

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

County Council
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Cabinet Member for a Learning Powys

SUBJECT: Question from Laura Hares

What is being done to promote wellbeing and limit adverse childhood experiences amongst our ALN children in mainstream schools? Why does it take 1-2 years and often tribunal proceedings typically in Powys before our ALN Childrens needs are met? Who is held to account for the neglect of our children's needs and why is early intervention never put in place? My child is now on a very part time timetable and his paediatrician has explicitly expressed how PCC not meeting his needs is creating physical and mental health issues and yet over a year on from the school asking for support via a 1:1 TA for him, nothing is still in place. When will our education body catch up with the support offered over the border in Shropshire and with the legal requirements?

In March 2021 Welsh Government issued the framework for embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being as statutory guidance to governing bodies of maintained nursery, primary, secondary, middle, pupil referral units (PRUs), and special schools and local authorities in Wales. The majority of schools within Powys have been provided with training to support Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and/or Trauma Informed Practice. The individual schools will look to implement the training within their daily practice in order to support the children and young people that need support.

Powys offers schools a range of support services that can be accessed to assist in early help advice and guidance, through the role of a wellbeing officer, and through the provision of specialist teachers and educational psychology service. In addition, programmes to support the emotional health of children is offered through a programme called ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants), and individual schools will decide on the appropriateness of accessing and implementing this resource.

There is a national process, that is dictated via statutory documentation that describes the processes for assessing and meeting the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) of children and young people. This is adhered to by Powys County Council, but there are a few occasions where there are extenuating circumstances, such as complex cases or disagreements that extend the time scales. Schools and local

authorities are routinely inspected by statutory bodies, such as Estyn, to ensure that they are compliant with statutory guidance and processes.

Part time timetables are a local agreement between a school and parent, and the local authority does not intervene with these decisions. Families should not feel obliged to agree to a reduced timetable, but to work with the school to ensure that a pastoral support plan is implemented, with realistic and achievable targets, that is regularly reviewed and evaluated. The local authority delegates ALN funding to all schools in order to support the needs of children. Research conducted by the Education Endowment Fund (EEF) demonstrates that 1:1 support has a detrimental impact on the progress of children, and inhibits their independence skills; although it is recognised that there are occasions where children need a more bespoke package of support to meet specific needs, and in particular where there is a serious medical condition. Panels within Powys are multi-agency, and they make decisions based upon the information provided to them by schools, families and other agencies. Education provision and processes differ between local authorities and in particular there is distinct legislation between England and Wales. The support provided by Powys County Council meets statutory guidance and is compliant with requirements imposed by law. We wouldn't comment publicly on individual cases and will always respect the privacy and consent of children, young people and their families.