

SWYDDFA CYMORTH Y  
CABINET  
CABINET SUPPORT OFFICE

Fy Nghyf / My Ref: CM40317

Neuadd y Sir

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Dyddiad / Date: 22nd October 2018

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Councillor David Walker

Cardiff County Council

Atlantic Wharf

Cardiff

CFIO 4UW

Annwyl/Dear Councillor Walker

Prap Scrutiny Committee - 12th September

Thank you for your letter dated 1 7<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

1. Recommends you strongly recommend to schools that sickness absence becomes a standing item on all Governing Body agendas.

This was raised as an agenda item at Chair of Governors meeting on the 16th October. In addition to sending the quarterly benchmarked data reports to the Chair of Governors and Headteacher of each school, a communication will also be sent to the school Clerks to Governors circulation list requesting that they ensure the item is included on the governing body agenda. Finally, the benchmarked data communication to Chairs of Governors and Headteachers includes the following statement:

'As personal data is not included, please share the benchmarked data report with your governing body for information and discussion at its next meeting.'

From Q2 reports this message will be moved to a more prominent position.

2. Urges you to continue development work on monitoring schools' uniformity of sickness absence policy application.

**GWEITHIO DROS GAERDYDD, GWEITHIO DROSOCH CHI**

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg, Saesneg neu'n ddwyieithog. Byddwn yn cyfathrebu â chi yn ôl eich dewis, dim ond i chi roi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

**WORKING FOR CARDIFF, WORKING FOR YOU**

The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh, English or bilingually. We will ensure that we communicate with you in the language of your choice, as long as you let us know which you prefer. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay.



HR Officers continue working with schools to ensure sickness is captured and reported on HR system.

**ATEBWCH 1 1 PLEASE REPLY TO:**

Swyddfa Cyr-north Y Cabinet / Cabinet Support Office, Ystafell / Room 518, Neuadd y Sir / County Hall Glanfa'r Iwerydd / Atlantic Wharf, Caerdydd/Cardiff, CF10 4UW  
Ffon / -rel: (029) 2087 2598

**3. Requests a more detailed comparison of best practice in Merthyr Tydfil and Glasgow Councils when it next monitors sickness absence.**

Further work will be done to develop a detailed comparison of practice in Merthyr Council following recent visit and we will investigate sickness absence management in Glasgow Council.

**4. Urges you to explore the practice of social prescribing as a good initiative used by organisations such as United Welsh Housing.**

I have asked officers to follow-up on the practice of social prescribing and make contact with United Welsh Housing in relation to this initiative.

**5. Considers there is value in the Council recording 'work related' back and muscular-skeletal sickness absence figures.**

Currently we report work related back and muscular skeletal sickness absences which relate to Occupational Ill Health or Industrial Injury, the latter having a direct link to work. APSE have indicated that there is a direct link between high levels of absence in roles such as refuse workers and homecarers and their working practices and advocate preventative measures such as those mentioned at the Scrutiny meeting e.g. early referral to physiotherapy. I am not clear as to the value of this suggestion and the extra work it will mean for officers and will discuss it further with the Council's Health & Safety manager.

**6. Considers it would be useful to see the data for Education presented without the catering service**

As mentioned at the meeting, the Education Directorate have identified this as an area of focus and an action plan for the catering service has been developed. Attached at Appendix 1 is that sickness absence data for the central Education Service with the breakdown of the catering service sickness absence data for 2017/18 and for Quarter 1 2018/19.

**7. Will continue its interest in the sickness absence figures for service areas that hold vacant posts, and looks forward to more health and safety information informing sickness reporting over the next 6 months.**

I note your interest in sickness absence figures for areas which hold vacancies and we can explore this further. As mentioned at the meeting Health & Safety colleagues are reviewing stress risk assessments across Directorates and this will be used to inform prevention interventions and support for staff in reducing stress in the workplace.

Yn gywir

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Weaver', written in a cursive style.

Councillor / Y Cynghorydd Chris Weaver

Cabinet Member for Finance, Modernisation & Performance

Aelod Cabnet dros Gyllid, Moderneiddio a Pherfformiad