



T: 01495 355001

E: committee.services@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

Our Ref./Ein Cyf.

Your Ref./Eich Cyf.

Contact:/Cysylltwch â: committee.services@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

THIS IS A MEETING WHICH THE PUBLIC ARE ENTITLED TO ATTEND

23rd January 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the People Scrutiny Committee will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams – if you would like to attend this meeting live via Microsoft Teams please contact committee.services@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk on Tuesday, 30th January, 2024 at 10.00 am.

Yours faithfully

Damien McCann
Interim Chief Executive

AGENDA

Pages

1. SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION

You are welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, a minimum notice period of 3 working days is required should you wish to do so. A simultaneous translation will be provided if requested.

2. APOLOGIES

To receive.

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a Saesneg a byddwn yn cyfathrebu gyda chi yn eich dewis iaith, dim ond i chi rhoi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn creu unrhyw oedi.

The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh and English and we will 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 any delay.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**

To receive.

4. **SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE INFORMATION FOR SOCIAL SERVICES 1ST APRIL TO 30TH SEPTEMBER AND EDUCATION SUMMER TERM-2023** 3 - 62

To consider the report of the Interim Corporate Director Social Services and the Interim Corporate Director Education.

5. **KEY STAGE 4 OUTCOMES 2023** 63 - 74

To consider the report of the Interim Corporate Director Education.

6. **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING ROLLING PROGRAMME** 75 - 86

To consider the report of the Service Manager Education Transformation.

7. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME: 19TH MARCH 2024** 87 - 90

To receive

To: Councillor T. Smith (Chair)
Councillor J. Morgan, J.P. (Vice-Chair)
Councillor D. Bevan
Councillor J. Gardner
Councillor G. Humphreys
Councillor J. P. Morgan
Councillor G. Thomas
Councillor D. Wilkshire
T. Pritchard
Chloe Lines

All other Members (for information)
Interim Chief Executive
Chief Officers

Agenda Item 4

Cabinet and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: N/A

Committee: **People Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **30th January, 2024**

Report Subject: **Safeguarding Performance Information for Social Services 1st April to 30th September and Education Summer Term–2023**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Haydn Trollope, Cabinet Member People & Social Services and Cllr Sue Edmunds, Cabinet Member People & Education**

Report Submitted by: **Tanya Evans, Interim Corporate Director of Social Services and Luisa Munro-Morris, Interim Corporate Director of Education**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
12.12.23	x	17.01.24			30.01.24	21.02.24		16.1.24

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide scrutiny members with safeguarding performance information and analysis from Children's and Adult's Social Services from 1st April 2023 to the 30th September 2023 and Education for the Summer term 2023.

The information provided will enable members to identify safeguarding trends and areas within the Authority that require further development to improve safeguarding practice in order to meet the safeguarding needs of children and young people and adults within Blaenau Gwent.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The report contains safeguarding information from Social Services for the period 1st April 2023 to 30th September 2023 and Education information for the summer term 2023.
- 2.2 This report is written to provide a greater focus on the safeguarding agenda. The Corporate Leadership Team and Elected Members agreed for safeguarding information to be reported to a People Scrutiny Committee after each school term.
- 2.3 In April 2016, the Gwent-wide Adult Safeguarding Board (GwASB) and the South-East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB) became a statutory Board as set out in Part 7 of the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014. The role of the Board is to set the strategic direction in relation to multi agency safeguarding. The Board carries out these core functions through policy direction, monitoring the effectiveness within

agencies, commissioning practice reviews, and disseminating learning to practitioners to ensure safeguarding is high on the agenda at all levels of the workforce.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 Having scrutinised the information members can:

Option 1

Accept the approach and information detailed in the report provided.

Option 2

Consider the information provided and provide comments on where improvement can be made to the current monitoring processes.

4. **Evidence of how this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

4.1 The Safeguarding agenda is considered as part of the Council's Corporate Strategies that includes:

- Corporate Improvement Plan
- Single Integrated Plan
- Corporate Risk Register
- Safe Reduction of CLA Strategy

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 places a statutory duty on all local authorities to produce an annual report on the discharge of its social services functions' Social Services work to a number of regional and national safeguarding procedures.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short- and long-term impact)***

There is no impact on the budget both in the short and long term.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

The Directorate Risk register identifies the highest risks for the Social Services Department. These are monitored as part of the quarterly report of the Director of Social Services. Similarly, the Education Directorate risk register captures the risks in respect of Education and is again included for reference in the data pack.

5.3 ***Legal***

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act came into force on 6th April 2016. The Act provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of

people who need care and support, and carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales.

5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no human resources implications attached to this report.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information**

Performance and data are provided within the report and the accompanying data pack.

6.2 **Children Social Services**

6.2.1 **Referrals to Social Services**

6.2.2 **Figure 1:1** Identifies a continued upward trend in respect of referral rates into Childrens Services with referrals received per quarter exceeding 2000 in both Q1(2,045) and Q2 (2,069). This offers a total of 4,114 for the two Q's. For comparison, the number of referrals for the same period (Q1/Q2) in year 22/23 totalled 3,388 therefore demonstrating a 21.4% increase in referrals. The volume of referrals being received via our front door Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) Team is at an unprecedented high. Despite the significant increase in referrals, we continue to work tirelessly to ensure children and families are offered the right support at the right time to prevent escalation of needs and to safeguard children.

Referral rates continue to be monitored and similar increasing referral patterns are being reported within neighbouring Gwent authorities.

6.2.3 **Figure 1.1A** Shows the number of individuals associated with the referrals received, the number of individuals who have had 2 or more referrals during the month and the highest number of referrals received by an individual during the month.

Q1 saw an average of 577 individuals linked to a referral and an average of 70 individuals who received 2 or more referrals. Q2 saw an average of 595 individuals linked to a referral and an average of 77 individuals who received 2 or more referrals.

The highest number of referrals linked to any 1 individual across Q1 and Q2 was 13 which occurred in May. This is somewhat higher than all other months during this reporting period where the average across the remaining months was 5.2.

6.2.4 **Figure 1.2:** Shows the source of the referrals. As in previous quarters, Police remain the highest referring agency (Q1 35.5% and Q2 34.5%).

Health and Education referrals are grouped closely within these quarters as being the second and third highest referring agency.

Ongoing joint working with Police through safeguarding hub meetings allows for regular discussion and monitoring of Police referrals alongside a Detective Sergeant from Gwent Police being co-located in Children's IAA, to quality assure all PPN's received.

Referral thresholds from partner agencies are being considered on a regional basis as part of a task and finish group which has been set up under the Gwent Safeguarding Board. The task and finish group are currently looking at the development of a regional Duty to Report (DTR) threshold document to act as an aid for professional judgement on when to appropriately submit a referral to Children's Services. This work is progressing, and it is hoped the draft document will be presented for approval at Gwent Safeguarding Children Board before the end of financial year. Following approval this will be disseminated to partner agencies to consider when using their professional judgement on when to submit a Duty to Report to Children's Services. Training and briefing sessions on the application of this document will be provided to partner agencies by Children's Services.

6.2.5 **Figure 1.3:** Shows the numbers of referrals received into the department on open cases. The graph identifies a marginal reduction for the receipt of additional referrals on open cases from Q1(1,796) to Q2(1,787). Figure 1.3 demonstrates minimal fluctuation in the receipt of additional referrals for open cases across the 4 Q's included in the graph.

6.2.6 **Child Protection**

6.2.7 **Figures 2.1 & 2.2:** Provides a summary of the number of children on the child protection register with the numbers of registrations and deregistration's also being referenced within Fig 2.2.

There was a total of 63 children on the child protection register in Q1 which demonstrates an increase of 1 from Q4. During Q1 there were a total of 24 new registrations which is a decrease of 7 compared to Q4. There were 19 less de-registrations in Q1 compared to the previous Quarter.

During Q2 there were a total of 83 children on the child protection register which demonstrates an increase of 20 from Q1. During Q2 there were a total of 47 new registrations which is an increase of 23 compared to Q1. There were 4 more de-registrations in Q2 compared to Q1. In Q2 we have seen a sharp increase in the number of children registered on the child protection register.

When scrutinising this data there has been a double in figures for pre-birth conferences and for transfer-in conferences. One of the transfer-in conferences was for a large sibling group of 6.

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) undertook a national rapid review of child protection arrangements earlier this year for which Blaenau Gwent was chosen as one of 5 Local Authorities across Wales to have CIW undertake fieldwork activity to support their national review. We were proud of the feedback from

CIW in particular their comments on how committed staff are to the children and families with whom they work which led to them receiving the right support at the right time.

The CIW rapid review full report was published in September 2023 which included several recommendations for all agencies and Regional Safeguarding Boards to consider to further strengthen child protection practices across Wales. A working group consisting of service and operational team managers within Children's Services will be seeking to review the actions as part of an action plan to consider how best these can be implemented locally in Blaenau Gwent.

6.2.8 **Figure 2.3:** Shows the categories of abuse for which children's names are registered for on the Child Protection Register over the past year. Neglect and Emotional/Psychological abuse remain the highest categories of abuse across Q1 and Q2. This is typically in keeping with national statistics for child protection categorisations.

We have continued to see an increase in the number of children that have been registered under the category of Emotional/Psychological Abuse over the past 2 quarters with this category accounting for 36 (Q1) and 42 (Q2) of all registrations. The category of Neglect is the second highest category and accounts for 24 (Q1) and 35 (Q2) of all registrations.

Conference chairs seek to ensure that if the category of Emotional/Psychological Abuse is agreed within the conference, then there should be a CAMHS consultation arranged by the social worker for the child/ren to consider their emotional wellbeing needs with health colleagues to inform the child protection plan.

6.2.9 **Figure 2.4:** relates to the age and gender breakdown of children on the child protection register during Q2. In Q2 we identified males aged 10-15 being the highest (19), followed by females in the 1-4 age brackets (15).

Age group comparison with Q1 data identifies the following;

- 10–15 year-olds = 30 demonstrating an increase of 9 from Q1.
- Under 1's = 8. No change.
- 5–9 year-olds = 20 demonstrating an increase of 4 from Q1.
- 1–4 year-olds = 24 demonstrating an increase of 8 from Q1.
- There was 1 young person between the ages of 16 and 18 demonstrating a decrease of 1.

6.3 **Adults' Social Services**

6.3.1 **Figure 3.1:** The data shows a 15.9% increase in referrals of adults at risk received in quarter 2 this year compared to last year. Although slightly lower than quarter 1 (12 less reports) there is a still a consistent increase across the year in comparison to last year. This may be reflective of there being more adults at risk due to increased poverty with regards to the cost-of-living crisis affecting all local communities. The Safeguarding network event delivered by GWASB earlier this year focused on the impact of poverty on the most

vulnerable people within our communities. The increase could also be due to awareness raising through the regular Safeguarding training that we deliver jointly with Caerphilly safeguarding team. Training has now returned to the classroom and there is a high number of attendees in every session over the last 2 quarters.

- 6.3.2 **Figure 3.2:** The data shows we received the highest number of referrals for females over 65 who are experiencing neglect (42) followed by females over 65 who are experiencing physical abuse (29). The information suggests females tend to be more at risk than males across all types of abuse and people over 65 tend to be more at risk of physical abuse and neglect. There are more consistent figures across the ages for the other categories of abuse. This data is consistent with previous quarters.

The regional Quality Assurance sub-group continues to support the development of the performance management and quality assurance framework identifying any emerging safeguarding themes and challenges that may become more amplified and require more targeted attention moving forward.

- 6.3.4 **Figure 3.3** The figures reflecting where the alleged abuse/neglect took place shows that we had the highest number of reports from care home settings in Q2 (91) followed by own home (70). It is more likely that abuse will be witnessed and reported in this type of environment. There has been a concerted attempt to work with care home managers to raise their awareness of the safeguarding procedures. We also continue to have a close working relationship with the Commissioning team within the department and with our Health colleagues in sharing information and jointly investigating any concerns. The majority of the population still reside in their own homes therefore we would expect to see a high number of reports from 'own home'. Care and support is often provided by domiciliary care companies in people's homes who again are aware of the safeguarding procedures so are more likely to report. Domestic abuse cases will also likely be included in the 'own home' category. This data is consistent with previous quarters.

- 6.3.5 **Figure 3.4** This data shows the person allegedly responsible for the abuse is most often recorded as 'not known' (92). An example of this is where an incident such as a fall in a care home would not identify the alleged perpetrator. There can also be cases in which the report is closed because it was inappropriate, and no abuse/neglect has occurred. The alleged perpetrator may have been identified through the course of enquiries but if the safeguarding process is still ongoing when the data is taken it may not be captured in the final performance statistics. There were less reports of abuse by a professional in Q 2 (19) compared to Q1 (35) this year. This will be closely monitored and further assessed over quarters 3 and 4 to see if this trend continues and if a rationale or reason can be provided. There has been an increase in reports in which the alleged perpetrator is a son or daughter, 17 in quarter 2 compared to 11 in quarter 1.

6.3.6 **Figure 3.5:** The majority of our reports are received from provider agencies and the local health board which is to be expected due to their awareness of the safeguarding procedures. This is consistent with previous data. There has been a 50% increase in the reports received from relatives/friends. This may be due to more awareness via media or the drive to recruit more carers who will then receive the mandatory training and are more likely to report abuse in all circumstances. This is an encouraging increase from members of the public. Self-reporting continues to increase also which suggests adults at risk are becoming more aware of their rights and the importance of raising any concerns,

A member of the Commissioning Team attends every strategy meeting held for commissioned services to offer advice, guidance and perspective. The Contracts and Commissioning Team Manager and the three Contract Monitoring Officers are all fully trained non-criminal investigators and undertake investigations independently or jointly with colleagues depending on the complexity and size of the investigation, or, with health colleagues if there are nursing issues involved. Whether referrals progress to strategy meetings and/or investigation, or are closed down as inappropriate safeguarding referrals, there is very often some preliminary investigation work and/or recommendations / performance issues with providers to be acted upon and followed up by the Commissioning Team.

6.3.7 **Figure 3.6:** The data suggests females continue to be more at risk of domestic abuse than males or are at least more likely to be reported. There continues to be a steady increase in females aged between 18 and 64 experiencing domestic abuse. This could be reflective of the crisis being experienced by the community as a whole such as poverty and unemployment. The reports could also be increasing due to an increased awareness of 'Ask and Act'. This figure only captures the adult at risk cases and not all people within the community experiencing domestic abuse. We have a dedicated worker within the team who has expertise in this area and responds to these reports.

A strong link also remains with the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) partnership. Our close working relationships are also demonstrated with the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner's Office, and nationally recognised bodies such as Public Health Wales along with our regional volunteering agencies, Gwent Association of Volunteering Organisations (GAVO) and Torfaen Voluntary Alliance.

6.4 **Education**

6.4.1 **Overview**

Action Short of Strike (ASOS) was in place until the end of November 2023, this impacted on some of the data that would routinely be presented to Members.

Data presented within this report is done so on an exception basis to bring key aspects of information to Members' attention and as such not all evidence in the supporting performance report will be included in this narrative.

- 6.4.2 **Section 05 Figure 1.2 Estyn** There was one school inspected by Estyn Summer 2023, no health and safety or safeguarding concerns were highlighted.
- 6.4.3 **Section 05 Figure 4.2.1/4.2.3 - Training** - The number of school staff completing the VAWDASV Group 1 online training during the summer term was 72% which is a small decrease on the Spring term when it was 73%. Whilst recorded completion of the online safeguarding module appears low, all schools are compliant with 'in-person' delivery of their whole school safeguarding training.
- 6.4.4 **Section 05 Fig 5.13** - There are established arrangements in place for the reporting of bullying within schools. Due to ASOS data for the summer term 2023 is not available for inclusion as not all schools have returned their data.
- 6.4.5 **Section 05 Figure 5.2.1/5.2.2/5.2.3: Electively Home Educated Pupils** - Annual visits by LA Officers to EHE pupils provide valuable information regarding the efficiency of the education provided. Support is offered to reintegrate or to signpost. Home visits are offered parents who refuse are few. Neutral venues are offered, and School Attendance Orders are considered. Additional funding from WG has improved engagement with hard-to-reach families. There is emerging positive impact of this work but more needs to be done nationally so that a national register is compiled of all those children EHE. The implementation of effective safeguarding nationally continues to be compromised until this is achieved. More robust EHE guidance has been issued by WG however there is no longer going to be a national register of EHE children. All local authorities will be required to keep their own CME database but there will be requirements for other agencies to inform the local authority.
- 6.4.6 **Section 05 Figure 5.4.1/5.4.2/5.4.3/5.4.4/5.4.5: Children who offend** - There is a service level agreement in place with the Youth Offending Service and both agencies work together to ensure that children are in appropriate education.

The 22/23 academic year has seen a decrease in children accessing the youth offending service when compared to 21/22

- 6.4.7 **Section 05 5.5 Anti-social Behaviour Process**
The Council's Community Safety Team membership includes Gwent Police (CADRO), Social Services (including Families First), Youth Offending Service, Senior Education Welfare, Youth Services, Registered Social Landlords and Legal Team, where appropriate. Referrals to the group can come from the Council, Police or Registered Social Landlords.

The purpose of this Group is to effectively tackle anti-social behaviour by providing multi-agency tailored support.

There are 4 different stages of intervention:

- 1st Warning Letter
- 2nd Warning Letter
- Case Review
- Punitive sanction

6.4.8 **Figure 5.5.1: Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)** - shows the number of children identified in the 4-Stage Anti-Social Behaviour Process, broken down by age and gender. Generally, more males have been identified in the anti-social behaviour for primary and secondary school age children. Overall, there has been a drop in the number of incidents.

6.4.9 **Figure 5.5.2 Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents-** identified from children who have received Stage 1 and Stage 2 Warning Letters. As can be seen the majority of issues are in relation to being part of a group: nuisance behaviour and setting fires.

6.4.10 **Figure 5.5.3 - Children Identified in 4-Stage ASB Process.** The majority of individuals do not progress past Stage 1. However, in the summer term there was an escalation in the number of Stage 3 cases, attributed to anti-social behaviour in one of our town centres. There were no stage 4 cases.

6.4.11 **Figure 5.8.5 Operation Encompass**

In the Summer term, children were present at 52.2% of occurrences of reported domestic violence, a significant increase from 31.6% in the Spring term. However, it is important to note that the local authority is now recording this information, as opposed to relying on police data, which may account for the increase.

6.4.12 **Section 05 Figure 5.10.1/5.10.2: Exclusions** - Exclusions are high, with many schools seeing a decline in the behaviour of pupils. There is a similar picture across Wales. Targeted support meetings have been offered to schools to discuss attendance and behaviour. Training has been offered to governors. A vulnerable learner panel has been established where schools can discuss pupils with persistent disruptive behaviour. This remains a key priority for the Education Directorate and schools.

6.4.13 **Section 05 Figure 5.11.2: Physical Interventions** - Most of the interventions reported are attributable to the specialist schools. Since the Autumn term, there has been a reduction in the number of interventions used in both specialist schools.

6.4.14 **Section 05 Figure 5.12/5.13/5.14 – Prejudice Related Incidents/Bullying** - There are established arrangements in place for the reporting of bullying concerns within schools which involve an alleged incident involving a protected characteristic under the Equalities Act. Due to ASOS the data for the summer term 2023 is not available for inclusion.

6.5 Corporate Safeguarding

6.5.1 **Figures 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 DBS Compliance** evidences all those within the Council who require a DBS and those who do not. Currently over 73% of Council employees require a DBS check. It is evident that this is an area in which we are performing exceptionally well. All directorates are performing at over 98% and those where no DBS is in place, there is a clear escalation process in place to ensure that managers and leads are aware and can take necessary action to resolve. Operational Teams receive fortnightly reports of all DBS applications currently in progress to enable Safeguarding escalation where required.

6.5.2 **Figure 6.2.1 VAWDASV Corporate Online Training** evidences that corporate training has been provided to staff in respect of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence with 52% of staff having completed the VAWDASV online training. Welsh Government has developed an e-learning module which is available on our online learning platform – the All-Wales Academy and there is an expectation for all council staff to complete this training.

6.5.3 **Figure 6.2.2 Corporate Online Safeguarding Training** evidence 52% of staff having completed the safeguarding training. On commencing employment with Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, all practitioners are required to have basic safeguarding awareness training. A refresher training session is required every 3 years. This is the 'All Wales Group A Safeguarding' online session to be completed as part of the induction process.

The National Safeguarding Training, Learning and Development Standards were launched in November 2023. This provides an overview of the knowledge, skills and competence expected for each group of practitioners, in relation to their safeguarding role and responsibilities. The National Safeguarding Training, Learning and Development Framework provides guidance for the implementation of training and how this could look in practice. Work is ongoing with the Regional Safeguarding Board in order to ensure the training opportunities across the region are reflective of the practitioner needs within each practitioner grouping.

Training compliance is being monitored via the Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group. There are identified challenges in respect of the data collection in respect of safeguarding training in the absence of an online learning management system. This is including the monitoring and tracking of safeguarding training consistently across all service areas. Work is ongoing to consider methods and practices which can support this function more effectively across all directorates.

6.5.4 **Figure 6.3 Risk Register** – The tables under this section evidence the progress being made against the controls outlined within the risk register and progress set against the recommendations for corporate safeguarding. As noted, the annual safeguarding self assessments for service areas across the council have been submitted and will be reviewed by the Children's

Safeguarding Team to identify themes, trends and gaps to inform a forward work plan for the Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group for year 24/25.

The Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group (CSLG) will be seeking to review the effectiveness of the current corporate safeguarding model in the new financial year. This will inevitably lead to the CSLG group proposing recommendations to help strengthen and improve the current corporate safeguarding functions across the Council. This work will support the review of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy.

6.6 Expected outcome for the public

Quarterly reporting provides the public with the opportunity to view progress of the Directorate and ensure accountability.

Those children who are assessed to be at risk of harm are protected and safeguarded, and the Local Authority adheres to legislation regarding statutory intervention.

6.7 Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)

The development of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the Departmental Safeguarding Leads meetings reconvened in 2021 and this helps to ensure all departments within the Authority are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and are kept updated with any emerging issues or trends within safeguarding.

Termly meetings also take place with the Safeguarding Leads from all the schools and other education settings and half termly meetings take place between the safeguarding team and lead education staff.

The SEWSCB local Safeguarding Network group also reviews the safeguarding information to ensure all partner agencies are as fully aware as possible.

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 looks to build and strengthen on existing arrangements by involving service users, carers and other key partners where possible in helping shape and influence future design of services.

6.8 Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)

The Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF) enables both Social Services and the Education Directorate to plan for the future as spend, risk and performance is continuously reported on and provides a baseline of where the department is currently and where it needs to be in the future. This process is further supplemented by the Local Government Education Services (LGES) framework within which local government education services operate.

The rigorous self-evaluation processes ensure that key areas for development are identified and then embedded within business planning arrangements.

6.9 **Preventative focus**

The work undertaken by the Social Services and Education Directorates looks to promote a preventative approach to practice through early identification and intervention. Having a proactive rather than reactive approach to service planning can also help with planning resources.

Providing this report and the level of detailed safeguarding information to Scrutiny Committee enables members to ensure risks are identified and acted on.

The Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board has developed a new partnership agreement between local authorities and agency partners including Gwent Police, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Wales Probation Trust, Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations which sets out a clear and shared vision to ensure all adults in Gwent are safeguarded effectively through partnership working and community engagement.

The recent establishment of the Strategic Safer Schools Partnership Board continues to progress strategic issues across the Local Government Education Services.

6.10 **Collaboration / partnership working**

The South-East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board and its sub-groups ensure a multi-agency collaborative approach to safeguarding. Blaenau Gwent fully participates in the Children's and Adults Safeguarding Boards.

Additionally, the Corporate Safeguarding Policy ensures each department has safeguarding leads and these meet together on a quarterly basis looking at safeguarding across the whole Authority. The Leisure Trust lead also participates in this meeting.

Throughout the Q's partnership working with the police and statutory partners continued to progress. The Hub model is working well, with multi agency safeguarding meeting happening in a timely manner.

6.11 **Integration (across service areas)**

All local authorities and partner agencies work together on safeguarding through the South-East Wales Safeguarding Children Board and Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board.

The development of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the Departmental safeguarding leads meetings helps ensure all departments within the Authority are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and are kept updated with any issues trends within safeguarding. Within Education this is further supplemented by the work of the Strategic Safer Schools Partnership Board and the termly meetings with Designated Safeguarding persons (DSP'S)

6.12 **Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions**

N/A

6.13 **Integrated Impact Assessment - EqIA**

N/A

6.14 **Monitoring Arrangements**

The Local Safeguarding Network Group is a subgroup of the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board and Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board. This group is made up of multi-agency representation from within Blaenau Gwent who monitor and reviews the safeguarding information and performance. This group has direct links with the Youth Forum to ensure the voice of the child is fully considered and heard on safeguarding issues.

The performance of both directorates is monitored throughout the financial year from April to March and reported to People Scrutiny Committee and in the context of Education is supplemented by various quality assurance activities that are routinely reported to Education DLT on a termly basis and seek to inform the ongoing self-evaluation and the priorities to be progressed in respect of Safeguarding in Education.

6.15 **Background Documents /Electronic Links**

Appendix 1 – BG Safeguarding Reporting Data Template Q1&Q2 2023-24 Final

Appendix 2 – BG Education Risk Register

The following hyperlink provides further details on the governance and Structure: www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk

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Safeguarding Performance Report

Social Services
1st April 2023 to
30th September 2023

Education
Summer Term 2023

Corporate Services
1st April 2023 to
30th September 2023



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council

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06

Corporate

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Purpose of the report

The council is committed to creating an environment which enables people to maximise their independence, develop solutions and take an active role in their communities whilst feeling safe and protected.

We believe that all children, adults and young people have the right to be safe from harm and it is a corporate objective to put effective safeguarding arrangements in place to protect people from harm.

We recognise our responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, and this includes the contribution we make to working together with other agencies so that all children and young people reach their full potential and we continue to look after the most vulnerable people in our communities.

The purpose of this report is to provide safeguarding information that is recorded and monitored to ensure that we are indeed delivering this objective.

Monitoring and reporting systems are well-developed to ensure the department is able to track information and evidences that the safeguarding agenda remains a priority for the local authority.

Performance information is collated from Social Services, Organisational Development and Education information systems which identifies activity, demands and trends of data. This includes a number of items that are statutory requirements as part of the Welsh Government Performance Framework.

The report includes information on the following:

- Referrals received and their outcomes
- Children who are being safeguarded and analysis
- Quality assurance arrangements with education settings
- Broader issues within education that impact upon safeguarding
- Corporate progress on recommended proposals for improvement
- DBS Compliance
- Safeguarding Corporate Risk Register

This report will be shared with Senior Management Teams and presented to the Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee for Social Services, Education and Active Living.

00 | Community Profile - Demographics

Community Profile

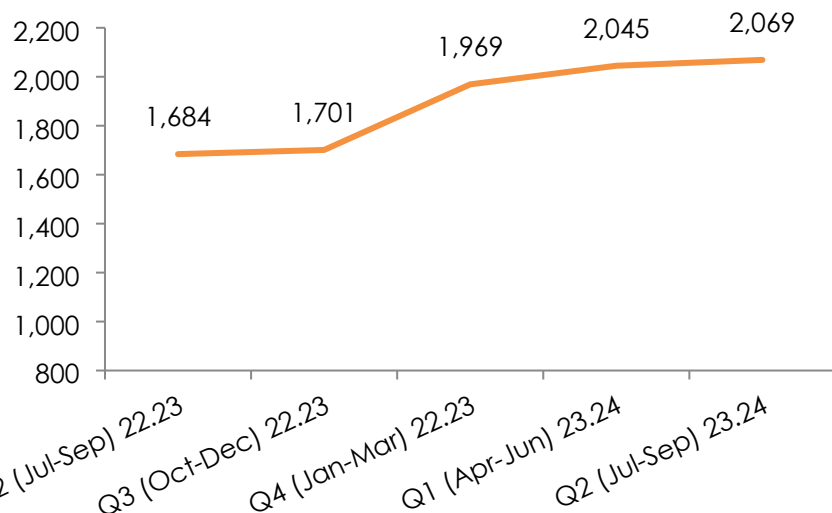


- 45% of Blaenau Gwent's local areas are amongst the top 20% deprived areas in Wales. (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019)
- The proportion of benefit claimants amongst people of working age was higher in Blaenau Gwent than the proportion across the comparable authorities (working-age client group

– key benefit claimants November 2016 – 20.3% in Blaenau Gwent compared to all Wales level of 14.4%)

- The total rate of Blaenau Gwent's recorded offence levels was higher than comparative areas. For the year ending December 2014 Police recorded crimes - 76.89 crimes per thousand population in Blaenau Gwent compared to its most similar group of areas average (as defined by the Home Office) of 69.03 per thousand population.
- Total Population: **66,905** Number of 0 – 17 year olds: **13,153** (2021 Census)
- Number of Open cases to Children's Social Services as at 31st December 20: **1,108**
- Number of pupils of primary age (inc. nursery): **6,124**
- Number of pupils of secondary age: **3,250**

Fig: 1.1 Number of referrals received by Social Services



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Fig 1.1a Number of individuals linked to referrals

	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23
Referrals	600	725	521	725	799	669	634	766
No of Individuals	526	629	451	600	681	584	535	665
2+ Referrals	53	84	55	68	87	77	69	75
Highest No. of Referrals for an individual	5	4	5	13	6	3	6	6

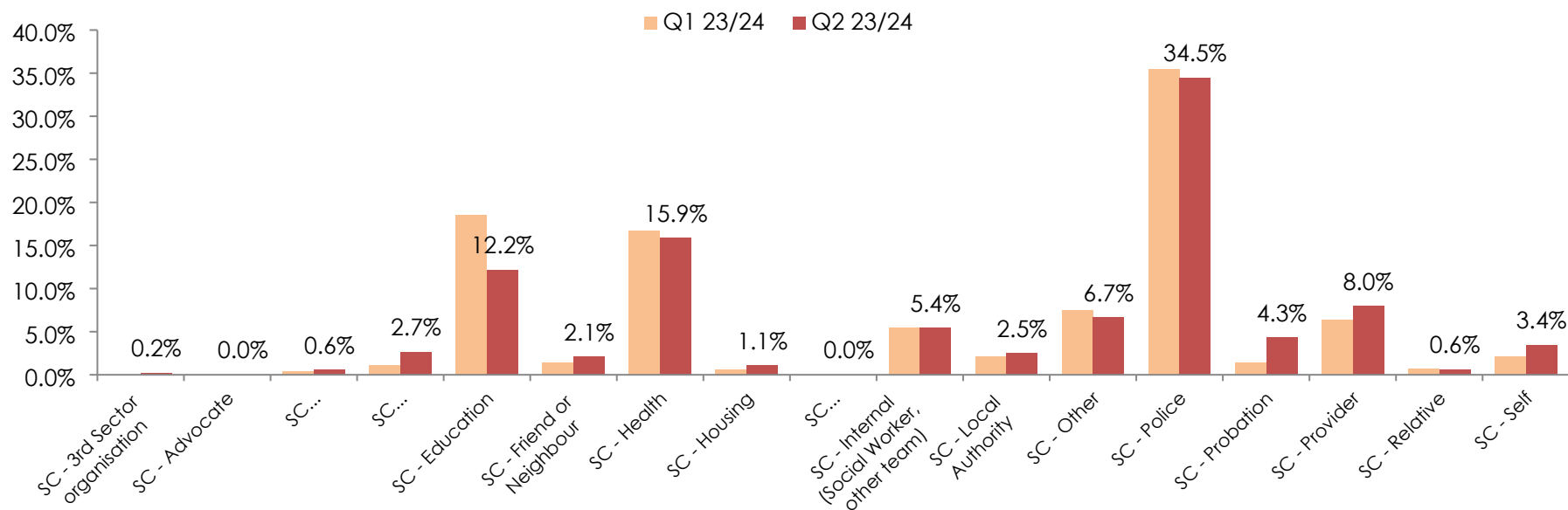
Fig: 1.2 Number and Percentage of Referrals by Source (Q1 & Q2*)

	Q1 23/24		Q2 23/24	
	No.	%	No.	%
SC - 3rd Sector organisation	0	-	4	0.2%
SC - Advocate	0	-	0	-
SC - Ambulance Service	7	0.3%	12	0.6%
SC - Early Intervention / Prevention Service (Step-up)	23	1.1%	55	2.7%
SC - Education	379	18.5%	252	12.2%
SC - Friend or Neighbour	28	1.4%	43	2.1%
SC - Health	342	16.7%	328	15.9%
SC - Housing	12	0.6%	22	1.1%
SC - Independent Hospital	0	-	0	-
SC - Internal (Social Worker, other team)	112	5.5%	112	5.4%
SC - Local Authority	44	2.2%	52	2.5%
SC - Other	154	7.5%	138	6.7%
SC - Police	725	35.5%	713	34.5%
SC - Probation	29	1.4%	89	4.3%
SC - Provider	131	6.4%	165	8.0%
SC - Relative	15	0.7%	13	0.6%
SC - Self	44	2.2%	71	3.4%
Total	2,045	100%	2,069	100%

*The table is only showing 2 quarters as the reporting categories for this data item have changed.

01 | Children's Social Services

Graph showing the source of referrals and the percentage



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Fig: 1.3 Multi-agency referral forms (MARF's) received on open cases

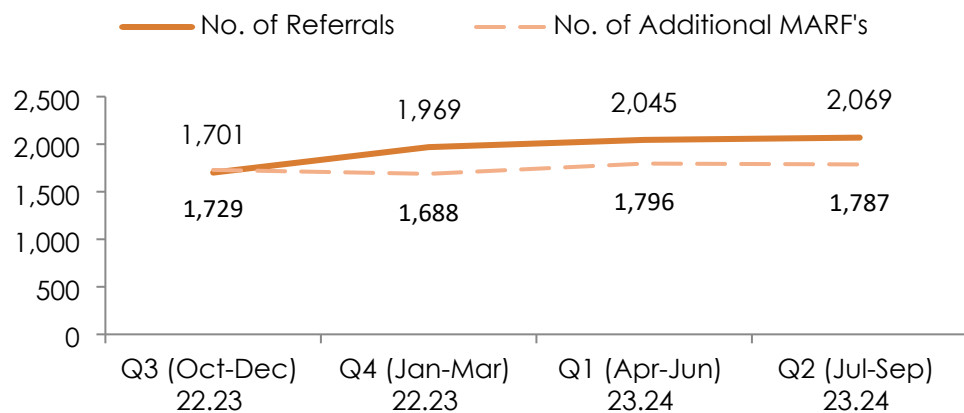


Fig 2.1 Children on the Child Protection Register

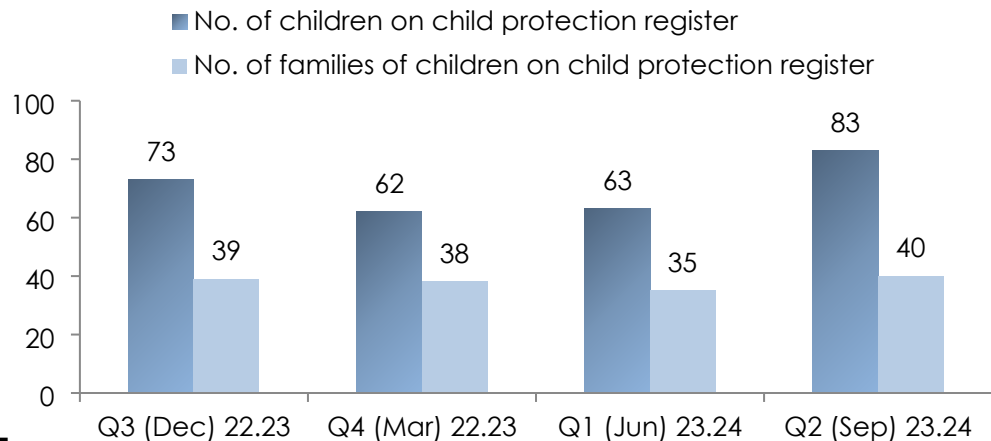
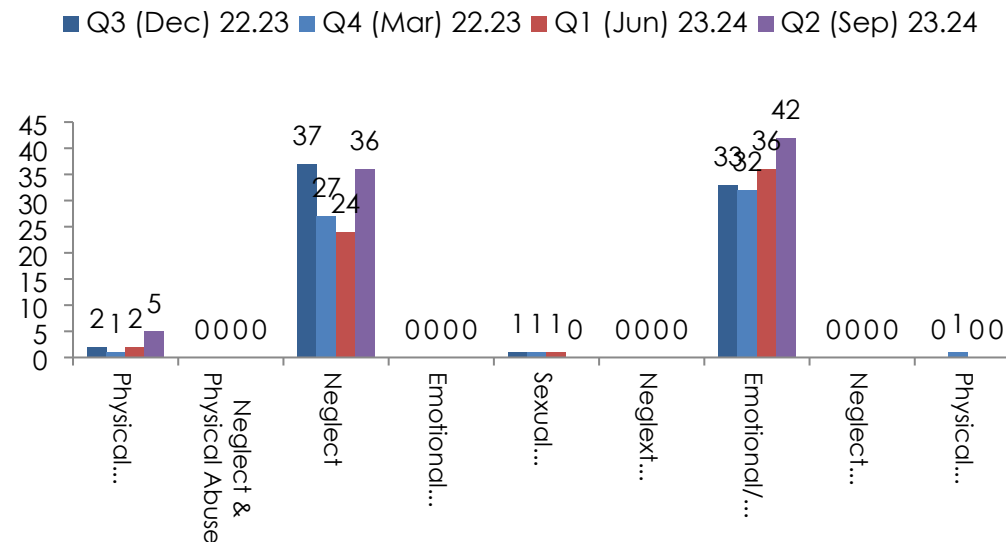


Fig 2.3 Categories of abuse



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Fig 2.2 Child Protection Register Summary

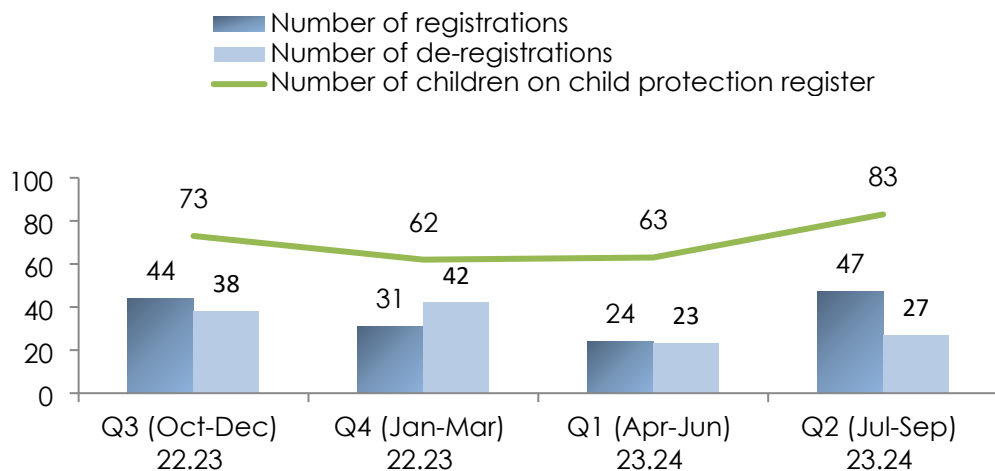
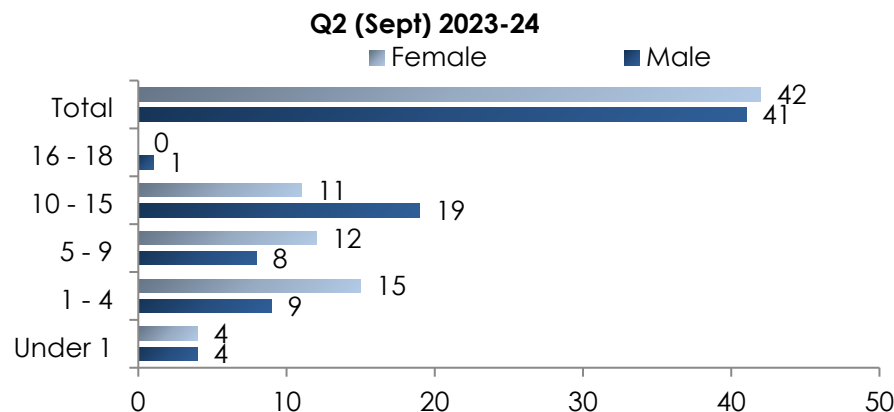


Fig 2.4 Age Breakdown of children on child protection register



03 | Adult Services

Fig 3.1 Adults suspected of being at risk

Number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk received during the quarter 2023/24	1/4/23-30/6/23 (Q1)	194	1/7/23-30/9/23 (Q2)	182
Number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk received during 2022/23	1/4/22-30/6/22 (Q1)	139	1/7/22-30/9/22 (Q2)	157

Fig 3.2 Categories of abuse or neglect

Category of Abuse	Gender	Age 18-64	Age – 65 and over	Age 18-64	Age – 65 and over	Age 18-64	Age – 65 and over	Age 18-64	Age – 65 and over
		1/4/23-30/6/23 (Q1)	1/4/23-30/6/23 (Q1)	1/4/22-30/6/22 (Q1)	1/4/22-30/6/22 (Q1)	1/7/23-30/9/23 (Q2)	1/7/23-30/9/23 (Q2)	1/7/22-30/9/22 (Q2)	1/7/22-30/9/22 (Q2)
Physical	Male	8	8	3	4	4	8	6	6
	Female	10	21	8	17	16	29	9	19
	Transgender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual	Male	3	1	0	0	2	2	0	0
	Female	5	0	2	1	2	1	2	2
	Transgender	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Emotional/Psychological	Male	4	2	1	3	4	6	7	7
	Female	12	7	6	4	9	6	3	7
	Transgender	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Financial	Male	2	5	1	3	2	4	2	7
	Female	1	5	3	6	5	7	7	9
	Transgender	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Neglect	Male	7	28	7	15	8	19	6	16
	Female	9	54	7	48	5	42	12	30
	Transgender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	Male	24	44	12	25	20	39	21	36
	Female	37	87	26	76	37	85	33	67
	Transgender	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
	Total	63	131	38	101	58	124	54	103

Fig 3.3 Place alleged abuse/neglect took place

Place alleged abuse or neglect occurred	Total	Total	Total	Total
	1/4/23-30/6/23 (Q1)	1/4/22-30/6/22 (Q1)	1/7/23-30/9/23 (Q2)	1/7/22-30/9/22 (Q2)
Own Home	76	48	70	65
Community	13	13	9	13
Care Home Setting	93	70	91	70
Health Setting	12	8	12	9
Other	0	0	0	0
Total	194	139	182	157

Fig 3.5 Source of Referral

Source of Referral	Total	Total	Total	Total
	1/4/23-30/6/23 (Q1)	1/4/22-30/6/22 (Q1)	1/7/23-30/9/23 (Q2)	1/7/22-30/9/22 (Q2)
Self-reported	7	2	8	3
Relative / friend	4	5	10	3
Local authority	10	11	15	6
Police	7	3	5	4
Local health board	37	14	27	22
Independent hospital	0	2	0	1
Ambulance service	9	3	3	3
Care regulator	6	0	3	0
Provider agency	80	57	80	66
Probation	0	0	1	0
Third sector	10	4	9	3
Advocate	0	0	0	0
Education	0	2	0	0
Housing	3	4	2	10
Internal (Social Worker, Other Team)	17	17	9	26
Other	4	15	10	10
Total	194	139	182	157

Fig 3.4 Person alleged responsible

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Person alleged responsible	Total	Total	Total	Total
	1/4/23-30/6/23 (Q1)	1/4/22-30/6/22 (Q1)	1/7/23-30/9/23 (Q2)	1/7/22-30/9/22 (Q2)
A spouse	10	8	13	6
A son or daughter	11	6	17	9
A family member who is not a child or spouse	7	10	7	3
A professional	35	26	19	28
A volunteer or unpaid worker	0	0	0	0
A friend	2	1	4	3
A neighbour	2	2	7	8
Another service user	19	3	16	11
Other Person	8	3	7	8
Not known	100	80	92	81
Total	194	139	182	157

Fig 3.6 Domestic abuse referrals

	Age 18-64	Age – 65 and over	Age 18-64	Age – 65 and over	Age 18-64	Age – 65 and over	Age 18-64	Age – 65 and over
	1/4/23-30/6/23 (Q1)	1/4/23-30/6/23 (Q1)	1/4/22-30/6/22 (Q1)	1/4/22-30/6/22 (Q1)	1/7/23-30/9/23 (Q2)	1/7/23-30/9/23 (Q2)	1/7/22-30/9/22 (Q2)	1/7/22-30/9/22 (Q2)
Male	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	1
Female	8	4	5	0	11	2	1	2

* Please note that information recorded for Domestic abuse referrals doesn't get recorded until case closure.

04 | Referrals from Education

Fig 4.1 Contacts by Source – Primary School

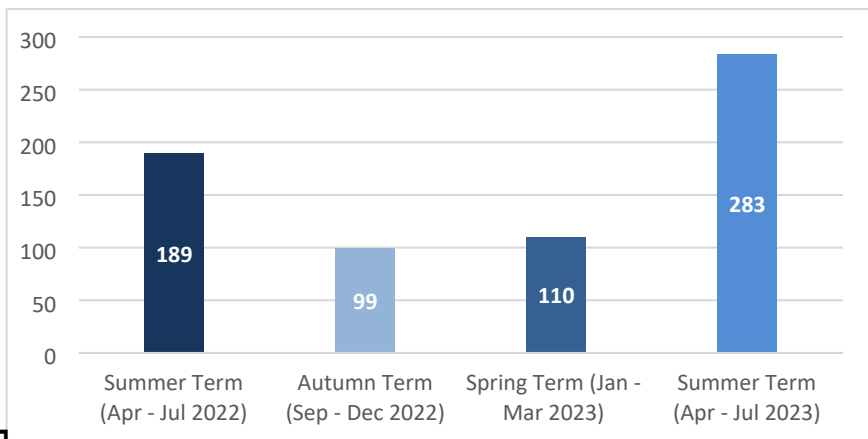
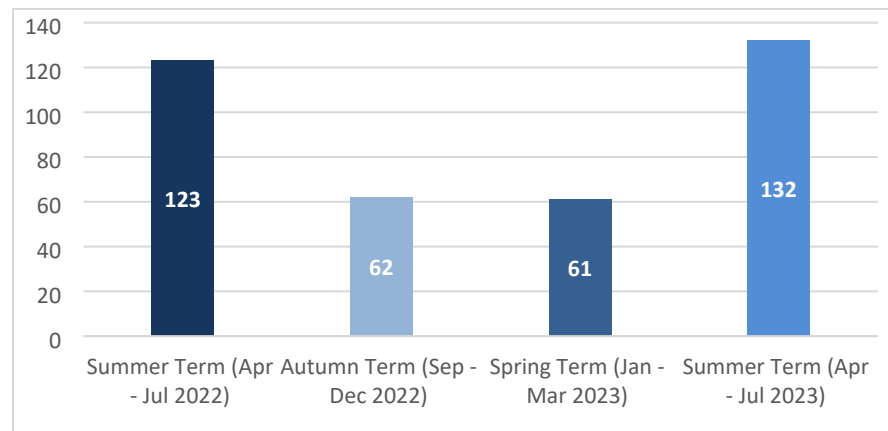


Fig 4.2 Contacts by Source – Secondary School



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Fig 4.3 Contacts by Source - Other

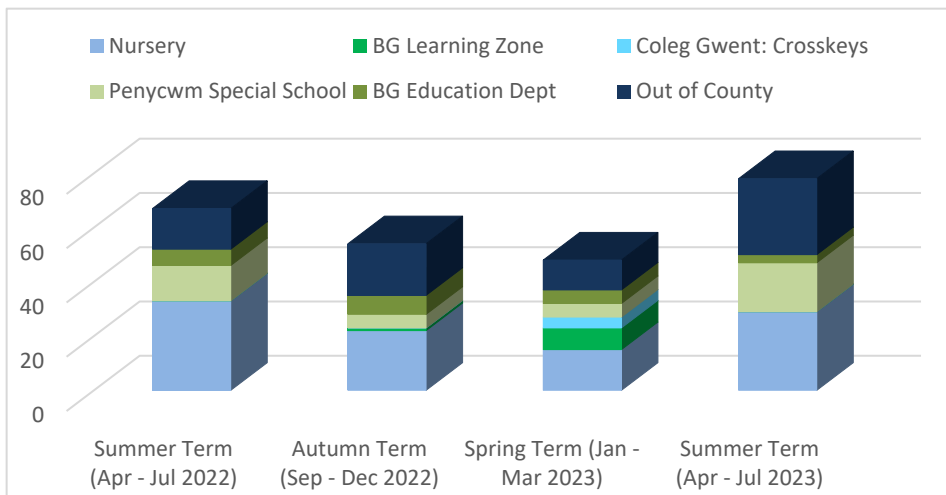
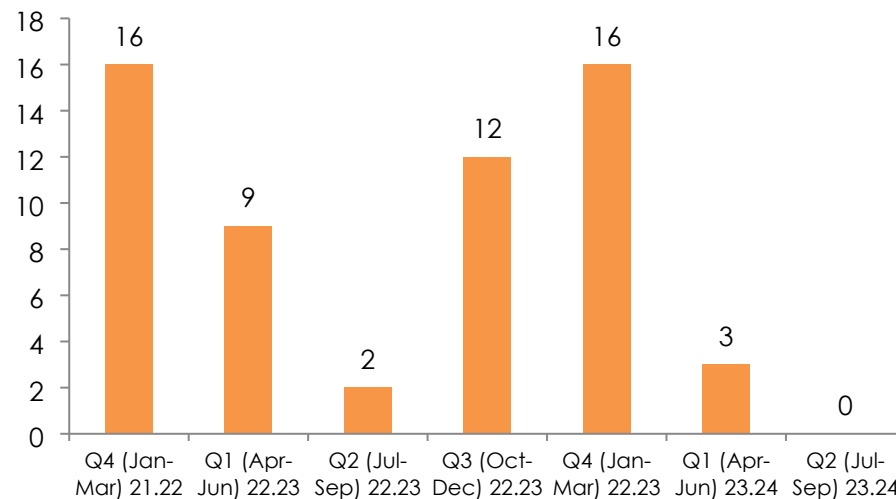


Fig: 4.4 Referrals received from Youth Services



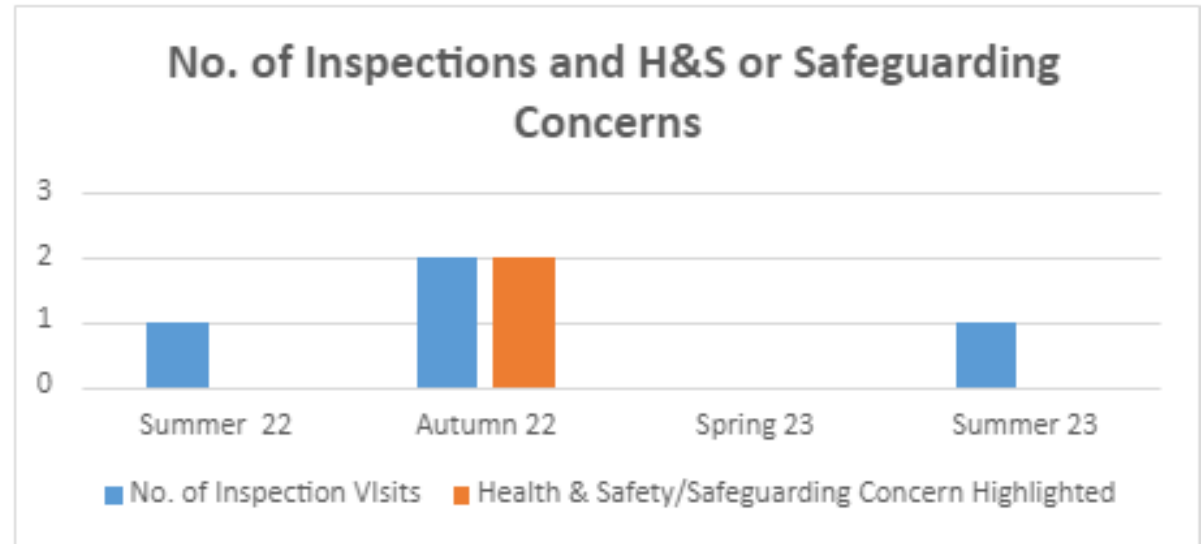
1. Regulatory

1.1 Education Directorate Risk - **Education Risk Register is a separate appendix.**

1.2 Estyn

1.2.1 The table below provides an overview of the number of Estyn inspections conducted and associated Health & Safety/Safeguarding concerns highlighted.

No of School Inspected	No. of Inspection Visits	Health & Safety/Safeguarding Concern Highlighted
Summer 22	1	0
Autumn 22	2	2
Spring 23	0	0
Summer 23	1	0



1.3 Policy

1.3.1 Compliance Statements

Partner Agency Safeguarding Policies in Place	Ac Year 21-22	Ac Year 22-23
No of Partner Agencies	4	4
Policies in Place	4	4
% Compliance	100%	100%

1.3.2 Safeguarding Policies released and Governing Body Compliance

Safeguarding Policy Compliance	21-22	22-23
No of Schools in BG	25	25
Governing Body Compliance	25	23
% Compliance	100%	92%

August 2023- All schools have a Safeguarding policy. 92% are recorded as having adopted the 2022-23 version by the end of the Summer term 2023.

2. Systems/Quality Assurance

2.1 My Concern

2.1.1 Safeguarding Systems in Use

Safeguarding System	Term	No. of Schools Using	% of Schools Using
My Concern	Autumn 22	22	81%
	Spring 23	24	96%
	Summer 23	24	96%

2.2 Keeping Learners Safe audit tool

2.2.1 School Assessment of 5 Key Areas

	21-22	22-23
No of Schools in BG	25	25
No of Schools who have used the KLS Safeguarding Toolkit to review procedures in the last 12 months?	25	25
% of Schools who have Reviewed	100%	100%

3. Independent Settings

3.1 Pupils in Out of County Placements - LA and Independent Settings

3.1.1 – Out of County Placements

	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	Autumn 2022	Spring 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
LA	15	15	9	9	11	11
Independent	18	18	10	11	16	16

3.1.2 Overview of Safeguarding arrangements.

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May 2023 - there is a BG SG QA process for OOC settings which includes open source search, review of Estyn reports, safeguarding policy and QA visit information.

This process is implemented for Independent Specialist Provision and there is a spreadsheet that captures all data. This is reviewed prior to the placement of any learner.

Safeguarding in Education Manager works collaboratively with counterparts in other LAs where BG are placing learners in LA schools out of area to ensure the safeguarding/quality of provision.

3.2 Education Workforce Council (EWC) Registrations

3.2.1 EWC Registrations on Appointment

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
No. of Incomplete EWC Registrations	5	0	0	1	2	2

4. Safe Workforce

4.1 DBS Position Statement: **Data as at Q1 – This data is no longer available**

4.1.1 New Starter/Rolling Programme DBS Checks Schools

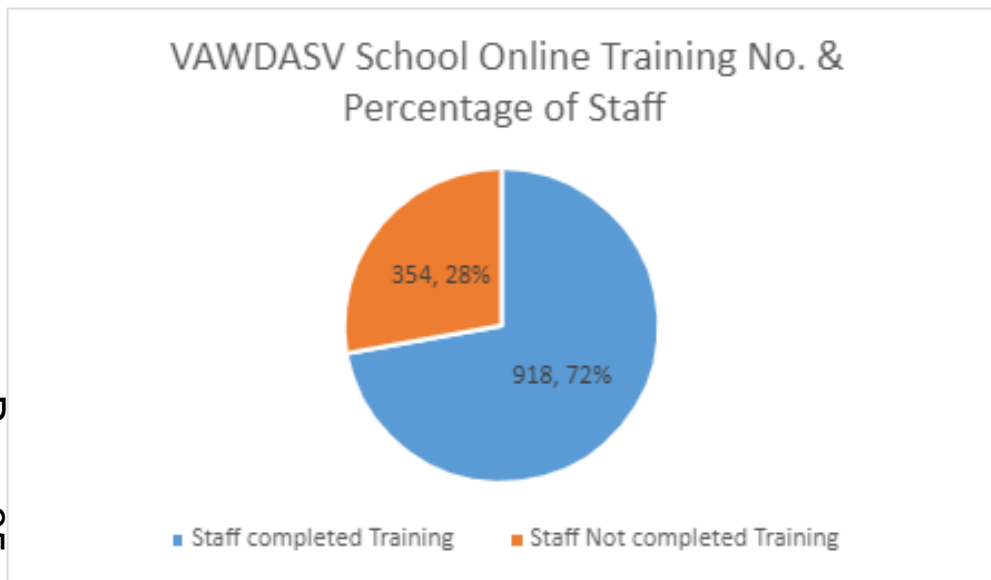
Criteria	Total
Staff requiring a DBS	1263
Staff with a valid DBS	1262

Out of Compliance	Less than 4 weeks		More than 3 months	Total
New Starters currently out of compliance	0		0	0
Rolling Programme currently out of compliance	0		1	1
Totals	0		1	1

Appt Comments	Awaiting Certificate		Total	Escalation	
				Chased with Employee	Escalation to Operational Team
Awaiting ID documents	0		1	0	1
	0		1	0	1

4.2 Training

4.2.1 Basic/Enhanced VAWDA SV



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4.2.4 Online Safeguarding Training – Schools

All schools are compliant with their whole school safeguarding training (delivered in person).

Online Safeguarding Training	Q3 2022-23	Q4 2022-23	Q1 2023-24	Q2 2023-24
Staff completed Training	244	256	242	244
Staff Not completed Training	1,010	998	1030	1028
Total Staff	1,254	1,254	1,272	1,272

4.2.2 Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSP) Meetings

DSP Meetings	Aut 21	Spr 22	Sum 22	Aut 22	Spr 23	Sum 23
No of Schools Represented	16	17	16	no mtg	16	12
% of School represented	64%	68%	64%	N/A	64%	48%

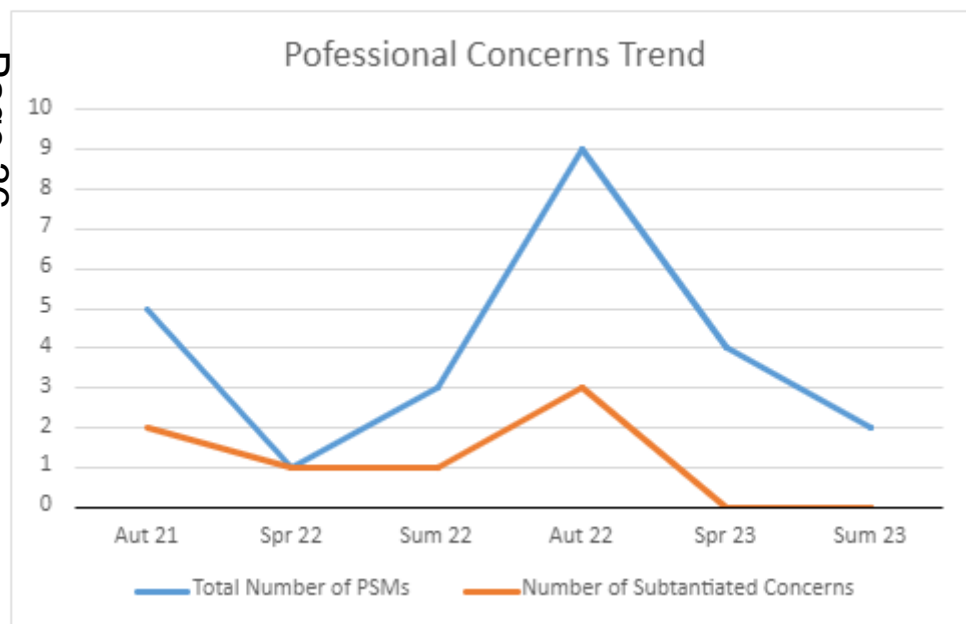
4.3 Professional Concerns

4.3.1 Professional Concerns Review

Professional Strat Meetings	Aut21	Spr 22	Sum22	Aut 22	Spr 23	Sum 23
Total Number of PSMs	5	1	3	9	4	2
Number of Substantiated Concerns	2	1	1	3	0	0 (1 concern ongoing)

4.3.2 Professional Concerns Trend

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5. Vulnerable Children and Specific Incidents

5.1 Pregnant Schoolchildren

5.1.1 Numbers by Academic Year

No. by Academic Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
No. of Pregnant Schoolchildren*	1	1	2	1

*As numbers are so small, there are too few to report termly.

5.2 Electively Home Educated Pupils

5.2.1 Total Number of EHE Pupils

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	PLASC January 2023 No.	PLASC January 2022 No.	PLASC January 2021 No.	PLASC January 2020 No.
Children electively home educated in BG	214	132	89	70
Children electively home educated in Wales	242	197	180	132

5.2.2 The table below sets out the number of secondary age pupils who have become EHE or who have returned to school from being EHE during the summer, autumn, spring and summer terms.

Month	School 1		School 2		School 3		School 4	
	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In
Sept - Dec 2021	4		5	1	6		3	
Jan - Mar 2022	7	2	1		4		0	
Apr - Jul 2022	2	0	5	0	3	0	2	0
Sep - Dec 2022	3	2	6	6	3	4	5	4
Jan - Mar 2023	1	1	0	1	3	0	3	0
Apr - Jul 2023	2	0	5	0	4	0	3	0
Total	19	5	22	8	23	4	16	4

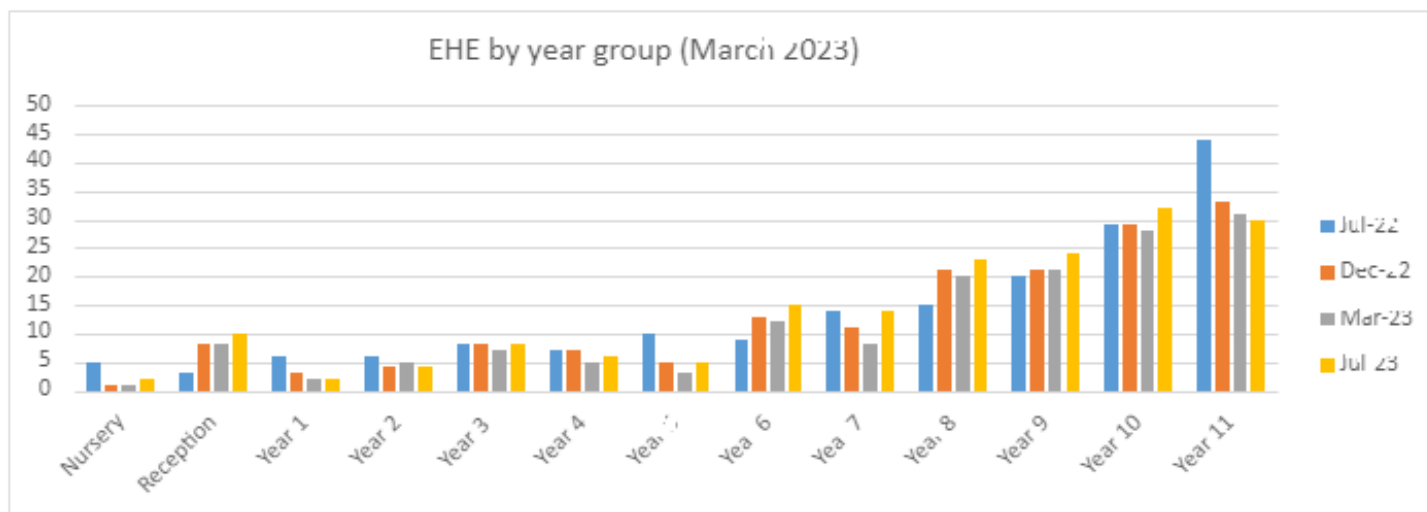
05 | Education

5.2.3 The table below sets out the number of additional pupils who have become EHE or who have returned to school from being EHE during the summer, autumn, spring and summer terms.

Month	Primary		College		Did not transition		Moved into/out of Borough (including BG pupils that were in OOC schools)		School place unavailable		Special School	
	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In
Sept - Dec 2021	5	9			1		11				1	
Jan - Mar 2022	2	2					7				1	
Apr - Jul 2022	7	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0
Sep - Dec 2022	4	9	0	1	2	1	11	1	0	0	0	0
Jan - Mar 2023	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Apr - Jul 2023	9	2	0	0	0	0	7	0	1	0	0	0
Total	30	24	0	1	3	1	43	1	1	0	2	0

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5.2.4 EHE Breakdown per year group



*Please note that all year 11 pupils are removed on the last Friday of June when they end compulsory school education.

5.3 Children Missing in Education

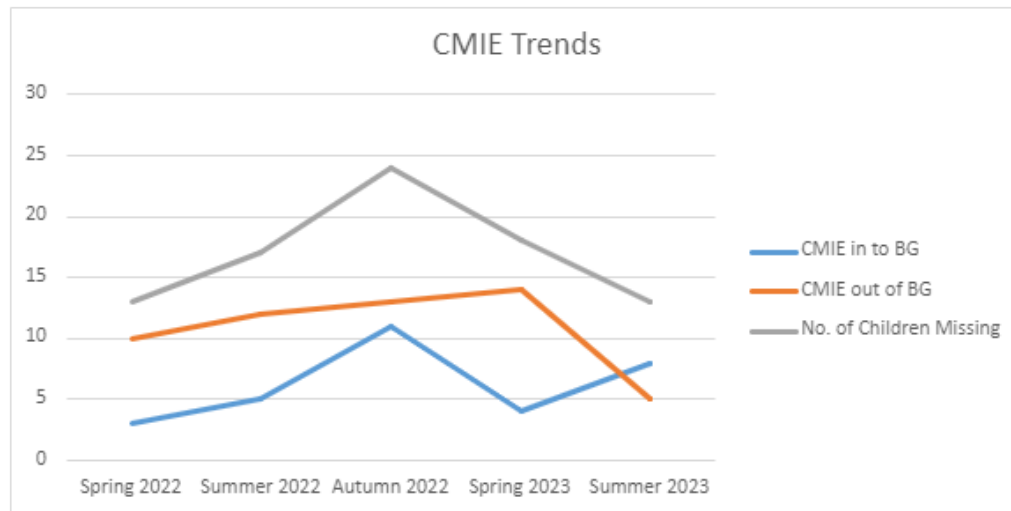
5.3.1 Referrals from other LAs

No. of CMIE Referrals	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
CMIE in to BG	3	3	5	11	4	8
CMIE out of BG	11	10	12	13	14	5

5.3.2 Number of Children Missing

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
No. of Children Missing	14	13	17	24	18	13

5.3.3 CMIE Trends



5.4 Youth Offending Referrals

5.4.1 Number of children accessing the Service

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
No of Schoolchildren accessing YOS	23	34	32	18	31	30

5.4.2 YOS pupil Placement by Setting and Access

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
Access						
FT	14	34	30	6	23	24
PT	3	0	3	3	4	6
Setting						
EHE	0	0	0	0	0	0
Special Schools	5	9	5	0	4	5
Mainstream - Primary	1	4	4	0	3	2
Mainstream - Secondary	11	21	23	8	20	23
Secure Unit				1	0	0
Employed	3	0	0	1	2	0
College				3	0	0
NEET	3	0	0	4	1	0
Training Provider				1	1	0

05 | Education

5.4.4 REACH Interventions

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
Prevention Programme	5	16	19	1	11	16
Community Resolution	12	13	10	10	10	3
Youth Caution	0	1	0	01	0	1
Youth Conditional Caution	1	2	1	0	0	0
Referral Order	2	2	2	1	0	2
Youth Rehabilitation Order	2	0	0	2	0	0
Remanded in Custody	1	0	0	1	0	0
Detained	0	0	0	0	0	0
Outcome 22	0	0	0	2	10	6
Turnaround	0	0	0	0	0	2

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5.5 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

Data recorded in Quarters due to the team working through the summer.

	Q2	Q2	Q2	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2	Q2
	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	23-24	22-23	23-24	23-24	23-24	23-24
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
No. of Schoolchildren Identified and Managed through CS Team	16	13	29	7	3	10	2	2	4	18	7	25	12	2	14

5.5.1 Number, Age and Gender of Children Identified and Managed through Community Safety Team

Age of Schoolchildren Identified and Managed through the CS Team	Q2	Q2	Q2	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2	24
	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	23-24	23-24	23-24	23-24	23-24	23-24
Primary Aged Pupils	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Secondary Pupils Aged 11-14 (KS3)	4	0	4	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
Secondary Pupils Aged 14-16 (KS4)	9	9	18	6	2	8	1	2	3	12	5	17	5	0	5
Total	3	4	7	1	1	2	0	0	0	5	2	7	6	2	8

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5.5.2 Types of ASB Incidents

Incident	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	23-24	23-24
Nuisance behaviour – part of a group	15	28	24	4	3	1	0	0	12	5
Setting fires – part of a group	2	7	0	6	4	4	0	0	0	0
Swearing	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Possession of alcohol	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Inappropriate use of electric scooter	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trespass in a derelict building	0	4	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
Verbally abusive	0	4	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	0
Shouting	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0
Criminal damage	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	0
Throwing/kicking objects at property	0	0	0	0	0	6	6	0	9	1
No. of Individuals	20	45	24	13	7	21	8	2	21	6

5.5.3 Warning Letters Issued

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	23-24	23-24
Advised by Police									5	0
Home Visit									16	4
Strike 1	19	43	24	13	6	19	6	2	0	2
Strike 2	1	2	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	0
Strike 3 (multi-agency ASB Case Management Group)	4	3	2	2	7	8	1	1	4	8
Strike 4 (multi-agency ASB Case Management Group)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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5.5.4 Cases by Agency to demonstrate Co-ordinated Intervention

Cases by Agency (involved in cases discussed at Strike 3 multi-agency meeting)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	23-24	23-24
Youth Offending Service	1	2	1	1	4	4	1	1	2	7
Social Services	0	2	1	1	6	5	1	1	2	8
Families First	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
CAMHS	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
Youth Services	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	2
Registered Social Landlord	0	3	0	2	3	4	0	0	2	5
NxtGen Project	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fire Intervention Service	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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5.5.5 EWO Involvement with schools of known to be involved in anti-social behaviour

Senior Education Welfare Officer is invited to Strike 3 and Strike 4 meetings for all school-aged pupils known to be involved in anti-social behaviour. Senior Education Welfare Officer participates and provides updates at each meeting and sends a copy of the notes and agreed actions to the relevant schools. In addition to the above Agencies, Education provide intervention and support on a case by case basis.

5.6 Child Employment

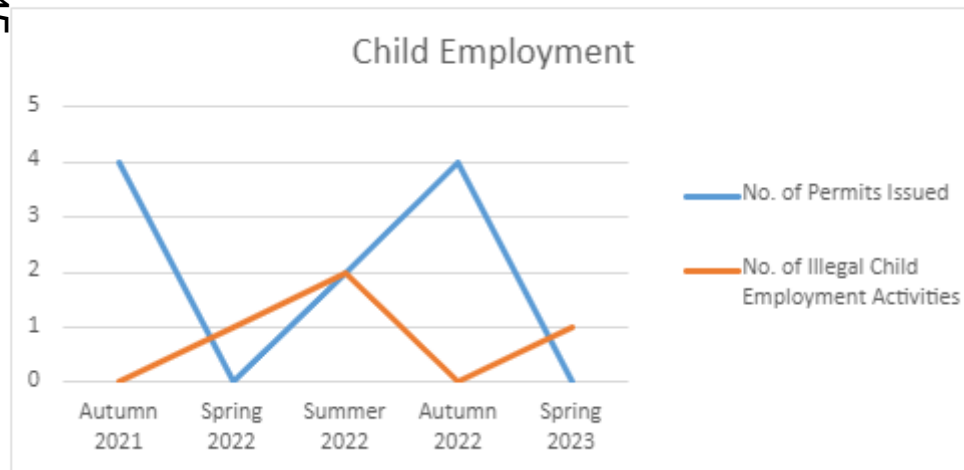
5.6.1 Number of Permits Issued

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
No. of Permits Issued	4	0	2	4	0	

5.6.2 Number of Investigations relating to Illegal Child Employment Activities

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
No. of Illegal Child Employment Activities	0	1	2	0	1	

5.6.3 Child Employment Trends



5.7 Child Performances

5.7.1 Number of Licences Issued to Children and Chaperones

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
No. of Licences Issues to Children and Chaperones	4	20	56	52	2	2
No of licences for chaperones	20	18	5	14	3	3
Body of persons approvals - group licences	10	6	7	2	6	4

5.7.2 Number of Chaperones attending Training

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
No. of Chaperones	20	18	5	14	3	0
No of Chaperones attending Training	29	24	15	20	8	0

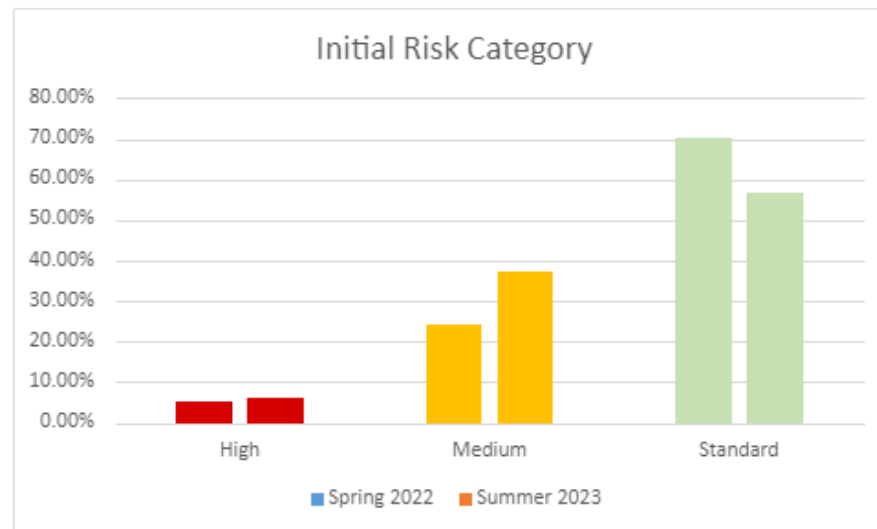
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5.8 Operation Encompass -

5.8.1 Number of Incidents in Period and Repeat Incidents

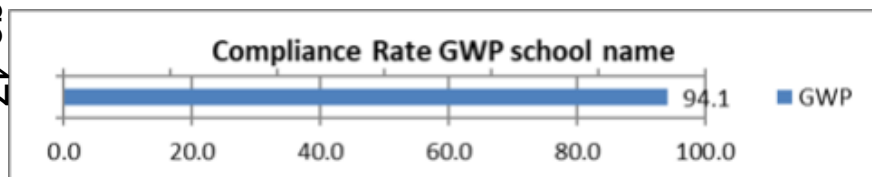
Term	Occurrences	CYP	Repeat Incidents
Autumn 2021	265	330	22.40%
Spring 2022	211	266	24.10%
Summer 2022	246	333	21%
Autumn 2022	282	299	unavailable
Spring 2023	182	218	unavailable
Summer 2023	156	333	23.1%

5.8.2 Risk Level



5.8.3 % Compliance by Police *

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5.8.4 Comparative Data

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
No. of Occurrences	265	296	141	265	211	246	282	182	156
No. of Children and Young People Involved	330	371	185	330	266	333	299	218	333
Average No. of CYP per Occurrence		1.25	1.31	1.25	1.26	1.35	unavailable	unavailable	2.1
% children present at incident							37.50%	31.60%	52.25%

- The recording of Operation Encompass incidents is now done by the LA, which will allow for more accurate reporting. Figures used for compliance rates may be higher than expected due to them only being available from July 2023.

5.9 Attendance

5.9.1 Primary and Secondary Attendance

	Autumn 2020	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
Primary Attendance	88.4	89.6	89.9	89.3	89.3	89.0	89.5	90.4	90.0
Secondary Attendance	84.3	83.0	84.8	85.3	85.3	84.8	85.9	85.8	85.4

5.9.2 Low Attendance and Implementation of Neglect Policy

	Autumn 2022	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
Fixed penalties	0	0	2	22	46	67
Single Justice Process	5	0	6	9	21	54
Court Notices	0	3	0	0	0	5

5.10 Exclusions

5.10.1 Exclusions by Setting and Type

	Summer 22			Autumn 22			Spring 23			Summer 23		
	Fixed	Average No. of Days	Permanent	No. Fixed	Average No. of Days	Permanent	Fixed	Average No. of Days	Permanent	Fixed	Average No. of Days	Permanent
Primary	25	2.4		42	2.1		39	2.1		44	2.8	
Secondary	193	1.4		404	1.4	2	402	1.4	1	369	1.2	1
Special	12	1.1		15	2.5		2	5.5		2	3	
Total	230	1.5		461	1.5		443	1.5		415	1.4	

5.10.2 Exclusions Linked to Bullying

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	Spring 22		Summer 22		Autumn 22		Spring 23		Summer 23	
	Fixed	Permanent	Fixed	Permanent	Fixed	Permanent	Fixed	Permanent	Fixed	Permanent
Primary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Secondary	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Special	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

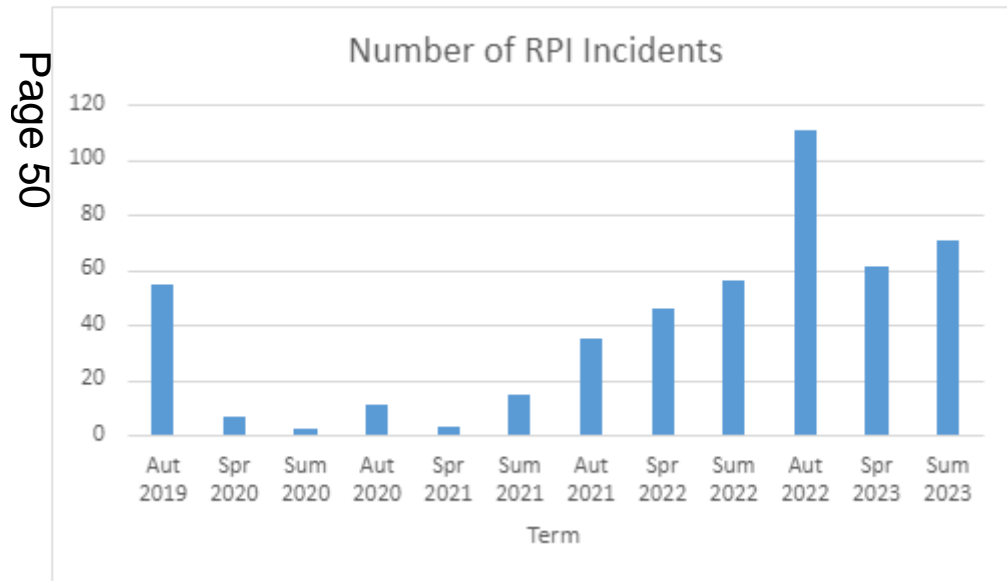
5.10.3 Pupils with Multiple Exclusions

No of Exclusions	Summer 22			Autumn 22			Spring 23			Summer 23		
	No. Pupils	No of Exclusions	Average No. of Days	No. Pupils	No of Exclusions	Average No. of Days	No. Pupils	No of Exclusions	Average No. of Days	No. Pupils	No of Exclusions	Average No. of Days
1	91	91	1.3	124	124	1.5	119	119	1.6	119	119	1.7
2	13	26	2.9	41	82	1.5	39	78	1.4	37	74	1.3
3	8	24	5.5	25	75	1.5	26	78	1.4	12	36	1.1
4	6	24	4.9	8	32	1.4	7	28	1.3	14	56	1.5
5	8	40	8.1	5	25	1.1	13	65	1.6	8	40	1.2
6+	4	25	10.4	17	123	1.5	10	74	1.7	13	90	1.2
Total	130	230	1.5	220	461	1.5	215	443	1.5	203	0	1.4

5.11.1 RPI Incidents

School	Aut 2022	Spr 2023	Sum 2023
1	14	6	7
2	96	55	62
3	1	0	0
4			2

5.11.2 RPI Trends



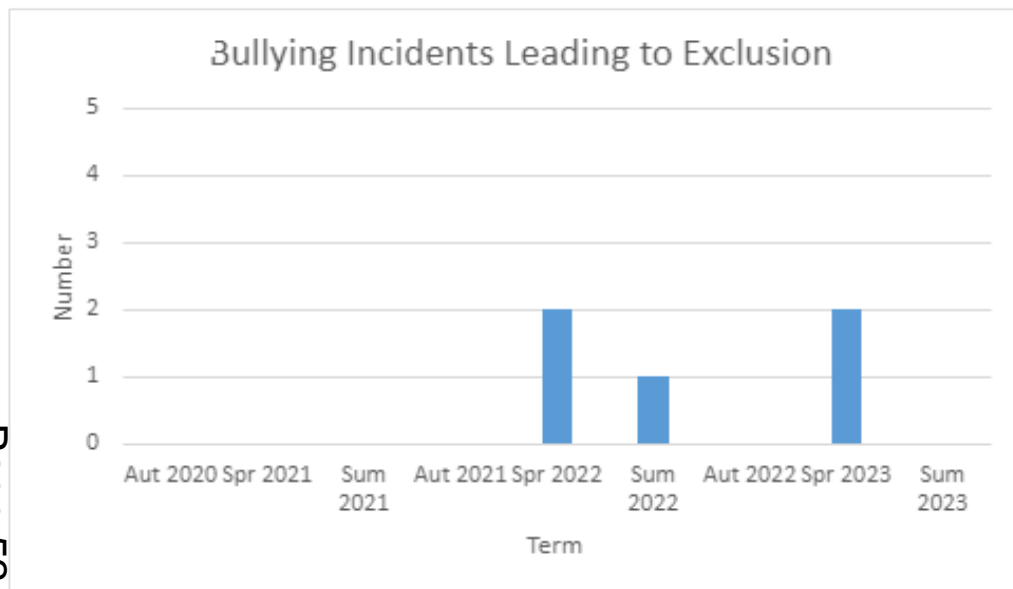
5.12 Racial Incidents

5.12.1 Racial Incidents in Period by Category and Setting

	Autum 22		Spring 23		Summer 23	
	No. Schools	No Incident.	No. Schools	No Incident.	No. Schools	No Incident.
Age						
Learners with a disability	1	1				
Homophobic/ biphobic	2	4				
Sexist or sexual bullying	1	1				
Racism Anti - Gypsium	0	0				
Racism Anti- refugee prejudice	0	0				
Racism Anti- Semitism	0	0				
Racism - appearance	7	27	2	13	5	11
Total	11	33	2	13	5	11

5.13 Bullying Incidents

5.13.1 Bullying incidents leading to exclusion



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5.13.2 Rights Respect Equalities Return bullying incidents

Rights Respect Equalities Return	
No of Schools submitting	16
No of incidents	19
No of Pupils involved	19

Data for the spring term is incomplete due to ASOS with only 7 schools returning

5.14 Safer Schools

5.14.1 Number of Safer Schools Tactical Meetings called under the Crime & Disorder Act

	Sum 22	Aut 22	Spr 23	Sum 23
No. of Safer Schools Strategic Partnership Board Meetings	1	0	0	0
No. of Safer Schools Partnership Meetings	1	0	0	0

5.14.2 Number of Incidents in the Community

Types of Community Safety Issues requiring a SSPM	Sum 22	Aut 22	Spr 23	Sum 23
Damage	0	0	0	0
Threat to Staff	0	0	0	0
Knife Crime	0	0	0	0

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5.14.3 Issues that hit the trigger for Safer Schools e.g. Criminal Exploitation, Violence, Threat to kill/of serious harm, Use of weapons

Issue	Sum 22	Aut 22	Spr 23	Sum 23
Arson				
Criminal Exploitation	0	0	0	
Violence	1	0	0	
Threat of Serious Harm	0	0	0	
Threat to Kill	0	0	0	
Use of Weapons	0	0	0	

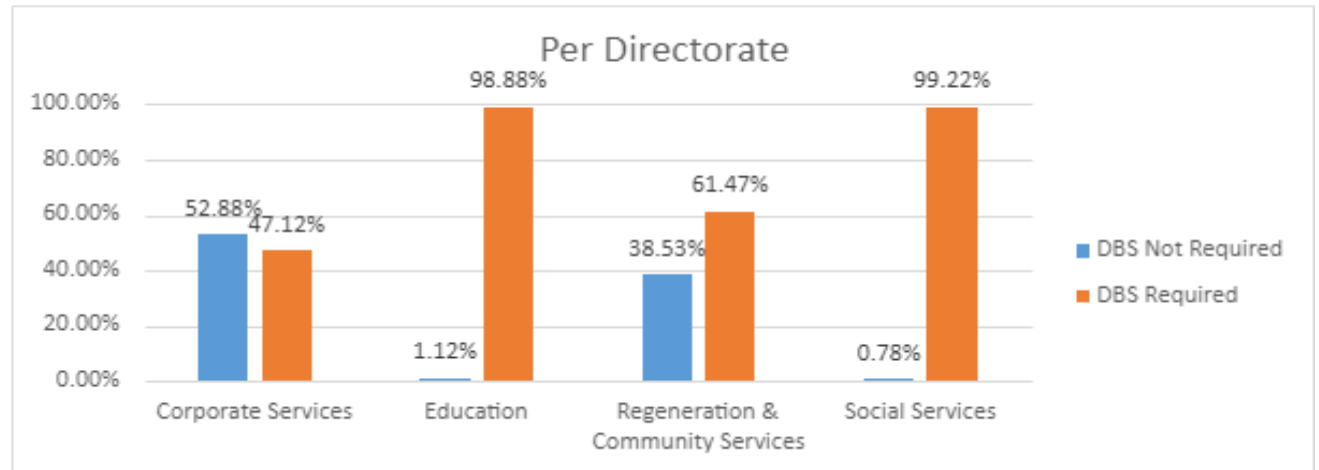
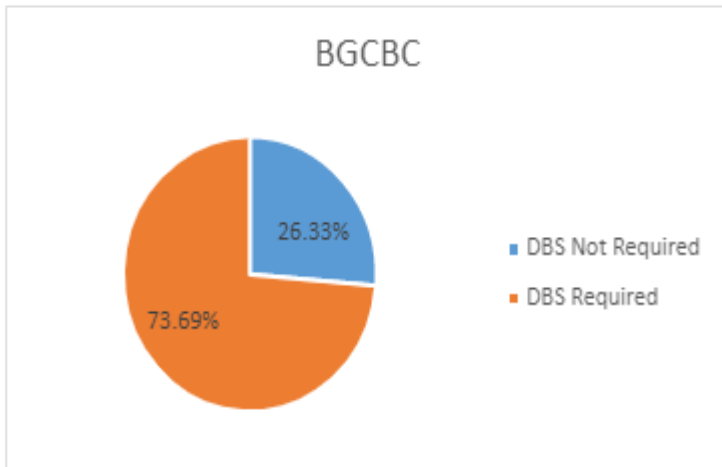
6.1 DBS Compliance

Managers are required to identify the requirement of a DBS check utilising the eligibility criteria, all DBS checks are renewed on a 3 yearly basis. Organisational Development co-ordinates this DBS process for new starters and 3 yearly rolling programme along with monitoring the compliance of these checks and we have formal escalation processes in place. The updates on the compliance with DBS are provided annually to Corporate Leadership Team but monitoring and escalation continues on a regular basis.

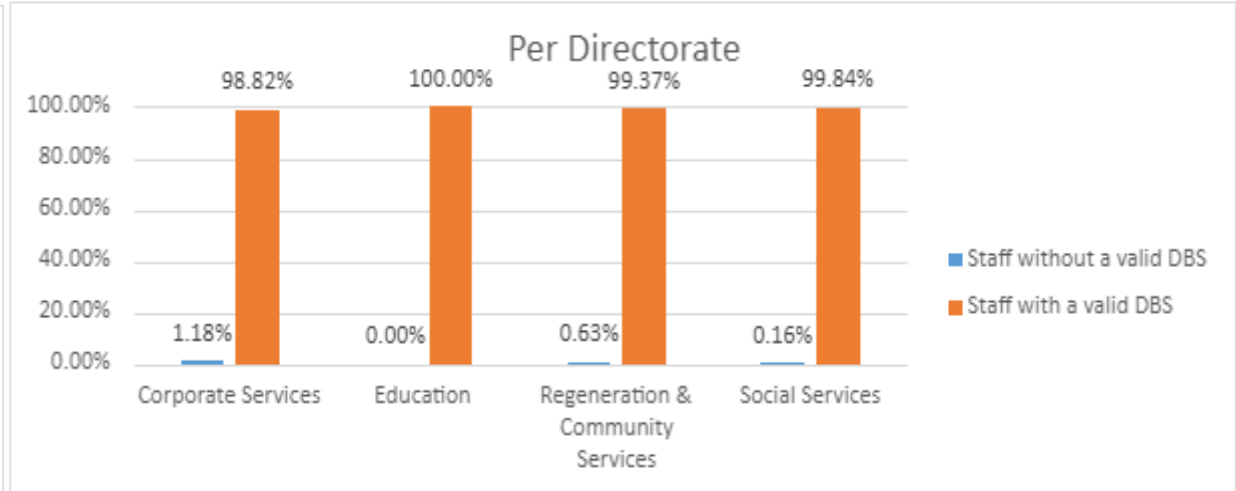
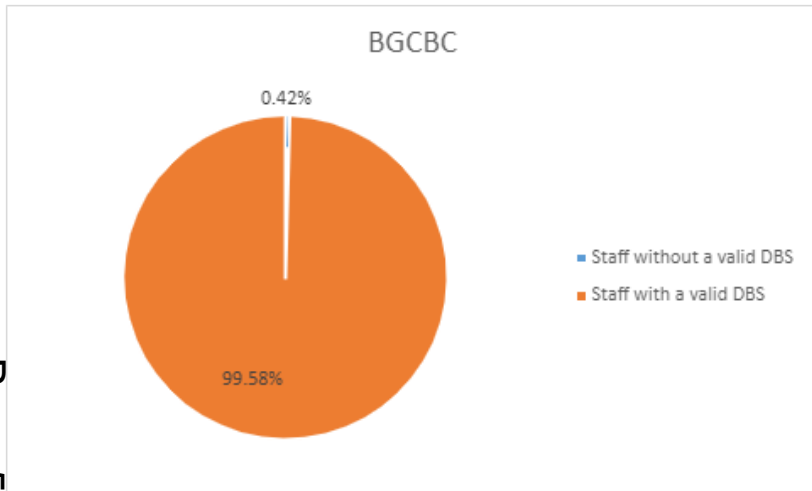
The latest submission to CLT was in May 2023 and is shown below:

6.1.1 Position Statement: Breakdown of Positions that require a DBS Check as at 31st March 2023

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6.1.2 Breakdown of those employees in compliance with DBS requirements as at 31st March 2023



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Escalation Process

Employees and Managers receive automated e-mails from the DBS system reminding that the process has not been completed.

Operational Teams receive fortnightly reports of all DBS applications currently in progress to enable Safeguarding escalation where required

6.2 VAWDASV Corporate Training Online

Corporate Training

Domestic abuse Training

Corporate training has been provided to staff in respect of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence with **58%** of staff having **completed** the **VAWDAS online training**.

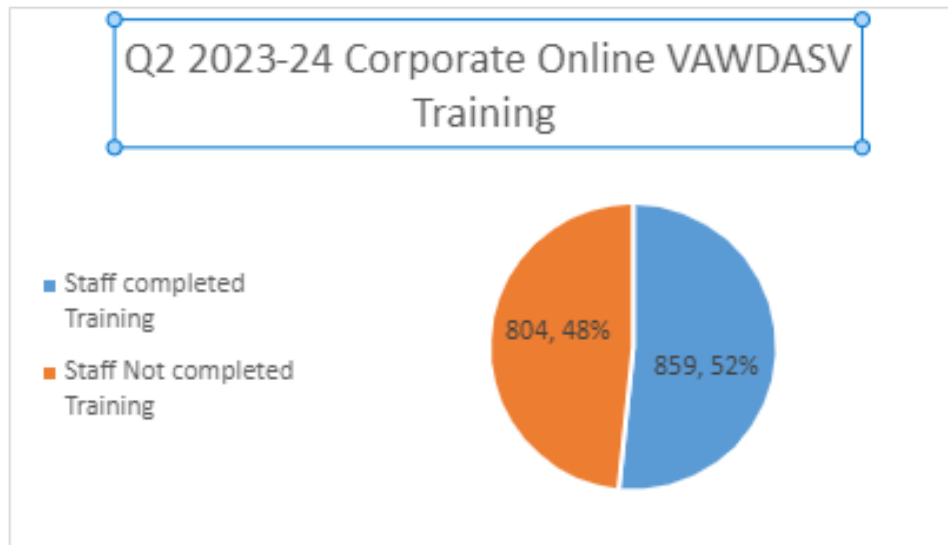
All Wales Safeguarding Training on line for staff

Online Safeguarding training was included in the online corporate induction module in 2019.

In terms of the wider workforce a suitable module is currently being evaluated by the corporate Safeguarding group which has been delayed due to the impact of the pandemic.

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6.2.1 VAWDASV Corporate




6.2.2 Safeguarding Training



6.3 Risk Register



6.3.1 Corporate Risk Register CRR4 – Q2 Update

Risk Reference CRR4 Risk Description: Safeguarding - Failure to ensure adequate safeguarding arrangements are in place for vulnerable people in Blaenau Gwent Risk Owner - Corporate Leadership Team / Interim Director of Social Services Portfolio holder: Councillor Hayden Trollope Risk Updater: Interim Director of Social Services / Director of Education / Strategic Safeguarding Leads Group							Direction of Travel No change 					
Triggers	Consequences	Inherent Risk			Current Controls	Residual Risk			Proposed further controls to mitigate / reduce risk	Target Score		
		Likelihood	Impact	Status		Likelihood	Impact	Status		L x I = Score		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is inadequate assessments and monitoring If there is a lack of documentation If there are increasing referrals for services If there is a lack of appropriate guidance and training If there is poor communication between all parties (internal / external) If there is a high turnover of staff and difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff. *If there are increased levels of sickness in key areas. Failure to recognise that all staff have a duty to report abuse, harm or neglect. Lack of appropriate guidance and training on safeguarding Failure to progress the corporate safeguarding action plan via the corporate safeguarding leads group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential significant harm / loss of life Long term reputational damage and confidence in the Council undermined Increase in complaints / Potential litigation / prosecution External intervention Increased pressure on budgets Low staff morale 	3	4	Critical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Social Services and Education Scrutiny established (PEOPLE scrutiny committee) Education Designated Lead and Deputy Officer nominated Education Safeguarding Officer established and in post Gwent Adult Safeguarding Board SE Wales Safeguarding Children's Board Safeguarding is a standing item on CMT agenda Lead Executive Member has been identified for having responsibility for safeguarding Senior leadership have received Level 1 safeguarding training. Programme of training for schools underway. Corporate safeguarding leads established for each directorate who have been requested to identify staff for Level 1 training (3 dates have already been set) Safeguarding in Education matrix regularly updated Use of MyConcern software in schools will be used to gather data, monitor positive cases and create consistency across the school estate. The roll-out project team is fully established. A corporate safeguarding leads group has been established to drive forward the safeguarding agenda and action the recommendations made by the BG Wales Audit Office report 	2	4	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All directorate business Plans to include safeguarding and include actions required to ensure safeguarding arrangements are in place Safeguarding Reports into PEOPLE Scrutiny contain corporate safeguarding information from all directorates. Plus and update from the corporate safeguarding leads group Safeguarding training data to be reviewed by each Directorate to ensure all staff are undertaking this Regularly review the councils volunteering register to ensure DBS checks are up to date Ensure the audit Wales BG safeguarding report recommendations continue to be reviewed and met Each Directorate to undertake a safeguarding self-assessment 	1	4	Medium

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Quarter 2 Progress Update (July – September 2023)

Update provided in the progress against further controls. In addition, due to recommendations from Wales Audit report not fully implemented and Directorate self-assessments still outstanding the risk need to remain high.

Progress Against Further Controls	Responsible Officer	Due Date	Comments / Update on Progress	BRAG Status of further controls
All directorate risk registers to include safeguarding and include actions required to ensure safeguarding arrangements are in place.	CLT	Ongoing	Safeguarding is included in all Directorate Risk Registers.	On track
Safeguarding Reports into PEOPLE Scrutiny contain corporate safeguarding information from all directorates.	Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group	Ongoing	The Corporate Safeguarding Performance Report which contains corporate safeguarding activity as well as specific information in relation to Social Services and Education was reported to People Scrutiny Committee in July. The half yearly safeguarding report is in the process of being drafted to present to scrutiny in November.	On track
Safeguarding training data to be reviewed by each Directorate to ensure all staff are undertaking this	Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group	Ongoing	The Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group are looking at the collation and accuracy of training data and reviewing the control measures to ensure its accuracy due to ongoing reporting concerns. Raising awareness for managers via DLT's to ensure staff are completing training in line with the Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework – e.g., Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3. The corporate safeguarding leads group continue to take this forward to ensure accurate capture information to ensure all staff have undertaken this training	Ongoing but encountering some issues (that can be addressed)
Regularly review the councils volunteering register to ensure DBS checks are up to date	Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group	Ongoing	The volunteering register has been updated across the council and all DBS checks are up to date. Periodic checks of the register will need to continue	On track
Ensure the audit Wales BG safeguarding report recommendations continue to be reviewed and met	Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group	Ongoing	The corporate safeguarding leads group continue to lead this work and reporting on progress will be contained in the next scrutiny report.	On track
Each Directorate to undertake a safeguarding self-assessment	Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group	Ongoing	This is in the process of being undertaken by each Directorate with a deadline of 30 th September being set. The safeguarding leads meeting are overseeing this and will be analysing data collection to present at the next CSGL meeting.	On track
Direction of Travel from previous quarter	Forecasted direction of travel			
		There is no change in the risk score from the last quarter. Due to recommendations from Wales Audit report not fully implemented and Directorate self-assessments still outstanding the risk need to remain High.		

Ref	Recommendation	Organisational response Please set out here relevant commentary on the planned actions in response to the recommendations	Completion date Please set out by when the planned actions will be complete	Responsible officer / group
R1	The Council needs to take further action to fully comply with the recommendations in the October 2019 follow-up report on corporate arrangements for safeguarding of children.	The safeguarding self-assessments for 2023 were submitted from each of the directorates at end of September 2023. The findings and analysis of the self-assessments will be reviewed by the Children’s Safeguarding Team (Team Manager, Service Manager and Safeguarding Education Manager) and will be presented in the next Strategic Safeguarding Leads Group in January 2024. This will seek to consider a comparison to the previous year’s findings. A Corporate Safeguarding action plan will be updated to reflect the themes and needs highlighted within the self-assessment returns in order to focus the work of the group over the next year. Corporate Safeguarding is reported on within the bi-annual Joint Safeguarding Report however consideration is being given to the development of a standalone corporate safeguarding report to be presented to the Governance and Audit Committee.	Self assessment – late summer 2023 Implementing actions from self assessment - ongoing	Strategic Safeguarding Leads Group
R2	The Council needs to strengthen its monitoring arrangements of third parties so it can assure itself that they comply with the Council’s safeguarding policies. It should consider whether a self-assessment tool like that recently used by Council directorates can be used with third parties to better understand compliance.	<p>Monitoring of safeguarding arrangements for third parties will be tested by Internal Audit in line with the risk assessed Audit Plan. This will evidence how well the monitoring arrangements work and provide an opportunity for the CSL Group to further strengthen these arrangements. Internal Audit are completing three audits that impact on safeguarding in this financial year:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safeguarding in contracts 2. Safeguarding with volunteers (schools) 3. Social Services safeguarding <p>The Safeguarding in Contracts audit will consider corporate procurement specifically looking at how safeguarding requirements are built in to contracts for third parties. The Safeguarding with Volunteers audit will seek to test the safeguarding arrangements implemented by schools in respect of volunteers. The parameters of Social Services Safeguarding audit will be outlined following consultation with the respective departments (adults and children’s services) in November 2023.</p> <p>The CRSA was amended to add additional safeguarding questions as per previous update. It was issued to schools in April 2023 and the draft audit report is currently being reviewed.</p> <p>The audit reports will be issued to the Strategic Safeguarding Leads group for any weaknesses identified through the audit to be rectified.</p>	Audit Quarter 2/3 2023/24	Strategic Safeguarding Leads Group

Ref No.	Description of Risk	Triggers	Consequences	Likelihood	Impact	Status	Current Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Status	Proposed further controls to mitigate / reduce risk	Target Score		Risk Owner	Direction of Travel from Previous Quarter		
Directorate Risk EDDRR3 Corporate Risk Register CRR4	Safeguarding - Failure to ensure adequate. Safeguarding arrangements are in place for children & young adults in Blaenau Gwent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate assessments and monitoring Lack of documentation Increasing demand for services Lack of appropriate guidance and training Poor communication between all parties (internal / external) High turnover of staff Varying capacity as a result of the pandemic so routine activities do not take place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential significant harm / loss of life Long term reputational damage and confidence in the Council undermined Increase in complaints / Potential litigation / prosecution External intervention Increased pressure on budgets Low staff morale 	3	4	Critical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Social Services and Education Scrutiny established (People Scrutiny) Education Designated Lead and Deputy Officer nominated Education Safeguarding Officer established and in post Gwent Adult Safeguarding Board SE Wales Safeguarding Children's Board Safeguarding is a standing item on DLT agenda Lead Executive Member has been identified for having responsibility for safeguarding Senior leadership have all received Level 1 training. Programme of training for schools in place. Corporate leads established for each directorate who have been requested to identify staff for Level 1 training Safeguarding in Education matrix regularly updated *Use of MyConcern software in schools will be used to gather data, monitor positive cases and create consistency across the school estate. The roll-out project team is fully established. 	1	4	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved reporting systems and databases in place Inclusion protocol in place Education Safeguarding Manager close working with School Improvement and Inclusion Close working relationships with Social Services Directorate Youth Services safeguarding arrangements are effective and monitoring is through the corporate arrangements. Half termly meetings to priorities to be diarised * DMT receive regular QA reports from Safeguarding in Education Manager 	1	4	Medium	Corporate Director of Education Exec Member Sue Edmunds	No change in direction of travel	Status of Further controls On track Forecasted direction of travel Work continues on target to reduce overall risk

Quarter 1 progress update (April – June 2023)

The Safeguarding in Education Manager continues to make good progress in implementing the various quality assurance processes for the current academic year and is now finalising the end of year position statement for education services with the Strategic Safeguarding in Education Manager through the completion of the corporate return and annual Local Government Education Services (LGES) self-evaluation process. The Education Directorate Leadership Team have received the required Fades that appropriately capture the areas for improvement and as such the improvement activities are being progressed. Strategic Safer Schools Partnership Board (SSSPB) continues to support the development of key pieces of work across LGES but it is too early to assess the impact of this work. Good progress continues to be made in the implementation of My Concern and the User Group are trialling the use of bullying and Restricted Physical Incident (RPI) returns with a view to rolling this approach to other schools during the autumn term. As part of this work a review of the Restricted Physical Intervention and Respectful Relationship policy is ongoing, one school still has not accessed My Concern training and this matter has been escalated within the Directorate

Quarter 2 progress update (July - September 2023)

The current safeguarding lead for the education directorate is an interim arrangement due to staff changes. All schools are now using MyConcern to record and report concerns and the MyConcern group has continued to meet despite Action Short of Strike (ASOS). Triage and filing concerns have been priority to ensure that safeguarding concerns are prioritised. Usage of the system between schools is variable and one school still needs to undertake training. ASOS has resulted in data submission being affected and this will need to be reviewed in order to ascertain the impact this has had.

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Agenda Item 5

Cabinet and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **People Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **30 January, 2024**
Report Subject: **Key Stage 4 Outcomes 2023**
Portfolio Holder: **Sue Edmunds, Executive Member for People and Education**
Report Submitted by: **Luisa Munro-Morris, Corporate Director of Education (Interim)**
Report Written by: **Debbie Hartevelde, Managing Director, EAS**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
10.01.24	11.01.24	17.01.24			30.01.24	21.02.24		

1. Purpose of the Report

This report provides members with final outcome data for Secondary schools within the Local Authority for 2022-2023 (Summer 2023).

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 This year, for the first time since 2019, the Welsh Government are producing Key Stage 4 All Wales Core Data Sets (AWCDS) at individual school level.
- 2.2 Each of the last 4 years used essentially different methods for determining grades, so none are directly comparable. In 2023 national outcomes are lower than 2022, 2021 and 2020, but not as low as 2019.
- 2.3 Provisional outcomes were available to schools, LAs and consortia in Provisional form in mid-November 2023 (via Data Exchange Wales (DEWi)). These were then used to contribute to a school level checking process, so any errors could be addressed, before final versions were published on 20 December 2023. This report uses the final versions.

Welsh Government published measures for 2023

- 2.4 These include the following points-based measures:
- The Capped 9 measure
 - Literacy measure (best of Language / Literature)
 - Numeracy measure (best of mathematics / numeracy)
 - Science measure (best of science)
 - Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate measure
- 2.5 In addition to the above 'points based' measures the percentage of learners achieving 5 or more A*-A and percentage of learners achieving No Qualifications are also included.

2.6 As well as comparisons of All Pupils, comparisons are also made Male / Female and FSM / non-FSM for each of the indicators, but only Capped 9 comparisons are included in this report at LA level.

2.7 In terms of analysis the two main comparisons are the Welsh Government line of modelled outcomes, and a comparison with a 'family' of similar schools.

Families

2.8 Schools face different challenges based on their context. The AWCDs contains comparative outcomes against similar schools – known as 'Families'. Families (of 9-10 schools) have been created by grouping on size and linguistic delivery and then ordering schools according to the values of an index of 'challenge', calculated as follows:

- 50% x the proportion of pupils of statutory school age eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)
- 30% x the proportion of pupils of statutory school age who live in an area classed as in the 20% most deprived parts of Wales using the 2019 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD)
- 10% x the proportion of pupils of statutory school age subject to an Individual Development Plan (IDP) or with a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- 10% x the proportion of pupils of statutory school age who are either new to the English language (or Welsh where relevant), at an early acquisition stage or developing competence.

2.9 A three-year average of data from PLASC 2021-2023 is used.

2.10 For 2023 there are 6 Welsh medium families, numbered from 1 (the most disadvantaged) to 5 (the least disadvantaged). There are 15 English medium families numbered from 7 (the most disadvantaged) to 21 (the least disadvantaged).

2.11 Families with Blaenau Gwent Schools (2023)

Moved to a MORE disadvantaged Family (0 Schools)
Moved to a LESS disadvantaged Family (1 School)
14 English Medium families (7-21)

School Name	Family	Position*
St Teilo's C-in-W High School	010	1
Cefn Saeson Comprehensive School		2
Cefn Hengoed		3
Abertillery Learning Community		4
St Julian's School		5
Bedwas High School		6
Cwmbran High School		7
Ysgol Nantgwyn		8
Brynmawr Foundation School		9
BISHOP GORE SCHOOL		10
St Cenydd School	011	1
Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi		2
Ebbw Fawr Learning Community		3
MORRISTON COMPREHENSIVE		4
Hawthorn High School		5
BIRCHGROVE		6
Tonyrefail Community School		7
Tredegar Comprehensive School		8
Ysgol Cwm Brombil		9
Rhosnesni High School		10

*This is the position of the school in the family in terms of social deprivation, not the position of the school in terms of how well they have achieved at KS4, when compared to other families.

2.12 The 4 Blaenau Gwent schools with secondary provisions are in families 10 and 11, the 4th and 5th most socio-economically disadvantaged families of the 15 English medium families.

3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 Option 1:

For members to receive the report for information.

3.2 Option 2:

For members to consider the information and offer further comment on the outcomes.

4. **Evidence of how this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

4.1 **Statutory Responsibility**

4.1.1 The Local Authority is required to monitor the standards of educations within its schools.

4.1.2 **Corporate Improvement Plan**

Education Aims

- Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent
- Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities
- An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place
- Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient.

4.1.3 **Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan**

The content of the EAS business plan is clearly aligned to the objectives in the Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan which aims for everyone to have the best start in life. Through this plan it seeks to ensure that the education provision is appropriate and able to meet the needs of children and young people so that their progress is as good as it ought to be.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

There are no budgetary implications for either option.

5.2 ***Risks including Mitigating Actions***

The risks related to future outcomes for at school level being below families and the Welsh Government modelled expectations, meaning that individual learners in Blaenau-Gwent do not achieve their full potential.

5.3 ***Legal***

None for this report.

5.5 ***Human Resources***

None for this report.

5.6 ***Health and Safety***

There are no health and safety implications from this report.

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 Capped 9 – all pupils – compared with the family average

6.1.1 The table below shows the Capped 9 performance of all learners compared with their individual family. Two schools are above their family, and two below, one significantly so.

School Name	Capped 9	Family Capped 9	Capped 9 - School-Family difference
Blaenau Gwent School	370.9	353.8	17.1
Blaenau Gwent School	366.7	353.4	13.2
Blaenau Gwent School	334.7	353.8	-19.1
Blaenau Gwent School	305.9	353.4	-47.6

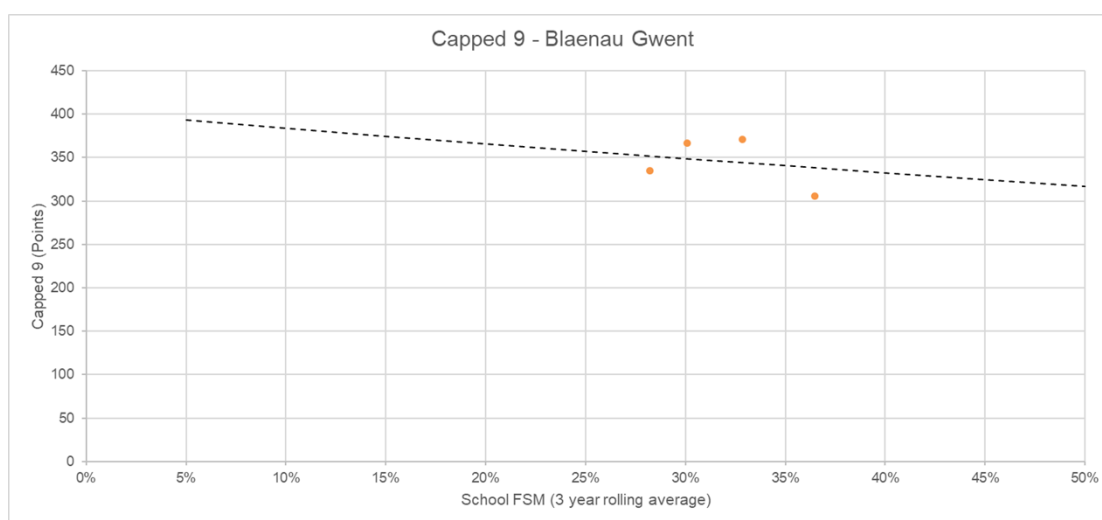
6.1.2 For all GCSE subjects the points difference between every grade is 6 points. So, for example a B is worth 6 more points than a C.

6.1.3 This means that for the Capped 9, a difference of 54 points indicates that on average, every learner in a school is performing above or below the family by a whole GCSE grade in every subject. (6 points x 9 subjects=54 points).

6.1.4 Please note that the indicative bars on the right for this table and all below are adjusted to the minimum (negative) and maximum (positive) values for each table individually and automatically. Therefore, a bar '47.6 points' long will not be consistent across each chart.

Capped 9 – all pupils – compared with WG 'Modelled Outcome' line

6.1.5 The chart below does not compare with the family, but rather the Welsh Government 'Modelled outcome'.



6.1.6 Two schools in Blaenau Gwent are above the modelled outcome line and two below.

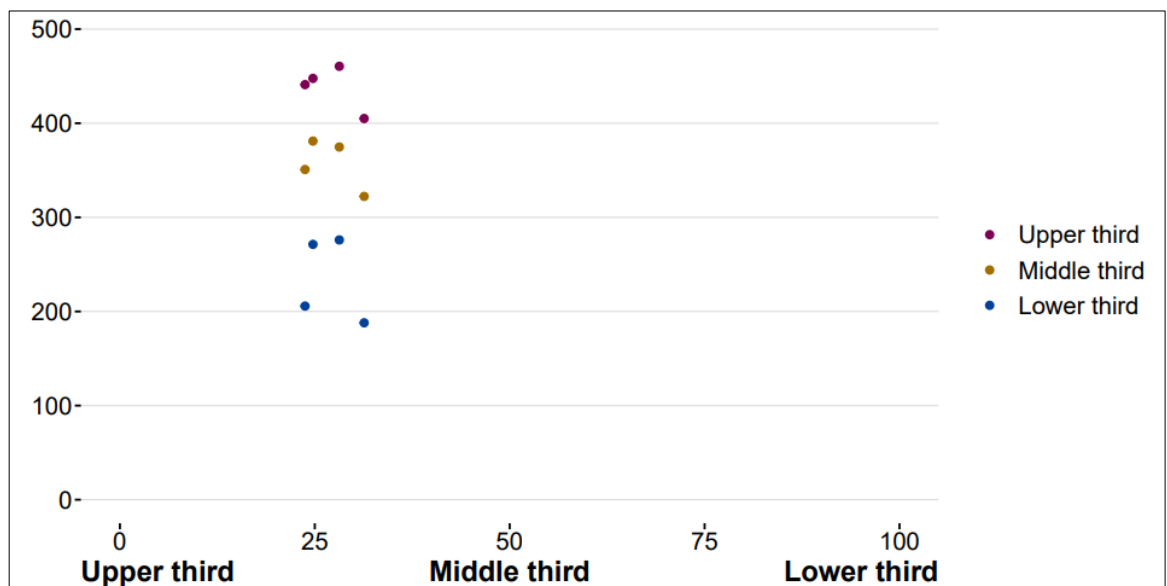
Capped 9 – Comparison by ‘Thirds’ with WG ‘Modelled Outcome’ line

6.1.7 The chart below groups learners in each individual school into ‘thirds. For example, if 120 learners in a cohort, they would be split into three groups of 40 by their Capped 9 scores. Three averages would then be calculated for each of these groups. The table below gives the average of each third.

School Name	Upper Third			Middle Third			Lower Third		
	Achieve ⁺	Modelle ⁺	+/-	Achieve ⁺	Modelle ⁺	+/-	Achieve ⁺	Modelle ⁺	+/-
Blaenau Gwent School	461	446	15	375	372	3	276	239	37
Blaenau Gwent School	448	451	-3	381	376	5	271	246	25
Blaenau Gwent School	441	452	-11	351	377	-26	206	248	-43
Blaenau Gwent School	405	442	-37	322	368	-45	188	232	-44

6.1.8 For the highest achieving third, one school is above expectation, one in-line, but two below, one significantly so. For the middle third two schools are in-line, but two below, both significantly so. There are however two positive differentials for the lowest thirds, which are significant.

6.1.9 The same data represented around 3 regression lines based on eligibility. This shows the relatively low level of variance for Blaenau Gwent in the outcomes for each school in each third.



Literacy Measure – compared with the Family average

6.1.10 To put these charts in perspective a difference of +/- 6 points is the equivalent of a GCSE grade difference for every learner. +/- 3 points would therefore be a half a grade difference.

School Name	Literacy Measure	Literacy Measure - Family	Literacy Measure - Difference
Blaenau Gwent School	40.4	38.2	2.2
Blaenau Gwent School	40.2	38.3	1.9
Blaenau Gwent School	39.2	38.2	1.0
Blaenau Gwent School	31.6	38.3	-6.7

6.1.11 Three schools are above the family average for the literacy measure, but one school is significantly below, by over a GCSE grade per learner.

6.1.12 The table below gives the individual contribution of each of the GCSEs that contribute to this measure.

School Name	English Language	English Literature
Blaenau Gwent School	34.7	39.8
Blaenau Gwent School	37.9	37.4
Blaenau Gwent School	36.6	39.0
Blaenau Gwent School	30.4	31.5

6.1.13 Three schools have a higher contribution made by literature rather than language.

Numeracy Measure – compared with the Family average

School Name	Numeracy Measure	Numeracy Measure - Family	Numeracy Measure - Difference
Blaenau Gwent School	34.0	31.1	2.9
Blaenau Gwent School	31.6	31.1	0.5
Blaenau Gwent School	32.8	32.4	0.3
Blaenau Gwent School	22.5	32.4	-10.0

6.1.14 For the numeracy measure two schools are in line with the family average, one above (by an average of half a grade), but one significant below the family average, by over 1.5 grades per learner.

6.1.15 The differences between the individual numeracy GCSE and mathematics GCSE are relatively small for each school, except one school where the difference is more than a grade per learners. Both are relatively lower than similar schools.

School Name	Numeracy	Mathematics
Blaenau Gwent School	34.0	36.0
Blaenau Gwent School	31.6	33.0
Blaenau Gwent School	32.8	34.7
Blaenau Gwent School	22.5	29.3

Science Measure – compared with the Family average

School Name	Science Measure	Science Measure - Family	Science Measure - Difference
Blaenau Gwent School	37.9	33.7	4.2
Blaenau Gwent School	36.2	36.0	0.2
Blaenau Gwent School	33.4	33.7	-0.3
Blaenau Gwent School	28.7	36.0	-7.3

- 6.1.16 Two schools are approximately in line with families, with one above, by approximately half a GCSE grade per learner and one below, by over a whole GCSE grade per learner.

Welsh Baccalaureate Measure – compared with the Family average

- 6.1.17 It is this measure which has the greatest variance, with some family averages across Wales particularly low.

School Name	Welsh Bacc. Measure	Welsh Bacc. Measure - Family	Welsh Bacc. Measure - Difference
Blaenau Gwent School	32.0	25.5	6.5
Blaenau Gwent School	39.3	36.1	3.2
Blaenau Gwent School	35.9	36.1	-0.2
Blaenau Gwent School	18.0	25.5	-7.6

- 6.1.18 Two schools are approximately in line with family averages, with these averages being as expected. For the remaining schools, their family comparators are both low, with one being well above and then one well below those 'low' averages.

6.1.19 No Qualifications – compared with the Family average

- 6.1.20 Please note the reversed colour coding on the bars to indicate that a negative difference from the family is positive.

School Name	No Qualifications (%)	No Qualificaitons (%) Family	No Qualificaitons (%) Difference
Blaenau Gwent School	0.0	0.4	-0.4
Blaenau Gwent School	0.0	0.4	-0.4
Blaenau Gwent School	0.0	0.0	0.0
Blaenau Gwent School	0.0	0.0	0.0

- 6.1.21 All 4 schools in Blaenau Gwent have no learners leaving without a qualification. The reason for the positive difference compared with the family is that the family average for their family is 0.4 (it is the same family for both schools).

5+ A*-A – compared with the Family average

School Name	5+ A*-A (%)	5+ A*-A (%) Family	5+ A*-A (%) Difference
Blaenau Gwent School	16.9	13.5	3.4
Blaenau Gwent School	15.3	13.5	1.8
Blaenau Gwent School	14.7	15.0	-0.2
Blaenau Gwent School	6.3	15.0	-8.7

- 6.1.22 Two schools 5+ A*-A percentage are in line with the family, with one above. One school's rate is less than half that of the family average. This will be linked to the lower relative performance of the Upper Third of learners on the capped 9 for this school.

Local Authority Aggregate Data

Key measures – Compared with Wales

- 6.1.23 Please note that these measures are not contextualised but compare with the Wales average.

Title	2023 - Blaenau Gwent	2023 - Wales
Capped 9 points score (interim)	340.2	358.1
WBacc Skills Challenge Certificate indicator – points score	31.9	31.6
Literacy indicator – points score	37.2	39.7
Numeracy indicator – points score	34.5	37.1
Science indicator – points score	33.8	36.9
No qualifications - % of pupils	0.5	1.4
5+ A*-A or equivalent	13.2	20.3

- 6.1.24 For nearly all measures the Blaenau Gwent average is below the Wales average, except the Skills Challenge Certificate indicator and also no qualifications (where a lower rate is positive).

Key measures – Compared with 'Modelled' by FSM

- 6.1.25 Modelled expectations for each indicator are all above expectation indicated by Free School Meals. Please note that each table number is from the original data pack, not this report.

Title	2023 - Capped 9 points score (interim)	2023 - Modelled score	2023 - Difference
Blaenau Gwent	346.4	355.5	-9.1

- 6.1.26 The Capped 9 Points Score is 9 points below the modelled expectation. The equivalent of approximately 1/6th of a GCSE grade per learner.

Title	2023 - WBacc Skills Challenge Certificate indicator – points score	2023 - Modelled score	2023 - Difference
Blaenau Gwent	32.6	33.1	-0.5

6.1.27 The Skills Challenge Certificate Indicator score is approximately in line with expectation.

Title	2023 - Literacy indicator – points score	2023 - Modelled score	2023 - Difference
Blaenau Gwent	37.9	38.8	-0.9

6.1.28 The Literacy Indicator score is slightly below expectation, the equivalent of 1/6th of a GCSE grade per learner.

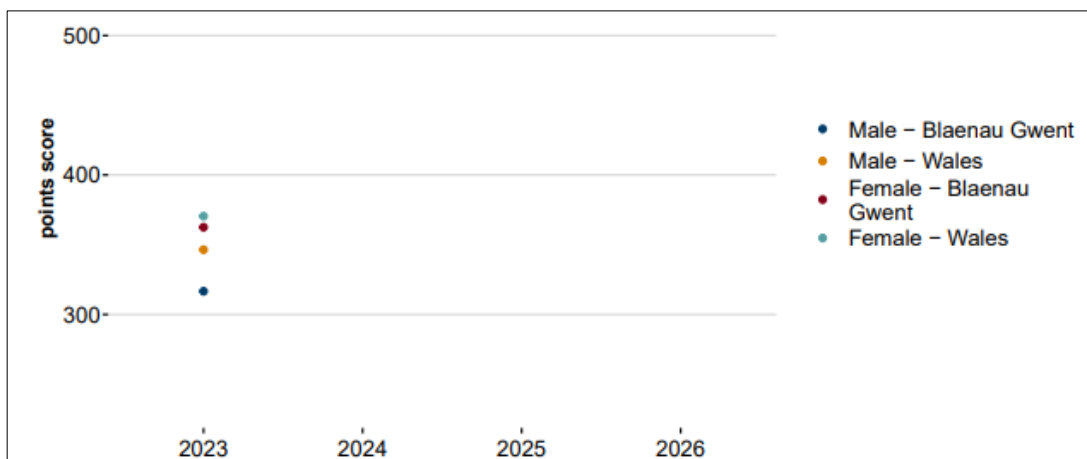
Title	2023 - Numeracy indicator – points score	2023 - Modelled score	2023 - Difference
Blaenau Gwent	35.1	35.9	-0.9

6.1.29 The Numeracy Indicator score is slightly below expectation, the equivalent of 1/6th of a GCSE grade per learner.

Title	2023 - Science indicator – points score	2023 - Modelled score	2023 - Difference
Blaenau Gwent	34.4	35.3	-0.9

6.1.30 The Science Indicator score is slightly below expectation, the equivalent of 1/6th of a GCSE grade per learner.

Capped 9 – Males and Females



Note: The y axis does not start at zero in this plot.

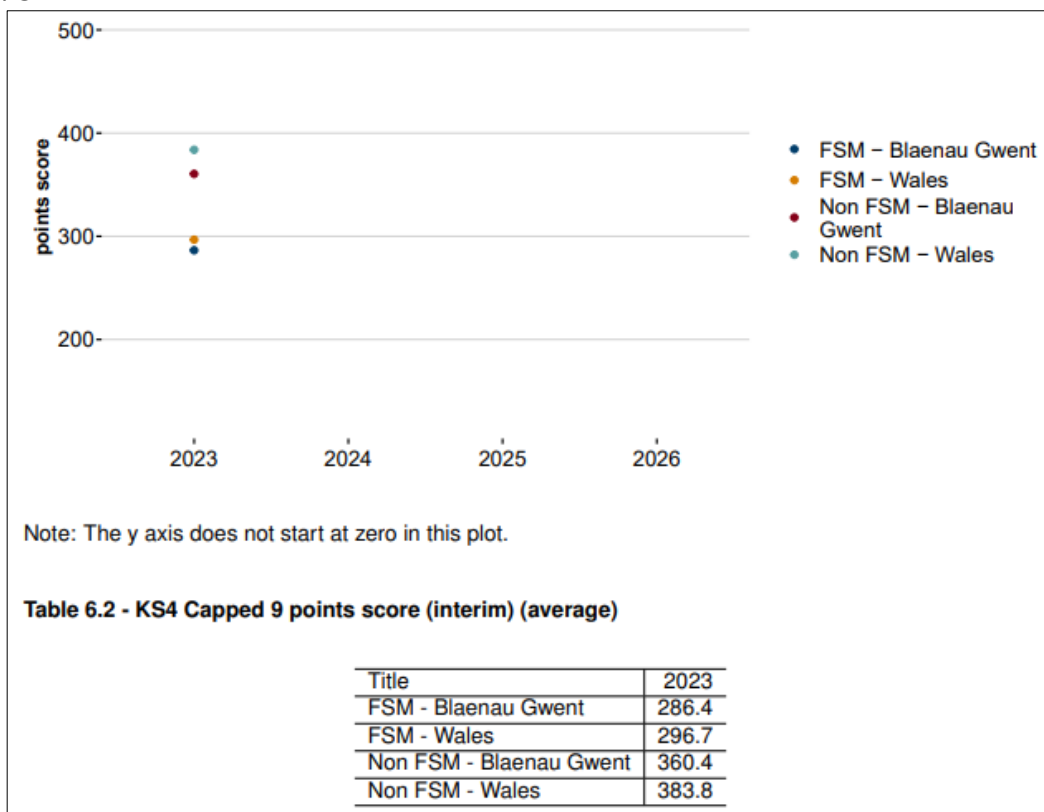
Table 3.2 - KS4 Capped 9 points score (interim) (average)

Title	2023
Male - Blaenau Gwent	316.6
Male - Wales	346.4
Female - Blaenau Gwent	362.6
Female - Wales	370.5

6.1.31 Both Males and Females in Blaenau Gwent perform less well than their peers in Wales, however the difference between boys in Blaenau Gwent and boys in the test of Wales is approximately four times larger than the corresponding gap for girls.

Capped 9 FSM – non-FSM

/Overleaf



6.1.32 Both FSM and non-FSM learners in Blaenau Gwent perform lower than their peers in Wales.

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

High Quality education is a fundamental pre-requisite of ensuring future local and national prosperity through the provision of an informed and well-educated workforce and society. The Local Authority's statutory role to monitor and evaluate school performance and the quality of provision, coupled with its statutory powers of intervention in schools causing concern is fundamental to ensuring that all schools provide high quality education provision.

6.3 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**

Involvement of partners is fundamental to securing and sustaining school improvement. The statutory framework advocates this and the work of the Local authority, its commissioned school improvement service (EAS) and schools evidences the positive impact of working in this way.

6.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**

Monitoring school outcomes is key element in ensuring that schools are known well by the Council so that appropriate support and intervention can be directed towards areas of greatest need. Constant monitoring of school performance facilitates

early intervention to ensure that schools maintain high quality outcomes in the longer term.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

A key element of the Council's work is to monitor settings and ensure appropriate support to secure continuing high standards. Review of schools' outcomes reflects the extent to which settings and Local Authorities have been effective in achieving this.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

Educational improvement in Blaenau Gwent is delivered on a regional basis through the South East Wales Consortium in collaboration with Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport, Torfaen and Blaenau-Gwent Councils.

6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***

Ensuring that schools deliver high quality education provision to secure high pupil outcomes relate to the Council's high-level outcomes within the Corporate Improvement Plan that children's and young people's learning and achievement levels are maximised. These overarching outcomes and objectives permeate the work of a range of Council departments and partners. Effective monitoring, evaluation and intervention are fundamental to the Council's wellbeing objectives.

6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***

No specific impact related to this report.

6.9 ***Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)***

Not required for this report.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 As part of existing arrangement.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

None – information included within the report.

Agenda Item 6

Cabinet and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **People Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **30th January 2024**
Report Subject: **Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme**
Portfolio Holder: **Cabinet Member – People & Education – Cllr Sue Edmunds**
Report Submitted by: **Joanne Watts – Service Manager Education Transformation**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
14.11.2023	x	17.01.24			30.01.24	21.02.24		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme (formerly 21st Century Schools) and agree the proposals to be submitted to Welsh Government as part of the rolling programme requirements.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 When the Band B 21st Century School programme was agreed by Welsh Government (WG) in February 2019 for the period 2019/20 to 2025/26, a £19.6million programme was agreed for investment throughout the Blaenau Gwent school estate. The general Welsh Government intervention rate for Band B is a 65/35 split, in favour of Local Authorities. The Band B Programme agreed the following projects in line with the investment objectives:

- Continued secondary school re-modelling
- Ebbw Fawr Primary Redevelopment, including the development of a new 360 primary school to replace Glyncoed Primary, which is the only category 'D' building in terms of condition within the county borough
- Remodelling of Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg to address ongoing condition and suitability issues

- 2.2 In January 2022 Welsh Government renamed the 21st Century Schools Programme to the 'Sustainable Communities for Learning (SCfL)' programme, the aim of this was to make a clear statement about their commitment towards the environment, community cohesion, and future generations.

- 2.3 Lessons learned from Band A, the transition into the Band B programme and post pandemic issues highlighted to Welsh Government the complexity and protracted nature associated with the delivery of a number of projects through the 'fixed' programme timelines and cost envelopes. This approach posed challenges for both the Welsh Government and Local Authorities in the management and delivery of strategic infrastructure investment for the education estate in Wales.

2.4 In November 2022 the Minister for Education and Welsh Language announced that the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme would now transition away from fixed bands of funding to a more agile rolling programme (**see Appendix 1**). With the expectation that Local Authorities would review and resubmit their new Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) Programme by March 2024, in line with the following investment objectives:

- Transforming learning environments and learner experience
- Meeting demand for school places
- Improving condition and suitability of the education estate
- Developing sustainable learning environments
- Supporting the community

2.5 The expectation of projects submitted under the rolling programme are as follows:
 Projects in years 1-3 are expected to reach full business case within the first 3 years
 Projects in years 4-6 are being developed and going through statutory consultation
 Projects in years 7-9 are pipeline projects

Local Authorities will then be expected to review their rolling programme at least every 3 years thereafter

2.6 The proposed Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme (**Appendix 2**) to be submitted with the Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) is summarised below:

Years 1-3 (2024/25 – 2026/27)

School	Anticipated Cost	Rationale / Current Status
Currently Delivering		
Glyncoed Primary School & Welsh Medium Childcare Facility - New Build	£13.5m (BG match funding £3.9m)	Jointly funded Sustainable Communities for Learning & Childcare project Full Business Case Approved as part of Ebbw Fawr Primary Redevelopment in February 2021 Contractor appointed December 2022 Scheduled for completion May 2024
Rhos y Fedwen Primary School remodelling of foundation phase, small extension with 3G pitch	£1m (BG match funding £350,000)	Full Business Case Approved Ebbw Fawr Primary Redevelopment February 2021 Scheduled for completion June 2024
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg Remodelling and development of a Resource Base	£1m (BG match funding £350,000)	Business Case approved November 2020 Project completed Summer period 2022 Ministerial opening 5 th June 2023
New Welsh Medium Seedling School Chartist Way - New build	£13.5m (100% WG funding)	100% WM Grant Full business case approved October 2018, delays in appointing a contractor as a result of the pandemic and market forces Contractor appointed July 2023, works have commenced on site Scheduled completion date May 2025

Projects rolled over from Band B/New		
School	Anticipated Cost	Rationale / Current Status
Ebbw Fawr 3-16 Learning Community – Secondary Phase Extension	£5.0m	A capacity review and accommodation audit highlighted that the internal footprint of the school could no longer accommodate the numbers of pupils it was built for. The school has been experiencing significant sufficiency issues since Jan 2022 Planning approval submitted in July 2023 Full business case to be submitted to WG April 2024
Tredegar comprehensive School – Extension (Subject to planning approval)	£3-£4m	A project brief is being developed with the school; this is being planned in line with anticipated sufficiency issues for September 2026 Business Case to be submitted to WG May 2024
Pen y Cwm Special School	£8-£15m	Currently undertaking an options appraisal and a forecast demand analysis to inform a business case to Welsh Government. Outline Business Case to be submitted to Welsh Government Summer 2024

Years 4-6 (2027/28 – 2029/30)

School	Anticipated Cost	Rationale / Current Status
Welsh Medium Primary Development	TBD	Commitment given in Blaenau Gwent's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan to undertake a feasibility study once the seedling provision in Chartist Way Tredegar is opened for 3-4 years to determine if a further Welsh medium provision is required
Cwm Primary School Remodelling	TBD	Rolled over from Band B Low Condition and Suitability
Faith Based School – New build potential 1 school to replace 3 schools	TBD	Formal consultation required 85% funding intervention rate, 15% (Diocese could contribute to this) Initial discussions have taken place with Diocese
WM Secondary Planning	TBD	Due to the development of a Seedling school in Torfaen, Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynllyw will no longer be able to accommodate Blaenau Gwent Learners from September 2028/2029, currently discussing on a Regional basis with Merthyr, Powys and Monmouthshire to determine a solution
Brynmawr Foundation School	TBD	Currently the lowest condition and suitability Secondary school. School not suitable for Secondary School remodelling, phased or full replacement needed. Site access issues has been the immediate priority, further discussions to resume with the school and technical colleagues in the Spring term

Years 7-9 (2030/31 -2032/33)

School	Anticipated Cost	Rationale / Current Status
Replacement Primary School	TBD	To be determined subject to school condition and suitability assessments, likely to be in Tredegar area
Brynmawr Foundation School	TBD	Depending on the outcome in years 4-6 may need to feature in years 7-9 also
WM Secondary Planning	TBD	Depending on the outcome in years 4-6 may need to feature in years 7-9 also

3. Options for Recommendation

That scrutiny consider the following options: -

3.1 Option 1: (Preferred option)

The People Scrutiny Committee considers the Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme proposals to be submitted to Welsh Government in March 24 (**Appendix 2**) and recommends it to Cabinet for approval.

3.2 Option 2: (Not Preferred option)

The People Scrutiny Committee considers the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme proposals to be submitted to Welsh Government in March 24 (**Appendix 2**) and provides any comments or amendments to be incorporated prior to recommending it to Cabinet for approval.

4. Evidence of how this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan

4.1 Education is a strategic priority for the Council and key to achieving the outcomes within the Council's Corporate Plan. the Sustainable Communities learning Programme (Formerly 21st Century Schools) is an essential component to support Education in ensuring there is improved: standards, access to education, education facilities throughout the school estate.

5. Implications Against Each Option

5.1 *Impact on Budget (short- and long-term impact)*

5.1.1 Lessons learned from Band A, the transition into the Band B programme and post pandemic cost escalation highlighted to Welsh Government the issues associated with the delivery of a number of projects through the 'fixed' programme timelines and cost envelopes. Welsh Government have therefore introduced the rolling programme to allow both Local Authorities and Welsh Government to plan more effectively and in line with demands, ensuring that funding is available to delivery partners when required.

5.1.2 When the Band B 21st Century School programme was agreed by Welsh Government (WG) in February 2019, £19.6million of funding was) awarded, with the Council's 35% contribution of £6.86million being secured and approved via the Council's Capital Programme. This funding is allocated in line with the programme identified in 2.6 as and when business cases are approved by Welsh Government.

5.1.3 The establishment of the Sustainable Communities for Learning rolling programme will inform the Blaenau Gwent's Capital Programme Planning and resourcing requirements going forward, should these proposals be agreed, they will form part of the review and update of the capital programme during 2024/25.

5.1.4 The Welsh Medium Seedling Project has received 100% funding from Welsh Government and is currently estimated to be £13.5million and has been fully approved by the Minister. Other intervention rates associated with the programme are as follows:

	%
Community, voluntary controlled and foundation schools	65
Voluntary aided schools of religious character	85
Special schools and pupil referral units	75

5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

The historical high-level risks associated with programme in recent years has always been associated with the impact of the cost escalation resulting in resourcing and programming implications. The establishment of a rolling programme will largely mitigate this and allow both Welsh Government and Local Authorities to plan more effectively. In addition, project Groups are established for all live projects monitoring development, delivery and associated requirements. Programme Board monitor programme delivery, with a core project team (Education, Finance and Community Services) monitoring and reviewing programme resourcing, progress, timelines and financial profiles.

There are significant financial pressures on Welsh Government and Local Authorities going forward, the provisional settlement indicated general capital funding will be maintained at current levels for 2024/25. Whilst there are no indications at the moment, there is a risk that capital grant funding, could be significantly reduced going forward. The establishment of the rolling programme by Welsh Government aims to mitigate this as it will allow Welsh Government and Local Authorities to plan more effectively. In addition the Local Authority meets with Welsh Government on a quarterly basis to discuss project progress and requirements going forward.

5.3 **Legal**

The Local Authority has a duty under the School's Organisation Code v2 2018 to ensure 'it has the right schools in the right place at the right time'. There are no direct legal implications associated with this report, other than the requirement for the Local Authority to follow the statutory processes set out within the Welsh Government School Organisation Code.

5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no direct human resource implications associated with the report. The Education Transformation & Technical Services teams are small teams across the Council, resourcing is monitored and reviewed at both a programme and project level and planned in line with programme delivery.

5.5 **Health and Safety**

There are no direct health and safety implications associated with this report, all projects in the rolling programme are designed in line with health and safety regulations.

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 Performance Information and Data

6.1.1 Market forces associated with the pandemic has caused resource and programming issues of the Band B programme. Welsh Government has recognised this as a national issue and has introduced the Sustainable Communities for Learning rolling programme to allow Local Authorities and Welsh Government to plan more effectively

6.1.2 Two business cases have been agreed under the Band B programme with projects either being completed or in the process of delivery

6.1.3 In December 2022 the Welsh Government announced the extension of the Community Focused Schools initiative, planning for further capital investment over the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25. The Local Authority were invited to submit expressions of interest (EOI) which would 'invest in the learning environment of Community Focused Schools, co-locating key services, and securing stronger engagement with parents and carers outside traditional hours.' The EOI's were to demonstrate support for the following objectives:

- Family Engagement – whereby schools engage well with families and involve parents/carers in supporting their children's learning in both English and Welsh language contexts.
- Community Engagement – where the facilities of the school are used as the basis for family, adult and community learning and a range of community activities.
- Multi-Agency Engagement – working in close partnership with universal parenting and early intervention services, like Families First. Co-location of support services, providing a single point of contact, can help ensure nobody gets left behind.

As a result, the Local Authority have been successful in securing agreement for the following projects:

School	Funding	Rationale / Current Status
CFS 2023 – 2025 funding		
Cwm YC Remodelling	£200,000	Project proforma approved April 2023
Coed y Garn – Development of 2 Community Rooms, Remodelling & Development of Outdoor provision	£350,000	Project proforma approved April 2023
Brynmawr Foundation – Development of Community Focused Home Economic area	£550,000	Project proforma approved April 2023
Sofrydd Primary – development of a community room and the development of the outdoor area	£450,000	Project proforma approved April 2023
Projects still under consideration by Welsh Government		
Abertillery Learning Community & Abertillery Youth Centre, remodelling to develop community focussed schools facilities	£1,100,000	Awaiting approval from WG to progress to full business case stage, if agreed business case to be submitted in Spring term 2024

- 6.2 **Expected outcome for the public.**
The Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme will contribute to raising the standard of education throughout the school estate, promoting pupil and staff wellbeing and attainment, whilst ensuring fit for purpose teaching and learning environments.
- 6.3 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**
The Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme contributes heavily to the strategic direction for the school estate across the County Borough. The Education Transformation Programme Board has representation from across all services within the Council. There are also statutory requirements to involve stakeholders in school organisation proposals linked to the WG's School Organisation Code (2018) which is currently being reviewed by WG.
- 6.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**
The Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme is an investment programme that at present spans a nine-year time period, allowing Local Authorities to plan into the longer term
- 6.5 **Preventative focus**
The Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme will take a preventative approach in line with the needs of school staff and learners', placing an emphasis on delivering a school estate that is fit for purpose and contributes to raising educational standards, which is a Council priority.
- 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working.**
The Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme plays a fundamental part in improving partnership arrangements with the schools and their respective communities e.g. the community focussed school's agenda. A collaborative approach between the Council, schools, staff, pupils, parents and governors, is essential in securing effective delivery which takes account of the needs of end users.
- 6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**
The programme is being progressed and managed by a multi-disciplinary team with dedicated officers from key service areas, including (Education, Finance and Community Services).
- 6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***
The Council are committed to ensuring that all new schools buildings, major refurbishment and extension projects meet Net Zero Carbon targets. In November 2021, the Education and Welsh Language Minister announced that all new schools and college buildings, major refurbishment and extension projects, will be required to meet Net Zero Carbon targets from January 1st, 2022, therefore all projects agreed after this date are designed in line with this objective.
- 6.9 **Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)**
An Integrated Impact Assessment is considered for each project individually as part of the business case submission process.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 The Education Directorate has established a Sustainable Communities for Learning board that has a strategic oversight for the programme, in line with the requirements of the Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) good practice guidelines. The Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme team reports to Education Department Leadership Teams (DLT) and Corporate Leadership Team (CLT). The People Scrutiny/Executive Committees monitor progress via their forward work programmes and Scrutiny are also consultees on any statutory school re-organisation consultation exercises

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Rolling Programme

Appendix 2 – Sustainable Communities Rolling Programme



Rolling Programme

As approved by the Minister for Education and Welsh Language the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme will now transition away from fixed bands of funding to a more agile rolling programme.

As delivery partners are at differing stages through their existing Band 'B', it is expected that as and when a local authority or college is nearing completion of their Band B programme, that they submit their new Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) which would initiate the start of their rolling programme. At the latest, Delivery Partners must review and resubmit their Programme by March 2024.

This will encourage a smooth transition of each delivery partner's programme as and when the need arises, removing the stop start actions associated with a fixed term investment programme.

A 9 Year Capital Programme, including an indicative funding forecast for the 9 years, is required to be submitted to the Welsh Government for consideration towards providing a commitment and support for first 3 years along with in-principle support for years 4, 5 and 6. Years 7 to 9 will reflect your longer-term project pipeline. If appropriate, Band B projects can be included at the beginning of your 9 Year Capital Programme.

Years	Expectation
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1, 2 and 3	Projects expected to reach Full Business Case within the 3 years
4, 5 and 6	Projects being developed and going through statutory consultation
7,8 and 9	Pipeline Projects

Delivery Partners are required to review their Rolling Programme at least every 3 years, by which time it is expected that years 1, 2 and 3 would comprise those projects which formed years 4, 5 and 6 of the previous revision, subject to those projects remaining a priority for the delivery partner with a further 3 years of pipeline projects added to the 9-year plan. This will focus on a 3-year investment plan and draft budgets, alongside the Wales Infrastructure Investment Strategy.

Projects identified for delivery under the Education Mutual Investment Model (MIM) delivery framework will continue to be classified as Band B projects.

All submitted Business Cases must be underpinned by a Strategic Outline Programme (SOP), which provides an overarching view of individual local authority / further education institution strategies. Individual projects can then be approved subject to receipt of a satisfactory Business Case.

Current intervention rates would be retained to support the deliverability and affordability of delivery partners' individual programmes.

Further information and guidance will be issued and published on our web site in the coming weeks.

Sustainable Communities for Learning Team
Education Directorate
Welsh Government

Appendix 2 - Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme, Community Focused Schools and ALN projects

Year 1-3 (2024/2025/2026)

Projects in years 1-3 are expected to reach full business case within the first 3 years

School	Anticipated Cost	Rationale / Current Status
Currently Delivering		
Glyncoed Primary School & Welsh Medium Childcare Facility - New Build	£13.5m	Full Business Case Approved Ebbw Fawr Primary Redevelopment February 2021 Contractor appointed Scheduled for completion May 2024 Jointly funded by Sustainable Communities for Learning programme & WG Childcare Grant
Rhos y Fedwen Primary School Remodelling and small extension with 3G pitch	£1m	Full Business Case Approved Ebbw Fawr Primary Redevelopment February 2021 Scheduled for completion June 2024
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg Remodelling and development of a Resource Base	£1m	Business Case approved November 2020 Project completed Autumn period 2022 Ministerial opening June 2023
Welsh Medium Chartist Way New build	£13.5m	100% WM Grant Full business case approved October 2018, delays in appointing a contractor as a result of the pandemic and market forces Contractor appointed July 2023, Drilling and Grouting works have commenced on site Scheduled completion date May 2025
Projects moved over from Band B to the rolling programme		
School	Anticipated Cost	Rationale / Current Status
Ebbw Fawr 3-16 Learning Community – Secondary Phase Extension	£5m	As a result of issues raised by the school in January 2022 a capacity review was undertaken. The accommodation audit based on the capacity and admission number the school were adhering highlighted that the internal footprint of the school could no longer accommodate the numbers of pupils it was built for. Projections based on the actual footprint of the school showed that the school have been experiencing sufficiency issues since January 2022. This is in part related to the development of an ALN provision at the school in 2021 Full business case to be submitted to WG April 2024 Contractor appointment Summer 2024
Tredegar comprehensive School Extension	TBD	A project brief is being developed with the school in relation to an extension to the building (Subject to planning approval), this is being planned in line with anticipated sufficiency issues for September 2026 Business Case to be submitted to WG May 2024
Pen y Cwm Special School/ Ebbw Fawr Primary	£15m	Working with the school to develop offices into classrooms, to re-open the Bistro area and develop an outdoor classroom to facilitate learning and to develop 3 additional a sensory areas. In terms of longer term, planning currently looking at an options appraisal and a forecast demand analysis going forward to formulate a business case to Welsh Government Outline Business Case to Welsh Government - Summer 2024

Year 4-6 (2027/2028/2029)

Projects in years 4-6 are being developed and going through statutory consultation

School	Anticipated Cost	Rationale / Current Status
Welsh Medium Primary Development	TBD	Commitment given in Blaenau Gwent's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan to undertake a feasibility study once the Seedling provision in Chartist Way Tredegar is opened for 3-4 years to determine if a further provision is required Potential for 100% WM funding if another Welsh Medium Capital round is opened by Welsh Government Welsh Government will be monitoring surplus place figures, depending on the capital funding available their focus could become - transferring schools from English medium to Welsh medium or having a dual stream school
Cwm Primary School Refurbishment	TBD	Rolled over from Band B Low Condition and Suitability
Faith Based – Potential 1 school to replace 3 schools	TBD	Formal consultation required 85% funding intervention rate, 15% Initial discussion with Diocese Diocese could contribute towards the 15%
WM Secondary Planning		Due to the development of a Seedling school in Torfaen, Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynllyw will no longer be able to accommodate Blaenau Gwent Learners from September 2028, currently discussing on a Regional basis with Merthyr, Powys Monmouthshire etc to determine a regional solution Welsh Government will be monitoring surplus place figures, depending on the capital funding available their focus could become - transferring schools from English medium to Welsh medium or having dual stream schools
Brynmawr Foundation School		Currently the lowest condition and suitability Secondary school. School not suitable for Secondary School remodelling, phased or full replacement needed Site access issues has been the immediate priority, further discussions to resume with the school and Technical colleagues in the Spring term

Year 7-9 (2029/2030/2031)

Projects in years 7-9 are pipeline projects

School	Anticipated Cost	Rationale / Current Status
Replacement Primary School	TBD	To be determined subject to school condition and suitability assessments, likely to be in Tredegar area
Brynmawr Foundation School	TBD	Depending on the outcome in years 4-6 may need to feature in years 7-9 also
WM Secondary Planning		Depending on the outcome in years 4-6 may need to feature in years 7-9 also

Agenda Item 7

Cabinet and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: N/A

Committee: **People Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **30th January 2024**
Report Subject: **Forward Work Programme: 19th March 2024**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Sue Edmunds, Cabinet Member People and Education**
Cllr Haydn Trollope, Cabinet Member People and Social Services
Report Submitted by: **Scrutiny and Democratic Officer**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
x	x	17.01.24			30.01.24			

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 To present to Members the People Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the Meeting on 19th March 2024 for discussion and agreement.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 The Scrutiny Work Programmes are key aspects of the Council's planning and governance arrangements and support the requirements of the Constitution.
 - 2.2 The topics set out in the Forward Work Programme link to the strategic work of the Council as identified by the Council's revised Corporate Plan, corporate documents and supporting business plans.
 - 2.3 Effective work programmes are essential to ensure that the work of scrutiny makes a positive impact upon the Council's delivery of services.
 - 2.4 The Committee's Forward Work Programme was agreed in July 2023, recognising the fluidity of the document to enable the Committee to respond to urgent and emerging issues, and included timescales when reports will be considered by the Committee. The work programme is managed and implemented by the Scrutiny and Democratic Officer under the direction of the Chair and Committee.
 - 2.5 The forward work programme for the forthcoming meeting will be presented to Committee on a 6 weekly cycle in order that Members can consider the programme of work; request information is included within the reports, as appropriate and / or make amendments to the work programme.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option 1:** The Scrutiny Committee consider the Forward Work Programme for the meeting 19th March 2024, and

- Make any amendments to the topics scheduled for the meetings;
- Suggest any additional invitees that the committee requires to fully consider the reports; and
- Request any additional information to be included with regards to the topics to be discussed.

3.2 **Option 2:** The Scrutiny Committee agree the Forward Programme for the meeting 19th March 2024, as presented.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- Appendix 1 – Forward Work Programme – Meeting on 19th March 2024

People Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme

Dates	Scrutiny Topic	Purpose	Lead Officer	Cabinet / Council
Meeting: 19th March 2024 Deadline: 5 th March 2024	Improving Schools Programme	Performance Monitoring To provide Members with an update on any inspection report findings (when available) and progress within schools that are causing concern or subject to Council intervention.	Luisa Munro-Morris	Cabinet
	Education Digital Strategy	Pre-Decision To consider the Draft Strategy and recommend approval by Cabinet.	Joanne Watts	Cabinet
	School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education Statutory deadline for the policy to be published by 15th April	Pre-Decision To consider the draft School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education 2023/24 prior to approval by the Cabinet.	Joanne Watts	Cabinet

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