



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

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:*

Scrutiny

*Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:*

01792 637256

*e-Mail
e-Bost:*

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

*Date
Dyddiad:*

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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 17 January 2019. It is about the Annual Education Performance Data including verified data for 2017-2018.

Dear Councillor Raynor,

Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel – 17 January 2019

We would like to thank you and Helen Morgan Rees for attending the meeting and answering our questions about the Annual Education Performance Data for 2017-2018.

We heard performance measures in Wales are changing which have and will continue to impact the data provided. For the first time pupil's at foundation phase are being measured on revised areas of learning. In primary schools, there is a greater emphasis on progress made by pupils, rather than the end of key stage performance. In the secondary sector new qualification have been introduced.

We understand that there has been a dip in performance at foundation phase of 10% following a positive trend between 2014 and 2017. We heard, however, that this is due to a change in the foundation phase descriptors and that this is also reflected at a national level. We agreed that a continued focus on this area is required.

We heard that progress at key stage 2 has shown a positive trend over the last five years and that Swansea is on par with the national average.

At key stage 3 there has been year on year improvement for the past 5 years but Swansea does fall below the national average for the core subject indicator although it shown a faster rate of improvement.

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We were pleased to hear that performance at key stage 4 for the last five years has been outstanding with Swansea schools showing continuous improvement in all main indicators.

We understand that the gap in performance between free school meal (FSM) and non-free school meal pupils is still evident. We heard that FSM pupil's performance has improved slightly but that the gap at key stage 4 is still at 32.8%. We agree that this should continue to be a focus for improvement and a key priority for Swansea.

We heard that there is still a gender gap in performance outcomes and that this is smaller than 2017 but with a widening trend remaining. You told us that some schools are doing better at targeting the underperformance of boys and that there are good mechanisms in place to share good practice around this issue. You said a campaign targeting literacy in boys, including reading with a male family member was positive. We agreed that running this again along with some more intergenerational work on this issue would be beneficial.

We heard that pupil achievement at 6th form in Swansea is showing improvement and agree when you said that work still need to be done in this area to strengthen performance.

We were pleased to hear that performance of our English as additional language pupils is strong.

We understand the data for Looked After Children can be difficult to assess as it can be based on a small cohort of pupils. We therefore plan to look at this aspect in a bit more detail at a future meeting.

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 MO SYKES

Convener, Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel

✉ Cllr.mo.sykes@swansea.gov.uk