

CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER EDUCATION – EXCLUSIONS FROM SCHOOLS **2019-2020**

SUMMARY REPORT

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To report and monitor the frequency and length of fixed term exclusions for Blaenau Gwent children looked after during academic year 2019-2020 to the Corporate Parenting Board.

This report covers the period 1st September 2019 to 20th March 2020. From this date, schools were re-purposed in the emergency response to the COVID pandemic.

SUMMARY

During 2019-2020 there has been a decrease in the incidents of exclusions issued in respect of children looked after. The number of individual children looked after who have received fixed term exclusions and the total number of days lost to exclusions has also decreased when compared with the previous year.

The majority of exclusions were issued for persistent disruptive behaviour. The majority of exclusions continue to be issued in respect of secondary aged pupils. The number of exclusions being issued for primary aged children remains low. Incidents of exclusion in mainstream school settings continues to be higher than in special or independent school settings.

More exclusions were issued by schools in Blaenau Gwent. Exclusions issued by schools in Blaenau Gwent are on average longer in duration than those issued by schools outside Blaenau. Incidents of exclusion were more prevalent amongst females than male pupils.

There has been a further decrease in the number of exclusions being issued for Blaenau Gwent children looked after who have Statements of Special Educational Needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Blaenau Gwent Corporate Parenting Board notes the decrease in incidents and length of exclusions being issued in respect of Blaenau Gwent children looked after to fixed term exclusions during the year.

It is also recommended that the action plan for 2020-2021 is agreed with the aim of further reducing the incidents and duration of exclusions issued in respect of Blaenau Gwent children looked after.

DETAILED REPORT

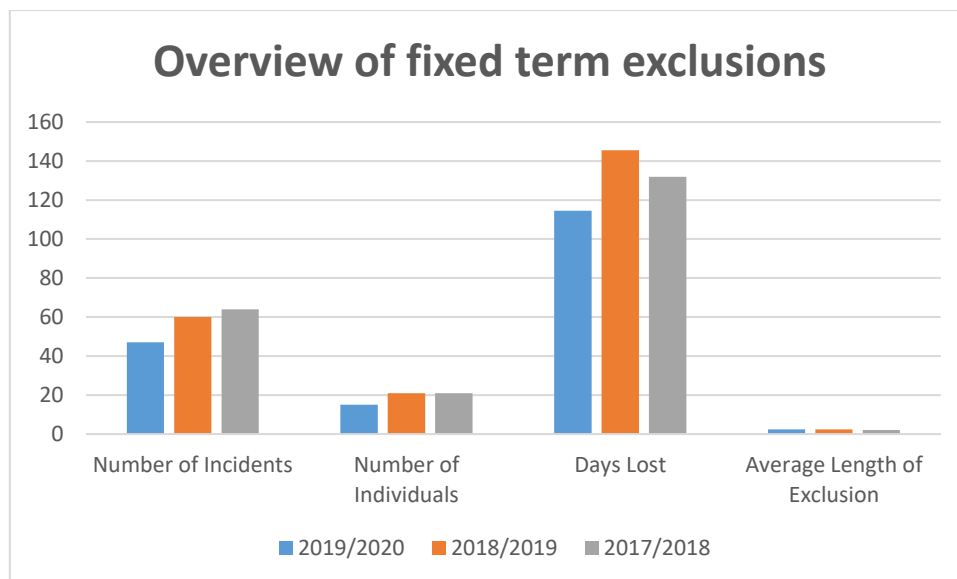
PRESENT POSITION

During academic year 2019-2020 children and young people were able to attend school for a total of 25 weeks rather than 39 due to school re-purposing as of Friday 20th March – which is relevant when drawing comparisons with the previous year's data.

Number and length of fixed term exclusions

47 fixed term exclusions were issued in respect of 15 individual Blaenau Gwent children looked after during academic year 2019-2020. A total of 114.5 school days were lost as a result. This is compared to a total of 60 fixed term exclusions issued in respect of 21 individuals and a total of 145.5 days lost for the previous academic year 2018-2019.

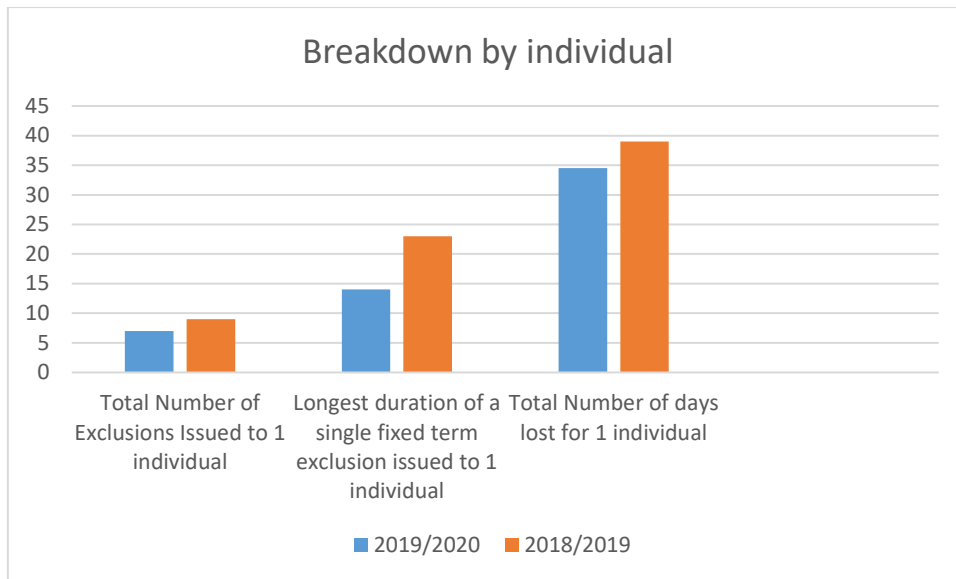
The average number of days spent out of school for an individual child looked after on fixed term exclusions during 2019-2020 was 2.4 days. This figure is in line with the previous academic year.



The highest number of fixed term exclusions issued in respect of one child was 7. This figure is a decrease when compared with the previous academic year when the highest number issued in respect of one child was 10 exclusions.

The longest duration of a single fixed term exclusion issued in respect of one child looked after during academic year 2019-2020 was 14 days. This figure is a decrease when compared with the previous year when the figure was 23.

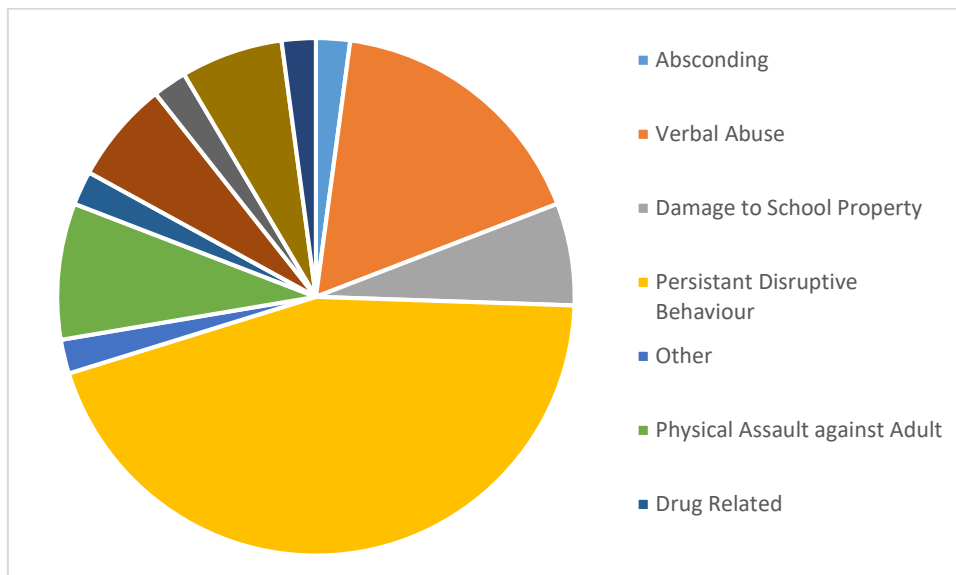
During academic year 2019-2020 the total number of days lost for one looked after child as a result of repeated exclusions was 34.5 days. This figure is a decrease when compared with the previous academic year when the figure was 39 days.



Of the 15 individual Blaenau Gwent looked after children who received fixed term exclusions from school, all but 2 (85%) received more than one fixed term exclusion during the year. This figure is higher when compared with the previous academic year when 76% of our children looked after received more than one fixed term exclusion.

Reasons for fixed term exclusions

The primary reasons for the majority of the exclusions issued during academic year 2019-2020 was persistent disruption behaviour.



Exclusions for primary and secondary aged looked after children

Of the 162 children of statutory school age who remained looked after at the end of the school year 2019-2020 there were more children of secondary school age than primary.

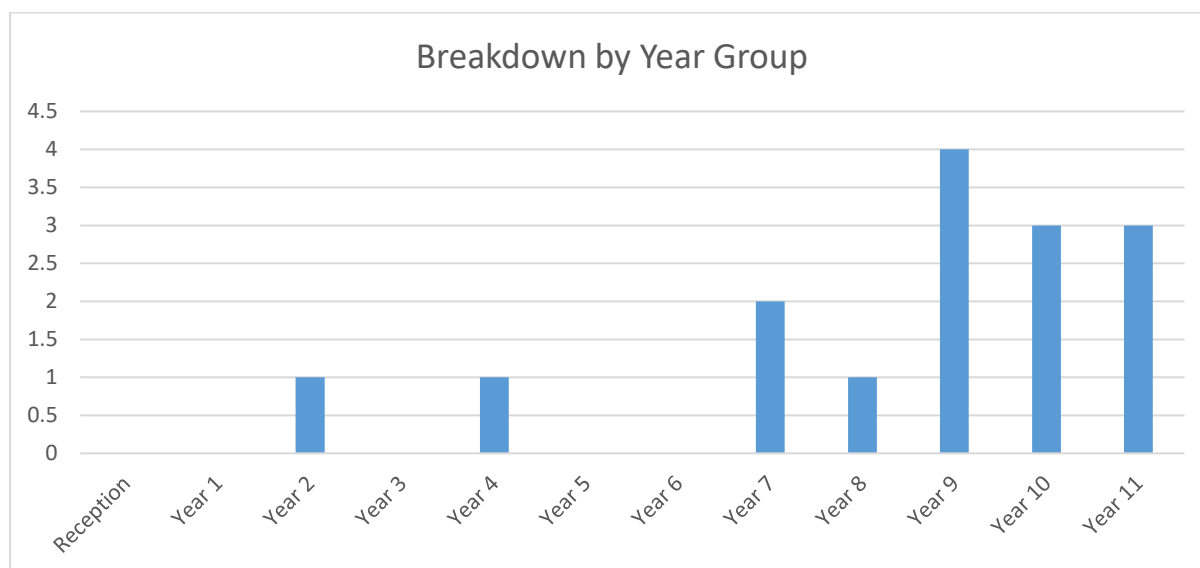
Primary aged pupils	77
Secondary aged pupils	85

87% of all fixed term exclusions (41 out of 47 incidents) for Blaenau Gwent children looked after were issued in respect of secondary school aged children during 2019-2020. Only 2 children of primary school age received fixed term exclusions during academic year 2019-2020. This figure remains in line when compared with the previous academic year.

Exclusion incidents by year group and gender

During 2019-20 - year 2 was the lowest age that a child looked after was excluded from school. There is no real pattern in primary schools given the very low numbers involved.

Of the 13 individuals of secondary school age who received fixed term exclusions during the year, 7 children were in key stage 3 (21 incidents) and 6 were in key stage 4 (20 incidents). Of the total exclusions issued 67% were in respect of females.



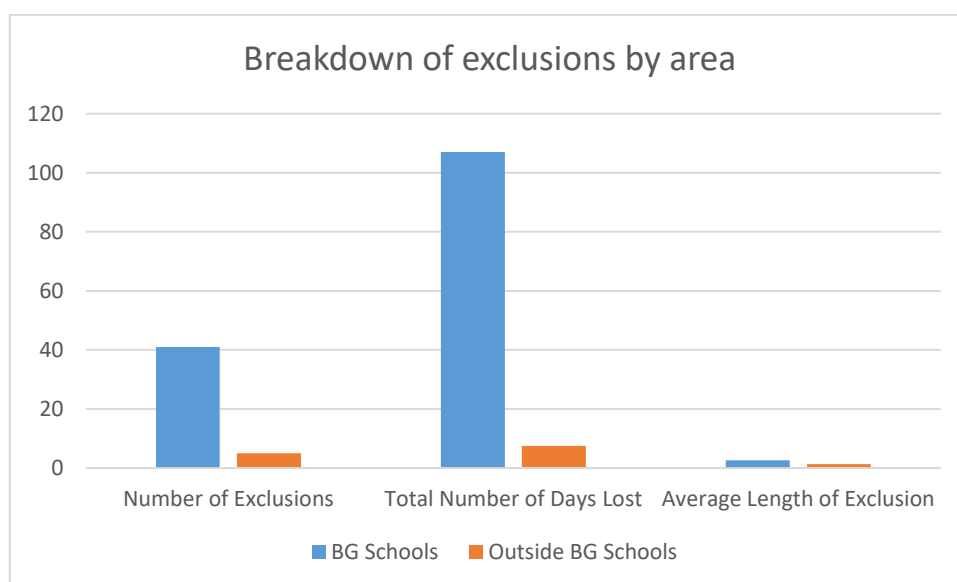
Exclusions for children attending Blaenau Gwent schools

Of the 162 children of statutory school age who remained looked after at the end of the school year 2019-2020 the majority continue to be educated in mainstream school settings and in Blaenau Gwent.

Educated in Blaenau Gwent	100
Educated outside Blaenau Gwent	62

During academic year 2019-2020 - 87% of the fixed term exclusions were issued in respect of our looked after children attending Blaenau Gwent schools (total 107 days lost) of this all but 2 fixed term exclusions were issued by mainstream schools.

19 of the 47 (40%) exclusions issued were in respect of 3 children. The average length of fixed term exclusions issued by schools in Blaenau Gwent was 2.7 days and 1.3 days for schools outside of Blaenau Gwent. This figure for Blaenau Gwent schools is considerably higher when compared with the previous academic year 2018-19 when exclusions issued by Blaenau Gwent schools were on average 1.35 days but a decrease when compared with the length of exclusion issued by schools outside the local authority area which were 2.4 days.



Breakdown of exclusions from mainstream secondary schools in Blaenau Gwent

School	Number of pupils excluded	Number of incidents	Total number of days lost	Average length of exclusion
Abertillery Learning Community	2	7	4.5	0.6
Brynmawr Foundation School	5	20	68	3.4
Ebbw Fawr Learning Community	1	2	2	1

Tredegar Comprehensive	1	6	13.5	2.3
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Breakdown of exclusions from special school settings in Blaenau Gwent

School	Number of Pupils excluded	Number of incidents	Total number of days lost	Average length of exclusion
The River Centre	1	2	4.5	2.3
Penycwm School	0	0	0	0

Of the 41 exclusions issued by Blaenau Gwent Schools, 20 (49%) were issued by one school in respect of 5 individuals.

Breakdown of exclusions issued by schools outside the local authority area in respect of Blaenau Gwent children looked after

Of the total number of fixed term exclusions issued, only 6 (13%) were issued by schools outside the Blaenau Gwent area.

Local Authority	School setting	Number of pupils excluded	Number of incidents	Total number of days lost	Average length of exclusion
Pembrokeshire	Mainstream	1	2	3.5	1.75
Monmouthshire	Mainstream	1	2	2	1
Carmarthenshire	SEBD Special	1	1	1	1
Caerphilly	Independent	1	1	1	1

Breakdown of exclusions by individual school settings

Almost all of the fixed term exclusions 96% (43 incidents) continue to be issued by mainstream schools. A total of 4 exclusions were issued by special school settings for children with social, emotional and behavioural needs.

Fixed term exclusions for looked after children with special educational needs

Of the total number of children looked after who received fixed term exclusions from school during academic year 2019-2020, 6 (40%) had statements of special educational needs. This is a further decrease when compared with the previous academic year when 8 (38%) of all children looked after who received fixed term exclusions from school had statements of SEN.

Of the children who were excluded who had statements of SEN the primary educational need for all of these pupils was social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

36% (17 out of 47 incidents) of the overall exclusions issued were in respect of children who had statements of special educational needs and the total number of days lost were 46.

Changes to education placements

4 of the children who received fixed term exclusions in 2019-2020 experienced changes to their education placement during the course of the year. This figure is in line with the previous academic year. 2 of the children experienced no further exclusions after changing education placement.

Number of Individuals	Change of education placement
2	Mainstream to Special School
2	Mainstream to Mainstream

Changes to care placements

5 of the children who received fixed term exclusions experienced changes to their care placements during the course of the year. Of this 3 had more than one change of placement. These 5 children were responsible for almost half (48%) of all fixed term exclusions issued.

Action Plan 2020-2021

Evaluation:

- Incidents of exclusions for a very small number of children are too high.
- This very small number of children are responsible for a significant proportion of the overall exclusions.
- One secondary school issued longer and more frequent exclusions.
- There is appropriate representation at reintegration meetings. Improved dialogue between schools and CLA education team regarding exclusions.
- There has been a significant focus on supporting transition of CLA. The significance of transition has reduced in 19-20.
- The proportion of exclusions from Blaenau Gwent schools issued in respect of children looked after continues to decrease in all but one of our schools when compared with the previous academic year
- There is a correlation between care placement instability and exclusions.

Actions:

- Share the exclusion report with schools and education directorate.
- Close tracking, monitoring and mentoring support of the two primary aged CLA who received exclusion during the course of the year.
- Ensure that the one secondary school is aware of the significantly higher level of exclusions issued.
- Continue to offer advice to the secondary school that has issued the higher proportion of exclusions including sharing of effective practice in other schools that have reduced exclusions.

Catherine Edwards

Children Looked After Education Coordinator

December 2020