

Councillor Mary Jones
Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

BY EMAIL

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Our Ref: WE/HS
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Date: 14 January 2019

Dear Cllr Jones

Scrutiny Cabinet Member Question Session – 12 November

With reference to your letter dated 6 December 2018 please find responses below.

QUESTION 1

Provide data on the educational attainment of Looked After Children and entry into higher education.

RESPONSE

i) Children at local schools?

ii) With looked after children in other authorities?

It is recognised that reporting cohorts are small and therefore liable to significant fluctuation and are largely dependent on the individual abilities of the individual learners each year. Individual potential and Additional Learning Needs (ALN) status are not requested, nor considered, in national reporting, which has been raised as an issue with Welsh Government.

All data attached is extracted from Local Authority and ERW data reported annually through PLASC. This includes all looked after learners attending Local Authority education in Swansea from other counties also in line with our responsibilities to other education departments. It should be noted however that Welsh Government have taken the decision to not collect any data on their PLASC returns effectively immediately. This will affect the ability to report on the results achieved.

Concern is expressed at the differences in some of the data in appendix A and B. Appendix A is generated from Swansea's data base in consultation with our data manager. Appendix B is ERW data taken from PLASC. Conversations are taking place as to how best resolve these differences. With such a small cohort, small changes can make big differences.

In considering the information below it is important to consider that it would be unusual for a pupil to be LAC for the duration of their school career. Many children come in and out of LAC status, affecting the stability of their schools placements and affecting educational outcomes. The figures below do not identify at what education stage pupils become LAC, often they are at KS3 and 4, which unfortunately means that there will be gaps in

their learning at a lower stage and it is often difficult for schools to provide enough intervention for them to catch up while simultaneously teaching a curriculum. Pupils do not progress through education stages in a continuous manner, despite best efforts LAC learners are still subject to high levels of instability in home and school placements. It should also be noted that out of county placements, and intercountry placements can be made at any stage and often in Key Stage 4. As a county we are liable for the education of the learners in our schools.

I. Comparison of LAC pupils with all others in Swansea schools. **(See Appendix A and C attached)**

Pupils achieving the Foundation Phase Indicator (FPI) at end of Foundation Phase (outcome 5 or higher in language, mathematics, PSD)

In Foundation phase the gap between looked after children (LAC) performance and all learners in Swansea has traditionally been the narrowest of any key stage. Over a 3 year period LAC learners in Swansea are 21.9% behind their peers.

This year there has been a decrease in this indicator which runs in line with decreases in Swansea, ERW and Wales figures.

Pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator (CSI) at end of Key Stage 2 (KS2)
Level 4+ in English/Welsh, Mathematics and Science.

In Key Stage 2 the gap between LAC performance and all learners in Swansea is second narrowest of any key stage. In 2018 LAC learners achieved 55.0% this is lower than previous years.

Pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator (CSI) at end of Key Stage 3 (KS3)
Level 5+ in English/Welsh, Mathematics and Science.

In Key Stage 3 the gap between LAC performance and all learners in Swansea shows an increase to a 3 year average gap of 32.7%. Learners achieved a 3 year average of 54.7%. LAC learners in KS3 in 2018 achieved 54.2%.

Pupils achieving Level 2+ at end of Key Stage 4 (KS4)
5A* - C including English/Maths, and Science.

In Key Stage 4 the gap between LAC performance and all learners in Swansea over a 3 year average is greatest at -44.4 %, we are concerned that just 1 LAC learner out of 18 achieved L2+, but must be taken into context that 14 of these youngsters had an additional learning need and were given intervention to support their needs. It is worthy to note that the changes to the reporting standards by Welsh Government, can be seen to significantly disadvantage more vulnerable learners, by omitting vocational qualifications from headline figures.

Pupils achieving Level 1 at end of KS4

The Level 1 threshold which is 5 A*-G has a much narrower margin with LAC learners achieving 88.9% compared with all 96.2% for all learners. This is very pleasing as it shows good distance travelled for our vulnerable young people, as it indicates good outcomes despite a high level of additional learning needs.

I. Comparison of LAC pupils with all LAC learners in other counties in ERW (See Appendix B attached)

Pupils achieving the Foundation Phase Indicator (FPI) at end of Foundation Phase (Outcome 5 or higher in language, mathematics, PSD)

2018 reporting (see Appendix B) shows LAC learners in Swansea achieving significantly higher than the ERW average of 43.8% and above the 9.1% and 16.7% reported by both neighbouring counties of Carmarthenshire and Neath Port Talbot.

Swansea had the largest reporting cohort of 16 learners within ERW. It should be noted that only 5 learners were reported on in Pembrokeshire who achieved the highest reporting of 100.0%

Over 3 years Swansea LAC learners have achieved the highest percentage of any county in ERW with an average of 61.5% compared to an ERW average of 51.7%. Both neighbouring counties reported significantly lower results with NPT showing 35.9% and Carmarthenshire 39.4%.

3 year average figures show that Swansea had the greatest number of learners in the cohort. We are delighted to report this excellent performance.

Pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator (CSI) at end of Key Stage 2 (KS2)

Level 4+ in English/Welsh, Mathematics and Science.

2018 reporting shows LAC learners in Swansea achieving 52.6% slightly below the ERW average of 65.2% however significantly above NPT reporting 16.7%. Swansea are the largest reporting cohort of 19 with NPT at 12. Reporting in 2018 shows a 3 year average of 60.8%.

Pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator (CSI) at end of Key Stage 3 (KS3)

Level 5+ in English/Welsh, Mathematics and Science.

2018 reporting shows Swansea at 59.1%. Swansea's performance was above the ERW average of 57.7% comparable to Carmarthenshire at 59.1% and significantly above NPT with their results at 48.1%.

Swansea's performance in 2018 shows a 3 year average of 56.2% compared with ERW at 54.6%, and considerably higher than neighbouring authority NPT with 45.06%

Pupils achieving Level 2+ at end of Key Stage 4 (KS4)

5A* - C including English/Maths, and Science - only is included in reporting.

The decrease in the percentage pass rate is something that should be reported and questions asked. The number of 2017-2018 year 11 LAC learners on the Additional Learning Needs register was the highest ever at nearly 80%. This undoubtedly has contributed to this headline figure.

Pupils achieving Level 1 at KS4

Swansea LAC Learners achieved 88.9% Level 1 + threshold, much higher than the ERW average of 84.7%, and those of our neighbouring counties with NPT at 82.4% and Carmarthenshire with 76%. This shows the high standards of care and support of our

schools in Swansea that so many of our learners achieved 5 GCSE grades despite their learning needs.

No looked after learner left a Swansea school without an approved external qualification in 2017-2018. All looked after learners achieving approved external qualifications remains a priority for schools and our local authority. The LA and Swansea schools place a high priority to ensure that Swansea learners leave school an approved qualification.

Information is also collected and analysed below for learners with any LAC status by Swansea Council in Year 11 placed both in and out of county. Analysis shows the total Y11 cohort for 2017-2018 as 29 pupils and 25 achieved a level 1 (86.2%). 2 achieved level 2+ (6.9%). See Appendix D which is locally collected data only.

Within the cohort 22 learners attend mainstream schools (75.9%), 4 are in specialist provision (13.7%), 3 in EOTAS/Pathways provision (10.3%). Also within the cohort of 29 a total of 5 learners are inter county learners all are in mainstream schools.

It is worthy of note that of the 29 there are 22 with additional learning needs (75.8%) 7 of whom have a Statement of special education needs (24.1%).

Entry in to Higher education

Good links have been established with Gower College and further education in neighbouring counties. In addition to support from schools, arrangements individual appointments for LAC learners can be made as needed. Gower College's LAC and Care Leaver Officer links relevant staff.

The officer also represents the College on the multi-agency LAC group. Gower College also host transition support events for LAC learners and have developed their own PEP. Partnership agencies are also working with the 'Reaching Wider ' partnership seeking to promote entry into higher education. The LACES team supported Key Stage 4 learners to engage in a range of activities at Swansea University to encourage aspiration and arrange individual support as needed. Activities for younger learners are currently being planned.

See appendix 4 – All learners surveyed in July had plans to either enter higher education or training. These will be surveyed again in January 2019 to compare figures and information gathered to understand issues facing our care experienced young people

The BAYs + team in conjunction with the LACES team actively promote the 'Higher Education Bursary' for previously looked after children.

QUESTION 2

Confirm whether training on safeguarding is mandatory for school governors.

RESPONSE

I can confirm that safeguarding training is compulsory for school governors.

QUESTION 3

Provide relevant performance data relating to the adoption service

RESPONSE

Please find attached the adoption service performance information for November 2018.

QUESTION 4

Confirm spending in Swansea on the Flying Start Programme

RESPONSE

I can confirm that in 2018/19 the allocation and projected expenditure is £5,986,567

QUESTION 5

Share any further information about the Welsh Youth Parliament elections

RESPONSE

The first Welsh Youth Parliament has been established, the parliament is made up of 60 people, 40 of whom were elected in an online ballot and a further 20 who represent specific interests of children and young people and were elected from specific organisations and charities.

- Three representatives have been elected for Swansea:
 - **Gower:** Ffion Haf-Davies
 - **Swansea East:** Ruth Sibayan
 - **Swansea West:** Ubayedhur Rahma
- Representatives elected from Special Interest include the following from the Swansea area
 - William Hackett (disability – deaf issues)
 - Sophie Billingham (disability – deaf issues)
 - Anwen Grace Rodaway (disability – girls with autism)
 - Nia Rose-Evans (representing Girlguiding Cymru)

Details of members portfolios can be found at
<https://www.youthparliament.wales/members>

Many of these members are already involved in the Big Conversation and we are delighted they have been successfully elected to represent Swansea at the Welsh Youth Parliament and will continue to work with them in the future.

Yours faithfully



**COUNCILLOR WILLIAM EVANS
CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S
SERVICES YOUNG PEOPLE**



**COUNCILLOR ELLIOTT KING
CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S
SERVICES – EARLY YEARS**