

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **21st February 2024**

Report Subject: **Key Stage 4 Outcomes 2023**

Portfolio Holder: **Sue Edmunds, Executive Member for People and Education**

Report Submitted by: **Luisa Munro-Morris, Corporate Director of Education (Interim)**

Report Written by: **Debbie Harteveld, Managing Director, EAS**

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

1. Purpose of the Report

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

2. Scope and Background

2.1 This year, for the first time since 2019, the Welsh Government are producing Key Stage 4 All Wales Core Data Sets (AWCDS) at individual school level.

2.2 Each of the last 4 years used essentially different methods for determining grades, so none are directly comparable. In 2023 national outcomes are lower than 2022, 2021 and 2020, but not as low as 2019.

2.3 Provisional outcomes were available to schools, LAs and consortia in Provisional form in mid-November 2023 (via Data Exchange Wales (DEWi)). These were then used to contribute to a school level checking process, so any errors could be addressed, before final versions were published on 20 December 2023. This report uses the final versions.

Welsh Government published measures for 2023

2.4 These include the following points-based measures:

- The Capped 9 measure
- Literacy measure (best of Language / Literature)
- Numeracy measure (best of mathematics / numeracy)
- Science measure (best of science)
- Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate measure

2.5 In addition to the above 'points based' measures the percentage of learners achieving 5 or more A*-A and percentage of learners achieving No Qualifications are also included.

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

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

Families

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

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

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

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

2.11 Families with Blaenau Gwent Schools (2023)

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

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

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

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

3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 The People Scrutiny Committee considered and supported Option 1 on 30th January 2024.

3.2 Option 1:

For members to receive the report for information.

3.3 Option 2:

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

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

4.1 **Statutory Responsibility**

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

4.1.2 **Corporate Improvement Plan**

Education Aims

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

4.1.3 **Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan**

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

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

There are no budgetary implications for either option.

5.2 ***Risks including Mitigating Actions***

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

5.3 ***Legal***

None for this report.

5.5 ***Human Resources***

None for this report.

5.6 ***Health and Safety***

There are no health and safety implications from this report.

6. Supporting Evidence

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

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

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

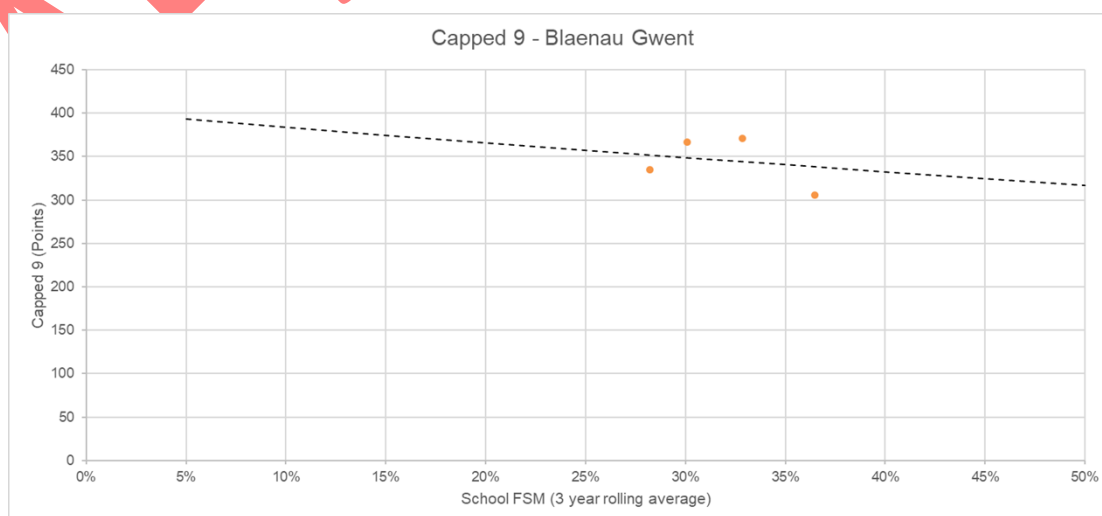
6.1.2 For all GCSE subjects the points difference between every grade is 6 points. So, for example a B is worth 6 more points than a C.

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

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

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

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



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

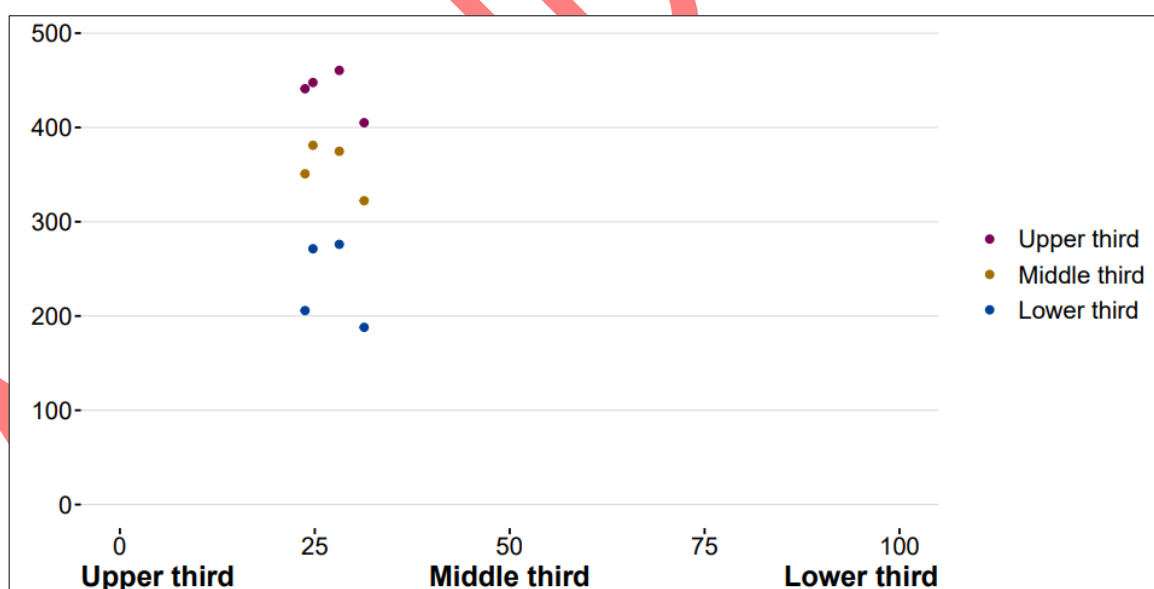
Capped 9 – Comparison by ‘Thirds’ with WG ‘Modelled Outcome’ line

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

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

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

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



Literacy Measure – compared with the Family average

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

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

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

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

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

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

Numeracy Measure – compared with the Family average

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

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

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

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

Science Measure – compared with the Family average

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

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

Welsh Baccalaureate Measure – compared with the Family average

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

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

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

No Qualifications – compared with the Family average

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

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

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

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

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

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

Local Authority Aggregate Data

Key measures – Compared with Wales

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

Table 1.1c - Qualifications outcomes

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

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

Key measures – Compared with 'Modelled' by FSM

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

Table 4.1 - KS4 Capped 9 points score (interim) - LA Average

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

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

Table 4.2 - KS4 WBacc Skills Challenge Certificate indicator - points score - LA Average

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

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

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

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

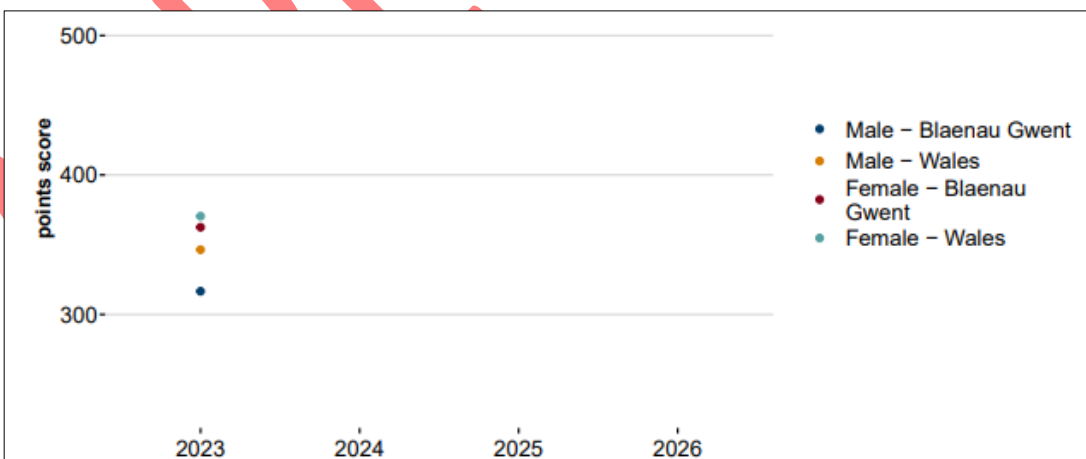
Title	2023 - Numeracy indicator – points score	2023 - Modelled score	2023 - Difference
Blaenau Gwent	35.1	35.9	-0.9

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

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

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

Capped 9 – Males and Females



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

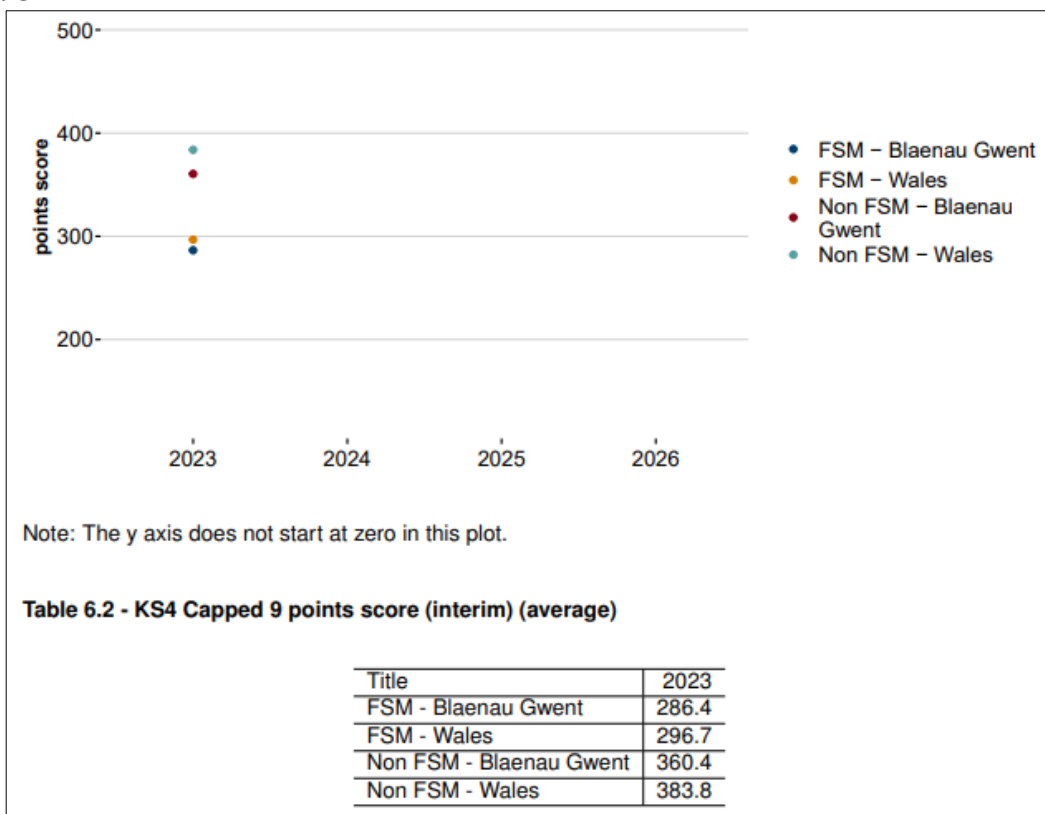
Table 3.2 - KS4 Capped 9 points score (interim) (average)

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

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

Capped 9 FSM – non-FSM

/Overleaf



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

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

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

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

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

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

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

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

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

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

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

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

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

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

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

No specific impact related to this report.

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

Not required for this report.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 As part of existing arrangement.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

None – information included within the report.