

# Safeguarding Performance Report

## **Social Services**

1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to  
31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

## **Education**

Spring Term 2021

## **Corporate Services**

1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to  
31<sup>st</sup> March 2021



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

# **Blaenau Gwent**

County Borough Council

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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.

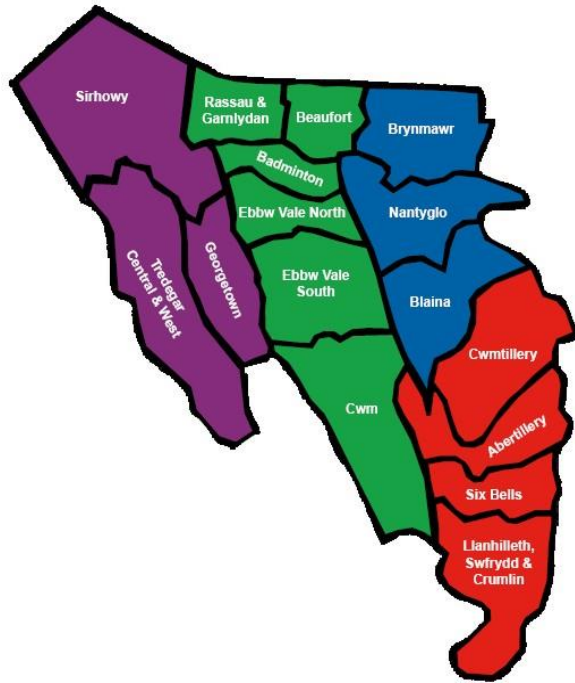
The report includes information on the following:

- 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



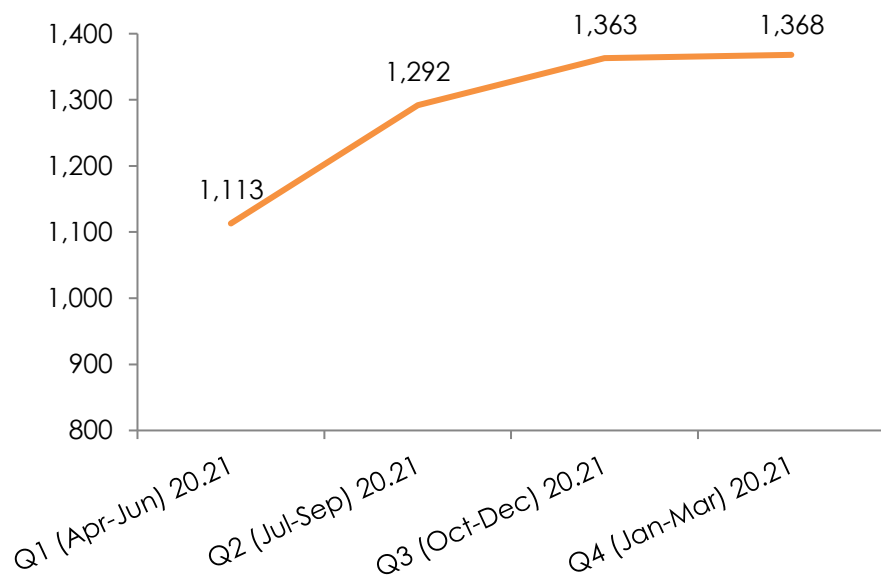
- 45% of Blaenau Gwent's local areas are amongst the top 20% deprived areas in Wales. (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019)
- The proportion of benefit claimants amongst people of working age was higher in Blaenau Gwent than the proportion across the comparable authorities (working-age client group

– key benefit claimants August 2014 - 23.2% in Blaenau Gwent compared to all Wales level of 16.4%)

- 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: 69,713 Number of 0 – 17 year olds: **13,607** (2018 Population Estimates)
- Number of Open cases to Children's Social Services as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 20: **930**
- Number of pupils attending primary schools: **5,961**
- Number of pupils attending secondary schools: **3,115**

# 01 | Referrals to Social Services

**Fig: 1.1 Number of referrals received by Social Services**

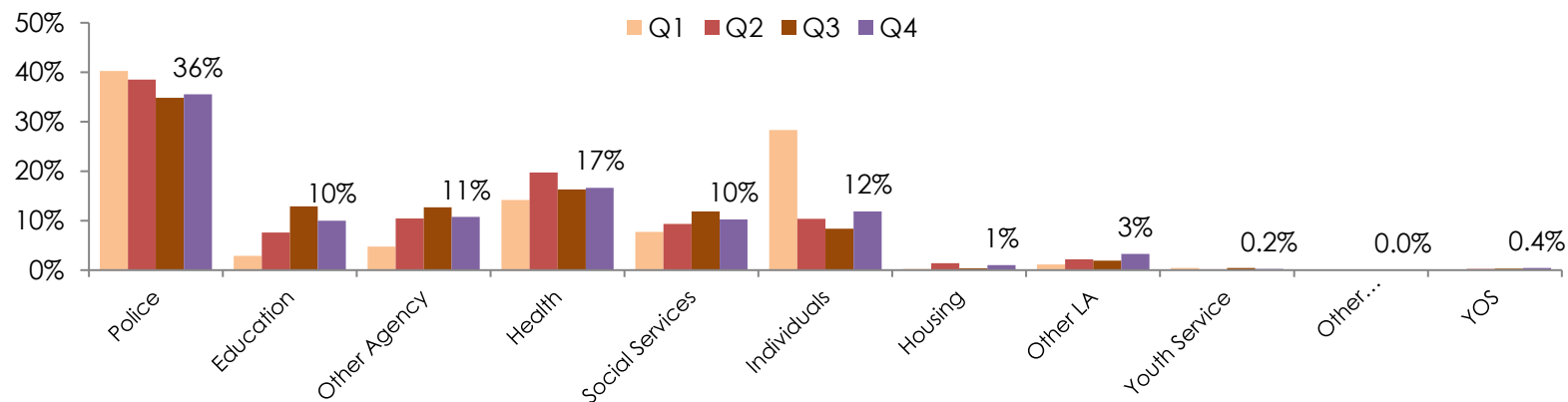


**Fig: 1.2 Number and Percentage of Referrals by Source (Q1, Q2, Q3 & Q4)**

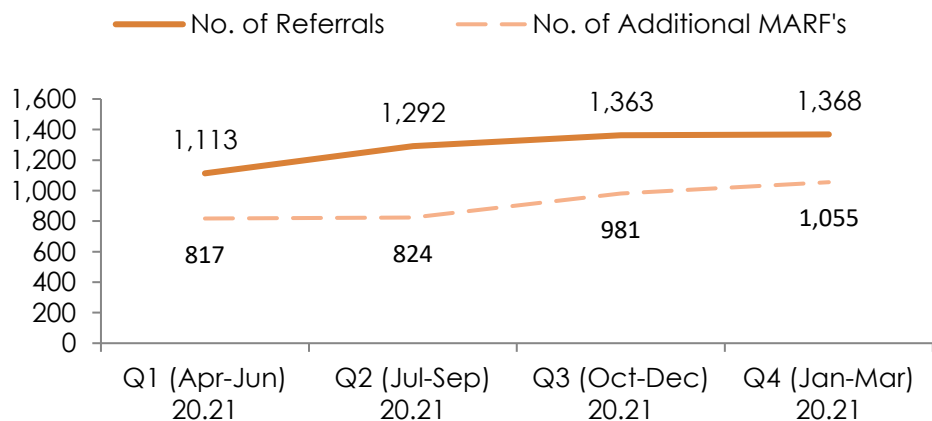
	Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 3	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Police	448	40%	498	39%	475	35%	486	36%
Education	32	3%	93	7%	158	12%	135	10%
Other Agency	53	5%	135	10%	173	13%	147	11%
Health	158	14%	255	20%	222	16%	228	17%
Social Services	86	8%	121	9%	162	12%	140	10%
Individuals	315	28%	134	10%	114	8%	162	12%
Education - Post 16		0%	0	0%	3	0%	2	0%
Education - OOC		0%	5	0%	15	1%	0	0%
Housing	3	0%	18	1%	5	0%	14	1%
Other LA	13	1%	28	2%	26	2%	45	3%
Youth Service	5	0%	2	0%	6	0%	3	0.2%
Other Departments	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
YOS	0	0%	3	0%	4	0%	6	0.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,113</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,292</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,363</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,368</b>	<b>100%</b>

# 01 | Referrals to Social Services

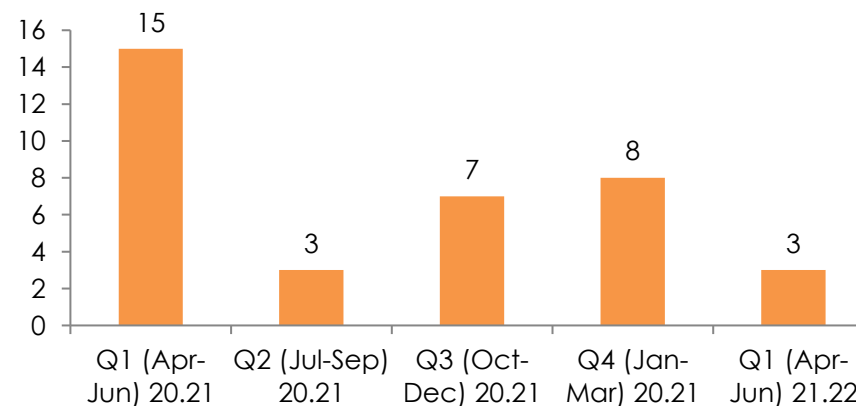
Graph showing the source of referrals and the percentage



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

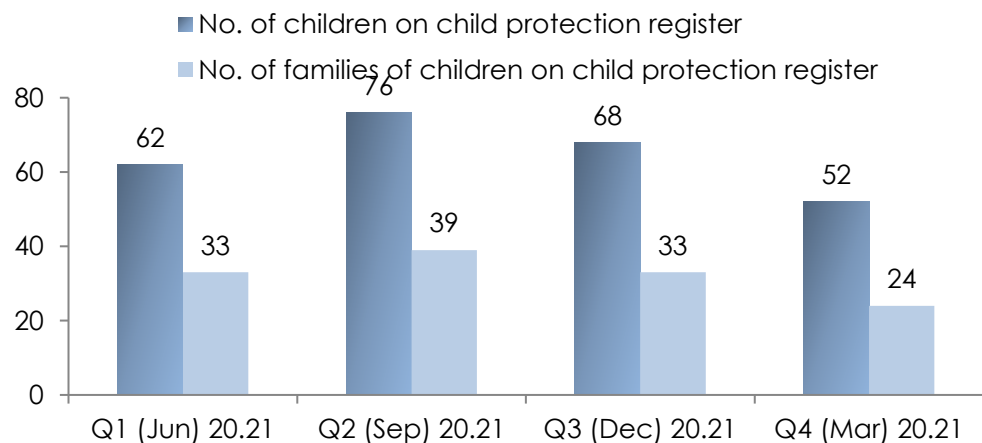


**Fig: 1.4 Referrals received from Youth Services**

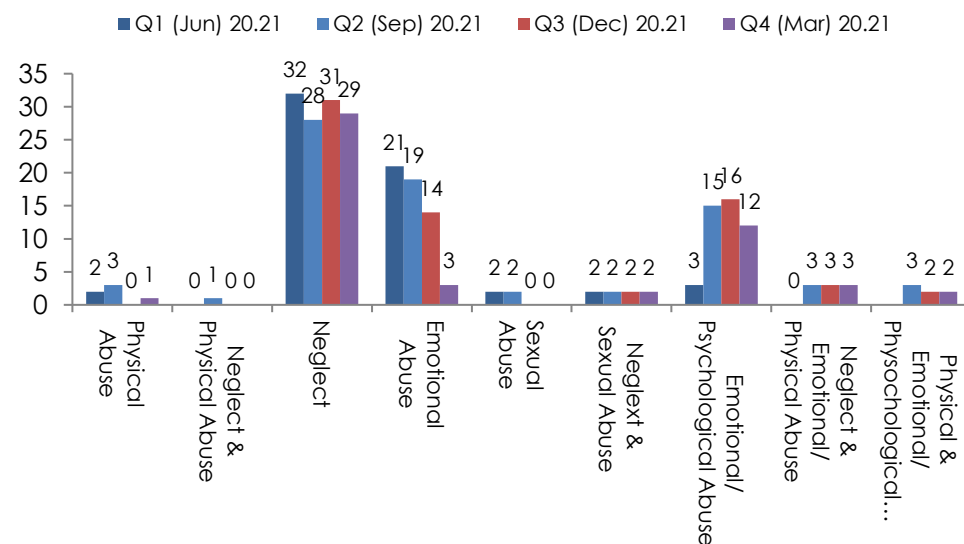


# 02 | Child Protection Register

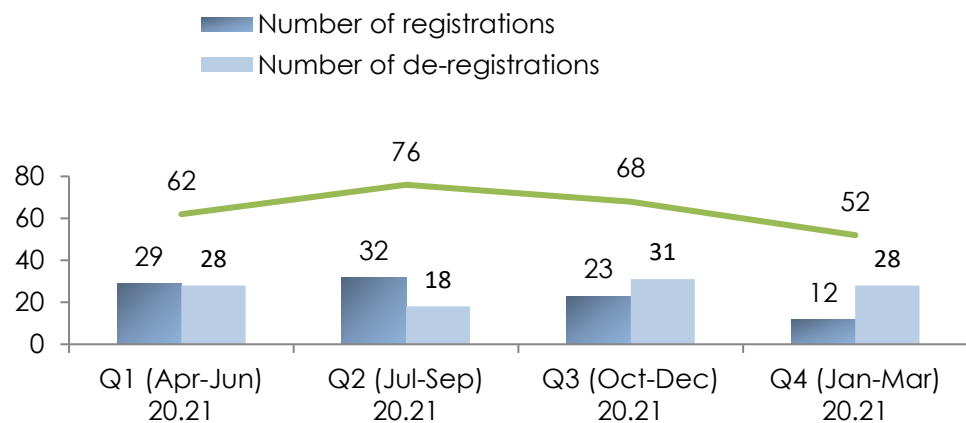
**Fig 2.1 Children on the Child Protection Register**



**Fig 2.3 Categories of abuse**



**Fig 2.2 Child Protection Register Summary**



**Fig 2.4 Age Breakdown of children on child protection register**

# 02 | Child Protection Register

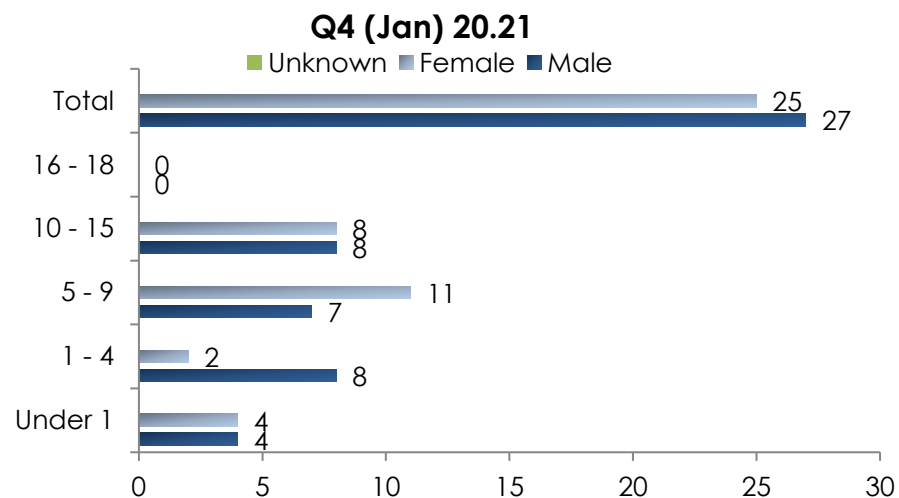
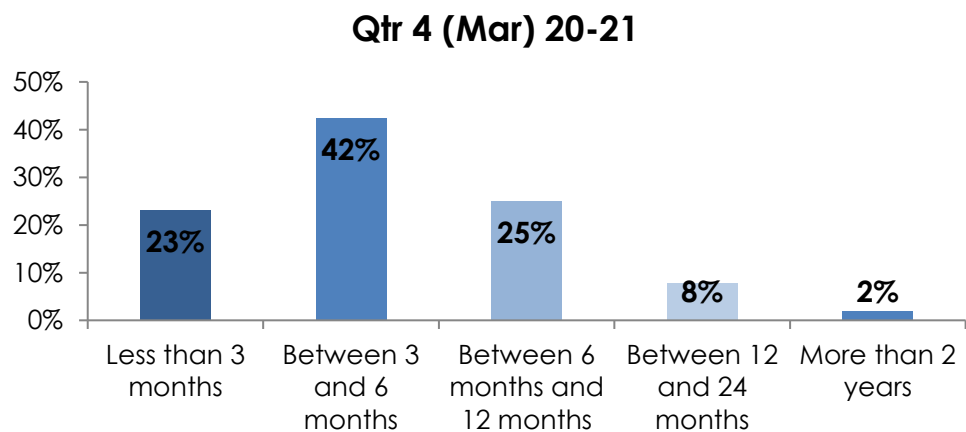


Table showing the breakdown of children on the child protection register over the last 12 months

	Q1 (Jun) 20.21	Q2 (Sep) 20.21	Q3 (Dec) 20.21	Q4 (Mar) 20.21
Less than 3 months	25	31	23	12
Between 3 and 6 months	14	15	20	22
Between 6 months and 12 months	19	26	15	13
Between 12 and 24 months	4	4	9	4
More than 2 years	0	0	1	1
	<b>62</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>52</b>

**Fig 2.5 Average length of time on register**





# 02 | Child Protection Register

**Fig 2.6: Child Protection Conferences**

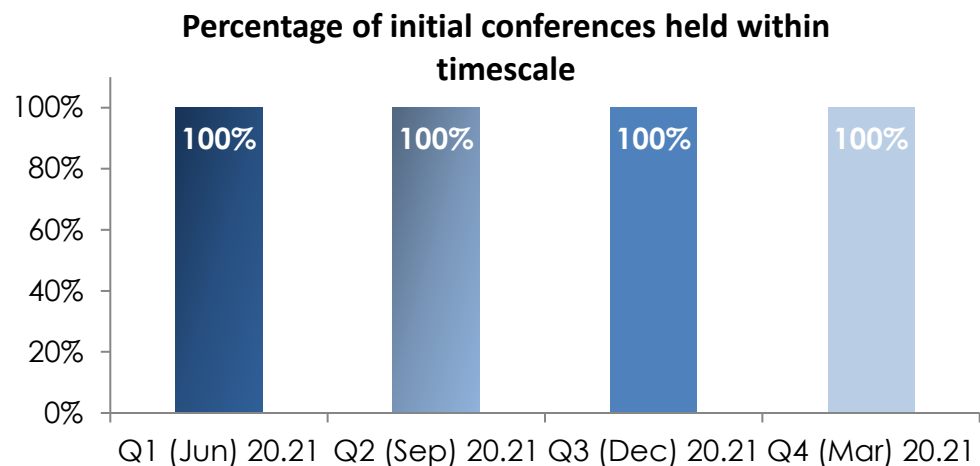
	Q1 (Jun) 20.21		Q2 (Sep) 20.21		Q3 (Dec) 20.21		Q4 (Mar) 20.21	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Conferences Held</b>	<b>84</b>		<b>75</b>		<b>81</b>		<b>68</b>	
Initial Conferences	33	39%	30	40%	28	35%	13	19%
No. of Families	19		16		12		8	
Review Conferences	51	61%	45	60%	53	65%	55	81%
No. of Families	27		22		29		25	

<b>Initial Child Protection Conferences</b>	<b>33</b>		<b>30</b>		<b>28</b>		<b>13</b>	
<i>Outcome:</i>								
Registered	24	73%	26	87%	22	79%	8	62%
Registered at birth	8	24%	3	10%	5	18%	4	31%
Not registered	1	3%	1	3%	1	4%	1	8%

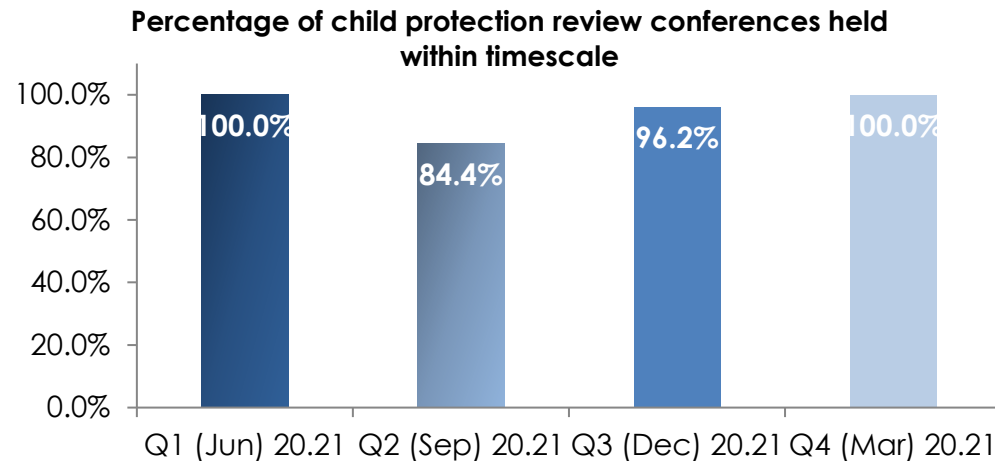
<b>Review Child Protection Conferences</b>	<b>51</b>		<b>45</b>		<b>53</b>		<b>55</b>	
<i>Outcome:</i>								
Continue with registration	23	45%	27	60%	26	49%	29	53%
Cease registration	28	55%	18	40%	27	51%	26	47%

# 03 | Referrals to Education

**Fig 2.7 Initial Child Protection Conferences**



**Fig: 2.8 Child Protection Review Conferences**

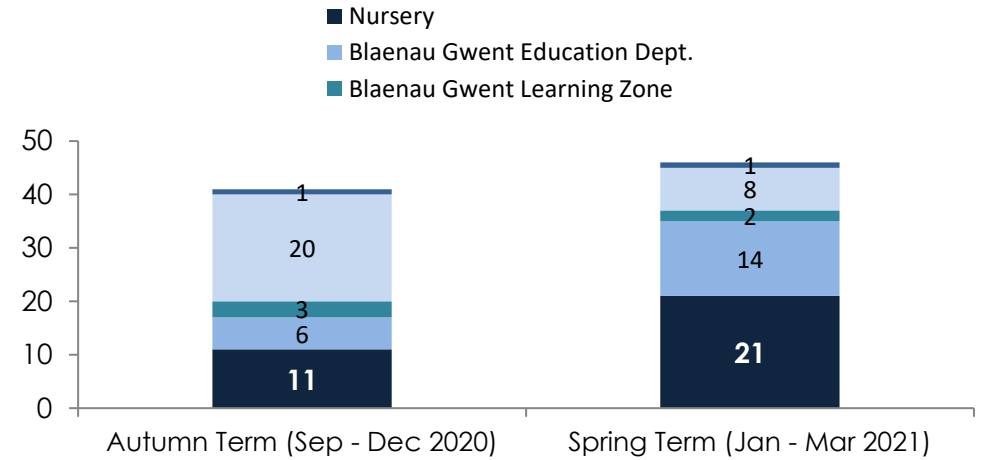
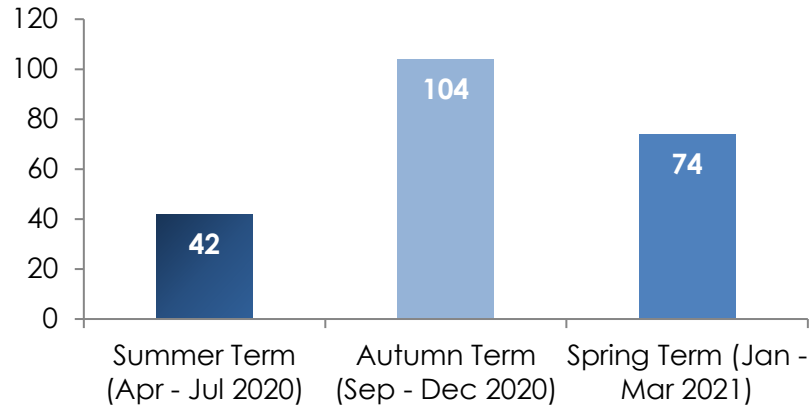


	Q4 (Mar) 19.20	Q1 (Jun) 20.21	Q2 (Sep) 20.21	Q3 (Dec) 20.21
Number of initial conferences held	33	30	28	13
Number of initial conferences held within 15 working days of the strategy discussion	33	30	28	13
Percentage of initial conferences held within timescale	100%	100%	100%	100%

	Q4 (Mar) 19.20	Q1 (Jun) 20.21	Q2 (Sep) 20.21	Q3 (Dec) 20.21
Number of Review Child Protection Conferences held	51	45	53	55
Number of Review Child Protection Conferences held within timescale	51	38	51	55
Percentage of Review Child Protection Conferences held within timescale	100.0%	84.4%	96.2%	100.0%

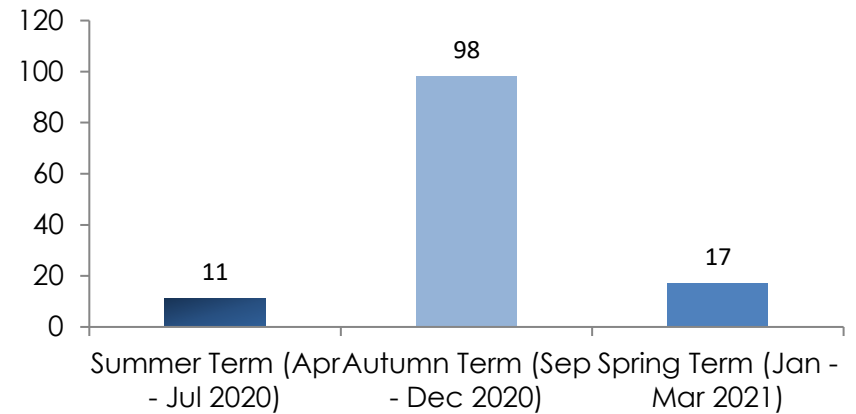
# 03 | Referrals to Education

**Fig 3.1 Contacts by Source – Primary School**



**Fig 3.2 Contacts by Source – Secondary School**

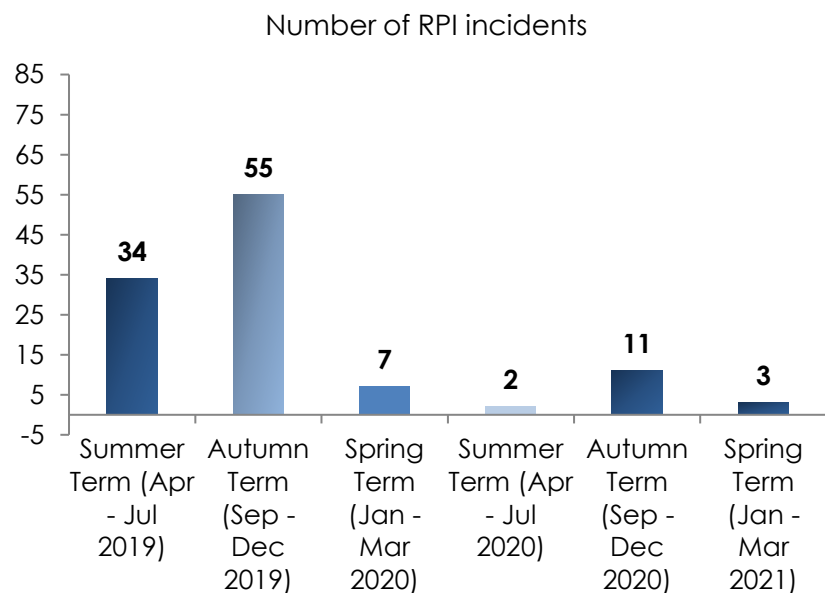
**Fig 33 Contacts by Source - Other**



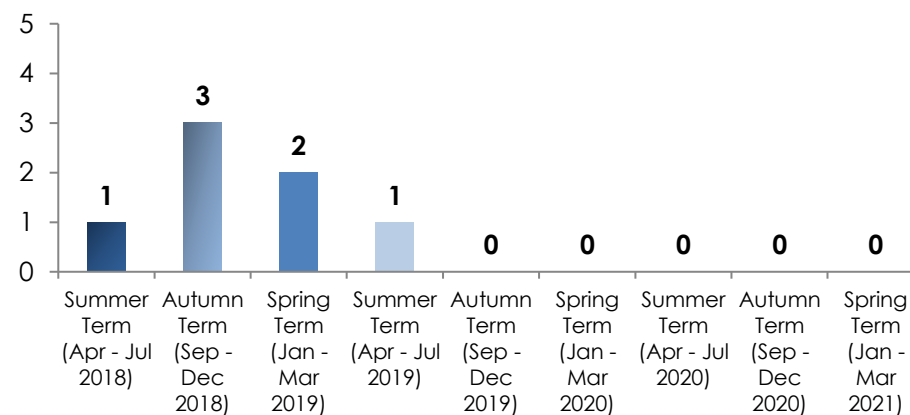
# 04 | Education

Attendance at schools has been severely disrupted due to the Covid pandemic. Schools have been closed for extended periods of time, repurposed, and partially opened, re-opening after February half-term. For these reasons, it is not advisable to make comparisons with performance in previous quarters, and years.

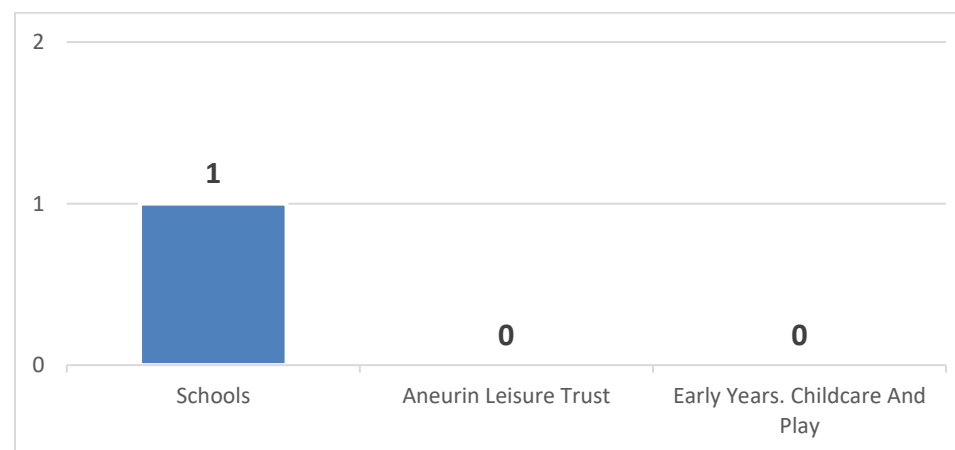
**Fig: 4.1 RPI Incidents**



**Fig: 4.2 Bullying incidents leading to exclusion**



**Fig 4.3 Quality Assurance Visits**

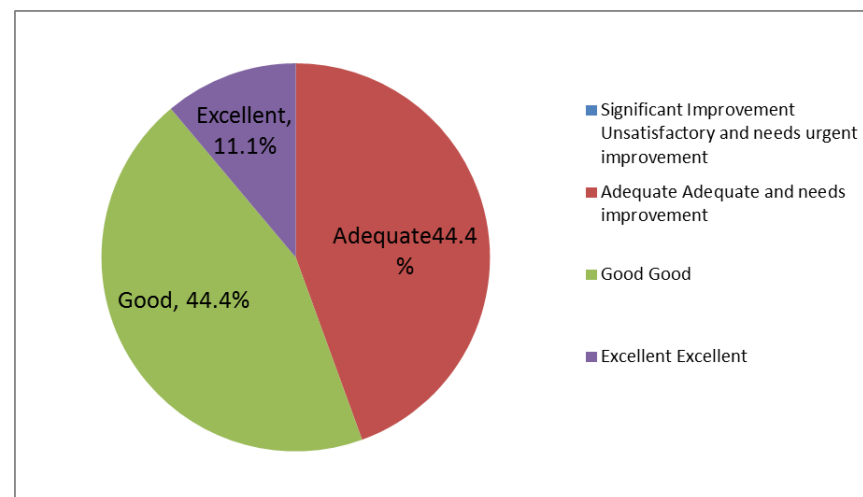


## 4 Estyn Judgements

The table below provides an overview of the Estyn judgements for schools inspected under the new arrangements from September 2017 up until December 2020.

Estyn Inspection Framework September 2017							Inspection Areas					
LA	Phase	School #	School	Date report Published	Follow-up Activity	Monitoring Visit 1	Standards	Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Teaching and learning experiences	Care, Support and guidance	Leadership and management	Out of Follow-up activity
BG	Secondary	6775401	Brynmawr Foundation School	Dec-19	SM		Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	
BG	Primary	6773309	St Marys CIW Primary School	Mar-19	-		Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	
BG	Primary	6772310	Rhos y Fedwen Primary **	Feb-17	Estyn Review		Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Jul-18
BG	Primary	6772310	Blaenycwm Primary	May-18	-		Good	Good	Good	Excellent	Good	
BG	Secondary	6772306	Abertillery Learning Community	01/02/2018 (revisit June 19)	SI	SI	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	
BG	Primary	6774074	St. Joseph's R.C. Primary	Jan-18	-		Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	
BG	Primary	6773316	St. Illtyd's Primary	01/10/2017 (revisit Mar 19)	Estyn Review	-	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Mar-19
BG	Primary	6772312	Glyncoed Primary*	Nov-17	-		Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	
BG	Primary	6772309	Glanhowy Primary*	Feb-18	-		Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	

## Care and Support Guidance Inspection Ratings

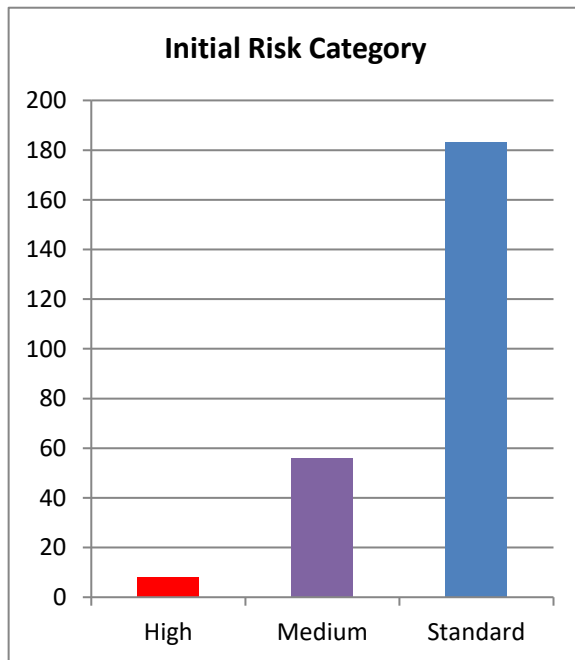
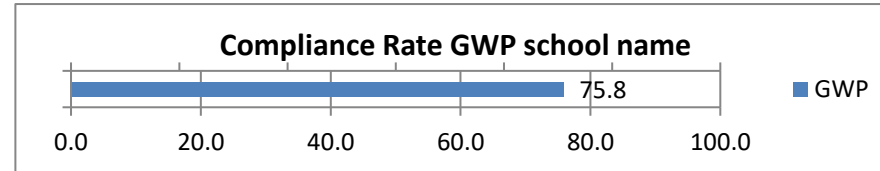


# 04 | Education

## 4.5 Operation Encompass

For the period Quarter 4 – January to March

Occurences	CYP
141	185



# 04 | Education

## 4.6 Elected Home Education (EHE)

	March 2021	March 2020
Total number of children electively home educated	94	77

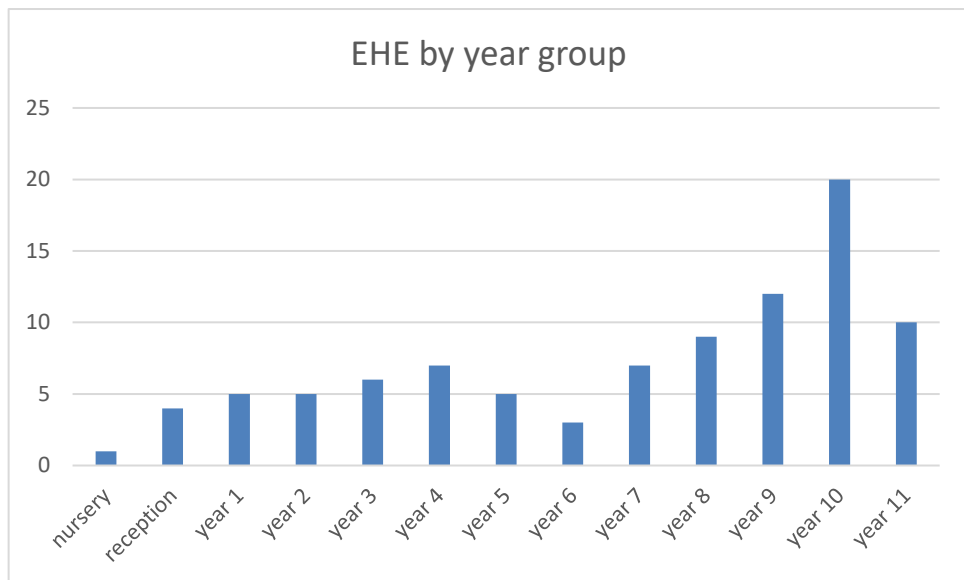
4.7 The table below sets out the number of secondary age pupils who have become EHE or who have returned to school from being EHE during the summer, autumn and spring term.

Month	School 1		School 2		School 3		School 4	
	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In
Apl – Jul 2020	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sept – Dec 2020	2	0	3	0	4	2	1	0
Jan – Mar 2021	1						2	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>

4.8 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 and spring term.

Month	Primary		College		Did not transition		Moved into/out of Borough (including BG pupils that were in OOC schools)		School place unavailable	
	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In
Apl – Jul 2020	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Sept – Dec 2020	18	2	0	2	8	0	4	5	2	0
Jan – Mar 2021	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

## 4.9 Breakdown per year group EHE





## 5.1 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 bi-annually to Corporate Leadership Team.

***This reporting has been relaxed during the pandemic, however the monitoring and escalation processes have continued.***

The information shown below is as of 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2021.

### 5.1.1 Position Statement: New Starter / Rolling Programme DBS Checks Schools

**Effective Date: 22nd April 2021**

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

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

Only those schools with DBS out of compliance will be detailed below.

Rolling Programme							
Department / School	Awaiting Appointment	Appt Comments	Awaiting Certificate	Cert Comments	Total	Escalation	
						Chased with Employee	Escalation to Operational Team
School 1	1	Awaiting ID documents	0		1	0	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

### 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

5.1.2 Position Statement: New Starter / Rolling Programme DBS Checks Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (Excluding Schools).

Effective Date: 22nd April 2021

Criteria	Total
Staff requiring a DBS	1079
Staff with a valid DBS	1079

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

### 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

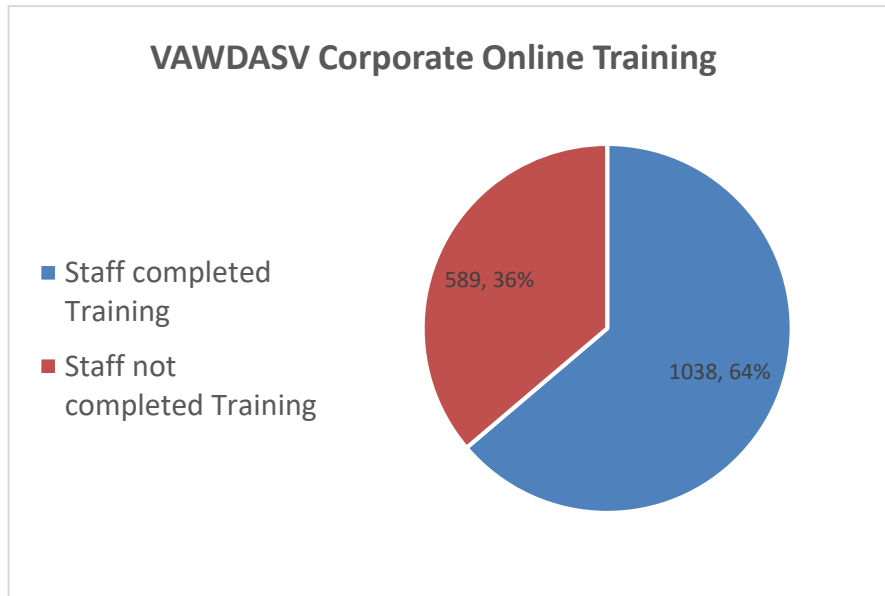
## 5.3 VAWDASV Corporate Training Online

### Corporate Training

#### Domestic abuse Training

Corporate training has been provided to staff in respect of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence with **69%** of staff having **completed** the **VAWDAS online training**.

#### 5.3.1 VAWDASV Corporate

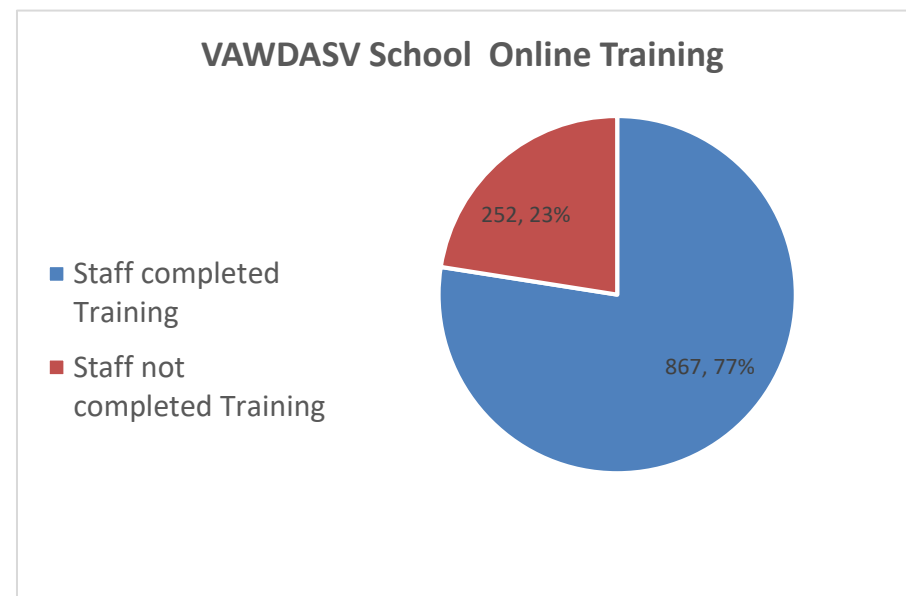


### All Wales Safeguarding Training on line for staff

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.

#### 5.3.2 VAWDASV Schools



## 5.4 Risk Register

Ref No.	Description of Risk	Triggers	Consequences				Current Controls						Proposed further controls to mitigate / reduce risk	Risk Owner
				Likelihood	Impact	Status	Likelihood	Impact	Status	Likelihood	Impact	Status		
CRR4	Safeguarding - Failure to ensure adequate safeguarding arrangements are in place for vulnerable people in Blaenau Gwent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If there is inadequate assessments and monitoring</li> <li>• If there is a lack of documentation</li> <li>• If there are increasing referrals for services</li> <li>• If there is a lack of appropriate guidance and training</li> <li>• If there is poor communication between all parties (internal / external)</li> <li>• If there is a high turnover of staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential significant harm / loss of life</li> <li>• Long term reputational damage and confidence in the Council undermined</li> <li>• Increase in complaints / Potential litigation / prosecution</li> <li>• External intervention</li> <li>• Increased pressure on budgets</li> <li>• Low staff morale</li> </ul>	3	4	<b>Critical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gwent Adult Safeguarding Board</li> <li>• SE Wales Safeguarding Children's Board</li> <li>• Standing item on CLT agenda</li> <li>• Safeguarding Network</li> <li>• Director of Social Services has a corporate responsibility for safeguarding</li> <li>• Lead Executive Member identified for safeguarding</li> <li>• Adult protection co-ordinator and process in place in line with All Wales process.</li> <li>• Manager's report consistently on safeguarding to elected Members and the Corporate Leadership Team</li> <li>• Joint Education and Social Services Safeguarding Team</li> <li>• Joint Social Services and Education Safeguarding scrutiny meeting held 3 times a year</li> <li>• Joint Business unit and subgroups for adults and children</li> </ul>	2	4	<b>High</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Plans will further embed risk assessment tools</li> <li>• Embedding of quality assurance processes in adult safeguarding</li> <li>• Training for all staff on Domestic Abuse Corporately</li> </ul>	<p>Director of Social Services</p> <p>Councillor John Mason</p>		

## **Quarter 4 Progress (January – March 2021)**

In Adult Services – the recent analysis of our adult safeguarding performance data and complexity of cases has resulted in an additional safeguarding post being created within the Safeguarding Team. This will add additional capacity to undertake safeguarding assessments and timely investigations and enable the service to enhance our preventative work through engagement and training. It has also enabled the safeguarding lead to further embed our quality assurance processes.

In Children’s services –Children in Blaenau Gwent have now started to return to school. Although we have seen an increase in referrals each Quarter during 2020/21 the rise has not been concerning to date. We await to see the impact on referrals when children have been in education with face-to-face contact for a longer period. The Children’s Services Service Manager has now completed the work on the Corporate Safeguarding policy update and a corporate safeguarding training programme which will be brought before CLT in quarter 1 of 2021/22.

The lack of meaningful safeguarding data available primarily due to most learners receiving their learning remotely resulted in the postponement of the Joint Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee

*The Joint Safeguarding Committee will now be held on 26<sup>th</sup> April and a report will highlight a need following the emergency response to the pandemic to re-establish the collection of data from schools through the safeguarding and inclusion protocol. This action is in hand and will be presented to CLT/Members accordingly. The Safeguarding in Education Manager has been tasked to provide a FADE evaluation of the safeguarding matrix as at the end of the Spring term. The information on the matrix includes policy adoption, training, DBS escalations and volunteer information. The Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) policy is being finalised and will be presented to the Joint Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee in the near future. The implementation of the data management system, namely MyConcern across the school estate continues. The Summer term Estyn Local Authority Link Inspector (LALI) meeting will cover an update to the inspectorate on safeguarding aspects of work.*

## **End of Year Review 2020 2021**

Despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the directorate has continued to provide a consistent and timely response to safeguarding including face to face visits. Initially there was a reduction of referrals when we first went into lockdown but quickly this returned to more ‘normal levels’. We have continued to report safeguarding performance to Welsh Government throughout the pandemic and to the Regional Safeguarding Board. Now that schools have returned full time to face to face contact we will continue to monitor the impact on referrals during quarter 1 of 2021-22.

In Adult Services due to the number and complexity of referrals we have created an additional social worker post within the safeguarding team, however the post is unlikely to be filled until quarter 1 of 2021-22. Also our lead service manager for Corporate Safeguarding has led

on the update of the Corporate Safeguarding policy as well as the proposed corporate safeguarding training programme which will be implemented in quarter 1 of 2021-22.

The risks around pupils not receiving “face to face” learning in the school setting as a result of the pandemic were recognised , WG guidance “Stay safe, Stay Learning: supporting the education system” encouraged practitioners to make virtual contact with learners based on routines developed by head teachers while following WG guidance on live streaming and video conferencing.

In relation to vulnerable learner provision, there was a strong provision in place to support learners that are Children Look After and those learners that are on the Child Protection Register whose families may have needed support. There were also arrangements in place with the education welfare service. The lack of meaningful safeguarding data available primarily due to most learners receiving their learning remotely resulted in the postponement of the Joint Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee.

*The Joint Safeguarding Committee will now be held on 26<sup>th</sup> April and a report will highlight a need following the emergency response to the pandemic to re-establish the collection of data from schools through the safeguarding and inclusion protocol. This action is in hand and will be presented to CLT/Members accordingly. The Safeguarding in Education Manager has been tasked to provide a Focus area of Analysis Development Way Forward (FADE) evaluation of the safeguarding matrix as at the end of the Spring term. The information on the matrix includes policy adoption, training, DBS escalations and volunteer information. The Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) policy is being finalised and will be presented to the Joint Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee in the near future. The implementation of the data management system, namely MyConcern across the school estate continues. The Summer term Estyn Local Authority Link Inspector (LALI) meeting will cover an update to the inspectorate on safeguarding aspects of work.*

## Regulatory Proposals

88	WAO	Follow-up review of Corporate Arrangements for the Safeguarding of Children Document Reference: 1521A2019-20	01/10/2019	<p>1. Corporate Safeguarding Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update the Policy</li> <li>• Update the structure</li> <li>• Include updated information from the All Wales Policy</li> <li>• When adopted in April 2020, include information from the All Wales Safeguarding Procedures</li> </ul> <p><b>Completion Date April 2020</b></p>	Alison Ramshaw (Corporate Safeguarding Group) T1 Families First, IAA 14+ and Safeguarding	Social Services	<p>The Corporate Safeguarding Leads mtg were on hold during the first stage of the pandemic but reconvened during the latter part of the year. The chair of the CSL group wrote a report to CLT and the Audit Committee seeking approval to extend the completion dates of the WAO Safeguarding Review recommendations as the pandemic meant that no progress could be made. Extended dates were agreed and a further 12 months was approved. Work was completed on the updating of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and a Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework has been developed. Both pieces of work are currently awaiting CLT approval prior to implementation. The Wales Safeguarding App is available to all those staff who have a works mobile and communications have gone out to alert those staff without a works mobile of the App which is available to all via Google search engine. Lead officers with responsibility for safeguarding are still to be identified</p>
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