



Anthony Foligno
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Eich Cyf/Your Ref:
Ein Cyf/Our Ref: ATISN 12594

26 September 2018

Dear Mr Foligno

ATISN 12594

Thank you for your request which I received on 5 September 2018 about school counsellors.

A copy of the information I have decided to release is enclosed. I have provided information against the various points you raised in your enquiry:

Do any secondary schools within Wales have school counsellors employed solely for the pupils welfare and wellbeing? If they do, how many and how were they funded? Are the subsidised in any way?

Since April 2013, local authorities in Wales have been required under the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 to make reasonable provision for an independent counselling service for:

- registered pupils who receive secondary education at:
 - a school maintained by the authority
 - other schools in its area (e.g. independent schools)
- registered pupils who are in Year 6 of their primary education at:
 - a school maintained by the authority
 - other schools in its area
- young people in its area between the ages of 11 and 18 who are not being educated at school.

Further information on the duty on local authorities to provide counselling services is available in [Statutory guidance to Welsh local authorities on the provision of independent counselling services](#)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.



The Welsh Government does not hold information on the number of counsellors who are employed.

As regards the funding of the counselling service, when the legislation came into force which put the provision of counselling on a statutory basis, £4.5 million specific grant funding for the provision of counselling was transferred to local authorities' Revenue Support Grant as part of the [Local Government Settlement](#) from 2013-14 onwards. This was to secure the sustainable funding of the service. Funding delivered through the local government settlement cannot be ring-fenced for any specific purpose. This means local authorities have the freedom and the responsibility to spend this funding (along with other income through council tax, sales, fees and charges) in the most efficient and effective way to deliver all their statutory responsibilities for their areas.

If no schools have them is information available on why not?

Local authorities are **required by law** to make reasonable provision of an independent counselling service on the site of each secondary school that it maintains.

If the information is available have they had any desirable or undesirable effect?

An independent [evaluation](#) of the Welsh Government's School-based Counselling Strategy found that link teachers reported counselling services had made a positive impact on the attainment, attendance and behaviour of pupils (65%, 69% and 80% respectively).

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ

or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire,
SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M L Reed'.

Lowri Reed
Pupil Wellbeing Branch