



City and County of Swansea

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

Committee Room 3A, Guildhall, Swansea

Thursday, 17 October 2019 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor L R Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
L James
L J Tyler-Lloyd

Councillor(s)

D W Helliwell
S M Jones

Councillor(s)

B Hopkins

Co-opted Member(s)

D Anderson-Thomas

Co-opted Member(s)

A Roberts

Co-opted Member(s)

Other Attendees

Jennifer Raynor

Louisa Reynolds
Ann Lewis-Puddock

Cabinet Member - Education Improvement, Learning & Skills

Headteacher Penclawdd Primary School
Chair of Governors Penclawdd Primary School

Officer(s)

Helen Morgan - Rees
Damien Beech
Michelle Roberts

Head of Education Achievement & Partnership
Challenge Adviser
Scrutiny Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): A M Day, S J Gallagher, L S Gibbard and M A Langstone

1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Cllr Susan Jones declared a personal interest in Item 6.

2 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips

None

3 Letters and Minutes

Letter to Cabinet Member arising from 12 September panel meeting. The issue of Free School Meals pupil attainment data was raised. The Cabinet Member and Head of Education Achievement and Partnership wished to elaborate on information given at the last meeting. In particular, that attainment measures in Wales are changing away from data measuring to looking at individual pupil

attainment and their improvement journey. Explaining that the figures published for this year do not reflect these changes and in future year's there will be new accountability measures reflecting this new focus.

4 Preparation with Challenge Adviser

The Panel met with the Challenge Advisor to discuss Penclawdd Primary Schools improvement journey.

5 Penclawdd Primary School

The Panel met with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors of Penclawdd Primary School. They chose to speak to Penclawdd Primary School because it had been categorised as Red on the ERW support matrix. They wanted to discuss the schools improvement journey, look at what the school is doing to improve its current performance and how it plans to improve moving forward. They have detailed their thoughts on how the school is progressing in this Conveners letter to the Cabinet Member.

The Panel heard about the context of the school from the Headteacher including: currently there are 146 pupils on roll, 15% are identified with Additional Learning Needs and 3 pupils with statements. 15.6% of pupils receive free school meals and 7.5% have English as an additional language. There are currently 7 classroom teachers (2 part-time) and 10 teaching assistants (some part-time).

They heard about the complex leadership issues around the time of the Esyn inspection and then about the subsequent staff appointments including that of the current Headteacher in September 2018 and the recently appointed Deputy Head. The Chair of Governors wanted to record the Governing Bodies thanks to the Councils Human Resources and Legal Teams for their time and commitment in helping to resolve those complex staffing issues.

The Panel concluded from our discussion with the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and the Challenge Adviser that improvements at the school are progressing well and they felt this was mainly due to

- The school having a supportive, engaged and challenging governing body that understands its own skills base making it resilient and in a good position to help to drive improvement. Councillors were particularly interested to hear about the work the governing body has done using a matrix to assess its skills base. The Panel were pleased to hear that governors are now active, visible, knowledgeable and not afraid to challenge.
- A stronger leadership team in place with a clearly enthusiastic Headteacher and newly appointed experienced Deputy Head Teacher.
- The school has a clear improvement plan and is working with and receiving support from the Local Authority and the Education Improvement Service.
- School leaders using self-improvement processes effectively to identify what pupils do well and what needs to improve.
- The school carefully considering which improvement tools are best for its context including, for example, Building Blocks and Seesaw.

- The school is enthusiastically learning from and sharing their good practice with other schools.
- The school has strong support from parents and the local community with the school working taking its role in the community seriously.
- A maintenance action plan is now in place to address shortcomings with the building including site security.

The Panel are pleased to hear about the much-improved picture at the school from the time of the Estyn Inspection recognising the distance that has been travelled in such a short amount of time. This is due to the commitment from the Headteacher and staff at the school, the governors and the Education Improvement Service driving forward the improvements needed.

The Panel wished to congratulate the Headteacher and the governing body at the school for their hard work and their commitment to this improvement journey, which is clearly showing to be successful. An invitation to visit the school was extended to the Panel and they plan to visit to see progress further embedded in the summer of 2020.

6 Work Programme 2019/2020

The panel reviewed their work programme.

7 For information

Recent publications of individual school Estyn inspections were received by the Panel.

The meeting ended at 5.45 pm

Chair