

DAVID REES AC /AM

Aelod Cynulliad dros Aberafan
Assembly Member for Aberavon

Aled Evans
Director of Education
Civic Centre,
Port Talbot
SA13 1PJ

12th June 2019

Dear Aled,

I am writing to you to seek clarification on the Council's use of the Welsh Government PDG Access Grant. As you know the purpose of this is to provide grant assistance to families on low incomes for the purchase of:

- School uniform including coats and shoes;
- School sports kit including footwear;
- Uniform for enrichment activities, including but not limited to, scouts; guides; cadets; martial arts; sports; performing arts or dance;
- Equipment e.g. school bags and stationery;
- Specialist equipment where new curriculum activities begin such as design and technology; and
- Equipment for out of school hour's trips such as outdoor learning e.g. waterproofs.

It has been brought to my attention that families of pupils who are in year 7 and 10 of comprehensive school have access to this grant with £200 being allocated in year 7 and £125 in year 10.

As you are aware, the local authority has taken to decision to close Cymmer Afan Comprehensive School at the end of this academic year, and those pupils will be transferred to Ysgol Cwm Brombil in Margam. Many families in the Afan valley are amongst the poorest in the area and as such, buying a new school uniform to allow their children to attend a new school, when those pupils already have the school uniform for Cymmer Comprehensive, will incur costs on families that they may not be able to afford. I believe that in these circumstances, families should have access to this scheme in order to buy new school uniform as this change has been brought upon them by the local authority's decision.

I understand that the local authority will continue to support families of children in years 7 and 10 as they move to their new school but not families with children in other years due to the financial constraints

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the authority faces. This could place many children attending their new school without the full uniform required by that school (including all Gym/PE kits).

As such could you please provide me with the following information:

- How much of the Local Authority's allocation for this grant was used in the last academic year?
- How much has the local authority been allocated for this academic year?
- What preparation has the local authority undertaken to help families change the whole school uniform sets following the local authority's decision to close Cymmer Afan Comprehensive School.
- What support will the local authority give to families with pupils in year's 8,9 & 11 who are struggling with the costs of sending their children to their new school?

I would very much appreciate your input on this in order to support those families struggling with the costs of sending their children to school in September.

Yours sincerely



DAVID REES AM
Assembly Member for Aberavon

CC: Cllr R Jones, Leader of NPTCBC
Cllr P Rees, Cabinet Member for Education, NPTCBC