

9 October 2020

Dear

Thank you again for your email, in which you formally request information in regards to distance learning oversight. When dealing with requests for information made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the 'Act'), Estyn's obligations include:-

1. Confirming or denying whether it holds information of the description specified in the request; and
2. Communicating the information requested to the applicant.

There are a number of exemptions under the Act that impact these obligations. Estyn is required to consider whether an exemption applies in the context of the information being released into the public domain, not just in the context of the information being released to the particular applicant that has requested the information.

If Estyn releases information in response to a Freedom of Information request, this is essentially a decision that the information can be released in response to any similar request from any member of the public.

In response to your request, I can confirm that in March 2020, we suspended school inspections and related activity. Since then we have been supporting the Welsh Government with their continuity of learning programme and been in touch with schools across Wales to gather information about their work. While distance learning has been a focus of these discussions, the purpose of the calls has been to identify interesting practice and ongoing challenges faced by schools in relation to promoting learning and supporting vulnerable learners. We have contacted over 320 providers across Wales during the past fortnight and information from these calls will form part of the evidence base for a thematic review that we will publish in early spring 2021. Today we have also launched a series of surveys which will contribute to this work. They are available here.

<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/inspection-feedback/survey>

<https://www.estyn.llyw.cymru/adborth-arolygu/arolwg>

I hope my response is helpful. If you have any further queries please don't hesitate to get in touch.

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Mae Estyn yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a  
Saesneg. Bydd gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn y naill  
iaith neu'r llall yn cael yr un flaenoriaeth.

Estyn welcomes correspondence in both English  
and Welsh. Correspondence received in either  
language will be given equal priority.

If however you are not satisfied with the decision Estyn has taken regarding your request for information, you are entitled to request that we review the matter. Your request for a review should be addressed to the Feedback and Complaints Manager, and received no later than 20 working days after the date of this communication.

If you are still not satisfied, you also have a right to complain to the Information Commissioner through their website:

<https://ico.org.uk/about-the-ico/who-we-are/wales-office/>

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Email: [enquiries@ico.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ico.gsi.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely

**Robert Gairey**

Swyddog Arweiniol Cyhoeddiadau / Lead Officer: Publications

**Estyn**

**Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi Dros Addysg A Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
Her Majesty's Inspectorate For Education and Training in Wales**

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Mae Estyn yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Bydd gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn y naill iaith neu'r llall yn cael yr un flaenoriaeth.

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**From:**

**Sent:** 28 September 2020 23:01

**To:** Enquiries <[Enquiries@estyn.gov.uk](mailto:Enquiries@estyn.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** 09 20 01 Freedom of Information Request

Good evening,

Please can you tell me what oversight ESTYN have undertaken of the distance learning or working from home provisions put in place by comprehensive schools in Wales in response to the Covid-19 pandemic?

I am particularly interested in any checks or inspections that may have been made on schools in the Neath Port Talbot local authority area.

If nothing has been done what plans does ESTYN have in place to ensure that the provision in place is adequate given that the restrictions as a result of the pandemic are likely to continue for the foreseeable future?

Thanks,