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THIS IS A MEETING WHICH THE PUBLIC ARE ENTITLED TO ATTEND

25th June 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the People Scrutiny Committee will be held in 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, 2nd July, 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. **PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

3 - 6

To receive the decisions of the People Scrutiny Committee held on the 19th March, 2024.

(Please note the decisions are submitted for points of accuracy only).

5. **ACTION SHEET**

7 - 8

To receive.

6. **SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE INFORMATION FOR SOCIAL SERVICES 1ST SEPTEMBER 2023 TO 31ST MARCH 2024 AND EDUCATION AUTUMN & SPRING TERM 2023-24**

9 - 66

To consider the joint Officers' report.

7. **TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

To consider.

To: Councillor T. Smith (Chair)
Councillor J. Morgan, J.P. (Vice-Chair)
Councillor S. Behr
Councillor D. Bevan
Councillor J. Gardner
Councillor J. Hill
Councillor J. Holt
Councillor G. Thomas
Councillor D. Wilkshire
T. Pritchard

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

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: **THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

SUBJECT: **PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 19TH MARCH, 2024**

REPORT OF: **DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER**

PRESENT: Councillor T. Smith (Chair)

Councillors J. Morgan, J.P.
 D. Bevan
 J. Gardner
 G. Thomas
 G. Humphreys
 J.P. Morgan
 D. Wilkshire

WITH: Interim Corporate Director of Education
 Interim Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
 Service Manager Education Transformation &
 Business Change
 Scrutiny & Democratic Officer

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
No. 1	<p><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	
No. 2	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>An apology for absence was reported for the Interim Corporate Director of Social Services.</p>	

<p>No. 3</p>	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>No declarations of interest or dispensations were reported.</p>	
<p>No. 4</p>	<p><u>PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The decisions of the People Scrutiny Committee held on 30th January, 2024 (10.00 am).</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the decisions be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
<p>No. 5</p>	<p><u>ACTION SHEET</u></p> <p>There were no actions arising from the meeting held on 30th January, 2024 at 10.00 a.m.</p>	
<p>No. 6</p>	<p><u>PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The decisions of the People Scrutiny Committee held on 30th January, 2024 (12.15 pm).</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the decisions be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
<p>No. 7</p>	<p><u>ACTION SHEET</u></p> <p>There were no actions arising from the meeting held on 30th January, 2024 at 12.15 a.m.</p>	
<p>No. 8</p>	<p><u>IMPROVING SCHOOLS PROGRAMME</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Interim Corporate Director of Education.</p> <p>The Chair commended the schools outlined in the report on their positive inspections, and thanked staff, pupils and the Education Department for their input in the inspection process.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted as presented (Option 2).</p>	

<p>No. 9</p>	<p><u>EDUCATION DIGITAL STRATEGY</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Service Manager Education Transformation & Business Change.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted, and recommended to Cabinet for approval (Option 1).</p>	
<p>No. 10</p>	<p><u>BLAENAU GWENT ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR NURSERY AND STATUTORY EDUCATION 2025/26</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Service Manager Education Transformation & Business Change.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report and Policy document be accepted (Option 1).</p>	

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Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Action Sheet

People Scrutiny Committee

Meeting Date	Action to be Taken	By Whom	Action Taken
19.03.24	Item 8: Improving Schools Programme A letter of thanks and well wishes to be sent to the former Headteacher of Ebbw Fawr.	Democratic Services	A letter has been drafted and sent. Complete
19.03.24	Item 9: Education Digital Strategy A Member Briefing Session to be arranged on the Strategy.	Democratic Services	Members Briefing on ICT & Digitalisation in Schools, including the progress of the Hwb Ed tech programme, arranged for Thursday, 13 th June at 10am. Complete

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Agenda Item 6

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: **2nd July, 2024**

Report Subject: **Safeguarding Performance Information for Social Services 1st September 2023 to 31st March 2024 and Education Autumn & Spring Term 2023-24**

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

Report Submitted by: **Tanya Evans, 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	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
3-7 th June 24	13.06.24				02.07.24			13.06.24

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 October 2024 to the 31st March 2024, and Education for the autumn term 2023 and spring term 2024.

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 October 2024 to the 31st March 2024 and Education for the autumn term 2023 and spring term 2024.

- 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:

Option1

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 Q3(2,196) and Q4 (2,282). This offers a total of 4,478 for the two Q's. For comparison, the number of referrals for the same period (Q3/Q4) in year 22/23 totalled 3,670 therefore demonstrating a 22% increase in referrals. The volume of referrals being received via our front door Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) Team continues to present 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. Consideration has been given to the rising trends in referrals on a regional basis and whilst no definitive identification indicator has been found, there is a view that improved training opportunities to raise awareness on child protection issues may be a contributory factor to increased reports being made as well as the ongoing cost of living crisis which has had a profound impact on our local communities.

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.

Q3 saw an average of 328 individuals linked to a referral and an average of 111 individuals who received 2 or more referrals. Q4 saw an average of 310 individuals linked to a referral and an average of 119 individuals who received 2 or more referrals.

The highest number of referrals linked to any 1 individual across Q3 and Q4 was 34 which occurred in November 2023. This is somewhat higher than all other months during this reporting period where the average across the remaining months was 18.2

6.2.4 Figure 1.2: Shows the source of the referrals. As in previous quarters, Police remain the highest referring agency (Q3 29.1% and Q4 32.9%). Education and Health referrals are grouped closely within these quarters as being the second and third highest referring agency respectively.

Ongoing joint working with Police through West 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 has been considered on a regional basis as part of a task and finish group which has been set up under the Gwent Safeguarding Board. A regional Duty to Report (DTR) and Continuum of Support Threshold Guidance document has now been produced and ratified by Gwent Safeguarding Board to act as an aid for professional judgement on when to appropriately submit a referral to Children's Services. Multi-agency meetings are now being arranged to consider the formal launch of the document and holding awareness raising sessions/briefing sessions for practitioners across the region. Additionally, the document is being presented during one of the May practitioner events hosted by the Gwent Safeguarding Board to support with awareness raising.

6.2.5 Figure 1.3: Shows the numbers of referrals received into the department on open cases. The graph identifies an increase for the receipt of additional referrals on open cases from Q3(1,795) to Q4(1,825). 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 89 children on the child protection register in Q3 which demonstrates an increase of 6 from Q2. During Q3 there were a total of 27 new registrations which is a decrease of 20 compared to Q4. There were 6 less de-registrations in Q3 compared to the previous Quarter.

At the end of Q4 there were a total of 102 children on the child protection register which demonstrates an increase of 13 from Q3. During Q4 there were a total of 42 new registrations which is an increase of 15 compared to Q3. There were 8 more de-registrations in Q4 compared to Q3. In Q4 we have seen an increase in the number of children registered on the child protection register.

When scrutinising this data to identify potential reasons for the increase in child protection registrations, it is apparent that within Q4 there were registrations for 1 x sibling group of 5, 1 x sibling group of 4 and 4 x sibling groups of 3 which equates to 21 children spanning only 6 families.

Additionally, it is noted that there is a small cohort of children/families who have recently been registered past their 3rd review. As part of the internal Children's Services Audit Framework, it has been agreed that those children who remain registered past their 3rd review conference will be referred to the Safeguarding Manager for a Multi-Agency Supervision session. This will offer the multi-agency practitioners involved in supporting the child protection plan to have a focused reflective space to explore a potential way forward. It is promising to note that these sessions have been arranged by the Safeguarding Manager for the cases identified in this cohort.

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 Q3 and Q4. This is typically in keeping with national statistics for child protection categorisations.

For Q4 we have seen Neglect become the highest category for registrations with 53 children compared to 41 children in Q3. From the graph we can see that Neglect registrations has continued to increase quarter on quarter through 23/24. It is reasonable to suggest the continued cost of living crisis may be having an impact on the growing number of children registered under this category.

Emotional/Psychological Abuse registrations has remained stable with 46 children registered under this category in both Q3 and Q4. 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 Q4. In Q4 we identified females aged 5-9 being the highest (19), followed by males aged 10-15 age (18).

Age group comparison between Q3 and Q4 data identifies the following;

- 10–15-year-olds = Increase by **6**.
- Under 1's = No change.
- 5–9-year-olds = Increase of **9**.
- 1–4-year-olds = Decrease of **1**.
- 16- and 18-year-olds = Decrease of **1**.
-

6.3 Adults Social Services

6.3.1 Figure 3.1: The data shows an overall increase in referrals (25%) of adult at risk compared to the same quarters 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 increase could also be due to the national and regional media awareness raising. People are becoming more aware of their rights and the importance of reporting any concerns. We continue

to jointly deliver regular Safeguarding training with Caerphilly Safeguarding Team which also increases awareness.

6.3.2 Figure 3.2: The data shows we received the highest number of referrals for females over 65 (a total of 154 referrals). Within this gender and age category the highest number of reports received was for neglect (76) followed by physical abuse (41). 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. 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 (for quarter 3 and quarter 4) from care home settings (187) followed by own home (142). 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 comparable 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' (222 for quarter 3 and quarter 4). 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 was an increase in reports of abuse by a professional in quarter 3 and 4 (51) compared to last year's quarters (35). The continued training and close working with Providers to raise awareness of the Safeguarding procedures and the importance of reporting any concerns may have resulted in the increase in these reports. There has been an increase in reports in which the alleged perpetrator is another service user (an increase of 32 referrals compared to the previous quarter 3 and 4). This may be again due to increased awareness (due to the continued training and close working) with Providers reporting incidences between service users (in environments such as Care Homes and Supported Living). Some of the reported incidences may have not met the threshold for

Safeguarding and we are continuing to support and work with Providers regarding reporting appropriate Safeguarding concerns.

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 continues to be an increase in 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 the cost of living which is further impacting on 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 as well as local Domestic Abuse agencies such as Cyfannol and Phoenix Domestic Abuse Service.

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 were three schools inspected by Estyn during this reporting period. No health and safety or safeguarding concerns were highlighted.

6.4.3 Section 05 Figure 4.2.1/4.2.3 - Training - All schools are compliant with 'in-person' delivery of their whole school safeguarding training.

6.4.4 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 where there is limited to no evidence of a suitable education being provided by the parent to the child/ren. 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. The consultation for all local authorities to keep their own CME database has ended and the results will be published in due course.

6.4.5 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. This reporting period has seen an increase in the number of children accessing the Youth Offending Service. The figure at the end of Spring term 2024 is 84, compared to 79 for the academic year 2022-23.

6.4.6 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

6.4.7 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.

6.4.8 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 there has been a decrease in the number of incidents during this reporting period. The issues reported are throwing/kicking objects at property.

6.4.9 Figure 5.5.3 - Children Identified in 4-Stage ASB Process. The majority of individuals do not progress past Stage 1. Whilst in the summer term 2023, there was an escalation in the number of Stage 3 cases, attributed to anti-social behaviour in one of our town centres, there are no stage 3 and 4 cases during this reporting period.

6.4.10 Figure 5.8.5 Operation Encompass

In the Spring term, children were present at 46.8% of occurrences of reported domestic violence, a small decrease from 52.2% in the Summer term 2023.

6.4.11 Section 05 Figure 5.10.1/5.10.2: Exclusions - Exclusions have seen a reduction in the Spring term 24 when compared to the Summer term 23. The average number of days lost are also lower indicating that schools are excluding for shorter periods of time. vulnerable learner panel is in place where schools can discuss pupils with persistent disruptive behaviour; those that are at risk of being excluded and those that have been permanently excluded. This remains a key priority for the Education Directorate.

6.4.12 Section 05 Figure 5.11.2: Physical Interventions - The number of interventions has increased in Autumn and Spring terms 2023-24 when comparing to the same periods in the previous academic year. Nearly all of the interventions reported are attributable to the special schools

6.5 Corporate Safeguarding

6.5.1 Figures 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 DBS Compliance evidence 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 with an overall compliance rate of 99.58%. For 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 57% of staff having completed the VAWDASV online training. This accounts for a small increase of staff who have completed this training in comparison to the last quarter. 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 and repeat this every 3 years.

6.5.3 Figure 6.2.2 Corporate Online Safeguarding Training evidences 61% of staff having completed the safeguarding training. This identifies a small increase in staff who have completed this since the last quarter. On commencing employment with Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, all practitioners are required to have basic safeguarding awareness training as per corporate induction requirements. A refresher training session is required every 3 years.

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 to consider the standards and framework is aligned with training opportunities across the region.

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. We identify that the current training reporting system presents challenges as those practitioners requiring higher tier safeguarding training isn't reported in the same way as the online basic awareness training. It is positive that, Thinqi, a new Learning Management system is currently in the early stages of being developed and will replace the current learning system. This will seek to resolve many of the reporting issues we are currently facing as a council and will support us in identifying more accurate training compliance data.

6.5.4 Figure 6.3 Risk Register – The tables under this section evidences 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 reviewed by the Children's Safeguarding Team and key

themes were presented to the Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group in January 2024. Key areas for development identified in the 2022 and 2023 self-assessments are:

- **Training:** training compliance with the basic safeguarding training; knowing what to do and who to seek safeguarding advice from in the service area; and receiving appropriate training at the relevant level to enable practitioners to carry out their safeguarding responsibilities.
- **Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP):** having a named DSP with appropriate training and all practitioners knowing who this is and how to contact them in each service area.
- **Recognition:** Recognising when additional support is required and how to make a referral to services.
- **Information sharing:** how to share safeguarding information.
- **Planning:** reflecting what has gone well, what needs to improve and ensuring new learning is embedded into practice.

Following on from the completion of the safeguarding self-assessments in September 2023, the Children's Services Safeguarding Team has worked on undertaking a review of Corporate Safeguarding in the Council throughout Quarter 4 and has considered recommendations to strengthen the corporate safeguarding arrangements in the Council. The report to outline the recommendations is due to be presented to SLT and CLT towards the end of June 2024.

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 (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed).

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 Q3&Q4 2023-24 Final

Appendix 2 – BG Education Risk Register Q4

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 October 2023 to
31st March 2024

Education

Autumn 2023 & Spring
2024

Corporate Services

1st October 2023 to
31st March 2024



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.

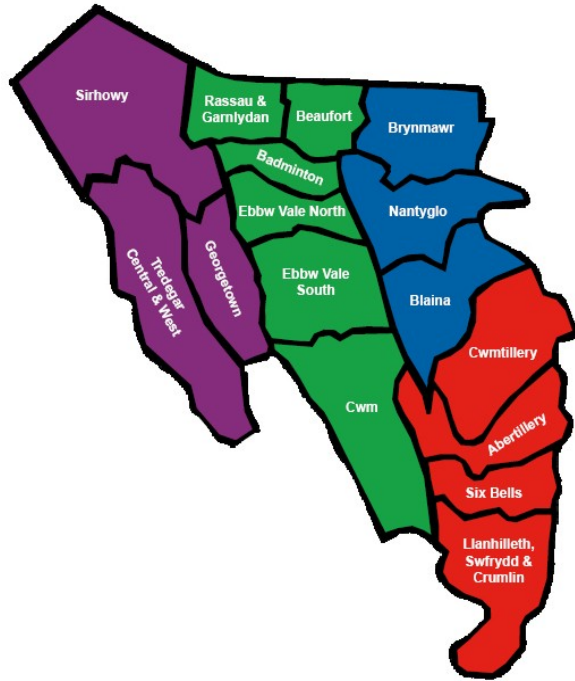
The report includes information on the following:

- 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 People Scrutiny

00 | Community Profile - Demographics

Community Profile



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- 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 2024: **1,108**
- Number of pupils of primary age (inc. nursery): **6,168**
- Number of pupils of secondary age: **3,314**

Fig: 1.1 Number of referrals received by Social Services

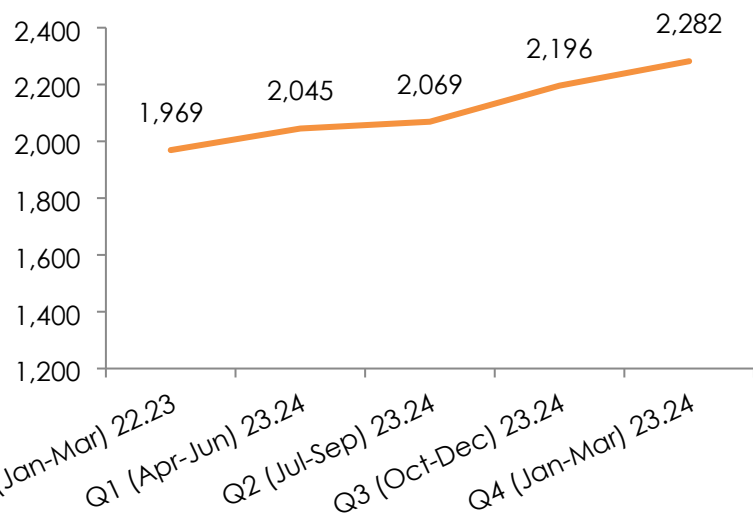


Fig 1.1a Number of individuals linked to referrals

	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24
Referrals	634	766	864	797	535	775	717	790
No of Individuals	237	355	404	319	262	318	306	308
2+ Referrals	82	150	154	103	78	137	102	119
Highest No. of Referrals for an individual	26	21	19	34	15	12	17	28

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

	Q3 23/24		Q4 23/24	
	No.	%	No.	%
SC - 3rd Sector organisation	33	1.5%	43	1.9%
SC - Advocate	1	0.0%	0	-
SC - Ambulance Service	6	0.3%	11	0.5%
SC - Care Regulator	0	-	1	0.0%
SC - Early Intervention / Prevention Service (Step-up)	33	1.5%	25	1.1%
SC - Education	453	20.6%	418	18.3%
SC - Friend or Neighbour	19	0.9%	20	0.9%
SC - Health	288	13.1%	328	14.4%
SC - Housing	19	0.9%	8	0.4%
SC - Independent Hospital	0	-	0	-
SC - Internal (Social Worker, other team)	189	8.6%	143	6.3%
SC - Local Authority	34	1.5%	51	2.2%
SC - Other	63	2.9%	106	4.6%
SC - Police	638	29.1%	751	32.9%
SC - Probation	158	7.2%	140	6.1%
SC - Provider	187	8.5%	168	7.4%
SC - Relative	13	0.6%	12	0.5%
SC - Self	62	2.8%	57	2.5%
Total	2,196	100%	2,282	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

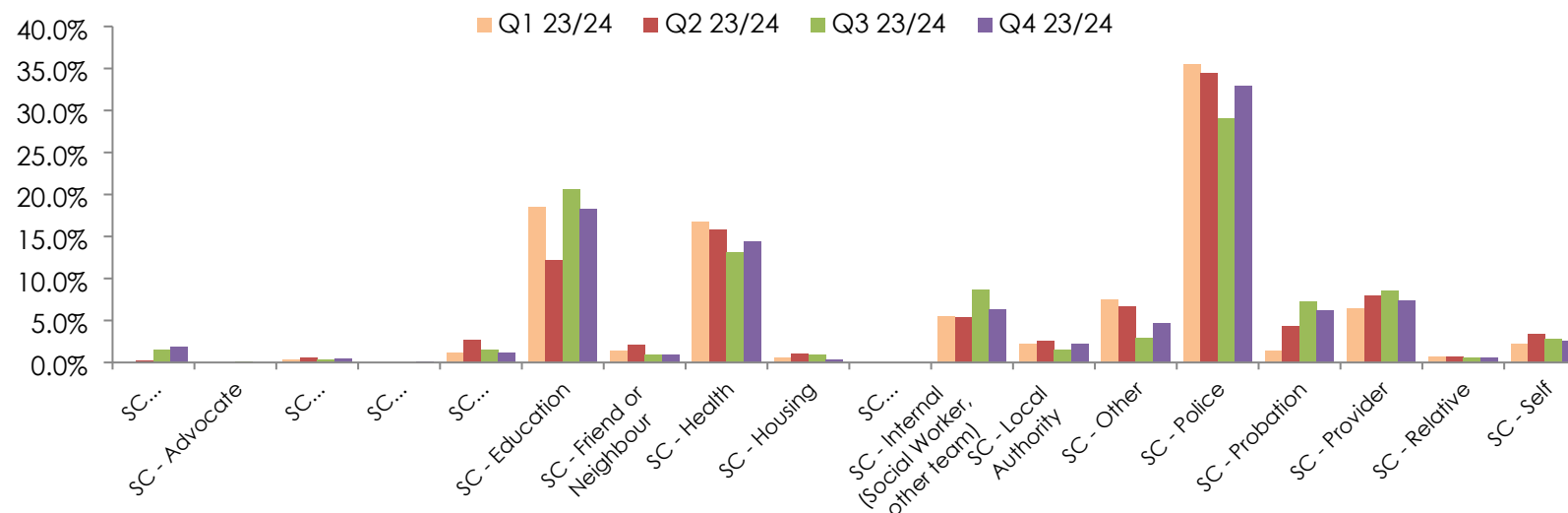


Fig: 1.3 Multi-agency referral forms (MARF's) received on open cases

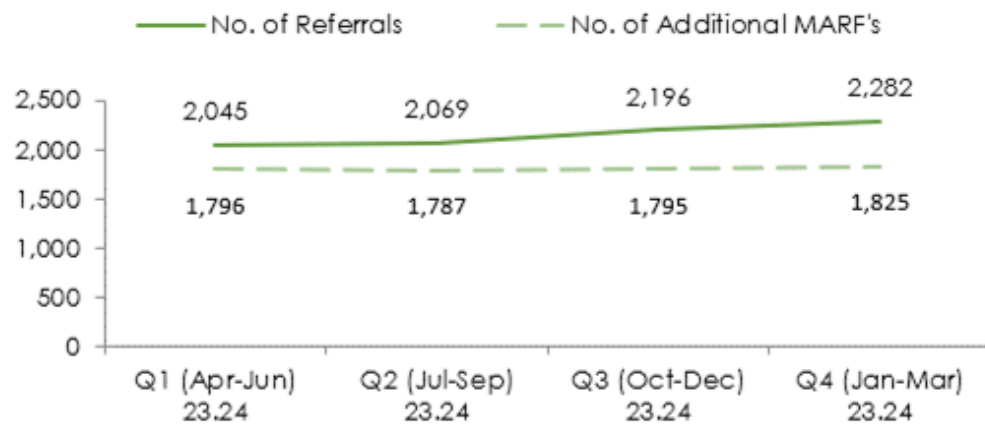


Fig 2.1 Children on the Child Protection Register

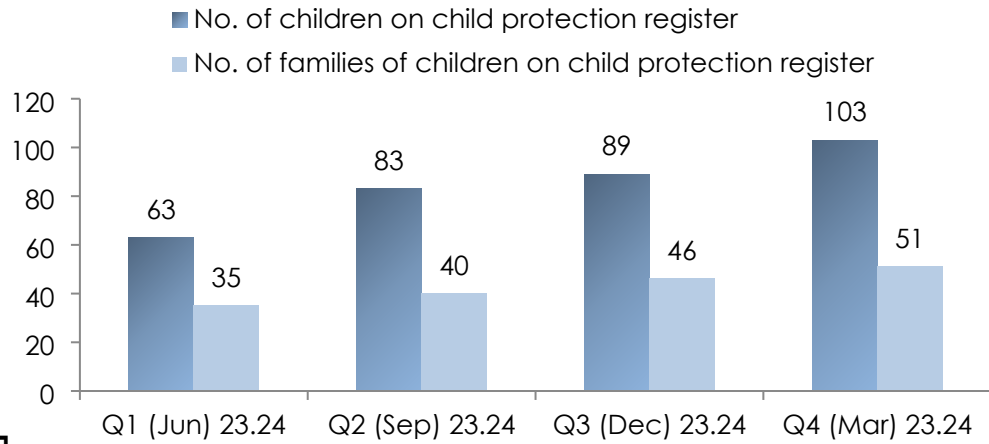
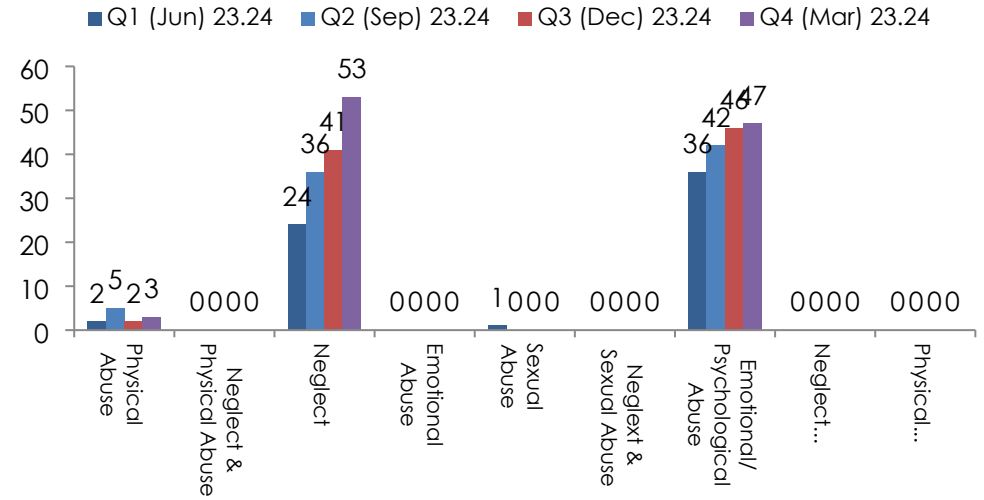


Fig 2.3 Categories of abuse



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Fig 2.2 Child Protection Register Summary

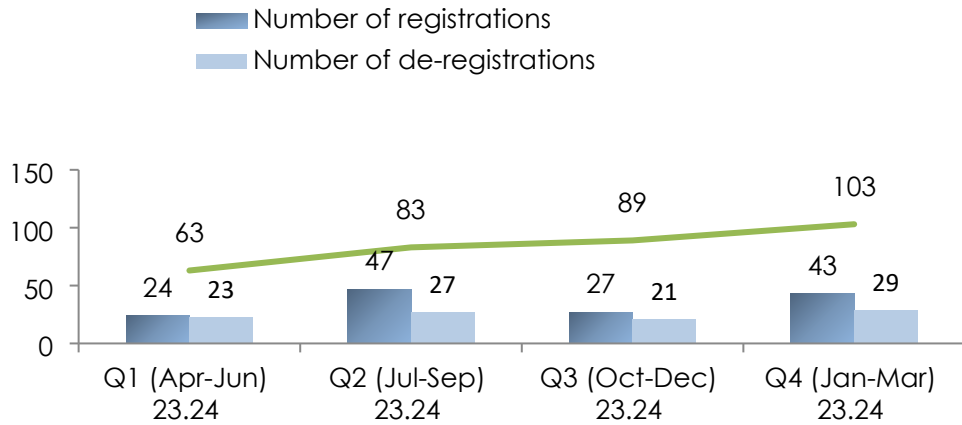
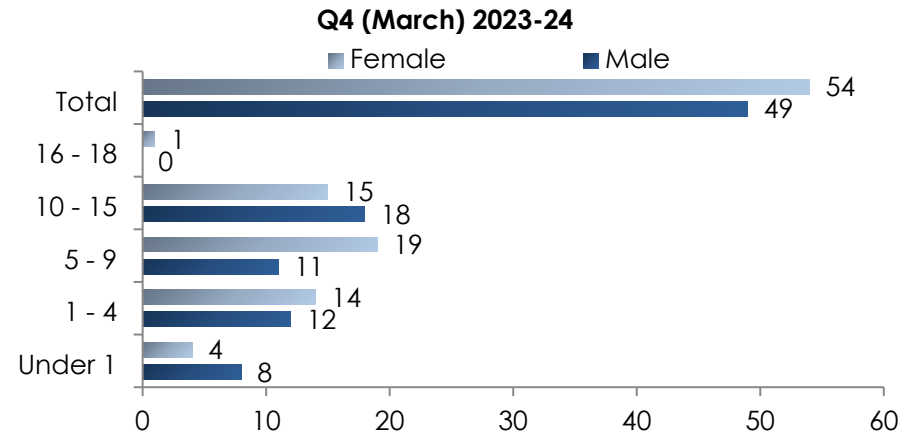


Fig 2.4 Age Breakdown of children on child protection register



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	1/10/23-31/12/23 (Q3)	216	1/01/24-31/3/24 (Q4)	211
Number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk received during 2022/23	1/10/22-31/12/22 (Q3)	138	1/01/23-31/3/23 (Q4)	205

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
		1/10/23-31/12/23 (Q3)	1/10/23-31/12/23 (Q3)	1/10/22-31/12/22 (Q3)	1/10/22-31/12/22 (Q3)	1/01/24-31/3/24 (Q4)	1/01/24-31/3/24 (Q4)	1/01/23-31/3/23 (Q4)	1/01/23-31/3/23 (Q4)
Physical	Male	13	8	4	8	6	11	8	17
	Female	20	20	10	11	10	21	10	15
	Transgender	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual	Male	4	1	2	0	1	1	1	1
	Female	2	1	2	1	7	1	8	2
	Transgender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Emotional/Psychological	Male	12	1	4	4	9	1	10	6
	Female	19	6	8	0	19	9	15	12
	Transgender	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
Financial	Male	3	7	4	1	4	3	3	6
	Female	7	5	9	7	4	15	8	7
	Transgender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neglect	Male	9	29	7	15	11	32	4	30
	Female	7	39	7	34	8	37	5	35
	Transgender	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	Male	41	46	21	28	31	48	26	60
	Female	55	71	36	53	48	83	46	71
	Transgender	3	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
	Total	99	117	57	81	80	131	74	131

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Fig 3.3 Place alleged abuse/neglect took place

Place alleged abuse or neglect occurred	Total	Total	Total	Total
	1/10/23-31/12/23 (Q3)	1/10/22-31/12/22 (Q3)	1/01/24-31/3/24 (Q4)	1/01/23-31/3/23 (Q4)
Own Home	77	70	65	88
Community	25	10	16	15
Care Home Setting	90	53	97	90
Health Setting	24	5	33	12
Other	0	0	0	0
Total	216	138	211	205

Fig 3.4 Person alleged responsible

Person alleged responsible	Total	Total	Total	Total
	1/10/23-31/12/23 (Q3)	1/10/22-31/12/22 (Q3)	1/01/24-31/3/24 (Q4)	1/01/23-31/3/23 (Q4)
A spouse	12	5	11	8
A son or daughter	10	4	5	10
A family member who is not a child or spouse	14	11	4	5
A professional	27	20	24	15
A volunteer or unpaid worker	1	1	0	0
A friend	3	1	8	2
A neighbour	4	5	3	4
Another service user	23	4	24	11
Other Person	25	3	7	14
Not known	97	84	125	136
Total	216	138	211	205

Fig 3.5 Source of Referral

Source of Referral	Total	Total	Total	Total
	1/10/23-31/12/23 (Q3)	1/10/22-31/12/22 (Q3)	1/01/24-31/3/24 (Q4)	1/01/23-31/3/23 (Q4)
Self-reported	6	3	2	3
Relative / friend	7	1	4	5
Local authority	13	4	13	9
Police	6	7	1	8
Local health board	38	19	51	29
Independent hospital	1	1	1	1
Ambulance service	2	2	3	0
Care regulator	12	1	13	5
Provider agency	74	57	80	93
Probation	1	0	1	0
Third sector	20	3	7	9
Advocate	0	1	1	0
Education	4	2	0	0
Housing	7	3	9	5
Internal (Social Worker, Other Team)	16	30	16	29
Other	9	4	9	9
Total	216	138	211	205

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
	1/10/23-31/12/23 (Q3)	1/10/23 - 31/12/23 (Q3)	1/10/22-31/12/22 (Q3)	1/10/22-31/12/22 (Q3)	1/01/24 - 31/3/24 (Q4)	1/01/24-31/3/24 (Q4)	1/01/23-31/3/23 (Q4)	1/01/23-31/3/23 (Q4)
Male	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	2
Female	12	0	3	0	5	1	6	0

* 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

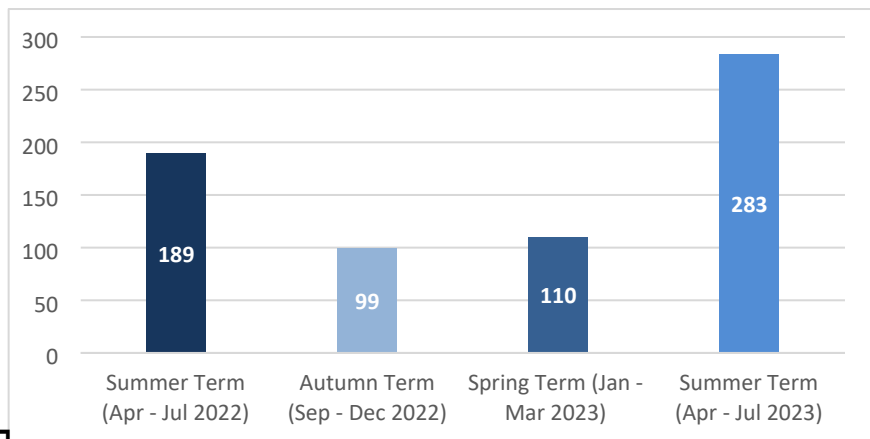


Fig 4.2 Contacts by Source – Secondary School

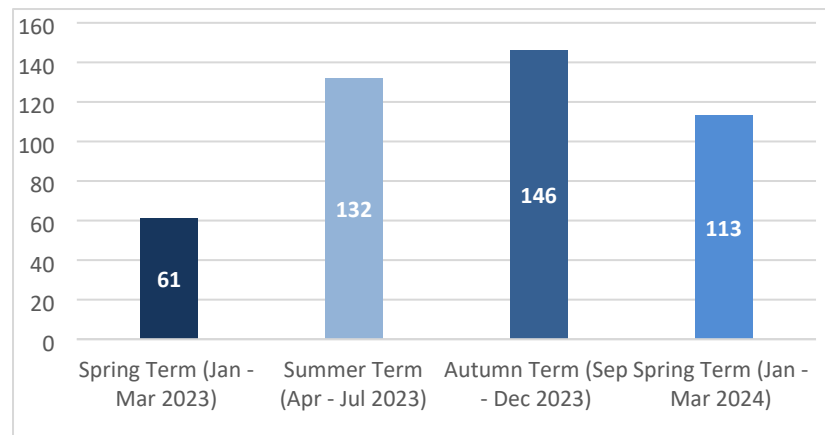


Fig 4.3 Contacts by Source - Other

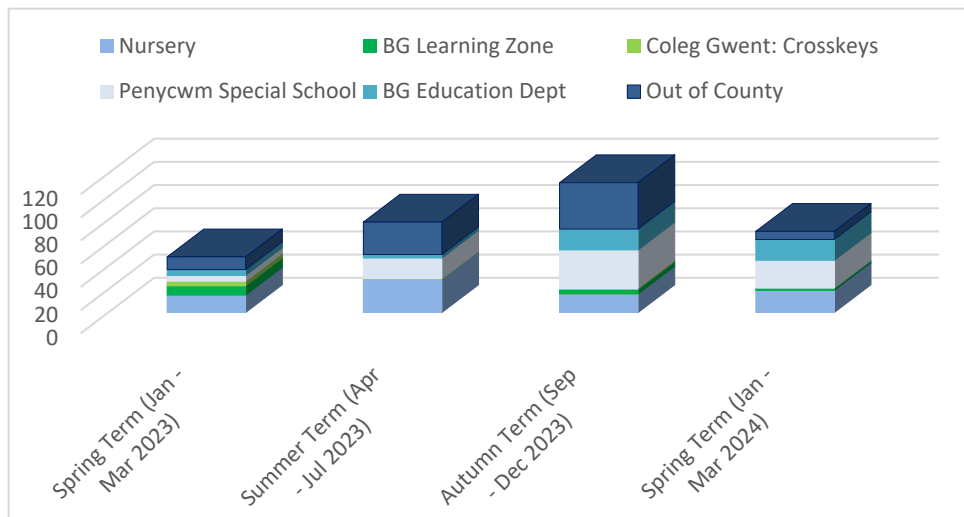
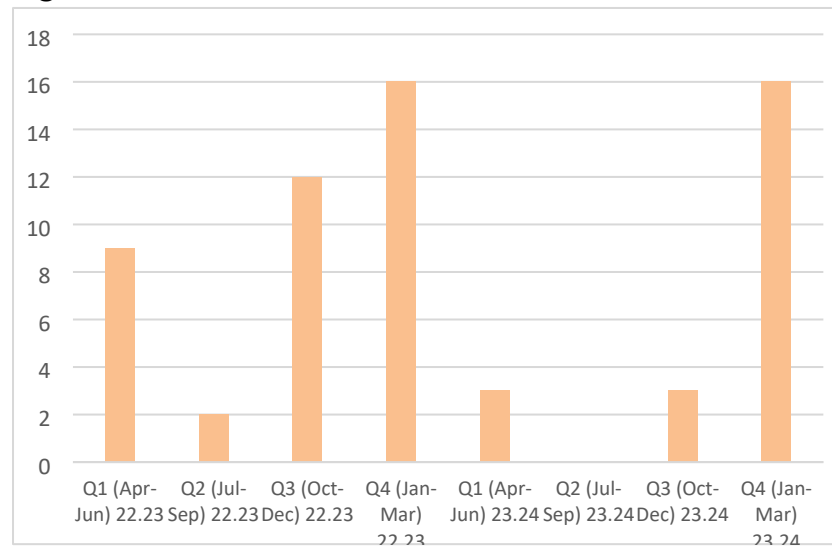


Fig 4.4 Referrals received from Youth Services



1. Regulatory

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

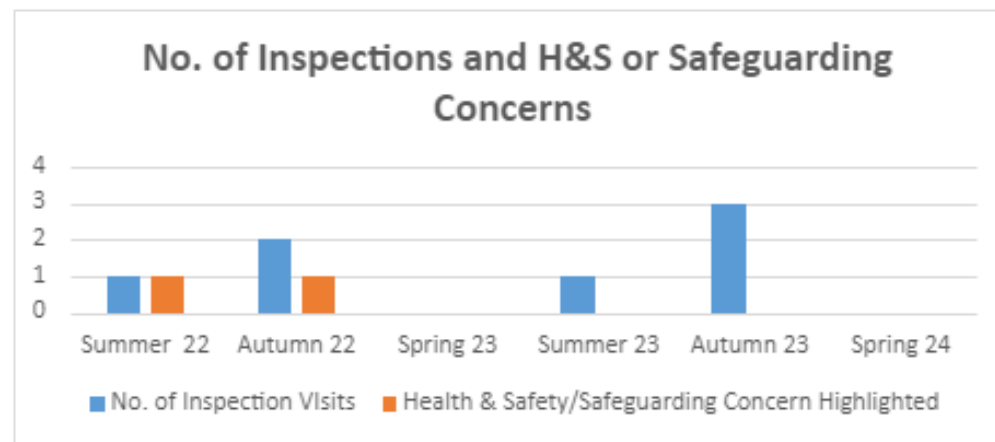
Please note some data that would normally be reported on is not included in this report due to ASOS which impacted on the information that schools provided to the LA during this reporting period.

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. Historical data prior to the reporting period are included for comparative purposes.

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No of School Inspected	No. of Inspection Visits	Health & Safety/Safeguarding Concern Highlighted
Summer 22	1	1
Autumn 22	2	1
Spring 23	0	0
Summer 23	1	0
Autumn 23	3	0
Spring 24	0	0



1.3 Policy

1.3.1 Compliance Statements

Partner Agency Safeguarding Policies in Place	Ac Year 21-22	Ac Year 22-23	Ac Year 23-24
No of Partner Agencies	4	4	4
Policies in Place	4	4	4
% Compliance	100%	100%	100%

1.3.2 Safeguarding Policies released and Governing Body

Compliance

Safeguarding Policy Compliance	21-22	22-23	23-24
No of Schools in BG	25	25	25
Governing Body Compliance	25	23	21
% Compliance	100%	92%	84%

The adoption of the current policy follows individual schools' annual review cycle.

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%
	Autumn 23	25	100%
	Spring 24	25	100%

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2.2 Keeping Learners Safe audit tool

2.2.1 School Assessment of 5 Key Areas

	21-22	22-23	23-24
No of Schools in BG	25	25	25
No of Schools who have used the KLS Safeguarding Toolkit to review procedures in the last 12 months?	25	25	25
% of Schools who have Reviewed	100%	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	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023	Autumn 2023	Spring 2024
LA	15	15	9	9	10	10	11	11	23	23
Independent	18	18	10	11	15	15	16	16	12	14

3.1.2 Overview of Safeguarding arrangements.

Page 38
 May 2023 - there is a BG SG QA process for OOC settings which includes opensource 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.

The process includes collaborative working with Local Authorities where Blaenau Gwent are placing learning in schools out of the area to ensure safeguarding quality of the 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	Autumn 2023	Spring 2024
No. of Incomplete EWC Registrations	5	0	0	1	2	2	1	0

4. Safe Workforce

4.2 Training

4.2.2 Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSP) Meetings

DSP Meetings	Aut 22	Spr 23	Sum 23	Aut 23	Spr 24	Sum 24
No of Schools Represented	no mtg	16	12	9	14	16
% of School represented	N/A	64%	48%	36%	56%	64%

4.2.4 Online Safeguarding Training – Schools

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

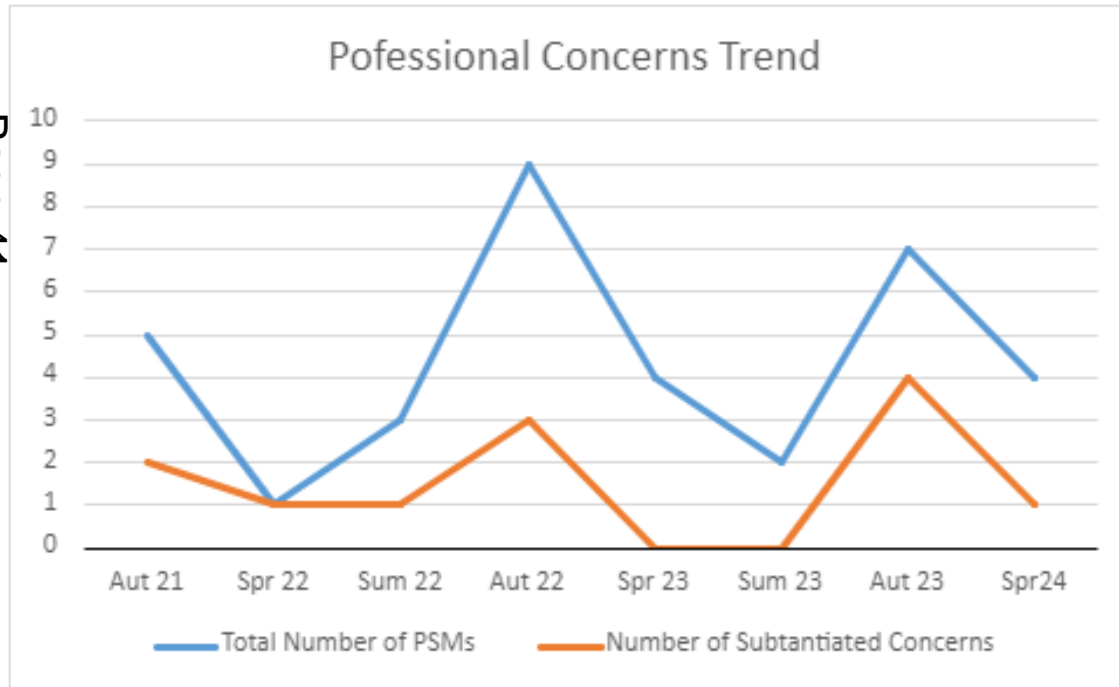
4.3 Professional Concerns

4.3.1 Professional Concerns Review

Professional Strat Meetings	Aut21	Spr 22	Sum22	Aut 22	Spr 23	Sum 23	Aut 23	Spr 24
Total Number of PSMs	5	1	3	9	4	2	7	4
Number of Substantiated Concerns	2	1	1	3	0	0	4	1

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	2023-2024
No. of Pregnant Schoolchildren*	1	1	2	1	0

*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

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

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
Sep-Dec 2023	6	6	10	2	3	2	5	2
Jan-Mar 2024	8	0	5	5	3	2	1	1
Total	33	11	37	15	29	8	22	7

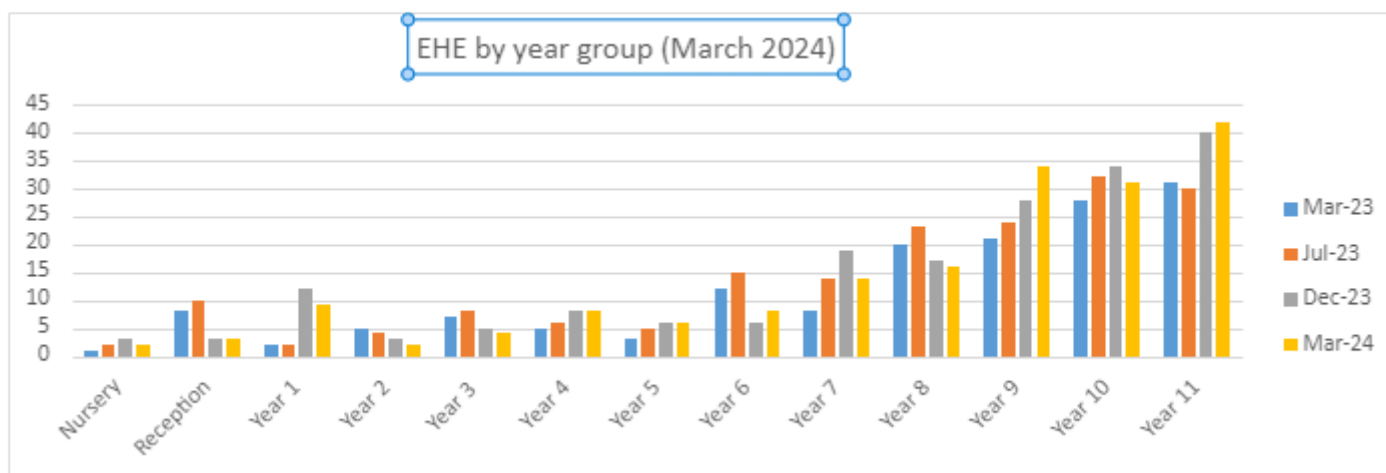
05 | Education

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
Sep-Dec 2023	9	7	1	1	2	0	1	4	0	0	1	0
Jan-Mar 2024	7	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
Total	46	34	1	2	5	1	45	6	1	0	4	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

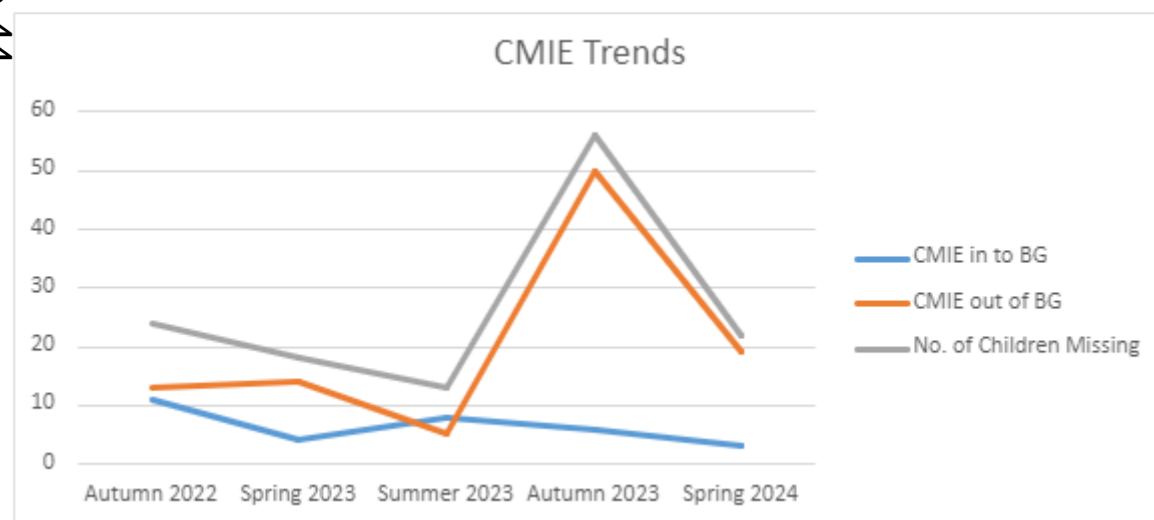
5.3.1 Referrals from other LAs

No. of CMIE Referrals	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023	Autumn 2023	Spring 2024
CMIE in to BG	3	3	5	11	4	8	6	3
CMIE out of BG	11	10	12	13	14	5	50	19

5.3.2 Number of Children Missing

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023	Autumn 2023	Spring 2024
No. of Children Missing	14	13	17	24	18	13	56	22

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	Autumn 2023	Spring 2024
No of Schoolchildren accessing YOS	23	34	32	18	31	30	49	35

5.4.2 YOS pupil Placement by Setting and Access

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023	Autumn 2023	Spring 2024
Access								
FT	14	34	30	6	23	24	32	23
PT	3	0	3	3	4	6	17	12
Setting								
EHE	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Special Schools	5	9	5	0	4	5	8	2
Mainstream - Primary	1	4	4	0	3	2	3	5
Mainstream - Secondary	11	21	23	8	20	23	32	21
Secure Unit				1	0	0	0	1
Employed	3	0	0	1	2	0	1	3
College				3	0	0	1	0
NEET	3	0	0	4	1	0	2	1
Training Provider				1	1	0	1	2

05 | Education

5.4.4 REACH Interventions

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023	Autumn 2023	Spring 2024
Prevention Programme	5	16	19	1	11	16	26	21
Community Resolution	12	13	10	10	10	3	14	8
Youth Caution	0	1	0	01	0	1	2	0
Youth Conditional Caution	1	2	1	0	0	0	1	0
Referral Order	2	2	2	1	0	2	0	0
Youth Rehabilitation Order	2	0	0	2	0	0	1	0
Remanded in Custody	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Detained	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Outcome 22	0	0	0	2	10	6	5	3
Turnaround	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2

5.5 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

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

	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2	Q2	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q4
	22-23	22-23	22-23	23-24	23-24	23-24	23-24	23-24	23-24	23-24	23-24	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	2	2	4	18	7	25	12	2	14	7	2	9	0	0	0

* Q4 police data unavailable

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	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2	Q2	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q4
	22-23	22-23	22-23	23-24	23-24	23-24	23-24	23-24	23-24	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)	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Secondary Pupils Aged 14-16 (KS4)	1	2	3	12	5	17	5	0	5	3	0	3	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	5	2	7	6	2	8	4	2	6	0	0	0

* Q4 police data unavailable

5.5.2 Types of ASB Incidents

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

* Q4 Police data unavailable

5.5.3 Warning Letters Issued

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

* Q4 Strike 1 and Strike 2 Police data unavailable

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	Q3	Q4
	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	23-24	23-24	23-24	23-24
Youth Offending Service	1	2	1	1	4	4	1	1	2	7	7	0
Social Services	0	2	1	1	6	5	1	1	2	8	7	0
Families First	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CAMHS	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	0
Youth Services	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	2	1	0
Registered Social Landlord	0	3	0	2	3	4	0	0	2	5	3	0
NxtGen Project	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fire Intervention Service	2	0	0	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

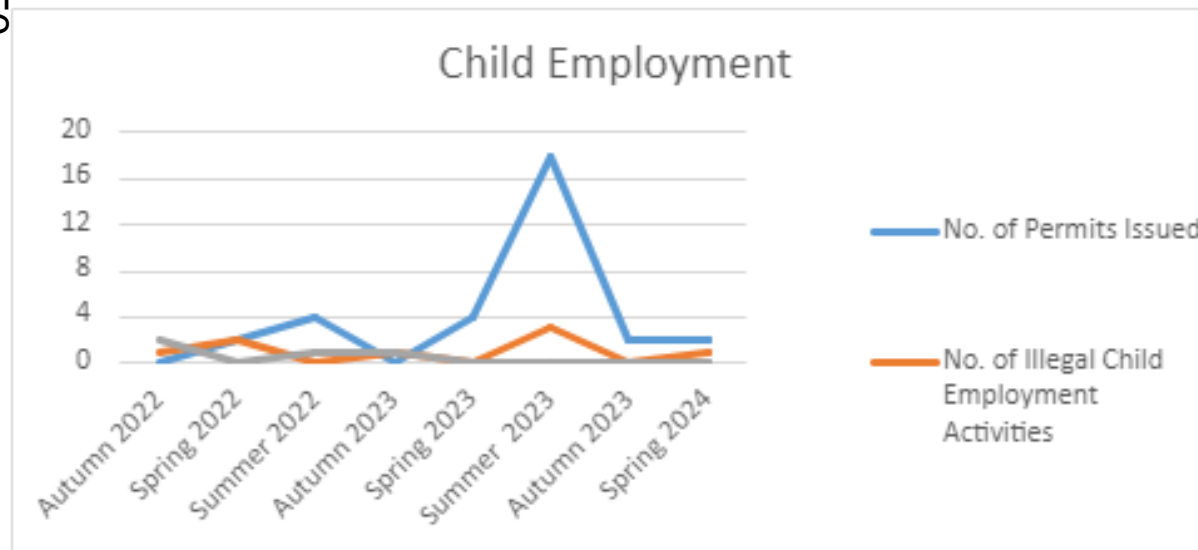
5.6.1 Number of Permits Issued

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023	Autumn 2023	Spring 2024
No. of Permits Issued	4	0	2	4	0	18	2	2

5.6.2 Number of Investigations relating to Illegal Child Employment Activities

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023	Autumn 2023	Spring 2024
No. of Illegal Child Employment Activities	0	1	2	0	1	3	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	Autumn 2023	Summer 2024
No. of Licences Issues to Children and Chaperones	4	20	56	52	2	2	6	0
No of licences for chaperones	20	18	5	14	3	3	5	2
Body of persons approvals - group licences	10	6	7	2	6	4	5	1

5.7.2 Number of Chaperones attending Training

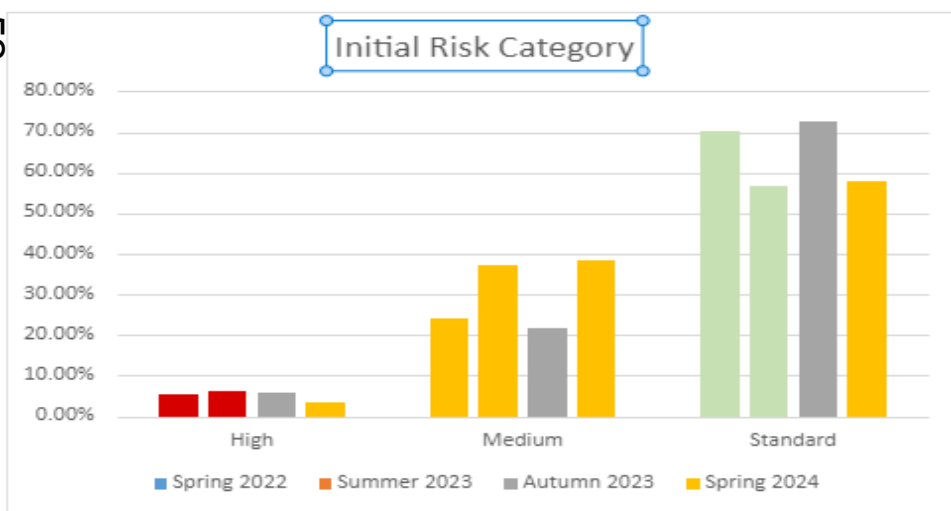
	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023	Autumn 2023	Spring 2024
No. of new Chaperones	20	18	5	14	3	0	5	2
No of Chaperones attending Training	29	24	15	20	8	0	10	12

5.8 Operation Encompass -

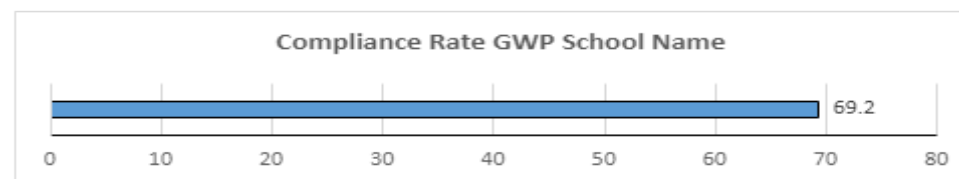
5.8.1 Number of Incidents during reporting Period and Repeat Incidents

Term	Occurrences	CYP	Repeat Incidents	Average No. of CYP per occurrence	% Children present at incidents
Autumn 2021	265	330	22.40%	1.25	
Spring 2022	211	266	24.10%	1.26	
Summer 2022	246	333	21%	1.35	
Autumn 2022	282	299	unavailable	u/a	37.50%
Spring 2023	182	218	unavailable	u/a	31.60%
Summer 2023	156	333	23.1%	2.1	52.25%
Autumn 2023	187	270	14.9%	1.44	59.00%
Spring 2024	142	207	19.0%	1.45	46.80%

5.8.2 Risk Level



5.8.3 % Compliance by Police *



- 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	Autumn 2023	Spring 2024
Primary Attendance	88.4	89.6	89.9	89.3	89.3	89.0	89.5	90.4	90.0	91.6	91.4
Secondary Attendance	84.3	83.0	84.8	85.3	85.3	84.8	85.9	85.8	85.4	86.9	86.8

5.9.2 Low Attendance and Implementation of Neglect Policy

	Autumn 2022	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023	Autumn 2023	Spring 2024
Fixed penalties	0	0	2	22	46	67	45	64
Single Justice Process	5	0	6	9	21	54	35	34
Court Notices	0	3	0	0	0	5	4	0

5.10 Exclusions

5.10.1 Exclusions by Setting and Type

	Spring 23			Summer 23			Autumn 23			Spring 24		
	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	39	2.1		44	2.8		69	1.4	0	37	1.1	1
Secondary	402	1.4	1	369	1.2	1	437	1.2	6	186	1.3	1
Special	2	5.5		2	3		11	2.9	0	9	0.9	0
Total	443	1.5		415	1.4		517	1.8	6	232	1.1	2

5.10.2 Exclusions Linked to Bullying

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	Autumn 22		Spring 23		Summer 23		Autumn 23		Spring 24	
	Fixed	Permanent	Fixed	Permanent	Fixed	Permanent	Fixed	Permanent	Fixed	Permanent
Primary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Secondary	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	0
Special	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

5.10.3 Pupils with Multiple Exclusions

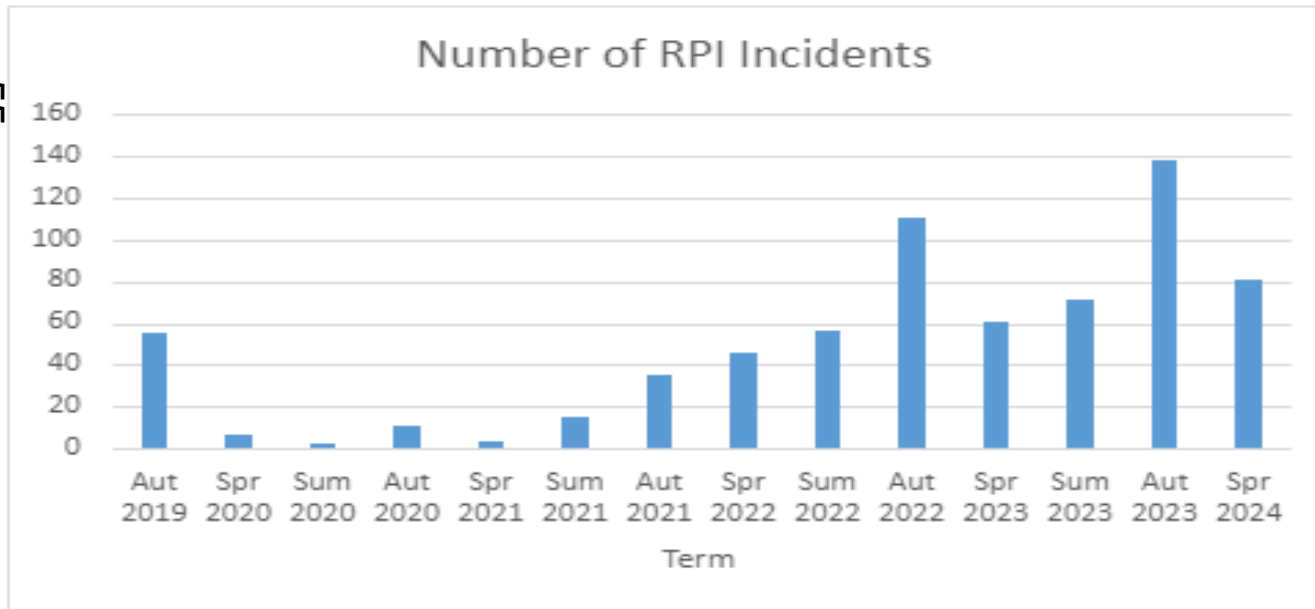
No of Exclusions	Spring 23			Summer 23			Autumn 23			Spring 24		
	No. Pupils	No of Exclusions	Average No. of Days	No. Pupils	No of Exclusions	Average No. of Days	No. Pupils	No of Exclusions	Average No. of Days	No. Pupils	No of Exclusions	Average No. of Days
1	119	119	1.6	119	119	1.7	106	124.5	1.5	98	139	1.7
2	39	78	1.4	37	74	1.3	46	146.5	0.8	25	52.5	1.3
3	26	78	1.4	12	36	1.1	19	74.5	1.4	8	17	1.1
4	7	28	1.3	14	56	1.5	10	56.5	0.6	4	44	1.5
5	13	65	1.6	8	40	1.2	3	12	8.7	5	20	1.2
6+	10	74	1.7	13	90	1.2	26	229	0.5	3	17.5	1.2
Total	215	443	1.5	203	0	1.4	210	643	1.0	143	290	1.4

5.11.1 RPI Incidents

School	Aut 2022	Spr 2023	Sum 2023	Aut 2023	Spr 2024
1	14	6	7	11	6
2	96	55	62	124	74
3	1	0	0	0	1
4			2	1	0
5				2	0

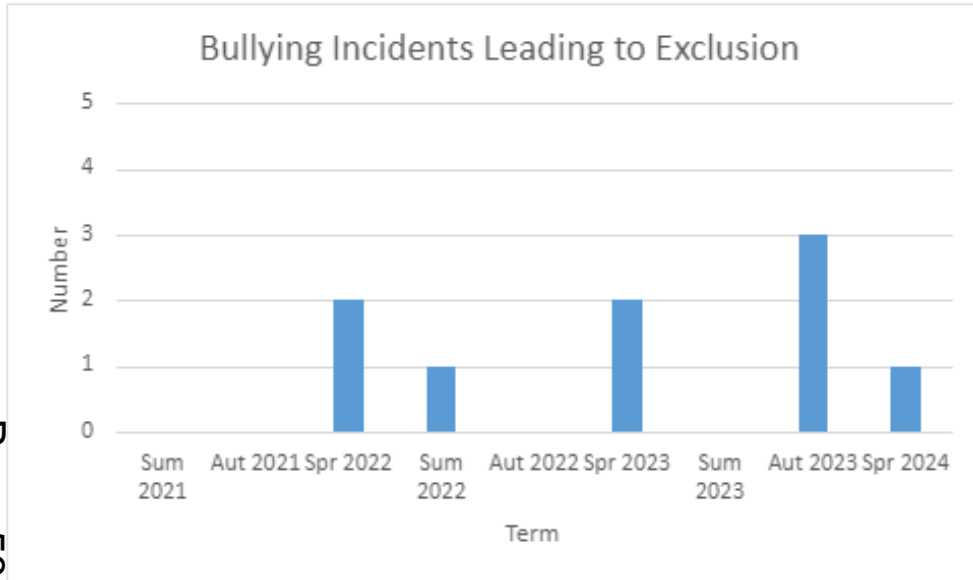
5.11.2 RPI Trends

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5.13 Bullying Incidents

5.13.1 Bullying incidents leading to exclusion



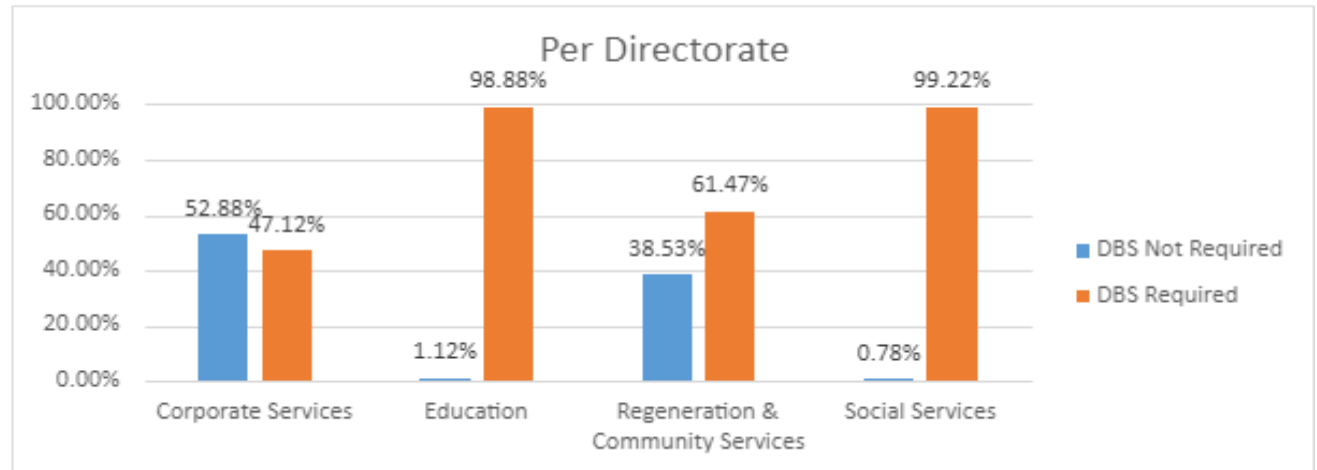
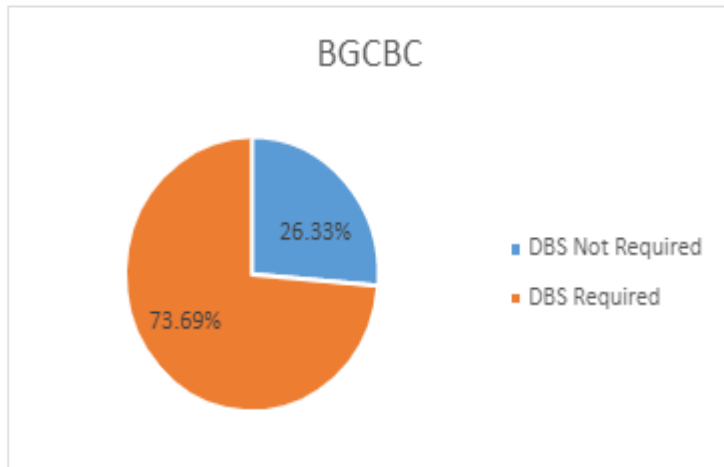
6.1 DBS Compliance

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.

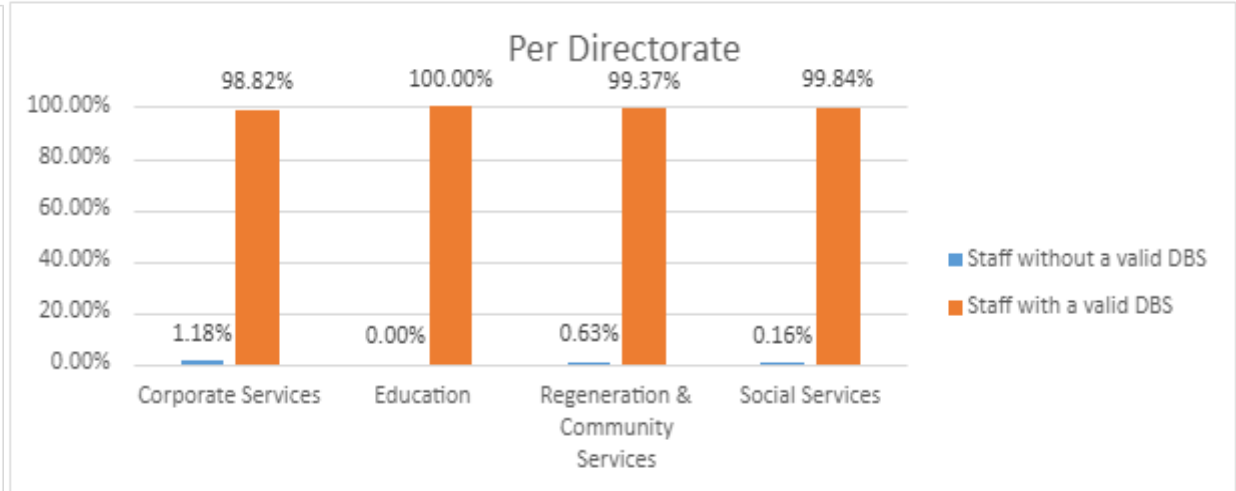
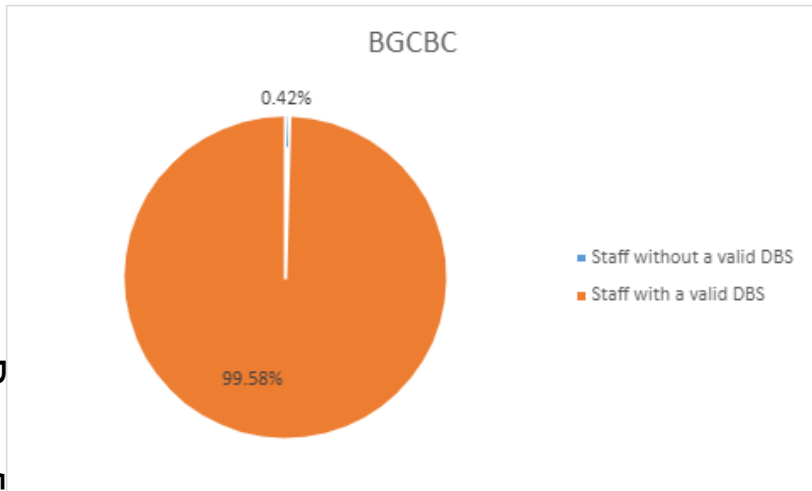
The latest submission to CLT was in May 2023 and is shown below:

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

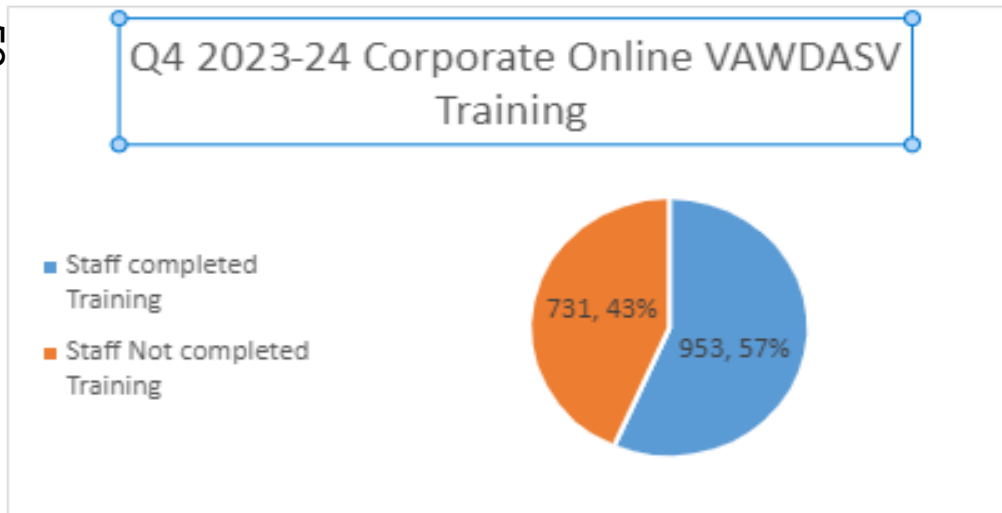
Corporate training has been provided to staff in respect of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence with **57%** of staff having **completed** the **VAWDAS online training**.

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.

6.2.1 VAWDASV Corporate



6.2.2 Safeguarding Training



6.3 Risk Register

6.3.1 Corporate Risk Register CRR4 – Q3 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								
Triggers	Consequences	Inherent Risk			Current Controls	Residual Risk		
		Likelihood	Impact	Status		Likelihood	Impact	Status
<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. • Annual safeguarding training is in place which all schools are up to date with. Training is updated on an annual basis to ensure it reflects any emerging safeguarding concerns. • Corporate safeguarding leads established • Safeguarding in Education matrix regularly updated • MyConcern safeguarding software is being used by schools. An annual health check of how the software is being used is in place and the findings of the audit are used to provide bespoke training for each school. A MyConcern working group meets termly to look at how the software can be used more effectively to record safeguarding concerns. An annual audit of school’s usage of MyConcern has identified that more schools are using MyConcern appropriately to record safeguarding incidents, but there is inconsistency across schools. • 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

Quarter 3 Progress Update (October - December 2023)

Update from Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group

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		All Directorate Risk Registers now include a risk on Safeguarding	Complete
Safeguarding Reports into PEOPLE Scrutiny contain corporate safeguarding information from all directorates.	Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group	Review of content of Corporate Safeguarding report to be undertaken in Quarter 4.	The Corporate Safeguarding Performance Report which contains corporate safeguarding activity as well as specific information in relation to Social Services and Education is due to be presented at January's People's Scrutiny meeting. A review of Corporate Safeguarding is due to be undertaken within Quarter 4 which will seek to review the data and narrative content of the report provided to People's Scrutiny.	On track
Safeguarding training data to be reviewed by each Directorate to ensure all staff are undertaking this	Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group	Recommendations for improvements in collation of accurate safeguarding training data to be developed by the end of Quarter 4.	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 planned review of corporate safeguarding within Quarter 4 will seek to consider more effective measures to track training compliance and instigate actions for non-compliance. The review of Corporate Safeguarding will also seek to update the Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework to align with National Safeguarding Training Standards and Framework which were launched in November 2023. It is noted that the absence of an electronic Learning Management System is a particular barrier to having an accessible and effective system to monitor training compliance across the council.	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	Awaiting outcome of internal audit related to safeguarding volunteers to consider any good practice and learning recommendations	The volunteering register has been updated across the council and all DBS checks are up to date. The volunteer register will be disseminated to all directorates on a bi-annual basis to be updated and the register will be reviewed by the Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group. The Internal Audit Team are undertaking an audit related to Safeguarding Volunteers which seeks to determine the effectiveness of the internal control procedures for safeguarding arrangements of appointment of volunteers at schools, to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and departmental (internal) policies and procedures. The outcome of this audit will be considered by the Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group to consider any learning which may be relevant to the management of all volunteers across the council.	On track

06 Corporate

Ensure the audit Wales BG safeguarding report recommendations continue to be reviewed and met	Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group	The Corporate Safeguarding review scheduled to take place during Quarter 4 will be further considering the progress made against the Audit Wales recommendations	The corporate safeguarding leads group continue to lead this work and reporting on progress will be contained in the bi-annual scrutiny report. The Corporate Safeguarding review scheduled to take place during Quarter 4 will be further considering the progress made against the Audit Wales recommendations and will consider additional actions to ensure recommendations are met fully. It is identified that a Corporate Safeguarding forward work plan will be beneficial to support in focusing the work of the CSLG and providing a clear overview of progress against agreed recommendations/actions not only from Audit Wales but the learning captured from safeguarding related internal audits and self assessments.	On track
Each Directorate to undertake a safeguarding self-assessment	Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group	2023 self-assessments completed. To be repeated in 2024.	Safeguarding self-assessments were completed in line with the agreed return date of 30 th September 2023. The Children’s Safeguarding Team have analysed the returns and will be presenting the key themes and trends from the self-assessments at January’s Corporate Safeguarding Leads meeting. The learning from the self assessments will be central to the corporate safeguarding review and the development of a forward work plan for 24/25.	On track

Direction of Travel from previous quarter	Forecasted direction of travel	
		There is no change in the risk score from the last quarter



Regulatory Proposals

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.	<p>The safeguarding self-assessments for 2023 were submitted from each of the directorates at end of September 2023. Key themes and learning observed were considered in January 2024's Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group.</p> <p>The current safeguarding children's service manager in partnership with safeguarding education manager has sought to undertake a review of the current corporate safeguarding arrangements across the council based on learning from 2022 and 2023 self-assessments, as well as continuing to review the progress against the Audit Wales recommendations. The review has identified recommendations to strengthen the corporate safeguarding arrangements in the Council and the report will be presented to SLT and CLT for their consideration at end of Q1 24/25. The report will include a clear forward work plan as well as recommending a new reporting format for scrutiny to include regionally agreed data sets for corporate safeguarding to support with internal date review and regional comparison.</p> <p>Annual self-assessment will be repeated in September 2024.</p> <p>Internal audit reports related to safeguarding will continue to be reported to the Corporate Safeguarding Group for oversight of findings and agreed action plans to improve assurances (see below for details of those which have been completed this financial year).</p>	<p>Annual self-assessment – to be repeated September 2024</p> <p>Corporate Safeguarding Review report – end of Q1 24/25</p> <p>Implementing actions from completed self-assessments - ongoing</p>	Strategic Safeguarding Leads Group

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																
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.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="407 539 622 651">Audit Area</th> <th data-bbox="622 539 810 651">Current Status</th> <th data-bbox="810 539 981 651">Audit Grading</th> <th data-bbox="981 539 1659 651">Comments</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="407 651 622 820">Safeguarding with Volunteers (Schools)</td> <td data-bbox="622 651 810 820">Final – Completed</td> <td data-bbox="810 651 981 820">Limited Assurance</td> <td data-bbox="981 651 1659 820">The report has been finalised and will be presented to the Corporate Safeguarding Group for further comment in April 2024. The process for recording and monitoring volunteers is in need of improvement. The Safeguarding in Education Manager is working with colleagues in OD to clarify arrangements in the 'Volunteers in the Workplace' document.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="407 820 622 1072">Safeguarding in Contracts</td> <td data-bbox="622 820 810 1072">Draft – Provisional</td> <td data-bbox="810 820 981 1072">Limited Assurance</td> <td data-bbox="981 820 1659 1072">The report has been issued in draft and will be presented to the Corporate Safeguarding Group in April 2024 for information at this stage. The audit looked at the requirements placed on contractors as part of the tendering process and throughout contract implementation. It is anticipated that the report will need to return to the Corporate Safeguarding Group again after initial presentation once responses from corporate procurement have been received / included and an action plan is available.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="407 1072 622 1214">Social Services Safeguarding</td> <td data-bbox="622 1072 810 1214">Draft – Provisional</td> <td data-bbox="810 1072 981 1214">Reasonable Assurance</td> <td data-bbox="981 1072 1659 1214">The audit examined the process for incorporating safeguarding requirements into the Authority's interactions with third party providers. The report and action plan will be presented to a future Corporate Safeguarding Group for consideration.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Audit Area	Current Status	Audit Grading	Comments	Safeguarding with Volunteers (Schools)	Final – Completed	Limited Assurance	The report has been finalised and will be presented to the Corporate Safeguarding Group for further comment in April 2024. The process for recording and monitoring volunteers is in need of improvement. The Safeguarding in Education Manager is working with colleagues in OD to clarify arrangements in the 'Volunteers in the Workplace' document.	Safeguarding in Contracts	Draft – Provisional	Limited Assurance	The report has been issued in draft and will be presented to the Corporate Safeguarding Group in April 2024 for information at this stage. The audit looked at the requirements placed on contractors as part of the tendering process and throughout contract implementation. It is anticipated that the report will need to return to the Corporate Safeguarding Group again after initial presentation once responses from corporate procurement have been received / included and an action plan is available.	Social Services Safeguarding	Draft – Provisional	Reasonable Assurance	The audit examined the process for incorporating safeguarding requirements into the Authority's interactions with third party providers. The report and action plan will be presented to a future Corporate Safeguarding Group for consideration.	CSG Quarter 1 2024/25 CSG Quarter 1 2024/25 CSG Quarter 1 2024/25	Strategic Safeguarding Leads Group
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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 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. Annual safeguarding training is in place which all schools are up to date with. Training is updated on an annual basis to ensure it reflects any emerging safeguarding concerns. Safeguarding in Education matrix updated March 2024 to ensure that all relevant safeguarding information from schools is now captured in one place. MyConcern safeguarding software is being used by all schools. A corporate safeguarding leads group has been established to drive forward the safeguarding agenda and action the recommendations made by the Blaenau Gwent Wales Audit Office report All directorate risk registers include safeguarding and include actions required to ensure safeguarding arrangements are in place. 	1	4	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding Reports into PEOPLE Scrutiny contain corporate safeguarding information from all directorates Safeguarding training data to be reviewed by each Directorate to ensure all staff are undertaking this Regularly review the council's 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	Corporate Director of Education Exec Member Sue Edmunds	No change in direction of travel	<p>Status of Further controls</p> <p><i>On track</i></p> <p>Forecasted direction of travel</p> <p><i>Work continues on target to reduce overall risk</i></p>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Safeguarding in Education Manager now sits across both Social Services and the Education Directorate with both paying 50% of the role, which has further improved partnership working and information sharing across the directorates. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New post created in the Education Directorate, School Improvement Officer with safeguarding responsibilities in the job description with responsibility for supporting schools with further developing their use of My Concern and for analysis data to inform next steps/future training needs etc from the Safeguarding in Education Matrix. 				
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Quarter 2 progress update (July - September 2023)

The current safeguarding lead for the education directorate is an interim arrangement due to staff changes. All school 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 school 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.

Quarter 3 progress update (September – December 2023)

MyConcern safeguarding software is being used by schools. An annual health check of how the software is being used is in place and the findings of the audit are used to provide bespoke training for each school. A MyConcern working group meets termly to look at how the software can be used more effectively to record safeguarding concerns. An annual audit of school’s usage of MyConcern has identified that more schools are using MyConcern appropriately to record safeguarding incidents, but there is inconsistency across schools.

Quarter 4 progress update (January – March 2024)

A review of Corporate Safeguarding has been undertaken within Quarter 4 which sought to review the data and narrative content of the report provided to People’s Scrutiny. The review of Corporate Safeguarding is complete and appropriate reports will be provided to SLT / CLT at the end of June. Quarter 3 and 4 information will be reported to People Scrutiny using the existing format, but Quarters 1 and 2 of 24/25 will be reported later in the year using a revised format if approved by CLT. The revised report will contain relevant regional data sets as well as Blaenau Gwent specific data.

The Safeguarding in Schools Matrix has been updated March 2024. This will now capture all relevant data in one place, this will make it more streamlined for schools and easier for the Education Directorate to analyse the data. A new post has been created in the Education Directorate, School Improvement Officer, who will lead on supporting schools with this and analysing this data in order to inform the future working of the directorate and to further develop safeguarding policies and procedures. Review of School’s Volunteer Policy to clarify the role of PTA members in schools undertaken following audit, relevant changes to the policy have been implemented.