis  
F D O'Brien

**Councillor(s)**

S M Jones

**Councillor(s)**

S Joy

**Co-opted Member(s)**

Elizabeth Lee

**Co-opted Member(s)**

**Co-opted Member(s)**

**Other Attendees**

Robert Smith  
Jason Dodd  
June Williams  
Alison Williams

Cabinet Member  
Headteacher Gorseinon Primary School  
Chair of Governors Gorseinon Primary School  
Commissioned Headteacher/School Improvement

**Officer(s)**

Helen Morgan-Rees  
David Thomas  
Michelle Roberts

Director of Education  
School Improvement Adviser  
Scrutiny Officer

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): A M Day, F M Gordon, B Hopkins, Y V Jardine, J D McGettrick and A J O'Connor. Co-opted Member(s): Beth Allender

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**94 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.**

None

**95 Schools Scrutiny Session - Gorseinon Primary School**

The Panel had an information session and visit to Gorseinon Primary School. They met with the Head Teacher, Chair of Governors and School Improvement Adviser to discuss their School Development Plan including progress they have made with the two Estyn Inspection recommendations made in November 2022. The Panel thanked the Headteacher and Chair of Governors for their presentation and tour of the school. The Panel will put their thoughts on the visit into a letter to the Cabinet Member of Education and Skills.

The meeting ended at 6.00 pm.

# Agenda Item 4



**To:**  
**Councillor Robert Smith**  
**Cabinet Member for Education and Skills**

**BY EMAIL**

*Please ask for:* Michelle Roberts  
*Gofynnwch am:*  
*Scrutiny Office Line:* 01792 637256  
*Llinell Uniongyrchol:*  
*e-Mail e-Bost:* [scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk)  
*Date Dyddiad:* 26 September 2023

**Summary:** This is a letter from the Education Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Education and Learning following the meeting of the Panel on 14 September 2023. The Panel discussed looked after children's education and support and then followed up upon 10 education recommendations as referred to them by the previous Education Cabinet Development Committee.

Dear Cllr Smith,

## **Education Scrutiny Performance Panel – 14 September 2023**

We would like to thank you and Helen Morgan Rees (Director of Education), Head of Education Strategy and the Team Manager for Pupil Support for attending the meeting and providing information for the Panel. We are writing to you to reflect on what we learnt from the discussion and to share the views of the Panel.

### **Looked after Children, support and progress in school**

We were pleased to hear that a child's access to appropriate education should not be determined by their personal circumstances and the Council's recently agreed Inclusion Strategy aims to drive equity of experience by removing barriers to education for vulnerable pupils, including those who are looked after.

We heard that children and young people in care have personal education plans and the intention is for the child's voice to be captured in them. Also, that all schools in Swansea have a designated teacher and governor for looked-after children.

We were told that as of July 2023 there were 293 looked after children of statutory school age who received education in Swansea schools, 75 of these are children looked after by other local authorities. A further 91 children are looked after by Swansea and receive their education in other Welsh authorities. 17 children are

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TRUSLOW A CHRAFFU**

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educated and placed in England. Also in 2022/2023, 20 pupils who are looked after, were provided with education via the Education Other Than at School Service or other specialist provision. We asked how many hours of tuition the home educating children receive and we heard that each child would have a bespoke curriculum depending on their individual needs and that may include some external provision.

We were pleased to hear that all looked-after year 11 pupils, who were in mainstream school, educated at home or in a pupil referral unit, went on to further education, employment or training last year. We were interested to explore how the progress post-year 11 was then monitored. We were pleased to hear that the new Swansea Virtual School will help to do this more effectively.

### **Following up on the 10 Cabinet Development Committee Recommendations**

The Head of Education Strategy took us through the progress made with regard to each of the 10 recommendations. We were pleased to hear from the Chair of the Education and Skills Service Transformation Committee Cllr Mike Durke, who told us that he felt good progress had been made on many of the recommendations, but there was more work to do on some. You also told us that many of those recommendation that have not yet been advanced are longer term developments and will require more time to progress.

We were pleased to hear about the new language guide that has been developed in conjunction with children and young people. We recognise that language is a powerful tool and would be keen to see the guide once it is available.

We felt that the approval by Cabinet in May 2023 of the Councils Inclusion Strategy is a positive step forward and we recognise this will help schools to promote inclusion and reduce exclusion.

We were also pleased to hear about the good progress being made with the Strategy for Vocational Education and we were interested to hear about how the Swansea Skills Partnership will also be looking to incorporate this into their work in the near future.

The Panel were encouraged by progress being made with regard to a number of the recommendations. We look forward to hearing about progress in relation to those that have not yet been advanced when we receive a further update in 12 months' time.

### **Your Response**

We would welcome your comments on any of the issues raised in this letter but on this occasion do not require a formal response.

Yours sincerely

**COUNCILLOR LYNDON JONES**

Convener, Education Scrutiny Performance Panel

[Cllr.lyndon.jones@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.lyndon.jones@swansea.gov.uk)





**To:**  
**Councillor Robert Smith**  
**Cabinet Member for Education and Skills**

**BY EMAIL**

*Please ask for:* Michelle Roberts  
*Gofynnwch am:*  
*Scrutiny Office* 01792 637256  
*Line:*  
*Llinell*  
*Uniongyrchol:*  
*e-Mail* [scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk)  
*e-Bost:*  
*Date* 30 October 2023  
*Dyddiad:*

**Summary:** This is a letter from the Education Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Education and Learning following the meeting of the Panel on 19 October 2023. The Panel met with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors from Gorseinon Primary School to discuss their school development plan.

Dear Cllr Smith,

### **Education Scrutiny Performance Panel – 19 October 2023**

We thanked the Headteacher for his detailed overview and for the answers to our set of questions that were sent to the school in advance of the meeting. We are writing to you as the Cabinet Member to reflect on what we learnt from the discussion and to share the views of the Panel.

We welcome the overall progress that has been made with the School Improvement Plan since the Estyn Inspection in November 2022. We were particularly keen to hear about the progress being made in relation to the two Estyn recommendations contained in that report.

Some of the points we noted from the discussion include:

- There is a dedicated Headteacher, Chair of Governors and newly formed Senior Management Team at the school, who are clearly committed to taking improvements forward at the school. The new team now need to bed in.
- The wellbeing of staff and pupils is at the heart of the school especially through what has been a challenging period.
- The school is working with its cluster comprehensive and primary schools in relation to introducing the new curriculum but we think that there was clear evidence that that this needs to be further improved.

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- We noted that the governing body has had its challenges with a big turnover of governors. There is currently a number of new governors at the school, so their training will be key. We were encouraged to hear that there is now a good and varied skills base and once governor training and development is given, they should be in a position to provide good support but also importantly provide positive challenge to the school.
- The school attendance figure for 2022/23 was 89% and the Panel heard that the school is working hard to improve attendance through, for example, speaking to parents and also having incentives in place for pupils to improve their attendance.
- That leadership, wellbeing and the new curriculum were key areas of focus within the School Improvement Plan.
- That the school was beginning to develop its links in the community but that was in its early stages and we recognise that this work can be aided by the new governor team.

We were encouraged to hear from the Headteacher and Chair of Governors, that the support received by the local authority has been excellent as well as from Partneriaeth. Particularly in the areas of Science and Maths. However, we heard that the wider group courses provided by Partneriaeth were less beneficial.

We were very pleased to see the fantastic facilities provided in this new school building and that it was clearly designed for pupils to get the best out of their day at school including good outside space, well designed classrooms and useful shared areas.

From our discussions with the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and the School Improvement Adviser, we are reassured that progress is being made across the School Improvement Plan and with the Estyn recommendations and that there is now a good base for the school to continue to build upon those improvements.

### **Your Response**

We would welcome your comments on any of the issues raised in this letter but on this occasion do not require a formal written response.

Yours sincerely

### **COUNCILLOR LYNDON JONES**

Convener, Education Scrutiny Performance Panel

[Cllr.lyndon.jones@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.lyndon.jones@swansea.gov.uk)

# Agenda Item 6



## Report of the Cabinet Member for Education and Learning

### Education Scrutiny Performance Panel 23 November 2023

## Reducing Disadvantage in Schools

<b>Purpose:</b>	To brief the Scrutiny Panel on how the Education Directorate reduces disadvantage in schools, including Pupil Development Grant, roll out of free school meals, the cost of the school day and school uniform.
<b>Content:</b>	An overview of support provided to schools and families to reduce disadvantage.
<b>Councillors are being asked to:</b>	Consider the information provided and give views.
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Councillor Robert Smith Cabinet Member for Education and Learning
<b>Lead Officer and report author:</b>	Kelly Small, Head of Education Planning and Resources <a href="mailto:Kelly.Small@swansea.gov.uk">Kelly.Small@swansea.gov.uk</a>
<b>For Information</b>	

### 1. Background

- 1.1 The City and County of Swansea's Corporate Plan 2023-2028 sets out wellbeing objectives including:
  - Improving Education and Skills - so that everyone in Swansea gains the skills and qualifications they need to succeed in life.
  - Tackling Poverty and Enabling Communities - so that every person in Swansea can achieve their potential.
- 1.2 The Education Directorate supports schools in their role to help ensure children and young people's needs are met by creating the right conditions for them to thrive now and prosper in the future.
- 1.3 In the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) 2019, 17 (11.5%) of Swansea's 148 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs - areas with an

average population of 1,600) are in the most deprived 10 per cent in Wales.

- 1.4 The percentage of children on roll in Swansea schools that were eligible for free school meals (FSM) in January 2023 varied from 2.05% to 68.63% in primary schools, and from 5.57% to 50.15% in secondary schools.
- 1.5 The Education Directorate aims to raise the attainment of children and young people from low-income households by reducing the barriers that they often face to achieving their full potential. This report outlines some of these areas, namely:
  - Pupil Development Grant (PDG)
  - The rollout of free school meals.
  - The cost of the school day
  - School uniform

## **2. Pupil Development Grant (PDG)**

- 2.1 PDG is grant funding provided by the Welsh Government to schools and settings for children and young people aged 5 to 15 who are eligible for FSM. Grant is based on £1,150 per learner with FSM eligibility (note that this excludes children only receiving universal FSM). Use of the grant should focus on the following key areas:
  - high-quality learning and teaching
  - Community Focused Schools
  - early childhood play, learning and care
  - high aspirations supported by strong relationships
  - health and wellbeing
  - leadership
  - Curriculum for Wales and qualifications
  - supporting post-16 progression
- 2.2 In May 2019, the Policy Development Committee supported recommendations regarding PDG use in Swansea. These included:
  - Appoint a senior leader within the school to champion pupils who are eligible for FSM with responsibility for the strategic implementation of PDG.
  - Optimise the progress of MAT (more able and talented) pupils eligible for FSM through more targeted and effective use of the PDG for this group of pupils.
  - Establish a PDG plan clearly identifying eligible pupils and demonstrate/evaluate the actions/activities to support them
  - Undertake regular tracking of the academic progress of this group of pupils.

- Include the provision and evaluation of the activities/resources used to support the learning of Looked After Children (LAC) FSM pupils where appropriate.
- Undertake an annual review of intervention strategies to be evidenced and undertaken by the leadership team - interventions that are selected to be implemented should be based on sound research and evidence.

2.3 School Improvement Advisers from the Education Directorate consider school PDG plans as part of their autumn term support visits and discuss how schools are supporting the recommendations from paragraph 2.2.

2.4 Schools also have access to a flowchart to consider if spend is eligible in line with the grant terms and conditions (see Appendix A).

2.5 A summary of PDG allocations to schools for the financial year 2023-2024 is shown in the table below:

	Max	Min	Avg	Total
Primary	£308,200	£1,150	£77,289	£5,951,250
Secondary	£411,700	£69,000	£227,700	£3,187,800
Special	£59,800	£18,400	£39,100	£78,200
PRU/EOTAS	£70,150	£70,150	£70,150	£70,150
				<b>£9,287,400</b>

The amount of PDG received by schools can vary greatly, depending on the number of pupils eligible for FSM.

2.6 Some interventions are more successful than others and the best approaches are not always the most expensive. What should be consistent is that the approaches are research and evidence based. Some examples of use in Swansea that meet the needs of learners are:

- Purchase of support packages (reading eggs, maths seeds, toe-by-toe etc.)
- Self-esteem (THRIVE, Empathy Lab etc.)
- Supporting mental health
- Developing tracking systems
- Freeing key staff to work with families and other agencies (TAF)
- Employing staff to support families
- Implement catch-up programmes
- Increase staffing ratios in the early years
- Provide enrichment and after-school provision
- Homework club for parents and pupils
- Computer skills course for parents
- Creation of wellbeing rooms

- Supporting MAT pupils
- Nurture lunchtime clubs
- Art therapy

2.7 Training packages are also delivered to staff (teachers and teaching assistants), such as:

- Speech and language
- Well-being training
- Wellcomm
- Developing teaching, e.g. Hattie's 'visible learning'
- Trauma informed
- Behaviour strategies
- Attachment

2.8 Families can also be supported directly, for example:

- Free pre-school childcare clubs
- Free after-school club
- Free/subsidised school trips
- Free school snacks
- Provision of IT equipment

2.9 The impact of PDG can be seen through improved engagement, fewer social services referrals, improved attendance, improved attainment and importantly a better relationship between parents and the school.

### **3. The rollout of free school meals**

3.1 The Welsh Government has asked local authorities to roll out universal free school meals for primary pupils by 2024. This commitment is in response to the rising cost-of-living pressures on families and ambitions to:

- tackle child poverty.
- ensure no child goes hungry in school.
- promote healthy eating across the school.
- increase the variety of food options.
- improve social skills at mealtimes.
- improve behaviour and attainment.

3.2 Swansea Council has agreed to roll out the free meal a whole year group at a time, to ensure fairness across the county. To date, pupils up to and including Year 3 in primary schools are receiving a free meal.

3.3 To accommodate the increasing number of pupils whilst working within the grant provided, changes have been made to the menu on offer in

primary schools. Less labour-intensive menu choices are being offered whilst still ensuring a healthy and nutritious meal is being served.

- 3.4 Some school kitchens required new equipment to enable them to produce more meals, and this was purchased and installed using a grant from the Welsh Government. Some schools also required upgrades to their electrical systems to enable the new equipment to be installed. Some of these projects delayed the rollout of universal free school meals as they had to be completed in all schools to allow us to roll out to the whole year group at the same time.
- 3.5 Five schools remain with major capital works required and it will not be possible to complete these works until at least the school summer holidays of 2024. Our catering service are working on alternative solutions to be able to deliver meals to these five schools to enable rollout to the last three year groups (Years 4, 5 and 6) as soon as possible in 2024.
- 3.6 To date, the Welsh Government has allocated £7.2m of capital funding to support equipment and building work in Swansea schools. Additional meals provided are supported by revenue grant at £2.90 per meal.
- 3.7 Take up of the universal free school meal is an average of 64% (ranging from 25% to 85%) and investigations are underway to understand levels of take up in our schools.
- 3.8 It should be noted that the directorate is continually reminding parents and carers to apply for free school meal eligibility, even though they will get a free meal without applying, as otherwise they cannot claim for school uniform grant if eligible and also the school and council will lose out on funding that is based on FSM numbers, in particular PDG.

#### **4. The cost of the school day**

- 4.1 Schools are frequently reminded to consider the cost of the school day for parents and carers. A presentation was made to the Cross Phase Headteacher meeting in June 2023 that outlined good practice use of PDG, provided information on school uniform grant and Period Dignity Grant, and also reminded schools to pay heed to the Welsh Government's *School uniform and appearance: policy guidance for governing bodies*. It is planned to hold another headteacher session on poverty in the spring of 2024.
- 4.2 Schools have been offered training linked to our regional school improvement service, Partneriaeth, on costing the school day. Things schools are asked to consider include:
  - The cost of school trips, particularly those abroad.

- The cost of non-uniform days and dressing up days (and how this can affect attendance for children living in poverty).
- Charges for after-school clubs.
- Charges for fruit, cooking etc.
- Asking for contributions for school fetes, discos etc.
- Access to technology for homework.
- Pressure to keep up with styles and trends when certain items are allowed in schools.

## 5. School uniform

5.1 The Welsh Government's *School uniform and appearance: policy guidance for governing bodies* includes the following statements regarding how a school uniform should be set by a governing body:

- Basic items and colours that can be bought from multiple retail suppliers at reasonable prices.
- Avoid high-cost items such as blazers and caps.
- Avoid variation in colours and style for different year groups as this is expensive for parents and limits the scope for second-hand sale or handing on to siblings.
- Have easily washable items: dry clean only items should be avoided.
- Limit the frequency of uniform changes.
- Consider the cost and availability of non-standard sizes.
- Transitional period for any change.
- If considering different uniforms for summer and winter consider whether it is proportionate and justifiable to do so.
- Secondary schools are encouraged to consider the feasibility of aligning their school uniform policy with those of their feeder primary schools to enable any core uniform items to continue to be used.

5.2 School uniform grant (now called School Essentials Grant) from the Welsh Government is available to children and young people who are:

- eligible for free school meals (eFSM)
- Looked After Children (LAC)
- classed as No Resource to Public Funds (NRPF)
- in year groups Reception to Year 11 (as of September 2023)

5.3 Funding available is £125 for each eligible learner with the exception of those in Year 7, who will be entitled to £200.

5.4 The grant can be spent on:

- School uniform including coats and shoes
- School sports kit including footwear



- IT equipment: laptop and tablets ONLY (School Essentials should only be used in limited situations where a school is unable to loan equipment to the family)
- Uniform for enrichment activities, including but not limited to: scouts; guides; cadets; martial arts; sports; performing arts, or dance
- Equipment - for example, school bags and stationery
- Specialist equipment where new curriculum activities begin such as design and technology
- Equipment for out-of-school hours trips such as outdoor learning - for example, waterproofs

5.5 Swansea Council uses an online system for parents/carers to apply for the grant. Payments are made directly into bank accounts a few days after applications are submitted. Should a parent be unable to use this system they can work through their school, where purchases will be made on their behalf.

5.6 It should be noted that pupils receiving the universal free school meal are not eligible for the uniform grant unless they meet the eligibility income criteria for free school meals. Also, some older children who do receive a free meal do so because of the Welsh Government's 'transitional protection'. This means that a child may have been entitled to a free school meal because of income levels, and even though the income level has increased the free school meal has been protected. This causes a lot of confusion for parents and carers who do not understand why they are not eligible for the uniform grant when their child is in receipt of free school meals.

5.7 Most schools in Swansea offer a recycling service to enable uniform to be reused. Swansea Council also supports GROW, a charity that launders and recycles school uniform, usually for £1 an item [Projects – GROW Cymru: A Women's Help enterprise in Swansea](#)

## **6. Legal implications**

6.1 There are no legal implications.

## **7. Finance Implications**

7.1 There are no finance implications.

## **8. Equality and Engagement Implications**

8.1 The report is for information and not for decision.

**Background papers:**

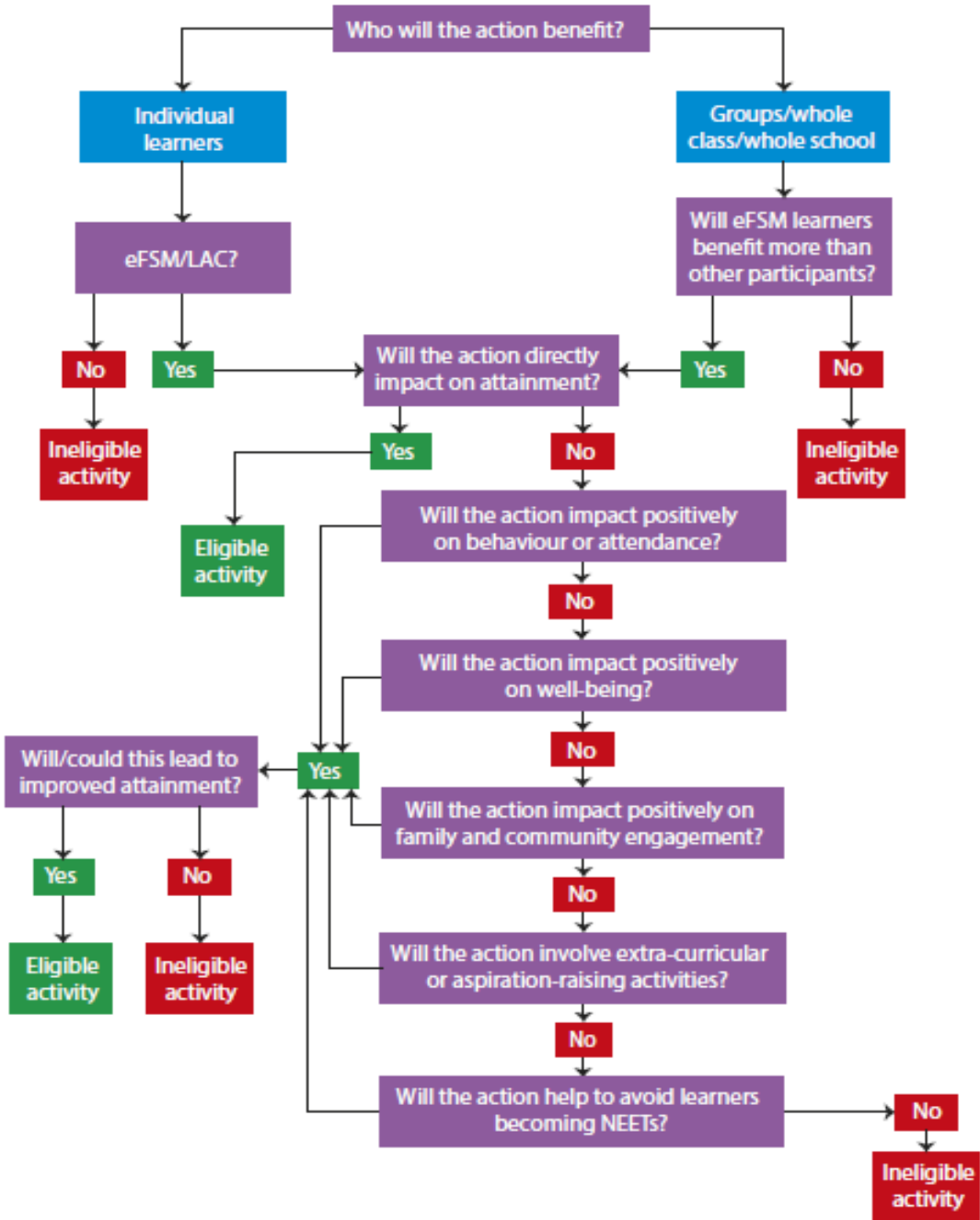
Corporate Plan [Corporate plan 2023 / 2028 - Swansea](#)

Welsh Government School Uniform Policy [School uniform and appearance: policy guidance for governing bodies | GOV.WALES](#)

**Appendices:**

Appendix A – Flowchart on Use of PDG

Flowchart on Use of PDG



# Agenda Item 7



## Report of the Cabinet Member for Education and Learning

### Education Scrutiny Performance Panel – 23 November 2023

## School Improvement Team

<b>Purpose:</b>	To brief the Scrutiny Panel on school improvement
<b>Content:</b>	A briefing on the progress of the School Improvement Team
<b>Councillors are being asked to:</b>	Consider the information provided and give views
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Councillor Robert Smith, Cabinet Member for Education and Learning
<b>Lead Officer &amp; Report Author:</b>	David Thomas, Principal School Improvement Adviser <a href="mailto:david.thomas1@swansea.gov.uk">david.thomas1@swansea.gov.uk</a>

### 1. Background

- 1.1 Swansea Council's School Improvement Team (SIT) sits within the Achievement and Partnership service area and helps deliver local and national priorities and strategies for school improvement. In October 2021, the Primary and Secondary phase teams were merged and are now led by one Principal School Improvement Adviser. A Welsh in Education Advisory Team, Music Service and Minority Ethnic Learners and Equality team are also situated within the SIT. An officer from within the team supports the provision for skills across Swansea's settings. Since the amalgamation, team members report a greater sense of agency. SIT members who are not School Improvement Advisers (SIAs) are now attending school visits which promotes the sharing of effective practice.
- 1.2 The SIT comprises of permanent and commissioned SIAs (known as Challenge Advisers prior to May 2021). For the academic year 2022-2023, the team had 4 full-time equivalent permanent SIAs plus a seconded Principal officer. Ten headteachers were commissioned to support the work of the permanent team.
- 1.3 In addition to the SIAs, the team is supported by four performance specialists covering the areas of Digital skills, Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)/Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE), Literacy and Research and Enquiry.

- 1.4 The core responsibility of the SIT is to support all schools to be self-improving, to help raise standards and promote high quality provision. There are four key aspects to the role:
- supporting school self-evaluation and improvement.
  - brokering effective support and identify/share effective practice.
  - developing school leadership.
  - building school-to-school capacity.
- 1.5 During the 2022–2023 academic year, industrial action, mainly affecting primary schools, prevented officers conducting school visits. As a result, reports could not be written in all cases. This action affected around 50% of primary schools. Normally, at least two formal visits are arranged for each school with reports compiled and submitted to the principal officer and the school.
- 1.6 Twelve schools were inspected by Estyn. One school was placed into a statutory category. Four schools were placed into Estyn monitoring. Four were asked to write at least one case study on the effective practice found. The SIT supports schools to share this work.
- 1.7 For the 2023 – 2024 academic year, the seconded principal officer was successfully appointed, following a competitive process, as a permanent member of staff. He is supported by 5 full-time, permanent SIAs and 4 commissioned SIAs who support Swansea’s 95 schools and settings. Secondees, funded by a regional grant, support schools in modern foreign languages (MfL), literacy and enquiry. In order to support the implementation and ongoing review of Curriculum for Wales (CfW), an additional secondee from a secondary school will support the team.

## **2. Briefing**

- 2.1 The SIT support schools in a number of ways throughout the school year. The core of the work is centred around annual support visits. The agenda for each visit is co-constructed with headteachers in order to support high levels of ownership and engagement. During visits, based on the needs of the school, SIT officers support schools/settings to undertake a range of quality assurance activities. For example, meetings with senior leaders/governors, observations of learning and work scrutiny. The main aim is to support the school’s own evaluations.
- 2.2 The SIT’s objectives for the last academic year were:
- Support school self-evaluation and improvement.
    - *Engage in Welsh Government’s school improvement guidance.*
  - Support school preparations to review the impact of their curriculum designs.
    - *Utilise self-evaluation tools such as the National Resource for Evaluation and Improvement (NR:EI).*
  - Broker effective support and intervention, build school-to-school support through partnership working.
    - *Facilitate and promote professional learning (PL).*

- Support implementation of the Framework on embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being and the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal (ALNET) Bill
  - *Continue to prioritise and promote positive wellbeing.*
- Develop workforce and leadership (at all levels).
  - *Provide senior and middle leader self-evaluation training.*

2.3 During 2022–2023, many schools were facing ongoing challenges in relation to work force availability. High levels of staffing absence across our schools required the SIT to provide operational support and advice. The team supported schools in a number of ways. For example, meeting remotely instead of cancelling planned visits, training governors remotely and attending schools to support leadership capacity shortcomings. The principal officer deployed senior leaders to 3 schools from the consultative pool.

Autumn term visit agendas were an interpretation of Welsh Government’s School Improvement Guidance and encouraged schools to self-evaluate in the areas of:

- Vision and leadership.
- Curriculum, learning and teaching.
- Wellbeing, equity and inclusion.

Nearly all schools were visited during the autumn term and visit reports were produced. Feedback from the quality assurance of these reports now inform the work of SIAs during 2023 – 2024.

Late in the Autumn term and during the early part of the Spring, the performance specialists delivered on the literacy and numeracy strategies before their secondments concluded. Good progress was made.

During the latter part of the Spring term, industrial action began to impact on the team’s interactions with schools and less visit reports were written. SIAs engaged with all schools with an offer of informal support and began planning professional learning based on the outcomes from Autumn visits.

Secondary Curriculum and School Evaluation Network (SCASEN) for secondary schools continued to meet regularly to share effective practice. A useful conference facilitated worthwhile professional dialogue. This network is a strength of Swansea’s schools/settings.

The Welsh in Education advisory team supported schools in a variety of ways that included:

- creating a wide range of resources for schools.
- facilitating coordinators’ seminars.
- training for staff.
- providing ‘live’ lessons via Teams.
- ongoing support for the development pathway of Cymraeg Campus/Siarter Iaith.

- strategic support and delivery of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).

During the Summer term, all secondary schools were visited, and reports written. A clear set of strengths and areas for development were identified within the three areas of self-evaluation above.

Industrial action continued to impact the work of SIAs in primary schools. Only a few schools permitted formal visits and the writing of reports. However, SIAs were able to visit schools more informally and in the majority of cases, supported schools during their quality assurance activities. In addition, SIAs developed a suite of training opportunities to support ongoing self-evaluation. These sessions have received exemplary feedback and were attended by around 400 practitioners across the city.

SIT plans to further develop these during 2023 – 2024.

- 2.4 In addition to the professional learning (PL) referenced above, SIAs have brokered beneficial opportunities for headteachers, senior leaders and teachers through the termly headteacher meetings. Members of the SIA team continue to oversee the induction of newly qualified teachers (NQTs). This entails allocating external verifiers, providing training, reviewing and moderating profiles.
- 2.5 SIAs have continued to support the Directorate’s Stakeholder and School Support Team by providing training sessions that have focussed on CfW, assessment, headteacher performance management and school improvement planning. Governing bodies have also been supported with officer advice when making headteacher and deputy headteacher appointments. The SIA team oversee new appointments of other senior leaders, as required.
- 2.6 In schools, leaders use Pupil Development Grant (PDG) funding well to support vulnerable pupils. For example, facilitating professional learning for staff focusing on elements such as speech and language provision, wellbeing, disorders linked to attachment anxiety, learning catch-up programmes, emotion coaching, among others. Some uses include employing staff deployed to support pupils and families. One of the team’s SIAs support schools in their work as community focussed organisations.

### **3. Conclusions**

- 3.1 Despite the reduced interactions, SIAs have supported schools well, providing a wide range of PL opportunities alongside school support visits. Effective practice has been shared via headteacher meetings and established networks.
- 3.2 SIAs have supported governing bodies well to make headteacher and deputy headteacher appointments, provide PL and bespoke support as required.
- 3.3 Vulnerable learners and Eligible for Free School Meals (eFSM) pupils are well supported by the local authority and their schools.

3.4 The Welsh Government's school improvement guidance (September 2022) has driven changes to the school visit agenda. SIT has been able to support schools further in their ability to evaluate the impact of their planned actions on learner outcomes.

3.5 For 2023 – 2024, SIAs are focusing on:

- A differentiated/graduated approach to the number of school visits per school depending on the level of need.
- Supporting schools and settings to have a clear rationale for their priorities.
- Supporting schools to plan for improvement in a more focussed manner.
- Improving the quality of school-based evaluations.
- Supporting schools to undertake purposeful quality assurance that promotes an improving view of:
  - pupil progress.
  - the impact of their curriculum plans.
  - the provision to promote positive wellbeing.

#### **4. Legal implications**

4.1 There are no legal implications within this report.

#### **5. Finance Implications**

5.1 There are no finance implications within this report.

#### **6. Equality and Engagement Implications**

6.1 The report is for information and not for decision.

**Background papers:** None

**Appendices:** None



# Agenda Item 8



## Report of the Cabinet Member for Education and Learning

### Education Scrutiny Performance Panel – 23 November 2023

## Cookery in Schools

<b>Purpose:</b>	To brief the Panel on what is being done in schools to provide children and young people with cookery skills.
<b>Content:</b>	An overview of cookery as part of the Curriculum for Wales and what the current offer is across our schools.
<b>Councillors are being asked to:</b>	Consider the information provided and give views.
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Cabinet Member for Education & Learning
<b>Lead Officer &amp; Report Author:</b>	Rhodri Jones, Head of Achievement and Partnership Service <a href="mailto:rhodri.jones@swansea.gov.uk">rhodri.jones@swansea.gov.uk</a>

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Curriculum for Wales states clearly that a headteacher must ensure a curriculum is designed for learning and teaching for all registered learners at the school aged 3 to 16. Amongst these requirements, they must make provision for learning and teaching that encompasses each of the Areas of Learning, including the mandatory elements. A curriculum only does this if it incorporates all the statements of what matters.
- 1.2 The Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience provides a holistic structure for understanding health and well-being. It is concerned with developing the capacity of learners to navigate life's opportunities and challenges. The fundamental components of this Area are physical health and development, mental health, and emotional and social well-being. It will support learners to understand and appreciate how the different components of health and well-being are interconnected, and it recognises that good health and well-being are important to enable successful learning.
- 1.3 In the Statements of What Matters for this Area, a mandatory statement is that *developing physical health and well-being has lifelong benefits*.
- 1.4 This Area can help learners to understand the factors that affect physical health and well-being. This includes health-promoting behaviours such as physical

activity, including but not limited to sport; balanced diet; personal care and hygiene; sleep; and protection from infection. It also includes an understanding of health-harming behaviours.

- 1.5 From this understanding, learners can develop positive, informed behaviours that encourage them both to care for and respect themselves and others. These behaviours support learners' sense of self-worth, their overall mood and energy levels.
- 1.6 Learners will be encouraged to develop the confidence, motivation, physical competence, knowledge and understanding that can help them lead healthy and active lifestyles which promote good physical health and well-being.
- 1.7 As a result, learners should be taught:
  - to explain the importance of a balanced diet and nutrition and the impact my choices have on my physical health and well-being.
  - plan and prepare basic, nutritious meals.
  - apply a range of techniques to prepare meals.

## **2. Primary Schools in Swansea**

- 2.1 At the time of writing and planning for this report members of the National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) are taking part in action short of strike meaning that many of our primary headteachers are withdrawing from certain administrative functions. As a result, we have been unable to gather detailed information on cookery in our primary schools.
- 2.2 However, our School Improvement Team have collected anecdotal evidence over time and as a result we are able to provide a brief overview of our understanding of the current offer across our primary schools.
- 2.3 Our School Improvement Team have reported that primary schools in Swansea are building cookery into their curriculum as required. Teachers use it to support various aspects of pupils' learning and skill development. This includes using it to allow the pupils to make various recipes to link with themes, festivals and cultures. We have also seen a number of schools providing additional opportunities via their after-school offer.
- 2.4 A number of our primary schools have looked further than the curriculum and have focused on healthy eating and cookery for their pupils, families and wider communities. A recent example of this has seen Penclawdd Primary School using Welsh Government Community Focussed Schools capital funding to support the redesign and repurpose the school's current staffroom kitchen area to use as an after school healthy eating / cooking club for families and children to benefit the community.
  - 2.4.1 This project will provide enormous benefits to the school and community as part of improving wellbeing by providing enrichment opportunities as an after school healthy eating cooking club for families and children.

- 2.4.2 Working with the support of The Sharing Table - a charity improving the lives of disadvantaged children in Gower and Swansea, the local North Gower food hub and Gorseinon food bank - this project will aim to teach children and families to cook, eat healthily, use vegetables, follow recipes and develop lifelong skills in food preparation, food hygiene, healthy eating choices and cooking on a budget. This project will also support the development of essential skills in Maths and English, positive relationships and encourage time away from the use of social media.
- 2.4.3 The school have their own school allotment and will also use vegetables and herbs grown by pupils in the after-school club.
- 2.5 Urdd Gobaith Cymru offer learners the opportunity to compete in CogUrdd, a competition that sees hundreds of children competing in local and regional heats before a final that's held on the Maes of the Urdd Eisteddfod every year. The competition starts with a simple meal that allows as many learners as possible to take part, with the recipes increasing in complexity as you move through the rounds. The last couple of years have seen an increase in the learners from Swansea schools taking part.
- 2.6 A number of Swansea schools have also started community cafés which not only provide learners with an opportunity to prepare food but also the wider skills of running a business in their local community.

### **3. Secondary Schools in Swansea**

- 3.1 We surveyed all our secondary schools to gather information on how cookery and food technology is taught in years 7,8 and 9, what options are available at key stage 4 and any other ways our schools promote home cooking skills or similar related activities.
- 3.2 Nearly all our schools offer food technology as part of a carousel with other subjects during years 7 and 8 with learners experiencing some practical lessons during that time. The schools that are not able to offer the subject in years 7 and 8 explained that this was due to staff capacity in this subject area.
- 3.3 All Swansea schools offer food technology to their year 9 learners as part of a carousel with other subject areas.
- 3.4 As students move to key stage 4 there are numerous GCSE and vocational courses offered in all Swansea schools These include:
- GCSE in Food and Nutrition
  - BTEC in Home Cooking Skills
  - Vocational courses in Hospitality and Catering
  - Personalised pathway access award in Home Cooking
  - Royal Society of Public Health qualifications in Food Hygiene
- 3.5 Similarly to our primary schools our secondary schools also find other ways of promoting home cooking skills or similar related activities. These include:

- Cooking lessons for eFSM pupil and parents/carers after school
- Year 6 Taster sessions
- Competitions, including Urdd Gobaith Cymru, Rotary, inter-school etc
- Posting recipes on social media for families to try at home
- Cooking for the homeless
- Regular cooking lessons for pupils within STFs and in ACE classes

#### **4. Legal implications**

4.1 There are no legal implications within this report.

#### **5. Finance Implications**

5.1 There are no financial implications within this report.

#### **6. Equality and Engagement Implications**

6.1 The report is for information and not for decision.

**Background papers:** None

**Appendices:** None

# Agenda Item 9

## Education Scrutiny Performance Panel DRAFT Work Programme 2023/2024

Date	Items to be discussed	Who invited
<b>Meeting 1</b> 15 Jun 23 4.00pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Additional Learning Needs Reform Annual Update (watching brief item) (Kate Phillips and Alison Lane)</li> <li>2. New Curriculum for Wales Annual Update (watching brief item) (David Thomas)</li> <li>3. Estyn Inspection – progress with recommendations (Sarah Hughes)</li> <li>4. Key issues affecting education 2023/24 (Helen Morgan Rees) then discuss draft Work Programme for 2023/24</li> </ol>	Cabinet Member and Director Relevant officers
<b>Meeting 2</b> 13 Jul 23 4.00pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Managing and Improving School Attendance including data</li> <li>2. Managing and Improving School Exclusions including data (Kate Phillips and Helen Howells)</li> </ol>	Cabinet Member and Director
<b>Meeting 3</b> 14 Sep 23 4.00pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Looked after Children, support and progress in school (Kate Phillips and Helen Howells)</li> <li>2. Following up on the 10 CDC recommendations (referred from Education Cabinet Development Committee) (Sarah Hughes)</li> <li>3. Feedback from Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group</li> </ol>	Cabinet Member and Director  Panel Convener
<b>Meeting 4</b> 19 Oct 23 4.00pm	<p><b>Schools Session and Site Visit 1 – Gorseinon Primary School</b></p> <p>School Development Plan (pre-meeting with School Improvement Advisor 18/10 at 4pm)</p>	
<b>Meeting 5</b> 23 Nov 23 4.00pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reducing disadvantage in Schools, including pupil development grant, roll out of free school meals, cost of the school day and school uniform (Kelly Small)</li> <li>2. School Improvement Service Annual Update (David Thomas)</li> <li>3. Cookery in Schools (Rhodri Jones)</li> </ol>	Cabinet Member and Director
<b>Meeting 6</b> 14 Dec 23 4.30pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Annual Education Performance against identified priorities (RAG) including Estyn Inspection recommendations progress update (Sarah Hughes)</li> <li>2. Cabinet Member Q&amp;A</li> <li>3. Feedback from Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group</li> </ol>	Cabinet Member and Director  Panel Convener
<b>Meeting 7</b> 18 Jan 24 4.30pm	Introducing the New Curriculum for Wales – a meeting with a Secondary School and its Cluster Primaries – Gowerton Comprehensive School cluster. Confirmed	Headteachers and Chairs of Governors
<b>Meeting 8</b> 12 Feb 24 3pm (tbc)	Annual Council Budget as it relates to education matters	Cabinet Member and Director

<b>Meeting 9</b> 22 Feb 24 4.00pm	<b>Schools Session 2 – Clydach Primary School</b> School Development Plan. Confirmed (pre-meeting with School Improvement Advisor tba)	Headteacher and Chair of Governors
<b>Meeting 9</b> 14 Mar 24 4.00pm (Tbc)	<b>Schools Session and Visit 3 – Bishopston Comprehensive School</b> School Development Plan (pre-meeting with School Improvement Advisor tba)	Headteacher and Chair of Governors
<b>Meeting 10</b> 18 Apr 24 4.00pm	1. Hearing the Voices of Children and Young People (Rhodri Jones) 2. Education Other Than At School services (EOTAS) Annual Update (Kate Phillips)	Cabinet Member and Director
<b>Meeting 11</b> 9 May 24 4.00pm	1. Quality in Education (QEd) / Sustainable Communities for Learning Update (Louise Herbert-Evans) 2. Swansea Skills Partnership Annual Update (David Bawden) 3. End of year review in Education Scrutiny	Cabinet Member and Director

To be added when we have more information from Welsh Government: Performance in Swansea Schools – Swansea Education Directorate/Cabinet Member and Partneriaeth (Annual) - Partneriaeth Legal Agreement says 'Each Council's scrutiny committee for children's and education services will meet at least once a year to consider performance and progress in their schools such meetings to be attended by Council and PARTNERIAETH staff equipped to answer questions'.

The Panel will also receive relevant individual school Estyn reports as they are published, along with any other reports or information relevant to Education Scrutiny.

## Background

Cllr Robert Smith, Cabinet Member for Education and Learning  
Helen Morgan Rees, Director of Education

The Officers listed in above timetable and their roles:

Sarah Hughes (Head of Education Strategy)  
Rhodri Jones (Head of Achievement and Partnership Service)  
Kate Phillips (Head of Vulnerable Learners)  
Alison Lane (Head of Additional Learning Needs Team)  
Kelly Small (Head of Planning and Resources Team)  
David Thomas (Principal School Improvement Officer)  
Karin Jenkins (Head of Swansea Music)  
Amanda Taylor (Head of PRU and BSU)  
Jennifer Harding-Richards (Religion, Values and Ethics Adviser)  
Louise Herbert-Evans (Team Manager Capital)  
Lisa Collins (Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer – Vulnerable Learners)  
Helen Howells (Team Manager Pupil Support – Vulnerable Learners)