



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

**To:**  
**Councillor Jennifer Raynor**  
**Cabinet member for Education**

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This is a letter from the Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Education following the meeting of the Panel on 3 November 2015. It highlights the Panel's discussion and any outcomes arising from the meeting are also contained.

Dear Cllr Raynor

**Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel**

Thank you for attending the Panel on the 3 November when we looked at the Annual Audit of Schools and progress in meeting the Estyn Inspection recommendations one year on. We have summarised the discussion and our thoughts in this letter.

Simon Cockings from Internal Audit attended the Panel to discuss the Annual report on behalf of the Chair of the Audit Committee and he summarised the outcomes of school audits for 2014/15. We heard that an audit of each primary, secondary and special school in Swansea is undertaken every 3 years. The Annual Report summarises the school audits that have taken place over the year and identifies common themes which have been found. Of the 14 Primary Schools audited, 11 achieved a substantial level of assurance and 3 achieved a high level of assurance. This is an improvement on last year where two schools received a moderate level of assurance. We were pleased to hear that it was the opinion of the Internal Audit Section that financial management systems that were established in Schools continue to operate effectively, although procurement is still the one area of concern noted.

The Head of School Improvement Helen Morgan-Rees outlined the progress the authority has made in relation to the Estyn Inspection one year on. She explained that the PIAP was developed in the format of an Education Business Plan, and that an Improvement Board was established in July 2013 to address actions. Also she explained that the Leader established a Member-led monitoring Board, the Education Leadership Board, which met termly during the first year and last met in Feb 2015. In addition in March 2015, the Education Strategic Group was established. The panel asked for clarification as to how these groups related to each other, and Mrs. Morgan-Rees said she would provide them with a diagram illustrating this.

We heard that three of the recommendations were categorised as 'yellow' meaning good progress had been made but two were still 'amber' meaning there had been limited progress. We mainly discussed recommendation 4 relating to the education other than at school services and heard that an Accelerated improvement Board had been established. New legislation for PRU management Committee came in so changes have been made to that. But the PRU management Committee still needs a steer to take things forward and some of the changes still need to be accepted fully. You also said that there have been informal discussions with Secondary Headteachers around the extra monies that will go into schools to support behaviour work. We agreed with you that all schools must be on the same page with this.

The issue of managed moves in year 11 was highlighted, particularly whether managed moves in year 11 should be discouraged. The Panel did recognise that managed moves are an important tool in the managing behaviour toolkit but were clear that it should be used appropriately.

EMLAS was raised, in particular the issue of a lack of flexibility within the council in relation to policies around recruitment. Recruitment policies need to be able to be flexible enough to support the different needs of the children attending schools, for example changes in the languages being spoken with more support needed for Romanian and Polish children but flexibility in council policies make those changes difficult.

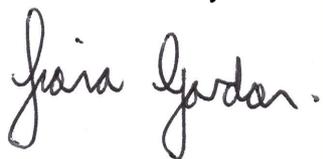
Post 16 education was also highlighted, particularly the point in the action plan around reviewing the model of delivery. You informed us that you are awaiting a political steer from Welsh Government which will help local politicians to develop a way forward on this matter. You also explained that the Education Cabinet Advisory Committee will be doing a piece of work on this shortly.

In summary we would recommend that:

- You look at how recruitment policies that support the requirements of EMLAS children to ensure that these policies are flexible enough to meet the changing needs of our communities.

We look forward to your reply by 9 December .

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fiona Gordon". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed within a thin yellow rectangular border.

**Fiona Gordon**  
**Convener Schools Performance Scrutiny Panel**  
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