

Ein Cyf /Our Ref:

WLGA/SENCOM Service /190619

Dyddiad /Date:

18 June 2019

Gofynnwch am/Please ask for:

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To: Headteachers (South East Wales), NHS and Associated Professionals, Voluntary Sector Partners to SENCOM Service

Dear Colleague,

Independent Review of the Sensory and Communication Support Service (SENCOM)

I write, on behalf of the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), to notify you of our decision to commission and support an independent review of the SENCOM (Sensory & Communication Support Service). The review, will be led by **Mark Geraghty**, an independent SEND Consultant with substantial experience of working in the education/ALN/SEN sectors.

SENCOM, is a joint service covering five local authorities in South East Wales; **Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Newport, Monmouthshire & Torfaen**.

SENCOM has been delivering a wide range of highly, specialist services and interventions, to families and schools, during a period when the Welsh Government's aspirations to support children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) in schools, with appropriate levels and type of support, has been a central principle of its proposed new legislation.

The WLGA, represents all 22 local authorities in Wales, and in this case is supporting the five partner authorities in this important evaluation of SENCOM's work. The review will examine how effectively SENCOM:

- meets the specialist teaching, learning and communication needs of children and young people, it helps?
- supports families and schools to meet the children and young people's respective aspirations?
- prepares young people with sensory and communication needs to become valued and valuable adults, in their local communities?

It will also look at resources allocated and used across the partner authorities, and how the SENCOM service may be the subject of appropriate governance in future.

The recently announced independent review will collect stakeholders' views and opinions, by engaging with families; schools; other support service partners; the voluntary and community sector (VCS), as well as the children and young people themselves.

Dr Chris Llewelyn
Prif Weithredwr
Chief Executive

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**Croesawn ohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg a byddwn yn ymateb i ohebiaeth yn yr un iaith.
Ni fydd defnyddio'r naill iaith na'r llall yn arwain at oedi.**

**We welcome correspondence in Welsh and English and will respond to correspondence in the same language.
Use of either language will not lead to a delay.**

A copy of the terms of reference of the SENCOM review is attached, with this communication.

The review will:

- Enable all parents, carers, schools, complementary ALN/SEND services and the voluntary & community sector, to submit their views, either in writing and/or via email
- Facilitate face-to-face meetings with representatives from the above stakeholder groups who wish to attend locally based consultation meetings. Details of these meetings will be published very soon.
- Collect, collate the views and experiences and publish a report of his independent findings, as well as a series of recommendations, based on the evidence gathered from the judgements of SENCOM's stakeholders.

WLGA and partner local authority's, believe the mark of a caring society is indicated by how we treat children who are most in need of our support. Every child, whatever their background and no matter what challenges they face, should have access to a best-in-class education that prepares them for life in the modern world.

Thanks to the hard work of all our teachers and support staff, standards are rising and we continue to encourage schools to focus on the achievements of *all* pupils. Children only get one chance at their education accordingly, they deserve the best.

This impartial examination is a timely opportunity to look again at the what SENCOM have achieved so far and consider where we can improve the teaching and learning experiences for children and young people with sensory and communication needs in our schools. It will also enable us to reflect on how we may seek to future-proof these highly specialist services.

The independent review process will commence in early June 2019 with a planned completion and publication of the findings and recommendations by early July 2019. There will be further updates, in due course, as the review progresses and it assembles the key views and ideas from all involved.

Yn gywir / Yours sincerely



Interim Head of Education, Learning & Culture

On behalf of Council Leaders and CEOs of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Newport, Monmouthshire & Torfaen authorities

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