



**To/
Councillor Jen Raynor
Cabinet Member for Education
Improvement, Learning and Skills**

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BY EMAIL

Summary: This is a letter from the Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning and Skills following the meeting of the Panel on 19 November 2018. It is about progress being made with the Education Other Than at Schools Services and the Wellbeing Strategy and Behaviour Policy.

Dear Councillor Raynor,

Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel – 19 November 2018

We would like to thank you, Amanda Taylor and Mark Sheridan for attending the meeting and answering our questions about the Education Other Than at School Service and the new Wellbeing Strategy and Behaviour Policy.

Education Other Than at School Service

You told us that

- A key factor in the success of the overhaul of the current provision is the support provided to schools to enable earlier identification of needs in relation to pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD), and importantly the greater capacity and support to manage the needs within the schools setting.
- There has been a greater alignment strategically and operationally of the Behaviour Support Team (BST), the interim Halfway House Team and the Home Tuition team. They are now under the same line management.
- We were particularly pleased to hear that the Halfway House has resulted in the highest number of pupils being re-integrated back to mainstream provision in many years. With 19 pupils being supported back into their mainstream school.
- There are now clear processes and systems in place to ensure a smooth handover of support to pupils and to schools from the Halfway House and the BST and vice versa.

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- There has been a review and robust revision of the training offered to schools and this now forms part of a more joined up offer to schools aligned with other education departments.
- 700k has been devolved to secondary schools to support the development of in-house provision to enable them to meet the needs of SEBD pupils at KS4. All schools submit a monitoring report of how they use this funding and visits have been made to some schools to see how this has developed.
- There has been a full review and revision of leadership at the PRU. That a negative impact has previously been evidenced of dependency on seconding of leadership post for short periods. Short term secondments are no longer used with a Head and Duty Headteacher appointed, Interim Head of Step Ahead, Head at Arfryn and Head of KS4 also appointed. This has also resulted in a re-allocation of staff across the service to provide a more robust, sustainable and experienced leadership team. The Panel were pleased to hear that this had been resolved and look forward to a much more consistent approach moving forward.
- All Centres are now working collaboratively with shared polices and significant progress made in developing shared practices. Joint training is held across centres, staff have worked together to develop a joint vision, shared aims and a shared improvement plan.
- Welsh Baccalaureate has been introduced which has resulted in 70% of KS4 pupils passing the WBQ Sill Challenge Certificate. We were keen to hear that Swansea PRU is provisionally reported by the WJEC to be top 3 of all PRUs in Wales in terms of results and number entered into Certificate.
- Aligning of well-being support is being made with the Well-bring Framework that is in place across other services including social service and poverty and prevention.
- The service has reviewed its approach to promoting positive behaviour and managing negative behaviour to ensure consistency is applied to approaches used across the service.
- Establishment a regional network where skills, experience and development of curriculum can be discussed regionally.
- We were very pleased to hear that the work to support the planning and proposed new build has proceeded well with a full business case approved at Cabinet on 28 September 2018. That Welsh Government approvals have been given and the project is on schedule for construction to start in November 2018 and for completion in and occupation by Jan/Feb 2020.
- We were particularly encouraged to hear about the in house 'wrap around' service which will provide telephone, skype and face to face multi-skilled support to schools for the early identification of pupil needs, and support to build school capacity to manage those needs.
- We also heard about the enforced closure of Brondeg House on the 19 October and that there is currently no base for the 56 pupil KS4 provision. That all available buildings owned by the Council have been considered but none have been deemed suitable for health and safety or planning regulation reasons. The long term options for the building have yet to be agreed, however, you are looking at work being undertaken to make it temporarily safe to enable continued use until the new build is complete.

- We understand that as little disruption as possible to the education of these pupils has been made. Hearing that where pupils attend education on site of external providers rooms have been rented for teaching, where pupils do not attend external providers, we are currently looking for bases to deliver their education in the meantime they are receiving home tuition. This is all being reviewed regularly.

Behaviour and Wellbeing

We were pleased to hear that the Integrated Well-being Strategy for Children and Young People and a Behaviour Policy had been drafted. We heard that the Strategy vision statement will be 'Swansea will promote, support and nurture every child and young person's well-being'. And that it also promotes a description of well-being 'Our well-being is made up of different factors at any one time and changes during our lifespan. It is affected by our experiences and background, how we think and feel, our ability to communicate and problem solve as well as our physical and mental health, relationships and sense of belonging in our communities'.

We were told that to best support the children and young people we work with is to assess the challenges faced by the child and their family against the resource available to support, promote and nurture their well-being. The Strategy introduces the Signs of Well-being Framework within a broad Team Around the Family approach that is already used by poverty and prevention and social services. It will include a Behaviour Policy which has been drafted separately. We were pleased to hear that the draft behaviour policy sets out Swansea's approach to promoting and supporting positive behaviour in school and other educational settings.

We were told that it is anticipated that work on these two documents will be completed by December 2018. We would like to see them once they are available.

The Panel thank you, the Headteacher of the PRU and Head of Learner Support Services for this very positive and comprehensive update report.

We would welcome your thoughts on any issue within this letter, on this occasion we do not require a formal written response.

Yours sincerely,

COUNCILLOR LYNDON JONES

Convener, Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel

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