

Councillor Mo Sykes
Convener
Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel

BY EMAIL

Please ask for: Councillor Jennifer Raynor
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Our Ref: JR/HS
Your Ref: ref
Date: 14 February 2018

Dear Councillor Sykes

Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel – 18 January 2018

I am writing in response to your letter dated 1 February 2018 in relation to the Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel held on 18 January 2018.

In response to the two questions you have put in your letter please find below the responses.

First of all, with regard to asking governing bodies to allocate a designated governor to champion the 'stretching of the most able pupils', the local authority (LA) will write to governing bodies to ask them to assign a governor to take on a role to oversee and monitor provision that will stretch the most able and talented pupils. Whilst this cannot be a mandatory requirement we will encourage schools to assign a link governor as good practice guidance.

Secondly, with regard to the request to investigate the development of a way of measuring how effective early intervention services are for improving children's readiness for school the LA has secured ALN Innovation Grant funding to purchase Wellcomm packs for all schools, including Welsh medium schools – where we have delivered a bespoke package of training.

Additional training is also scheduled for February and March to train those schools who are not already using the resource. The Wellcomm Toolkit assesses the receptive and expressive language skills of pupils on entry to Nursery and provides simple interventions to develop language skills in readiness for entry into Reception.

A SIMS tracking system is currently being used and we expect to have some data from Nursery pupils this academic year from the schools that are currently using the Wellcomm Toolkit. It is envisaged that the 2018/2019 data sets will be more reliable as it is hoped that all Swansea schools should be adopting this facility by then.

The LA will be recommending that all schools record this data to ensure a more accurate reflection across Swansea. Further training is planned for October where it is hoped to discuss plans with Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinators to encourage all schools to record results on SIMs.

I trust this response will provide the clarity on the questions you have posed.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Raynor', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Jennifer Raynor
Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Lifelong Learning