

Children, Young People and Education Committee
Request for information on Pupil attendance & training for school governors
Response from: Swansea Council



Jayne Bryant,
Chair of the Children, Young People &
Education Committee

SeneddChildren@Senedd.Wales

Corporate Management Team

The Guildhall,
SWANSEA. SA1 4PE
www.swansea.gov.uk

Please ask for: Phil Roberts
Direct Line: 01792 637525
E-Mail: Phil.roberts@swansea.gov.uk
Our Ref: PR/ajw/JB2001
Your Ref:
Date: 20th January 2022

Dear Ms Bryant,

Pupil Attendance and Training for School Governors

Attendance

In Swansea we are committed to ensure optimum engagement of all our learners through inclusion in all medium and long term planning at a senior leadership level. We scrutinise all attendance data to understand trends and anomalies, adapting our practice accordingly. Through regular data monitoring and close working partnerships with schools, we have identified learners who fall into the category described as, pupils who have not returned to school since the two periods of general school closures, have done so on a very limited basis, or have been regularly/persistently absent.

In the Autumn term there were 14 children in primary school in this category, which equates to 0.03% of the school population. Interestingly there is a slight rise in this category for primary school children, from the previous term. When analysed further we found that the number of families remain the same however younger siblings are now included in the data collection. In the Autumn term there were 61 children from secondary school assessed as falling within this category which is 0.1% of the total school population. Pleasingly, of these children we have seen a 43% increase in the children who are attending on part time basis since the Summer term, which can be attributed to the success of our implementation of reintegration plans through close collaboration between our Education Welfare Service, schools and families.

Through embedding school attendance as a key contributor to Swansea COVID recovery plan our Education Welfare Service are able to ensure the changing needs of families and schools have been met. The service always works flexibly and are adaptable where needed. The service has forged close relationships with schools and other agencies to ensure that families, children and young people can be supported holistically. Examples of such collaboration are as follows:

- The EWO meets with schools on a weekly basis to analyse data, looking at specific attendance issues and vulnerable groups.
- The service is embedded within the local authorities Early Help Hubs so have access to information from other important services.
- Close working with schools and families to formulate bespoke timetables and reintegration plans to encourage children and young people to attend school.
- Referrals to agencies to support families and young people with their anxieties and worries.
- Good relationships with ALN case workers have provided opportunities to look at any undiagnosed or already diagnosed needs and have helped identify support.
- The EWS have formed an attendance panel to look at and implement strategies for those families who have been difficult to engage with, sharing good practice throughout the service.

Throughout the pandemic, regular home visits have been undertaken to look at support for families, and check-ins have been commenced on a regular basis. The use of alternative methods of communication such as TEAMS have provided a direct access to the EWO and have facilitated positive working relationships.

Governor Support

Our Governor support team provide all school governors with a termly newsletter highlighting training opportunities. Estyn inspection arrangements training is included in this newsletter. Officers have also highlighted this training in our Education newsletter which is distributed to every school in Swansea.

Yours sincerely,



Phil Roberts
Chief Executive