



To:
Councillor Robert Smith
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

BY EMAIL

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Date 30 October 2023
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Summary: This is a letter from the Education Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Education and Learning following the meeting of the Panel on 19 October 2023. The Panel met with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors from Gorseinon Primary School to discuss their school development plan.

Dear Cllr Smith,

Education Scrutiny Performance Panel – 19 October 2023

We thanked the Headteacher for his detailed overview and for the answers to our set of questions that were sent to the school in advance of the meeting. We are writing to you as the Cabinet Member to reflect on what we learnt from the discussion and to share the views of the Panel.

We welcome the overall progress that has been made with the School Improvement Plan since the Estyn Inspection in November 2022. We were particularly keen to hear about the progress being made in relation to the two Estyn recommendations contained in that report.

Some of the points we noted from the discussion include:

- There is a dedicated Headteacher, Chair of Governors and newly formed Senior Management Team at the school, who are clearly committed to taking improvements forward at the school. The new team now need to bed in.
- The wellbeing of staff and pupils is at the heart of the school especially through what has been a challenging period.
- The school is working with its cluster comprehensive and primary schools in relation to introducing the new curriculum but we think that there was clear evidence that that this needs to be further improved.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TRUSLOW A CHRAFFU

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- We noted that the governing body has had its challenges with a big turnover of governors. There is currently a number of new governors at the school, so their training will be key. We were encouraged to hear that there is now a good and varied skills base and once governor training and development is given, they should be in a position to provide good support but also importantly provide positive challenge to the school.
- The school attendance figure for 2022/23 was 89% and the Panel heard that the school is working hard to improve attendance through, for example, speaking to parents and also having incentives in place for pupils to improve their attendance.
- That leadership, wellbeing and the new curriculum were key areas of focus within the School Improvement Plan.
- That the school was beginning to develop its links in the community but that was in its early stages and we recognise that this work can be aided by the new governor team.

We were encouraged to hear from the Headteacher and Chair of Governors, that the support received by the local authority has been excellent as well as from Partneriaeth. Particularly in the areas of Science and Maths. However, we heard that the wider group courses provided by Partneriaeth were less beneficial.

We were very pleased to see the fantastic facilities provided in this new school building and that it was clearly designed for pupils to get the best out of their day at school including good outside space, well designed classrooms and useful shared areas.

From our discussions with the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and the School Improvement Adviser, we are reassured that progress is being made across the School Improvement Plan and with the Estyn recommendations and that there is now a good base for the school to continue to build upon those improvements.

Your Response

We would welcome your comments on any of the issues raised in this letter but on this occasion do not require a formal written response.

Yours sincerely

COUNCILLOR LYNDON JONES

Convener, Education Scrutiny Performance Panel

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