

Councillor Chris Holley
Convener
Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny
Performance Panel

Please ask for: Councillor Clive Lloyd
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Our Ref: CL/CM
Your Ref:
Date: 14 August 2019

Dear Councillor Holley

Thank you for your letter dated 25th July 2019 and your comments have been noted.

In response your question;

“We do have a query around national reports stating that pupils are being removed from the school roll for the school benefit rather than the child’s benefit. We are not implying this happens in Swansea but can you explain how we manage this situation to ensure that this does not happen in our schools?”

In Swansea the Education Welfare Service (EWS) works closely with schools and regular register checks are undertaken. This will highlight any areas of concern. Schools discuss any concerns with their Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and advice and guidance is provided.

The Education (Pupil) (Registration) (Wales) Regulations 1995 states that a pupil can only be removed from a school roll if:

- Registered at another school
- The pupil is Electively Home Educated
- No longer resides within a reasonable distance from the school
- Granted leave of absence for a holiday and fails to attend for 10 days from return date where the school is satisfied there is no unavoidable cause.
- Too ill to attend and this is certified by a medical professional
- The pupil is not compulsory school age
- Permanently excluded.
- Is detained in custody in a secure unit.
- Deceased.

Should a pupil not return to school following a leave of absence and/or has not attended for 20 school days, then school and the EWO would make all attempts to try and locate the pupil. If the pupil cannot be traced then the school will remove them from roll and they will then be subject to the children missing education protocol (CME). This protocol ensures nationwide data sharing to try and locate children missing education.

In Swansea any pupils who are removed from school roll, unless they fit the criteria of CME, will have a destination school and are not taken off roll until they are attending at the destination school. This may require support from officers within the Education Directorate to ensure an admission is actioned with appropriate support to ensure it is a positive move. In Swansea we have a dedicated Inclusion Officer and Inclusion Assistant to support with these cases. If pupils move to a different local authority then they are tracked by the EWO.

The practice that the report you refer to details, is known as "off rolling". It has been identified by the schools inspectorate, Estyn, that rates of "off rolling" in Swansea are very low compared to national data and they have been interested to understand the strategies implemented in Swansea to keep these rates low. We have met with inspectors to share our good practice and this is likely to appear in an Estyn soon to be published report on this matter.

Yours sincerely



COUNCILLOR CLIVE LLOYD
DEPUTY LEADER & CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION
& PERFORMANCE