



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams
City & County of Swansea

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:
Direct Line:
Llinell
Uniongyrochol:

Councillor Mark Child
(01792) 637441

E-Mail / E-Bost:

mark.child@swansea.gov.uk

Our Ref / Ein
Cyf:

MC/SH

Your Ref / Eich
Cyf:
Date / Dyddiad:

30 May 2014

If you require this or any other information in another format e.g. Braille, audio tape or a different language, please contact me

Dear Councillor Hood-Williams

Well Being Performance Panel on 17 March 2014

Thank you for your letter of 14th March and I apologise for the delay in getting back to you.

I note your comments that the Safe LAC Reduction Strategy is coherent and delivering desired outcomes. Whilst overall numbers of LAC are still high, reduction is the largest drop ever recorded, not that that is any reason for complacency.

As children "come home" there will be a tendency to concentrate more, and particularly as LAC tend to come from certain areas of Swansea, school catchment areas. This will lead to numbers in some schools rising and Social Services, Education and the school do need to be aware of any effect this may have.

The alternative is to place children in new schools, perhaps in the catchment area they are fostered. This is not done without there being good reasons. Normally the aim is to maintain as many familiar and safe factors in the child's life as possible when they become looked after. However, maintaining a school placement is not always in the best interest of the child, and many other factors need to be weighed when deciding which school is best for a child, often as ordinary parents do.

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
MARK CHILD
CABINET MEMBER FOR WELLBEING
AELOD Y CABINET DROS LES

CABINET OFFICE, CIVIC CENTRE, OYSTERMOUTH ROAD, SWANSEA SA1 3SN
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, CANOLFAN DDINESIG, HEOL YSTUMLLWYNARTH, ABERTAWE SA1 3SN

☎ (01792) 637441 ☎ (01792) 636196

✉ mark.child@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

- 2 -

Permanence is vital for children, and support for Special Guardians, whilst not always the same as for Foster Carers, needs to be sufficient to ensure children are safe and secure. The current review of the Permanence Service includes a focus on ensuring the right supports are in place for Special Guardians.

Payment and other support for Special Guardians is currently subject to a legal case, and we will wait for the ruling. However, the LGA is supporting the current difference, as there is clearly a difference between the two groups; Foster Carers and Special Guardians, and treating them both the same, rather than equitably, would be very costly, and may even jeopardise the progress we have made with Foster Swansea.

I note that the Panel has agreed a series of actions with the Head of Service to allow for further scrutiny of various issues that emerged during the discussion about the Performance report.

The large number of babies expected is reflected in the proposed Regional Adoption Service having a specific target to increase the numbers of adopters across the region. Also a number of the expectant mothers are using the "Baby Steps" program run by the NSPCC to help vulnerable mothers.

I agree that children should not remain on the Child Protection Register for too long, and understand that cases are regularly reviewed to ensure the appropriate level of safeguarding is in place.

It is hoped some of the large cohort of children will no longer be looked after before they reach transition, and I also hope the quality of Fostering will also help reduce each individual's need for assistance when they start adult lives. However there does need to be awareness of this level of demand. This can be a very difficult time and the Panel is right to ask that we ensure sufficient resources are in place to cope with the number of children involved.

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
MARK CHILD
CABINET MEMBER FOR WELLBEING
AELOD Y CABINET DROS LES

CABINET OFFICE, CIVIC CENTRE, OYSTERMOUTH ROAD, SWANSEA SA1 3SN
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, CANOLFAN DDINESIG, HEOL YSTUMLLWYNARTH, ABERTAWE SA1 3SN

☎ (01792) 637441 ☏ (01792) 636196
✉ mark.child@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

- 3 -

I note that performance in relation to PEPs, Health Assessments and the timeliness of Core Groups are expected to improve. In relation to the Education & Health Performance indicators, Panel may wish to explore further with those Partners responsible for performance against those indicators.

Yours sincerely



COUNCILLOR MARK CHILD
CABINET MEMBER FOR WELLBEING

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
MARK CHILD
CABINET MEMBER FOR WELLBEING
AELOD Y CABINET DROS LES

CABINET OFFICE, CIVIC CENTRE, OYSTERMOUTH ROAD, SWANSEA SA1 3SN
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, CANOLFAN DDINESIG, HEOL YSTUMLLWYNARTH, ABERTAWE SA1 3SN

☎ (01792) 637441 ☎ (01792) 636196

✉ mark.child@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk