



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Councillor Fiona Gordon
Convenor
Schools Performance Scrutiny Panel

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:
Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:

Councillor Jennifer Raynor
(01792) 637429

E-Mail / E-Bost:
Our Ref / Ein Cyf:
Your Ref / Eich Cyf:
Date / Dyddiad:

cllr.jennifer.raynor@swansea.gov.uk
JR/CM

28th October 2015

If you require this or any other information in another format e.g. Braille, audio tape or a different language, please contact me

Dear Councillor Gordon

I write in response to your letter dated 13 October 2015 which follows the meeting on 10 September in respect of the educational performance of, and support for, Gypsy and Traveller children and looked after children (LAC).

I am pleased to note that you found the meeting a positive and interesting experience and were impressed by the work taking place with both these groups of learners. You have asked me to look at three specific issues and I am able to provide the following response.

Firstly, you asked what we do to support children and young people on special guardianship orders (SGOs). You asked if they are monitored as a group of children for their own performance in comparison with all pupils in the same way as we do with looked after children.

Children placed on SGOs cease LAC status on the date the order is issued. There should be a support plan drawn up by Social Services which is presented to court and subject to ongoing review. In relation to education, they should be able to access support, according to need, as with all learners, via schools and local authority services. If they were in receipt of additional support from the LAC Team (e.g. LAC project worker support), this would continue at least until the end of the academic year and would not stop immediately following a SGO being granted. The support would continue in the short term to best support the young person.

Page 1

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
JENNIFER RAYNOR
CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION /
AELOD Y CABINET ADDYSG

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

☎ (01792) 637429

✉ cllr.jennifer.raynor@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

The Welsh Government has recently agreed that local authorities have discretionary powers to use the Pupil Deprivation Grant for LAC learners to support learners on an SGO. Learners on an SGO, who have been previously looked after, also continue to be supported by the Welsh Government Admissions Code, giving them priority for admission to school. While my understanding is that there is no specific reporting required in relation to young people on SGOs, they would be included in reporting and monitoring as for all learners.

Secondly, you ask why there is such a variation between local authorities in grant funding from the Welsh Government in relation to Gypsy and Traveller learners.

The specific grant for Gypsy and Traveller learners ceased for the financial year 2015/16. It was previously based on pupil numbers and assessed using a Welsh Government formula. 75% of the grant was issued with a requirement for the local authority to match fund the additional 25%. If other local authorities received additional grant funding, this would have been determined by Welsh Government using their funding formula. It may also be the case that other local authorities provided additional funding in excess of the 25% required. Swansea did not.

Last year, the grant was subsumed, along with a number of other grants, into the Education Improvement Grant (EIG). The local authority has committed to maintaining funding from the EIG at the same cash level as the previous grant for this financial year. The Poverty and Prevention Team has also continued to budget the same cash amount as their previous match funding element for this financial year. The funding for Gypsy and Traveller children and young people for next year is currently under review with the aim to source a more permanent funding stream than temporary grants.

Finally, you asked me to look into the possibility of dual registration for some Gypsy and Traveller pupils. All primary-age pupils attend either their catchment or preferred placement primary school. The pupils are fully integrated into the mainstream and schools can access support from the Traveller Education Service if they need it. Dual registration is not considered appropriate or necessary for primary-age Gypsy and Traveller pupils.

Page 2

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
JENNIFER RAYNOR
CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION /
AELOD Y CABINET ADDYSG

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

☎ (01792) 637429

✉ cllr.jennifer.raynor@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk

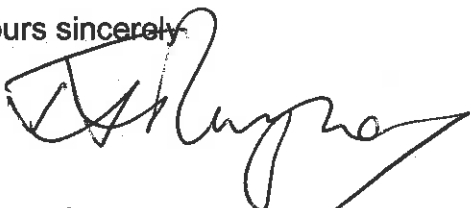
CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Secondary-age pupils are also registered at their catchment or preferred placement school. Currently, there are Gypsy and Traveller pupils on roll at a number of Swansea secondary schools. All of these pupils attend the Learning House at Cefn Hengoed Community School. Cefn Hengoed has the largest number of Gypsy and Traveller pupils on roll because there are established Traveller sites within their catchment area. All Gypsy and Traveller pupils' performance data, including attendance, is reflected in the data of the school in which they are on roll. For example, a Gypsy or Traveller pupil who is on roll at Gowerton Comprehensive School will attend Cefn Hengoed Community School Learning House but his/her data will be included in Gowerton Comprehensive School's performance data.

The issue of dual registration is a complex one because Gypsy and Travellers are a specific cultural group and, as the Welsh Government guidance published in 2008 urges, caution must be used in identifying a pupil's needs because of their culture rather than their individual learning needs. However, the unique nature of Gypsy and Traveller culture may mean that the learners could have specific needs which can be best met using an alternative method of education. There is a commitment to explore these issues further and relevant officers will be meeting to discuss options.

You also suggest that the skills and good practice learnt in developing Gypsy and Traveller education at Cefn Hengoed Community School is shared with others; particularly EOTAS services. This is a helpful suggestion and will be passed to all relevant parties who will be encouraged to develop this suggestion to achieve practical outcomes.

Yours sincerely



COUNCILLOR JENNIFER RAYNOR
CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION

Page 3

COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHORYDD
JENNIFER RAYNOR
CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION /
AELOD Y CABINET ADDYSG

CABINET OFFICE, THE GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE
SWYDDFA'R CABINET, NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

☎ (01792) 637429

✉ cllr.jennifer.raynor@swansea.gov.uk www.swansea.gov.uk

