



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
MERTHYR TUDFUL
MERTHYR TYDFIL
County Borough Council

MINUTES OF MEETING

SCRUTINY : LEARNING AND LGES MEETING

MONDAY, 4TH MARCH, 2024

PRESENT: Councillors L Mytton (Chair)

Councillors C Jones, C Tovey, J Scriven and A Williams-Price

Cooptees:

J Beard (Public Appointment), Bridges (MTBWYF), Jones (Parent Governor (Primary)) and L Matuszczyk (Merthyr Tydfil Governor Association) and K Lewis

Officers:

G Metheringham (Head of Additional Learning Needs) and S Walker (Director of Education), A Pugh (Education Welfare), J Watkins (Schools & Learning) and J Jones (Scrutiny Officer)

E Galeozzie (Democratic Services Officer) and O Moore (Democratic Services Officer)

ITEM NO.	AGENDA MATTER	DECISION
723	Apologies for absence	Apologies were received from Cllr G Lewis, Cllr G Thomas, L McClean, H O'Neill and P Phillips.
724	Declarations of Interest (including whipping declarations)	J Beard and N Jones declared a personal interest in Item 3 but have full dispensation.

725	<p>Review of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) following Implementation of Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal (Wales) Act (ALNET) 2018</p>	<p>Sue Walker noted an error with the third bullet point of 5.4 and that it should read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a shared understanding regarding the Additional Learning Provision (ALP) available within the college. <p>Sue Walker then led the Committee through the report and together with the Officers responded in detail to the following question raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can co-opted members be notified of future updates? • Has any consideration been made in regard to establishing provision for the new Blessed Carlo Acutis school? • Has the work done over the past year addressed managing the anxiety of parents and carers? • Are the conversations between the Local Authority and parents, informal support? • Do you have the figures for how many formal reviews are requested? • In relation to 5.8, did the Steering Group assess the recommendations? • Does the Steering Group have the feedback from the Task and Finish Group? • How effective has the training been for the school staff? Do we have an indicator of the impact it has had? • Are there any perceived obstacles in achieving the goals? • Lived experience representation – are there any other partnerships or agencies that are involved? • Information regarding teacher and LSA training. • In relation to 5.11, will there be any possibilities of speaking to those students who identify with ALN? • In relation to 5.17, are you able to provide statistics? • In relation to 6.3, do our current systems not meet the act? <p>A comment was made concerning 9.1 and the five ways of working.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The report is discussed and noted. 2. Members consider if there are other aspects, they wish to scrutinise.
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726	Attendance in Schools	<p>Sue Walker led the Committee through the report and together with the Officers responded in detail to the following question raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the definition of persistent absenteeism altered? • How many schools do not have an SLA with the EWS? How does this effect the recording of Fixed Penalty Notices? • Withdrawn Penalty Notices – what are the reasons and are any of them legalistic? • Are parents jointly liable? • Children in residential – how do you work around the Fixed Penalty Notices? • In relation to 3.2, did it bring forward anything new or did it just bring together previous knowledge? • In relation to 5.4, can you explain the statistics? • In relation to 5.16, are the staffing changes coming out of the education budget? • How long is the grant available for? • Is the staffing level dependent on the grant going forward? • In relation to 6.3, questions were asked about targets. • Is there a report available to show the level of absenteeism and the number of FPN generated for each school? • To what extent do you feel that approaches to absenteeism are consistent across the borough? Can anything be done to improve the consistency? • Parental expectations and engagement – do parents have suitable knowledge on the impact of low attendance? Can anything be done to improve that? Has anything been done in the past? • How can the Local Authority support the changing of a cultural mindset? • Are the financial implications of going to school causing problems with attendance? Are those issues being discussed? <p>Cllr J Scriven left the meeting.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The content of this report is discussed and noted. 2. Members consider if there are other aspects of attendance they wish to scrutinise.
727	Forward Work Programme 2023/2024	The Chair informed the committee that they will be discussing transition arrangements for all key stages in the

		<p>next meeting on the 22nd of April. The Chair also discussed arranging a visit to the College prior to the next meeting.</p> <p>The following questions were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can we include Education Psychology and Safeguarding in the Forward Work Plan? • Will we be doing a Workshop on the whole school approach? • Can we hold a space for something unknown that might come up?
728	Scrutiny Referrals	The Chair and the Committee agreed that the items on the agenda had been addressed and discussed.
729	Report Recommendations	The Chair and the Committee referred to the items that had been considered at the Meeting.
730	Feedback on Scrutiny Activities	<p>The Chair referred to the College visit and the self-evaluation workshop that is on the 14th of May.</p> <p>The following question was raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will there be any information coming back from the Estyn inspection?
731	Any other business deemed urgent by the Chair	No other business was deemed urgent by the Chair.