



City and County of Swansea

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

Pentrehafod School, Pentre Mawr Rd, Swansea SA1 2NN

Thursday, 12 March 2020 at 2.00 pm

Present: Councillor L R Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

M Durke
B Hopkins
M A Langstone

Councillor(s)

L S Gibbard
L James
L J Tyler-Lloyd

Councillor(s)

D W Helliwell
S M Jones

Other Attendees

Jennifer Ford	Pentrehafod School
Iwan Evans	Pentrehafod School
Jo Bamsey	Pentrehafod School
Margaret Hughes	Chair of Governors
Cllr Graham Thomas	Vice Chair of Governors

Officer(s)

Michelle Roberts	Scrutiny Officer
Rob Davies	Senior Challenge Advisor

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): C Anderson, A M Day and S J Gallagher
Co-opted Member(s): D Anderson-Thomas and A Roberts

1 **Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

None

2 **Pentrehafod Comprehensive School**

The Panel made a site visit to Pentrehafod Secondary School to discuss their practice in relation to prevention of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).

The Panel met with the Headteacher and senior members of staff at the school, the Chair of Governors Margaret Hughes, the Vice Chair of Governors Graham Thomas and the Senior Challenge Advisor Rob Davies. The following points were noted:

- The School context was outlined including: currently 1,035 pupils on roll. 29% of pupils receive free school meals. 34% are on the special educational needs register. Around 40% of pupils enter the school in Year 7 with a reading age

below their chronological age. Around 35% of pupils are potentially at risk of becoming Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).

- The majority of students at Post-16 attend Gower College. A small number of students attend Neath Port Talbot College. About 10% attend 6th Forms in various comprehensive schools. A very small proportion attend Apprenticeships placements (less than 1%). About 2% go onto full-time employment directly from school. In 2017/18 1.5% were categorised as NEET (3 students), so 98.5% attaining a post-16 placement.
- The Panel heard that successful transition to post-16 destinations can be attributed to a carefully planned and implemented Careers Programme, which is constantly reviewed and refined to meet the needs of students at the school.
- At the school the provision of careers education focuses on the development of personal effectiveness and work-ready skills through the delivery of bespoke lessons at KS3 and KS4. Additionally, students receive support from Careers Wales, the school's career advisor, local business, an extensive KS3-5 Transition Programme and provision for vulnerable students via the Cynnydd Project.
- The school maximises its grant provision through Pupil Development Grant (330K), PTS Challenge Cymru (250K over 3 years) and SEG funding (25k shared with primary schools).
- Some of the work completed at the school that contributes to the reduction in NEETS includes:
 - PAWB – identify students with low attendance, building close links with parents and families, first day calling and wellbeing interventions.
 - Family engagement officer working with Team Around the Family pupils
 - Skills centre (students identified using external test scores AWRT)
 - Co-ordinated approach to eFSM; 10 point action plan in line with Estyn Guidance.
 - Use of behaviour strategies like restorative practice and the use of UNCRC.
 - After school homework and activities club
 - Managing transition phases including summer camp to support challenging students making transition from KS2 to KS3
 - PACE provision providing individual curriculum for each pupil and making teaching facilities modern and welcoming for PACE pupils.
- This work has had a huge impact on outcomes including from 2012 to 2015: attendance improving from 88.6% to 93%. Exclusions reducing from 626 to 84. Attainment up at L2+ from 22.9% to 52.7% and Attainment of eFSM L2+ up from 11.9% to 29.4%. The Panel heard however the introduction of the new PACE provision brought with it a new and unwanted statistic, an increase in NEETS to the highest in the LA at 13.7% in 2015. With Cynnydd Funding the school brought in learning coach provision which has worked in improving this figure down to 4 students who were NEET in 2018/19.
- The school works strategically with others to reduce/prevent NEETs including with ALNCO, Careers Wales, Cynnydd, Evolve, external agencies, local colleges/sixth forms, local business and strong transition links through all key stages.
- The Panel heard that students that are vulnerable are identified by using for example the Vulnerability Assessment Profile (VAP) score and the attendance and attainment data. Students identified as vulnerable are registered with

Cynnydd, this ensures they can access mentoring and enrichment programmes. Currently in the school there are 175 pupils who can access this provision.

- A NEETs Panels at the school identifies those most at risk, primarily Year 11 students. Currently there are 49, 18 girls and 41 boys, 19 of these are eFSM pupils. Councillors heard that these numbers tend to reduce throughout the year and the NEETs panel has a find push, as Year 11 draws to a close, with those still causing concern.
- The school works to reduce core NEETs by working with parents through parents evenings, events, emails, text and twitter, parent slots at careers fair. Also by good links with colleges, training providers and pastoral links, PAWB and external agencies.
- School works closely with others including Youth Offending Team, Inspire, Evolve, Police Liaison Officer etc.
- The curriculum offer for those pupils at risk of NEET was outlines including for example, GC Junior Academy and the PACE provision; where some pupils attend full time and others part-time in conjunction with mainstream.
- The pupil progress tracking system was exemplified including a 'pupil on a page' breakdown of current position of each pupil reviewed regularly.
- The school uses an extensive 'pathway' for pupils relating to skills, citizenship and wellbeing that starts upon entry at the school in Year 7 right through to leaving a in Year 11. It includes a wide variety of key things pupils need to understand like healthy eating, substance misuse, problem solving skills, staying safe, banking and personal finance, careers fayre and talks etc.
- The school work with a wide variety of organisation and partners to deliver this pathway including for example Virgin Atlantic, role models, mentoring, Young Business Dragons, Gower College and 6th Form promotional assemblies and much more.
- They work with pupils in readiness for Post 16 transition in a number of ways including taster sessions with colleges and 6th forms, KS4 support, Careers Wales, Learning Leader and with the Enrichment Co-ordinator.
- They measure success of this NEET prevention work through,, for example monitoring destination of pupils, positive transition and outcomes and reduction in NEET figures for the school.
- Councillors were impressed with not only the quality and extent of the work happening throughout all Key Stages at the school to prevent pupils becoming NEET at 16 but also the preparation of pupils to become contributing life-long citizens. The Skills, Citizenship and Wellbeing Pathway preparing pupils for the world of work was seen as key to this and was praised by the Panel. They felt that the work at the school to reduce needs and to prepare them for life after school was excellent. The Panel would like to see this inspirational practice shared with other secondary schools across Swansea and the region.

The meeting ended at 3.40 pm