



**To/
Councillor Jen Raynor
Cabinet Member for Children,
Education and Lifelong Learning**

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1 March 2019

BY EMAIL

Summary: This is a letter from the Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning following the meeting of the Panel on 20 February 2019. It is about Morryston Primary School Performance and embedding of improvements.

Dear Councillor Raynor,

Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel – 20 February 2019

At our meeting on the 20 February 2019 we visited Morryston Primary School and met with the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and the Challenge Advisor to discuss how they are embedding the improvements that had been initiated at the time we met with them in February last year.

We previously spoke to this school because it had been highlighted as Amber on the support and categorisation matrix. We are pleased to hear they are now categorised as Yellow and that after a revisit they have been removed from formal Estyn monitoring.

From the discussion with the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and the Challenge Adviser we concluded that the improvements put in place last year are now embedding and that there is a much improved picture from previously reported.

We felt that this is mainly due to:

- The school being in a much more secure staffing situation with the appointment of the Headteacher and more recently the Deputy Headteacher.
- The school having a supportive, engaged and knowledgeable governing body that has the necessary skills to help to drive improvement.
- The schools willingness to work and the support from the local authority and the Education Improvement Service.
- The school learning from and sharing their good practice with other schools.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

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- The much improved resource management leading to a better financial position for the school.
- The school having strong support from parents and the local community with the school working to raise the profile of the school.
- Improved communication mechanisms at the school, particularly for parents, including a new more accessible website, a regular newsletter and the ability to text message teachers directly.

We were impressed with the enthusiastic children we met and spoke to about their work; and their willingness to share their experience with us. We felt that this is indicative of good teaching when we see children responding to visitors in such a positive manner.

We were particularly impressed with the Headteachers initiative and energy at engaging with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to bring the piece of scrub land at the rear of the school into use as a forest school and outside learning area. This is an excellent example of what can be achieved in a highly urban environment.

We were concerned about the schools proximity to the dual carriage way. We heard that there had been no monitoring on pollution levels as such on the school premises. Given the proximity of the school to one of Swansea's arterial roads there must be high levels of particulate and noise levels to which the pupils and staff are exposed on a regular basis. We were concerned about what pollutants are entering the school and if we do not know then should we be continually monitoring this in order to create a baseline.

We would like again to congratulate the Headteacher and school staff, the Challenge Advisor and the governing body at the school for their hard work and commitment to this improvement journey which is clearly starting to bear fruit.

We welcome your thoughts on any of the issues raised in our letter but would ask for a response to the following issues by 21 March 2019.

1. Could you tell us what assessments have been made by the Council in terms of air quality level measurements, both within and outside the school, during heavy traffic periods?
2. Is there any coordination between Highways planning activities and the Education department?
3. What would happen if the levels of particulate pollution was particularly high (do we, or should we, be considering sending children home?)

Yours sincerely,

COUNCILLOR MO SYKES

Convener, Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel

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