



City and County of Swansea

Notes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel – Schools**

Committee Room 3A, Guildhall, Swansea

Thursday, 21 September 2017 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor M Sykes (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
S J Gallagher
D W Helliwell
M A Langstone

Councillor(s)

A M Day
L S Gibbard
L James

Councillor(s)

M Durke
F M Gordon
L R Jones

Co-opted Member(s)

D Anderson-Thomas

Officer(s)

Mark Sheridan
Amanda Taylor
Michelle Roberts

Senior Education Psychologist, Behaviour and Learning
Head of the Swansea Pupil Referral Unit
Scrutiny Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): B Hopkins, S M Jones and L J Tyler-Lloyd

1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

None

2 Notes from meeting on 31 August 2017

Notes received by the Panel

Answers to two questions raised at the last panel meeting were answered by the Chief Education Officer by email:

- ***Do all governors have access to HWB and if so, are all schools enabling their governors to use it?*** Yes all schools have access to HWB but not only some schools have provided governors with HWB but not all. It is being recommended as good practice to roll out across Swansea schools. Panel agreed to keep an eye on this aspect and follow up later in the year.
- Concern was raised about funding for Ethic Minority Achievement Unit (EMAU) funding being often being agreed late in the financial year for the next years funding causing potential instability in continuity of service provision and difficulty in planning ahead. Can anything be done to alleviate this? We have no influence over the timing of decisions (taken elsewhere) over future levels of funding and like many councils have seen cuts to their grant funding for these

services. We have responded by developing new ways of working to make the most of the resources available and many of these have been implemented. It is pleasing to note that EAL learners in Swansea are performing well across key indicators with an upward trend. This is an indication that the revised provision is positively supporting ethnic minority learners.

3 Education Other Than at School Progress Update

Mark Sheridan and Amanda Taylor presented the Panel with a progress update giving details of the improvements being made to Education Other Than At School Services (EOTAS). The [report](#) covered:

- Proposals/timescale for changes to accommodation for EOTAS
- Progress being made with proposed new model of service delivery
- How have improvements affected the provision of services to pupils directly
- How pupils have been involved in the proposed changes and their involvement moving forward
- How effective the 'revolving door' is for pupils between EOTAS and schools
- How the pupil Referral Unit curriculum meeting the need of pupils
- How schools are progressing with developing in house provision for pupils with behavioural issues
- What the improvements have been to the referral system
- The current staffing structure, whether there are vacancies and how these are being filled/managed

The Panel asked questions and discussed the following points:

- Progress with changes to accommodation are moving at a fast pace now. A bespoke plan and design for a new build that will reflect the needs of Children and Young People and their differing needs including Social, Emotional and Behavioural needs is now in place.
- Panel agreed that it must be bright and welcoming school and a supportive environment and where pleased to hear that it is being designed to fit the needs of the children and young people who will be using it. They heard that the school will not only have curriculum areas but also therapeutic space and nature areas.
- Councillors heard that a Band B submission has been made to Welsh Government to help fund the project and that the Council should hear back formally about this application in October 2017 but signs are positive. If it is accepted it is planned that the facility will be open to take pupils in September 2019. A further report will go to Cabinet post Oct 2017. The Panel were interested in seeing the design proposals, if that is possible.
- The current facilities will be maintained until the new build is ready.
- Good progress is being made with the proposed new model of delivery including excellent progress being made to developing a tiered range of online and school based and external training for schools and services in issues related to social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, additional learning needs and well-being.
- The half-way house concept is a longer term aspect of the new model of service delivery. In the interim staff are being recruited to start developing that process and to work with schools and pupils where there is risk of EOTAS.

- The panel recognise that it is early days for this new model and that little progress has been made in terms of direct impact. The Panel were pleased to hear that there has been huge improvement in developing and improving the culture within the services. Getting commitment from staff to working towards a joint vision with all staff across the service working as one team. The Panel can see how these proposals and the new systems put into place along with enthusiasm of the new Headteacher, officers and staff involved has started to develop a good solid base from which hopefully a direct positive impact will emerge moving forward.
- Revolving door with schools - Work is happening to ensure that it is much clearer at the outset of a move to a PRU with the originating school; ensuring expectations are shared about the pupil's return back to the school (PRU will provide support for this). Staff-swap and sharing skills between PRU and schools is also planned. A memorandum of understanding has been agreed with school detailing support that will be provided to enable children to return to school.
- Layers of consultation is required for this project (required by Welsh Government) including engaging with parents, stakeholders and children and young people. This started at the design stage and will go on through till completion.
- Panel were pleased to hear that good progress is being made with leadership, and in raising standards and developing the curriculum in the PRU. The PRU is now providing a good range of academic and vocational offer and vitally is including the Digital Competency Framework and the Literacy and Numeracy Framework.
- They also heard that a strategy group has been developed which will bring together stakeholders to help move the Behaviour and Well-being Strategy forward. The Panel recognised the need to ensure that this strategy works in synergy with other strategies in existence like for example prevention and early intervention. The strategy must not just look at education but at the overall needs of children and their families.
- The Panel were pleased to hear about the behaviour self-evaluation toolkit for schools that has been designed. It will become part of the Challenge Advisors visit to look at this with schools including a discussion around the schools capacity around behaviour and their referrals to EOTAS.
- The panel heard that there is a very real appetite for change and working together across all agencies involved in this new model.

The Panel agreed the following actions arising from this discussion:

- a) a letter be written to the Cabinet Member outlining the conclusions from the discussion today

The Senior Education Psychologist, Behaviour and Learning, also gave the panel a short update on Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). The Panel were pleased to hear that progress is being made in this area.

4 Work Programme 2017/2018.

The Panel noted the work programme.

5 For Information Item

Minutes of the Scrutiny Performance Panel – Schools (21.09.2017)
Cont'd

The Panel received the information attached.

The meeting ended at 5.25pm