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For all enquiries relating to this agenda please contact Julie Lloyd
(Tel: 01443 864246 Email: lloydj4@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Date: 14th May 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

A multi-locational meeting of the **Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee** will be held in Penallta House, and via Microsoft Teams on **Monday, 20th May, 2024 at 5.30 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda. Councillors and the public wishing to speak on any item can do so by making a request to the Chair. You are also welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, both these requests require a minimum notice period of 3 working days. A simultaneous translation will be provided on request.

Members of the public or Press may attend in person at Penallta House or may view the meeting live via the following link: <https://civico.net/caerphilly>

This meeting will be live-streamed and a recording made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. Therefore the images/audio of those individuals speaking will be publicly available to all via the Council website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chrissy'.

Christina Harrhy
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A G E N D A

Pages

- 1 To receive apologies for absence.

A greener place Man gwyrddach



2 Declarations of Interest.

Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.

To approve and sign the following minutes:-

- 3 Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee held on 12th March 2024. 1 - 6
- 4 Special Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee held on 20th March 2024. 7 - 10
- 5 Consideration of any matter referred to this Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.
- 6 Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme. 11 - 24
- 7 To receive and consider the following Cabinet reports*:-
1. Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Programme – Statutory Objection Report: Ysgol Y Lawnt and Upper Rhymney Primary School – 3rd April 2024;
 2. School Organisation Code 2018 – Statutory Objection Report: Proposal for the Closure of Cwm Glas Infants School – 3rd April 2024;
 3. Post 16, Single Sex and Surplus Places Board – Further Recommendations to Cabinet – 3rd April 2024;
 4. Youth Forum Priorities – 1st May 2024;
 5. Re-Purposing of Social Services Earmarked Reserves – 1st May 2024.

**If a member of the Scrutiny Committee wishes for any of the above Cabinet reports to be brought forward for review at the meeting please contact Julie Lloyd 01443 864246, by 10.00 a.m. on Friday, 17th May 2024.*

To receive and consider the following Scrutiny reports:-

- 8 An Overview of how the EAS supports Caerphilly Local Authority (LA) to deliver their School Improvement Function. 25 - 74
- 9 Summary of Estyn Inspection Outcomes under the new Common Inspection Framework (CIF) - January 2022 to March 2024. 75 - 86
- 10 Federation of Schools. 87 - 94
- 11 Safeguarding. 95 - 102

Circulation:

Councillors Mrs E.M. Aldworth, C. Bishop, A. Broughton-Pettit, M. Chacon-Dawson, D. Cushing, Mrs P. Cook, M. Evans, A. Farina-Childs, C.J. Gordon, T. Heron, A. Leonard, B. Miles (Vice Chair), T. Parry (Chair), J.E. Roberts, J. Simmonds, S. Skivens, J. Winslade and K. Woodland

Co-opted Members:

Cardiff ROC Archdiocesan Commission for Education Representative (with voting rights on educational matters)

Mr M. Western

Parent Governor Representatives (with voting rights on educational matters)

T. Millington (Parent Governor Representative)

Outside Body Representatives (without voting rights)

Mrs P. Ireland (NEU) and Mrs K. Cole (NEU)

Caerphilly Governors Association (without voting rights)

Mr D Davies

Users and Carers - Vacant

And Appropriate Officers

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Agenda Item 3



EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON TUESDAY 12TH MARCH 2024 AT 5.30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor T. Parry – Chair
Councillor B. Miles - Vice Chair

Councillors:

E.M. Aldworth, C. Bishop, A. Broughton-Pettit, M. Chacon-Dawson, P. Cook, M. Evans, A. Farina-Childs, C. Gordon, T. Heron, A. Leonard, J. Roberts, J. Simmonds, S. Skivens, J. Winslade, and K. Woodland.

Cabinet Members:

Councillors C. Andrews (Education and Communities), and E. Forehead (Social Care).

Together with:

Officers: S. Richards (Head of Education Planning and Strategy), K. Cole (Chief Education Officer), G. Jenkins (Interim Director of Social Services), J. Williams (Assistant Director – Adult Services), A. West (Place Shaping and Sustainable Communities for Learning Service Manager), S. Mutch (Early Years Manager), C. Forbes-Thompson (Scrutiny Manager), A. Jones (Committee Services Officer) and J. Lloyd (Committee Services Officer).

Also in attendance:

Councillors S. Morgan and J. Pritchard, and co-opted Member Mrs P. Ireland (NEU).

RECORDING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chair reminded those present that the meeting was being live streamed, and a recording would be made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. [Click Here To View](#).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from D. Street (Deputy Chief Executive), R. Edmunds (Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services), Councillor D. Cushing, and Mr M. Western (Cardiff ROC Archdiocesan Commission for Education Representative), Mrs T. Millington (Parent Governor Representative), Mr G. James (Parent Governor Representative), Mrs K. Cole (NEU), and Mr D. Davies (Caerphilly Governors Association).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

3. EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 30TH JANUARY 2024.

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the meeting held on 30th January 2024, be approved as a correct record, subject to noting that due to technical difficulties the meeting was not live streamed but recorded only, and a request was made that the question regarding rewards for volunteers and the response be checked against the meeting record. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee held on 30th January 2024 (minute nos. 1 – 9) be approved as a correct record, as amended.

4. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALL-IN PROCEDURE.

There had been no matters referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

5. EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Manager introduced the report that informed the Committee of its Forward Work Programme planned for the period March 2024 to April 2024.

Following consideration of the report, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation, this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme as appended to the meeting papers, be published on the Council's website.

6. CABINET REPORTS

It was confirmed that there had been no requests for any of the Cabinet reports listed on the agenda to be brought forward for discussion at the meeting.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

7. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING BAND B PROGRAMME – STATUTORY OBJECTION REPORT: YSGOL Y LAWNT AND UPPER RHYMNEY PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Councillor C. Andrews (Cabinet Member for Education and Communities) introduced the report which updated Members in relation to the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme in respect of the proposal to relocate Ysgol Y Lawnt and Upper Rhymney Primary School, through the creation of sustainable school buildings with some shared facilities.

Members were asked to consider the information contained in the Objection Report and endorse the recommendations to Cabinet, who would then make the final determination on 3rd April 2024 as to whether or not to implement the proposal following the process outlined in the School Organisation Code 2018 and supporting documentation.

A Member highlighted the CADW listing on the existing Ysgol y Lawnt site and sought clarification as to its potential future use - if the new schools proceed. The Committee was advised that if the new schools go ahead, and the existing sites are declared surplus, they would be handed over to the Councils Property Services Team. In order to comply with the requirements of the Welsh Language Commissioner consideration as to whether the site has any potential Welsh Language use must be undertaken before any other proposals for the site would be considered.

Members asked for an update on other former school sites that have not yet been developed and assurance was given that an update will be provided.

A Member asked when the plans for the new schools will be available and was advised that should Cabinet approve the proposals, the next steps would be to work with Building Consultancy Team to develop them further and which includes the sustainable drainage process, Planning and Tender process, the full business case will need to be submitted to Welsh Government for approval in relation to funding. Once all this is completed the build can commence, with an anticipated completion date of September 2027.

Following consideration of the information contained in the Objection Report, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation, this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee endorsed the recommendation to Cabinet, via vote, to proceed to Planning Application stage and subsequent Welsh Government business case approvals.

8. SCHOOL ORGANISATION CODE 2018 – STATUTORY OBJECTION REPORT: PROPOSAL FOR THE CLOSURE OF CWM GLAS INFANT SCHOOL.

Councillor C. Andrews (Cabinet Member for Education and Communities) introduced the report which updated Members in relation to the proposal in respect of the closure of Cwm Glas Infant School, effective from 20th July 2024.

Members were asked to consider the information contained in the update report and endorse the recommendations to Cabinet, who would then make the final determination on 3rd April 2024 as to whether or not to implement the proposal, following the process outlined in the School Organisation Code 2018 and supporting documentation.

Members noted that there were no statutory objections received. A Member stated that the report advises that all pupils at Cwm Glas infants could be accommodated at Coed y Brain Primary school, which is an excellent school, therefore the children who will be transferring there will be well looked after.

Following consideration of the information contained in the update report, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation, (and in noting there were 15 For, 0 Against, and 1 Abstention), this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee endorsed the recommendation to Cabinet, via vote, to proceed to full implementation.

9. WINTER PRESSURES.

Councillor E. Forehead (Cabinet Member for Social Care) introduced the report which advised Members of annual preparations made for Winter planning as required by Welsh Government. Information was provided on the plans in place to address the pressures experienced across the health and social care system.

Members were advised that previously funding and plans have covered a 6-month period from October through to the end of March, and learning from previous years, it was agreed to plan for 2 years so that all schemes could be fully operational and evaluated properly over a longer period of time to ascertain if they had any impact on individuals and the whole system.

A Member sought clarification on whether the report was 'out of date' as reference was made to issues from October 2023. Members were advised that the report is a review at the end of the Winter season, rather than what is planned for the Winter period.

Members were also advised that data in appendix 1 relating to 'Mental Health Practitioner and WAST response' was correct at the time of publishing, however since that time, this project was now operating.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the use of Regional Integration Fund (RIF) to underpin a 2-year regional System Resilience Plan to address potential winter pressures experienced across the health and social care system.

10. WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN – ANNUAL REPORT.

Councillor C. Andrews (Cabinet Member for Education and Communities) introduced the report which informed Members of the progress made in the annual report and the Welsh Government response.

Members were advised that the report identifies positive progress towards the target for the Local Authority of 26% of year 1 learners to be in Welsh medium education by 2032, with a current percentage decrease in 2023 to 17.17% of year 1 (reception age) from 17.89% in 2016, and 17.02% of nursery from 17.95% in 2016.

Members were informed of positive feedback from Welsh Government although more information was needed to understand the current picture, and that the work developing the website pages had moved much of this information into the public domain for increased transparency.

A Member sought clarification on the decrease in numbers in Welsh medium education and whether the reasons for this were known, and also whether the views of the pupils had been obtained. Members were advised that most pupils move from Welsh Primary into Welsh Secondary education, however, the main challenge is to increase the numbers going into year 1 (reception age). Members were also advised that Covid had a major impact on Welsh medium education with non-Welsh speaking parents concerned about online learning at that time, although some pupils have since returned to Welsh medium education.

A Member sought clarification on the opportunities available out of school, delivered by the youth service, and to what extent these opportunities could be provided County wide. Members were advised that out of school activities need to be sufficient and there is an increase due in some areas of the Borough with regards to childcare provision and after school clubs. Members were also advised that a Welsh medium parent/toddler group had formed from the parent network involved with Ysgol Y Lawnt and Upper Rhydney Primary School, with more groups expected to be set up in the future.

A Member queried the decrease in the numbers for year 1 (reception age) and whether the targets were still achievable in the next 8 years. Members were advised that work was being done with health colleagues to confirm numbers going forward in relation to population, together with work being done with promotion and marketing of current surplus places in Welsh medium schools. Reference was also made to the proposed new development for Ysgol Y Lawnt which would also increase the surplus places available. Members were also advised that consideration would be required for the workforce development to increase, as the provision of Welsh medium pupils increased.

A Member sought clarification on the increase of provisions in place for children with additional learning needs and queried the current provision. The Member also queried whether all teaching roles were being filled in Welsh medium schools. Members were advised that there is a specialist resource base for ALN at Cwm Derwen, and there are plans to have another base at Cwm Gwyddon. Members were also informed that the required increase in the workforce development is challenging and includes a lot of training and specialist support to allow teachers the opportunity to learn Welsh.

A Member noted the 80% take up in the Flying Start provision and queried how this could be increased further. Members were advised that some parents do not realise that they live in specific areas where this is available, and advertising on social media and the Caerphilly Early Years website will hopefully see an increase in attendance, going forward.

At the Chairs' request, Members were shown an animation film which had been produced to encourage learning for pupils, in the medium of Welsh. The Chair thanked the Officer for their contribution and also wished to note thanks to the youth worker who had assisted 2 young persons to attain their Welsh qualifications.

A Member noted the reduction in the financial support for Welsh language and whether all the targets in the report were still achievable going forward. Members were advised that the changes to grants were currently being considered together with the school budgets that had been set.

The Scrutiny Committee received the report and commented on the progress made in the first year of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

The Chair wished to note thanks to Officers for arranging the recent Members visit to the new school at Cwm Gwyddon. An invitation was also noted for an event at Crosskeys College on 13th March 2024, which members were welcome to attend.

The meeting closed at 6.29 pm.

Approved as a correct record, subject to any amendments agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 20th May 2024.

CHAIR

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Agenda Item 4



SPECIAL EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL SPECIAL MEETING HELD AT THE
COUNCIL OFFICES PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON
WEDNESDAY 20TH MARCH 2024 AT 5.30 P.M.**

PRESENT:

Councillor B. Miles - Chair

Councillors:

E.M. Aldworth, C. Bishop, M. Chacon-Dawson, P. Cook, A. Farina-Childs, C. Gordon, A. Leonard, J. Roberts, J. Simmonds, and J. Winslade.

Cabinet Members:

Councillors C. Andrews (Education and Communities), and E. Forehead (Social Care).

Together with:

Officers: R. Edmunds (Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services), K. Cole (Chief Education Officer), S. Richards (Head of Education Planning and Strategy), P. Warren (Strategic Lead for School Improvement), G. Jenkins (Interim Director of Social Services), A. West (Place Shaping and Sustainable Communities for Learning Service Manager), C. Boardman (Development Manager), C. Ewings (Youth Service Manager (Participation and Inclusion)), L. Kabza (Youth Participation and Curriculum Projects Coordinator), M. Jacques (Scrutiny Officer), J. Thomas (Committee Services Officer) and J. Lloyd (Committee Services Officer).

Also in attendance:

Councillor J. Pritchard, and co-opted Members Mr M Western (Cardiff ROC Archdiocesan Commission for Education Representative), and Mrs T. Millington (Parent Governor Representative). C. Lancaster (Vice Chair Youth Forum), Mr C. Parry (Headteacher of Lewis School, Pengam), J. James (Jon James Architects), A. Willis (Quad Consult), and L. Hopkins (The Urbanists).

RECORDING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chair reminded those present that the meeting was being live streamed, and a recording would be made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. [Click Here To View](#).

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from D. Street (Deputy Chief Executive), Councillors A. Broughton-Pettit, D. Cushing, M. Evans, T. Heron, T. Parry, S. Skivens, and K. Woodland. Mr G. James (Parent Governor Representative), Mrs P. Ireland (NEU), Mrs K. Cole (NEU), and Mr D. Davies (Caerphilly Governors Association).

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

3. **POST 16, SINGLE SEX AND SURPLUS PLACES BOARD – FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET.**

Councillor C. Andrews (Cabinet Member for Education and Communities) introduced the report which sought the views of the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee on two linked proposals to Cabinet that had been made by the Post 16, Single Sex and Surplus Places Board.

The proposals sought Cabinet agreement to undertake a formal consultation on the provision of Single Sex Education at Lewis School, Pengam, and Lewis Girls School, as well as a proposal to address some long-standing issues of Surplus Places across Secondary School provision in the Upper Rhymney Valley area.

A Member queried if the consultation would extend to parents and pupils yet to attend Lewis School Pengam and Lewis Girls School, but who planned to do so for secondary education. Members were advised that parents of pupils attending feeder schools within the catchment area would be consulted if the recommendations were accepted. The Member enquired about staff implications if the proposal on single sex provision went ahead. Members were advised that HR consultations would potentially take place in the future, but at this stage support was being sought purely on going out for initial consultation on the recommendations. The Member asked if the proposal was motivated by a drop in birthrates. Members were advised that the main driving force was quality of education and the well-being of pupils and that currently pupils are separated at the age of eleven from friends and family. Members heard about surplus places at both Lewis schools which was linked to the recommendations under discussion, but it was stressed that this was not the primary focus for this action. Members were advised that surplus places were currently circa 40% at both schools.

A Member sought clarification on future transportation costs for pupils if the recommendations were accepted. Members were advised that both schools shared the same catchment area and that whilst a significant increase in transportation costs was not anticipated, that level of detail had not been assessed at this stage of the proposal.

The Headteacher of Lewis School, Pengam, outlined to Members the process which had been followed to reach the current stage. The four headteachers of the secondary schools in the Upper Rhymney Valley had been part of discussions for four years.

The Chair noted the transition period designed to minimise impact on exam pupils and allow staff/pupil integration and asked how long this period was likely to be in place. The

Headteacher of Lewis School Pengam outlined the level of collaboration between both schools which was already taking place at sixth-form level. Members heard how an appraisal on the length of time needed for transition would emerge after continuing discussions between the two schools. This was likely to be a number of years in the first instance. The Chief Education Officer also stressed the importance of staff well-being as part of any future consultation.

The Chair queried the future of the Lewis Girls School site if the plans to locate all the catchment pupils at the Lewis School Pengam site went ahead. Members were advised that there were a number of options and highlighted the significance of community consultation on any future plans. Members heard about health facility challenges in Ystrad Mynach, and that the lower playing fields at the girls' school was prone to flooding.

A Member sought clarification on the continuous professional development and training for staff if they moved from single sex provision to co-education. The Chief Education Officer provided assurances that this would be part of considerations within the 'team around the school' system to allow as smooth a transition as possible. The Headteacher of Lewis School Pengam advised that the majority of staff had backgrounds in co-education schools.

A Member enquired about the provision for ALN pupils in the plans for a new secondary school in Heolddu. Members were assured that ALN provision would be a key part of any future plans and highlighted that a full business case would have to be provided in order to obtain Welsh Government funding.

The Chair queried whether any modifications were needed at Lewis School Pengam if it moved from single sex provision to co-education. The Headteacher of Lewis School Pengam highlighted that there was sufficient capacity, the building was in good condition as it had only been built in 2004 and that co-education toilet facilities were already in place. Therefore, minimal modification would be required if the recommendations were accepted.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the unanimous support from the Post 16, Single Sex and Surplus Places Board (the Board) on the proposals set out within 5.7(1), 5.7(2) and 5.18(1) of the report, and commented on and scrutinised the content of the report and the stated proposals ahead of their consideration at Cabinet.

4. YOUTH FORUM PRIORITIES.

Councillor C. Andrews (Cabinet Member for Education and Communities) introduced the report which informed Members of the issues raised by Young People via the Youth Services Youth Forum and sought the views of Members prior to its presentation to Cabinet.

Members were given a presentation from the Vice Chair of the Youth Forum on the process of identifying priority issues, which included drugs, cost of living, personal safety, body image, and littering. Members were advised that the Youth Forum is currently undertaking a consultation on vaping and drugs and were informed on how the Youth Forum will address the priority issue.

A Member queried how the Council would be supporting the Youth Forum in achieving the priorities they have raised. Members were advised that the local authority youth service support the work of the youth forum and will work in partnership with the Police, Public Health Wales, and Healthy Schools, to raise awareness of the issues raised.

A Member asked the Vice Chair of the Youth Forum what he thought the attraction was with vaping and young people, and whether they had any health concerns. Members were advised that the style of company advertising was targeted at young people and noted that vapes should not be displayed in shops where they would be easily accessible by young people.

A Member queried whether the Youth Forum could refer the matter of vaping to their local MP or Senedd Member. Members were advised that this would be beneficial to the cause and the youth forum had already been working with Public Health Wales on this matter.

A Member sought clarification on where the data came from and how it is collated, including the information gathered from young people. The Member also noted that a petition of 50 to 100 signatures, if submitted to the Senedd, could result in the matter being raised and discussed within the Senedd. Members were advised that the statistics obtained were the results of the consultation that had been held online and through Borough wide meetings, in the Council Chamber every 2 months, and through surveys and workshops.

A Member noted that the issue of vaping had been raised in a recent Council meeting and that a Members seminar had been proposed on this matter. The Member also queried whether Members could attend a Youth Forum meeting. Members were advised they would be welcome to attend. Members were also advised that arrangements were being made for the Members seminar on vaping, and that the Youth Forum would be welcome to attend.

The Chair thanked the Vice Chair of the Youth Forum and Officers for their contribution.

Following consideration of the report, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation, this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee:

- a) Support the presentation of Youth Forum issues, by young people, to the Cabinet.
- b) Considered how to support the Youth Forum in addressing their Priority Issue.
- c) Have due regard to issues raised within this report by Young People when making decisions which impact upon their lives.

The meeting closed at 6.32 pm.

Approved as a correct record, subject to any amendments agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 20th May 2024.

CHAIR



EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 20TH MAY 2024

**SUBJECT: EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND
CORPORATE SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Forward Work Programmes are essential to ensure that Scrutiny Committee agendas reflect the strategic issues facing the Council and other priorities raised by Members, the public or stakeholder.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members consider any changes and agree the final forward work programme prior to publication.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To improve the operation of scrutiny.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee forward work programme includes all reports that were identified at the Committee Meeting on Tuesday 12th March 2024. The work programme outlines the reports planned for the period May 2024 until March 2025.
- 5.2 The forward Work Programme is made up of reports identified by officers and members. Members are asked to consider the work programme alongside the

cabinet work programme and suggest any changes before it is published on the council website. The Scrutiny committee will review this work programme at every meeting going forward alongside any changes to the cabinet work programme or report requests.

5.3 The Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1, which presents the current status as at 29th April 2024. The Cabinet Work Programme is attached at Appendix 2. A copy of the prioritisation flowchart is attached at appendix 3 to assist the scrutiny committee to determine what items should be added to the forward work programme.

5.4 **Conclusion**

The work programme is for consideration and amendment by the scrutiny committee prior to publication on the council website.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 No assumptions are necessary.

7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 As this report is for information only an Integrated Impact Assessment is not necessary.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no specific financial implications arising as a result of this report.

9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no specific personnel implications arising as a result of this report.

10. **CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been included in this report.

11. **STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 The Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Mark Jacques, Scrutiny Officer jacqu@carphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director for Education and Corporate

Services

Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer

Gareth Jenkins, Interim Corporate Director of Social Services

Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

Lisa Lane, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer,
Legal Services

Councillor Teresa Parry, Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny
Committee

Councillor Brenda Miles, Vice Chair of Education and Social Services
Scrutiny Committee

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work
Programme

Appendix 2 Cabinet Forward Work Programme

Appendix 3 Forward Work Programme Prioritisation Flowchart

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Forward Work Programme - Education and Social Services

Appendix 1

Date	Title	Key Issues	Author	Cabinet Member
20/05/24 17:30	EAS Overview		Pryce, Ed (EAS)	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
20/05/24 17:30	School Inspection Update		Cole, Keri;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
20/05/24 17:30	Federation of a Schools Governing Body proposal	To seek Scrutiny endorsement to move to formal consultation, in partnership with each Governing Body, for the federation of the following schools: Cwmaber Infants School and Cwmaber Junior School	West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
20/05/24 17:30	Safeguarding	Critical areas of work undertaken Impact of the work Next steps	Ellis, Sarah;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
20/05/24 17:30	Information Item - Modern Foreign Languages taught in Schools	How many; what is taught and future plans/developments.	Cole, Keri;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
04/06/24 17:30	Exclusions	Approaches taken by schools Impact of school interventions Current rates of exclusions Support and challenge to schools	Ellis, Sarah;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
04/06/24 17:30	Pupil Attendance		Warren, Paul;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
04/06/24 17:30	The proposal to move to coeducation for Lewis Girls and Lewis School Pengam	For Scrutiny Members to provide their 'views', via vote, on the proposal for Lewis Girls and Lewis School Pengam in line with the requirements of the 'School Organisation Code 2018'.	Edmunds, Richard 'Ed';	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
04/06/24 17:30	Information Item - Regional Partnership Board 6-month update	Implementation of governance review Update on work of RPB	Williams, Jo;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
16/07/24 17:30	Social Services - Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report	To ensure Scrutiny Committee is fully aware of the Council's arrangements for corporate safeguarding and is satisfied and assured that these arrangements are effective.	Jenkins, Gareth;	Cllr. Forehead, Elaine;
16/07/24 17:30	Amalgamation of Hendre Infants and Junior Schools	For Scrutiny Members to endorse a recommendation to consult on the proposal following the Statutory process as prescribed by the 'School Organisation Code 2018'.	West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
16/07/24 17:30	Proposal for the closure of Rhydri Primary School	For Scrutiny Members to endorse a recommendation to consult on the proposal following the Statutory process as prescribed by the 'School Organisation Code 2018'.	West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;

16/07/24 17:30	Information Item - Complaints		Williams, Jo;	Cllr. Forehead, Elaine;
03/09/24 17:30	The proposal to move to coeducation for Lewis Girls and Lewis School Pengam	To obtain the views of Scrutiny on the consultation update report prior to Cabinet making their decision to proceed to Statutory Notice.	Edmunds, Richard 'Ed';	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
03/09/24 17:30	Federation of Cwmaber Infants and Junior Schools	For Scrutiny Members to provide their 'views', via vote, on the proposal to federate Cwmaber Infants and Junior Schools	West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
03/09/24 17:30	Amalgamation of Hendre Infants and Junior Schools	For Scrutiny Members to provide their 'views', via vote, on the proposal to amalgamate Hendre Infants and Junior Schools	West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
03/09/24 17:30	Additional Support Delegation		Cole, Keri;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
15/10/24 17:30	Proposal for the closure of Rhydri Primary School	For Scrutiny Members to provide their 'views', via vote, on the proposal to close Rhydri Primary School	West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
15/10/24 17:30	LGES Inspection Report		Cole, Keri;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
15/10/24 17:30	Annual Report for the Director of Social Services		Jenkins, Gareth;	Cllr. Forehead, Elaine;
26/11/24 17:30	Federation of Cwmaber Infants and Junior Schools	To obtain the views of Scrutiny on the consultation report prior to Cabinet making their decision to implement the Federation	West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
26/11/24 17:30	Amalgamation of Hendre Infants and Junior Schools	To obtain the views of Scrutiny on the consultation update report prior to Cabinet making their decision to proceed to Statutory Notice	West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
26/11/24 17:30	The proposal to move to coeducation for Lewis Girls and Lewis School Pengam	For Scrutiny Members to consider the Objection Report and endorse the recommendation to Cabinet, via vote, to implement the proposal	Edmunds, Richard 'Ed';	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
26/11/24 17:30	Proposal for the closure of Rhydri Primary School	To obtain the views of Scrutiny on the consultation update report prior to Cabinet making their decision to proceed to Statutory Notice	West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;

28/01/25 17:30				
11/03/25 17:30	Amalgamation of Hendre Infants and Junior Schools	For Scrutiny Members to consider the Objection Report and endorse the recommendation to Cabinet, via vote, to implement the proposal	West, Andrea	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
11/03/25 17:30	Proposal for the closure of Rhydri Primary School	For Scrutiny Members to consider the Objection Report and endorse the recommendation to Cabinet, via vote, to implement the proposal	West, Andrea	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;

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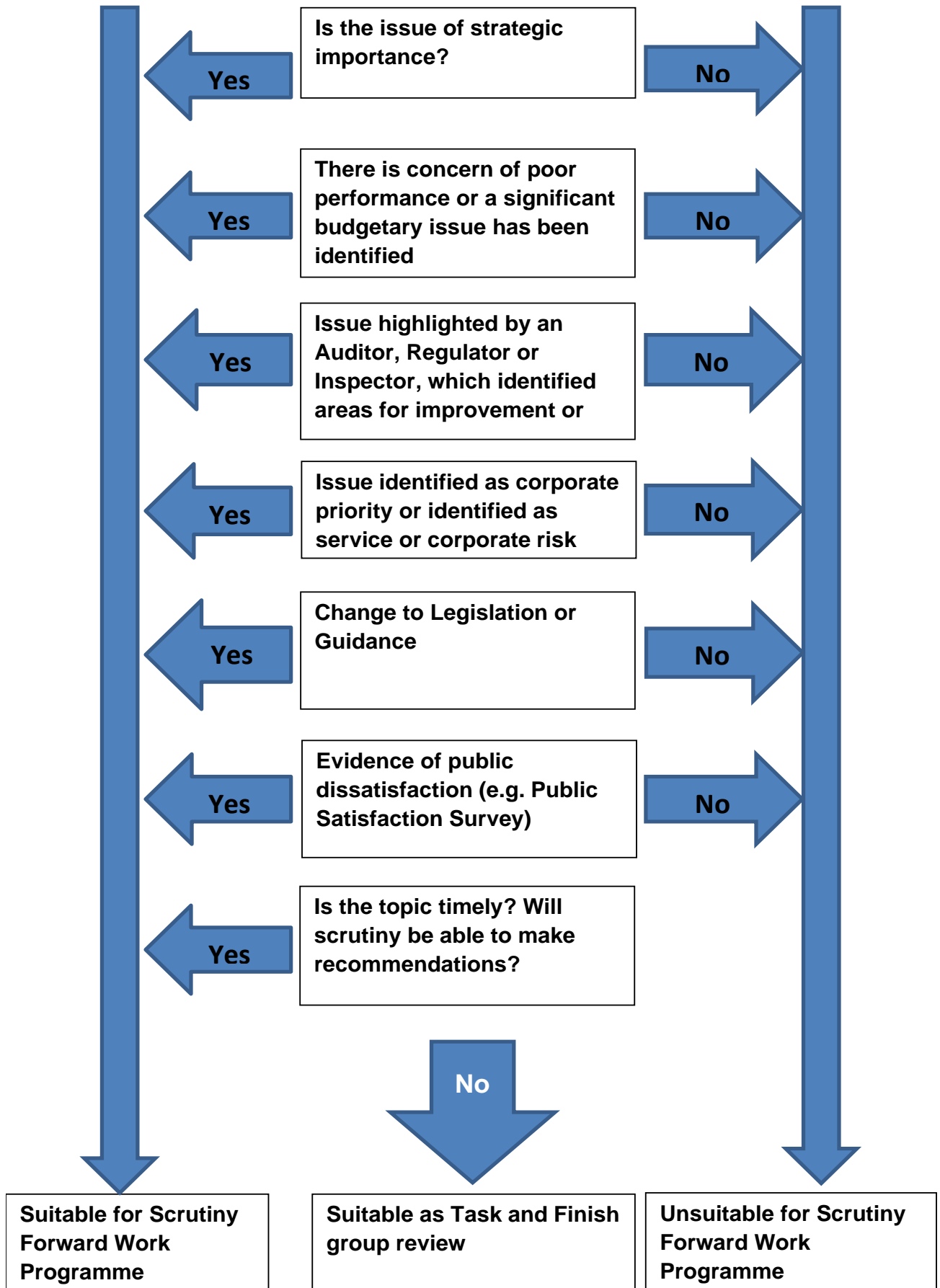
Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author	Cabinet Member:
05/06/24	Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2023/24	To inform Cabinet and seek their endorsement of the progress made during the financial year 2023-2024 against four specific areas of Welsh language work, as required under the regulatory framework for implementing the Welsh Language Standards	Anwen Cullinane /Kath Peters	Cllr Eluned Stenner
05/06/24	The federation of the Cwmaber Infants School and Cwmaber Junior School	To seek Cabinet approval to move to formal consultation, in partnership with each Governing Body, for the federation of Cwmaber Infants School and Cwmaber Junior School	Sue Richards / Andrea West	Cllr Carol Andrews
05/06/24	School Inspection Update - Estyn	To update members on recent Estyn school inspections and to offer an analysis of themes for comment and observations.	Keri Cole	Cllr Carol Andrews
05/06/24	Proposed Changes to Caerphilly CBC's Discretionary Rate Relief Policy	To seek Cabinet approval of a proposed change to the Discretionary Rate Relief Policy in relation to rateable value limits.	Glenn Edwards/ Sean O'Donnell	Cllr Eluned Stenner
05/06/24	Residential Parking Permit Inquiry – Final Report	To advise on the final recommendations of the Scrutiny Task and Finish inquiry into the potential implications of changes to the current Residents' Parking Policy	Mark Jacques	Cllr Nigel George
05/06/24	Exempt Item - Tourism Review: Memorandum of Understanding in respect of Cwmcarn	This item is subject to a public interest test	Allan Dallimore	Cllr James Pritchard

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author	Cabinet Member:
	Forest with Natural Resources Wales			
26/06/24 13:00 p.m.	Sport Caerphilly Disability Sports Camps	To seek approval to replace the current programme of Sport Caerphilly disability sports camps with an offer that is more tailored for the attendees and their changing needs.	Jared Lougher	Cllr Chris Morgan
26/06/24 Page 20	Local Housing Market Assessment and the Welsh Government Prospectus	To discuss and approve the LHMA and the Prospectus. Welsh Government requires all Local Authorities to undertake a Local Housing Market Assessment and a Prospectus. The documents set out the requirement for housing within the county borough and is utilised to inform the LDP, the allocation of Social Housing Grant and the Council's own Caerphilly Homes development programme.	Nick Taylor-Williams/Jane Roberts-Waite/ Mark Jennings	Cllr Shayne Cook
24/07/24 13:00 p.m.	Proposed Waste Strategy and Consultation Feedback.	Consideration of public consultation feedback in regard Draft Waste Strategy and finalisation of new Waste Strategy to allow development of Full Business case for submission to Welsh Government.	Marcus Lloyd/Hayley Jones/ Hayley Lancaster	Cllr Chris Morgan
24/07/24	Leasing Scheme Wales	To seek Cabinet agreement to adopt the Welsh Government leasing scheme Wales to increase access to the private rented sector	Nick Taylor -Williams	Cllr Shayne Cook

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author	Cabinet Member:
24/07/24	Social Services - Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report	To present the 2023-24 Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report, Forward Work Programme and Safeguarding Key Activity Data for information to ensure Cabinet is fully aware of the Council's arrangements for corporate safeguarding and is satisfied that these arrangements are effective.	Gareth Jenkins	Cllr Elaine Forehead
24/07/24	Public Protection Annual Report	To update Cabinet on the enforcement activities of the public protection division for 2023/24	Rob Hartshorn	Cllr Philippa Leonard
24/07/24	Amalgamation of Hendre Infants and Junior Schools	To seek approval to proceed to Consultation	Sue Richards, Andrea West	Cllr Carol Andrews
24/07/24	Proposal for the closure of Rhydri Primary School	For Scrutiny Members to consider the Objection Report and endorse the recommendation to Cabinet, via vote, to implement the proposal	Sue Richards, Andrea West	Cllr Carol Andrews

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Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme Prioritisation



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EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 20TH MAY 2024

SUBJECT: AN OVERVIEW OF HOW THE EAS SUPPORTS CAERPHILLY LOCAL AUTHORITY (LA) TO DELIVER THEIR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT FUNCTION

REPORT BY: DEBBIE HARTEVELD, MANAGING DIRECTOR, EAS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide members with an overview of how the Education Achievement Service (EAS) supports Caerphilly Local Authority (LA) to deliver their school improvement function.
- 1.2 To seek members' views on current arrangements for how this support is delivered, within the context of an ongoing review.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report is supported through the delivery of a presentation giving a detail overview of the ways in which the EAS supports Caerphilly Local Authority to deliver their School Improvement function.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members are asked to scrutinise the contents of the report and ask questions and offer views about current arrangements.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility for monitoring educational outcomes and delivering its school improvement function. Much of this work is currently undertaken through partnership working with the EAS. The presentation provides the regional context, explains governance and funding models as well as describing how the LA ensures that the EAS meets the needs of Caerphilly schools and local priorities. It also provides details on EAS staffing and the delivery model in Caerphilly LA and how the LA holds the EAS to account for its work.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The EAS is a service that was set up by the five Councils in South-East Wales in September 2012 in response to the requirements of the Welsh Government's National Model for Regional Working.
- 5.2 The EAS is co-owned by the five Councils, who took the decision to set it up as a not-for-profit Company.
- 5.3 The EAS is subject to a strict governance model and is held to account through this mechanism.
- 5.4 There is a legal agreement in place with the 5 Councils called the CAMA (Collaboration and Members Agreement) that sets out how the organisation works, work, how it is funded and how funding is allocated.
- 5.5 The EAS receives funding, in the form of grants and core funding from each LA on an annual basis.
- 5.6 The Governance model, which included Caerphilly member representation on the Company Board, Joint Executive Group (JEG) and Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC), and the relationships between them are described.
- 5.7 Funding Model for the EAS is described in detail in the accompanying presentation. This describes in detail the original sources of funding and how these have evolved significantly over the last 12 years. Each council's contributions, the staffing model and the efficiencies that have been delivered over this period.
- 5.8 The EAS Business Plan, which has through Caerphilly Scrutiny committee before final approval by JEG and Caerphilly Cabinet, sets out how services are delivered, so that they meet the local needs of each LA. This is complemented by a Caerphilly specific delivery plan.
- 5.9 The presentation also describes the model for capturing the impact of the work in Caerphilly schools, through the Intent, Implementation and Impact approach, and how this is reported to JEG, Company Board and Caerphilly LA at multiple points throughout the year. This section also includes examples of how we share the and celebrate the progress made by Caerphilly schools.
- 5.10 The presentation describes the systems that have evolved and matured to record all of our work in, and support for schools, and how this is reported to Caerphilly LA.
- 5.11 The EAS staffing and Partner delivery model, including the rationale that sits behind that are described, including our approaches with the LA to provide team support around both schools and clusters of schools.

Conclusion

- 5.12 This report outlines the content of a detailed presentation which provides members with a broad range of information to inform them and allow them to ask questions about the way in which the EAS supports Caerphilly LA's statutory function.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1. There are no specific assumptions.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This report is for information only therefore no Integrated Impact Assessment is required.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 This work is funded through the EAS Business Plan, therefore there are no specific financial implications.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 The draft report was distributed as detailed below. All comments received have been reflected in this version of the report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000, Children's Act 2004, Standards and Framework Act 1998

Appendix 1: Presentation - How the EAS supports Caerphilly Local Authority to deliver their school improvement function

Author Edward Pryce, Assistant Director, EAS, edward.pryce@sewaleseas.org.uk

Consultees:

- Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services
- Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive
- Councillor Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member for Education and Communities
- Councillor Teresa Parry, Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee
- Councillor Brenda Miles, Vice Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee
- Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
- Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer
- Sue Richards, Head of Transformation and Education Planning and Strategy
- Sarah Ellis, Lead for Inclusion and ALN
- Sarah Mutch, Early Years Manager

- Paul Warren, Strategic Lead for School Improvement
- Jane Southcombe, Financial Services Manager
- Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
- Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Service and Monitoring Officer
- Ros Roberts, Business Improvement Officer.



An overview of how the EAS supports Caerphilly Local Authority (LA) to deliver their school improvement function?

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Caerphilly LA Scrutiny Committee
20 May 2024



Overview of the session

- Regional Context
- Governance and Funding Model
- How does the LA ensure that the EAS meets the needs of Caerphilly schools and local priorities?
- EAS Staffing and Delivery Model in Caerphilly LA

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Regional Context

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Serving the communities of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly,
Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen



EAS Vision and Values

EAS Vision

Supporting and enabling schools and education settings to thrive as effective learning organisations, learning from each other and the wider educational community.

EAS Values:



Integrity: Doing what is right and delivering what we promise by providing a high support and high challenge environment.



Innovation: We promise an innovative culture and attitude. We will challenge and aim for excellence in all we do.



Collaboration: We value everyone and work together to achieve our vision.

Our vision and values guide everything we do in our day-to-day practices and interactions with our key partners, the wider educational community and our employees.

The Region

73,542

Number of pupils of compulsory school age within the region in 2021



19.4%
of all pupils in Wales.



236

maintained schools in the region
(which includes 4 pupil referral units)



21 Welsh medium primary schools | **3** Welsh medium secondary schools

17 Roman Catholic schools | **11** Church in Wales schools

EAS figure correct from September 2021, Wales figure from Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC), 2021



24%

The percentage of pupils of compulsory school age who are eligible for **free school meals (FSM)**

This level of eligibility is the second highest of the four regional consortia with Central South Consortium highest with 24.6% (PLASC, 2021)

10%

of people aged three and over say that they can speak Welsh compared to the Wales average of 19%

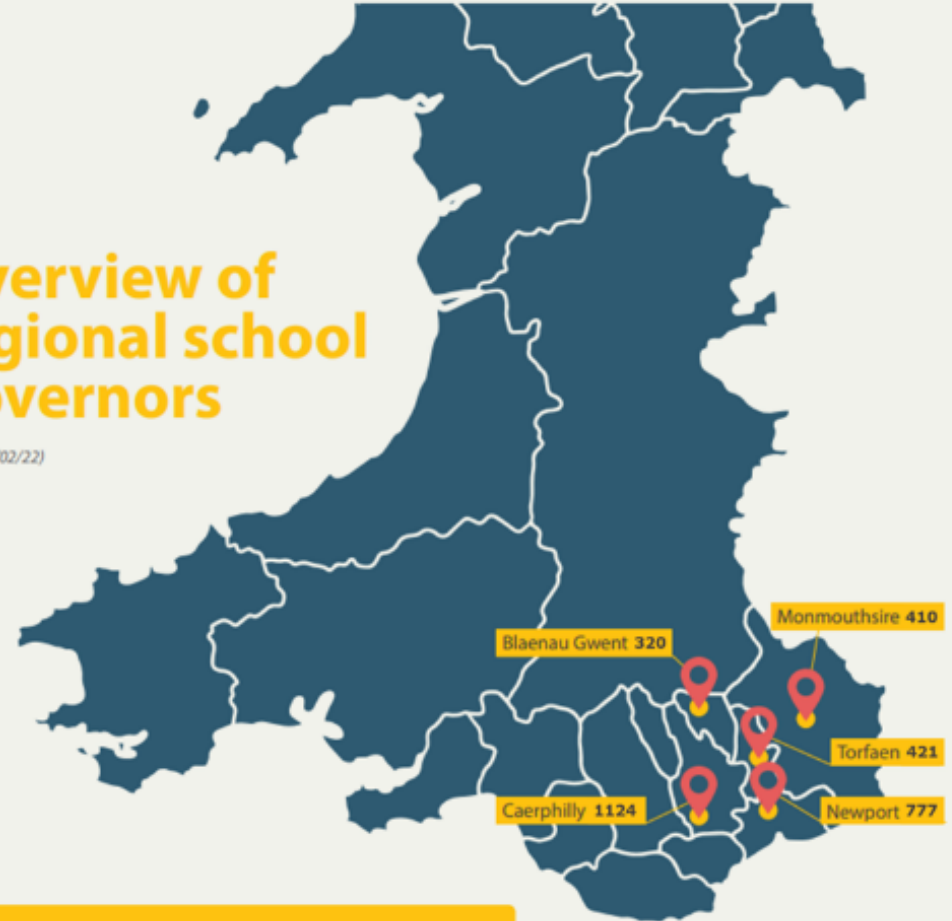


13.2%

The percentage of pupils aged 5 or over from an ethnic minority background


Overview of regional school governors

(As at 15/02/22)



EAS Region Total **3,052**

Caerphilly LA

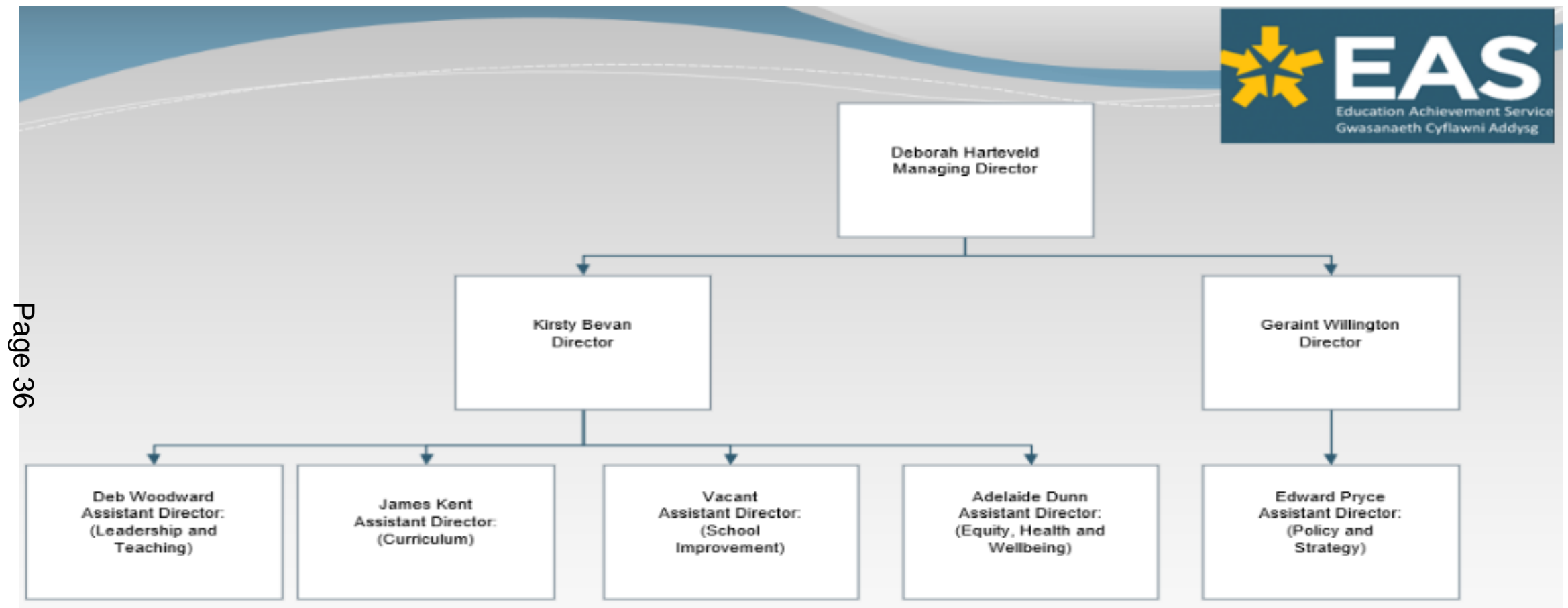
	
Caerphilly	
24.9%	Free School Meals
14	Non-maintained nursery settings
63	Primary <i>(11 Welsh medium, 1 Roman Catholic)</i>
6	Infant
4	Junior
11	Secondary <i>(1 Welsh medium)</i>
1	Special
1	Pupil referral unit
1	3-18
Regional school / PRU staffing	
1,580	Teaching staff
1,416	Support staff

	
EAS Region	
24.8%	Free School Meals
81	Non-maintained nursery settings
1	Nursery
181	Primary
6	Infant
4	Junior
32	Secondary <i>(1 Welsh medium, 1 Roman Catholic)</i>
6	Special
2	Pupil referral service
2	Pupil referral unit
2	3-16
1	3-18
Regional school / PRU staffing	
5,012	Teaching staff
4,679	Support staff

Who is the Education Achievement Service (EAS)?

- The EAS is a service that was set up by the 5 Councils in South-East Wales in September 2012 in response to the requirements of the Welsh Government's National Model for Regional Working.
- The EAS is co-owned by the 5 Councils, who took the decision to set it up as a not-for-profit Company.
- The EAS is subject to a strict governance model and is held to account through this mechanism.
- There is a legal agreement in place with the 5 Councils called the CAMA (Collaboration and Members Agreement) that sets out how we work, how we are funded and how we agree and allocate funding.
- The EAS receives funding, in the form of grants and core funding from each LA on an annual basis.
- The EAS Business Plan sets out how we deliver our services so that they meet the local needs of each LA.

EAS Staffing Structure



- Currently 64.7 FTE staff employed within the EAS. In 2012 there were 135 FTE staff within the service.
- Annual re-structures / staffing changes have ensured delivery model remains fit for purpose.



Education Achievement Service
Gwasanaeth Cyflawni Addysg

Governance and Funding Model

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Serving the communities of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly,
Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen



The EAS Funding Model

- All staff working in School Improvement from each of the 5 LAs were TUPE transferred across to the EAS in 2012.
- When the EAS was set up it was funded in the following way:
 - **Core funding** from each LA based upon an agreed funding model by the 5 Councils
 - **Traded Income** from schools for services
 - **Grants and Service Level Agreements**

LA Contributions 2012 to 2025

	EAS 'As Is' Model Aug 2012	2013/14	2014/15 (funding levels set by WG, based on RSG formula to LA)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	% Movement 2012 to 2023/24
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	%
Blaenau Gwent CBC	454,853	423,953	417,511	358,985	351,805	350,046	315,042	283,537	-37.66%
Caerphilly CBC	1,187,541	1,133,580	1,169,666	1,005,705	985,591	980,663	882,597	794,337	-33.11%
Monmouthshire CC	591,619	468,403	481,642	414,127	405,844	403,815	363,434	327,090	-44.71%
Newport CC	1,095,407	926,421	934,254	803,293	787,227	783,291	704,962	634,466	-42.08%
Dorfaen CBC	940,858	760,016	600,536	516,355	506,028	503,498	453,148	407,833	-56.65%
Total	4,270,278	3,712,371	3,603,609	3,098,465	3,036,496	3,021,313	2,719,182	2,447,264	
Total Efficiencies								1,823,014	-36.32%
Total Staff FTE	135.10	132.60	125.46	66.07	63.30	63.77	64.77	63.17	-53.24%
Inflation rate % (Average for calendar year) *	2.8%	2.6%	1.5%	0.9%	2.6%	9.1%	8.4%	tbc	35.6%
<i>If at the 2012 level funding continued at the rate of inflation</i>		4,389,846	4,503,982	4,933,262	4,977,662	5,107,081	5,571,825	6,039,858	
<i>Difference between current and inflationary commissioned income</i>								3,592,595	246.80%

LA Contributions 2012 to 2025

2) Delegation from EAS budget to schools to enable schools to support other schools

	2013/14	2014/15	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£	£	£	£	£	£
SIPs / s2s	116,550	120,000	385,007	831,397	946,033	912,950
NMS	-	-	14,000	14,000	20,400	26,000
Total	116,550	120,000	399,007	845,397	966,433	938,950

3) Summary of grants received from WG overtime

	2013/14	2014/15	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£	£	£	£	£	£
No of Grants / Initiatives within grants	x6	x12	x64	x55	x39	x33
Total £	18,984,000	26,156,000	52,641,140	60,998,552	59,981,918	34,634,866
Delegation* £	16,635,000	23,990,000	49,633,262	58,247,845	57,084,917	31,681,599
Delegation %	87.6%	91.7%	94.3%	95.5%	95.2%	91.5%

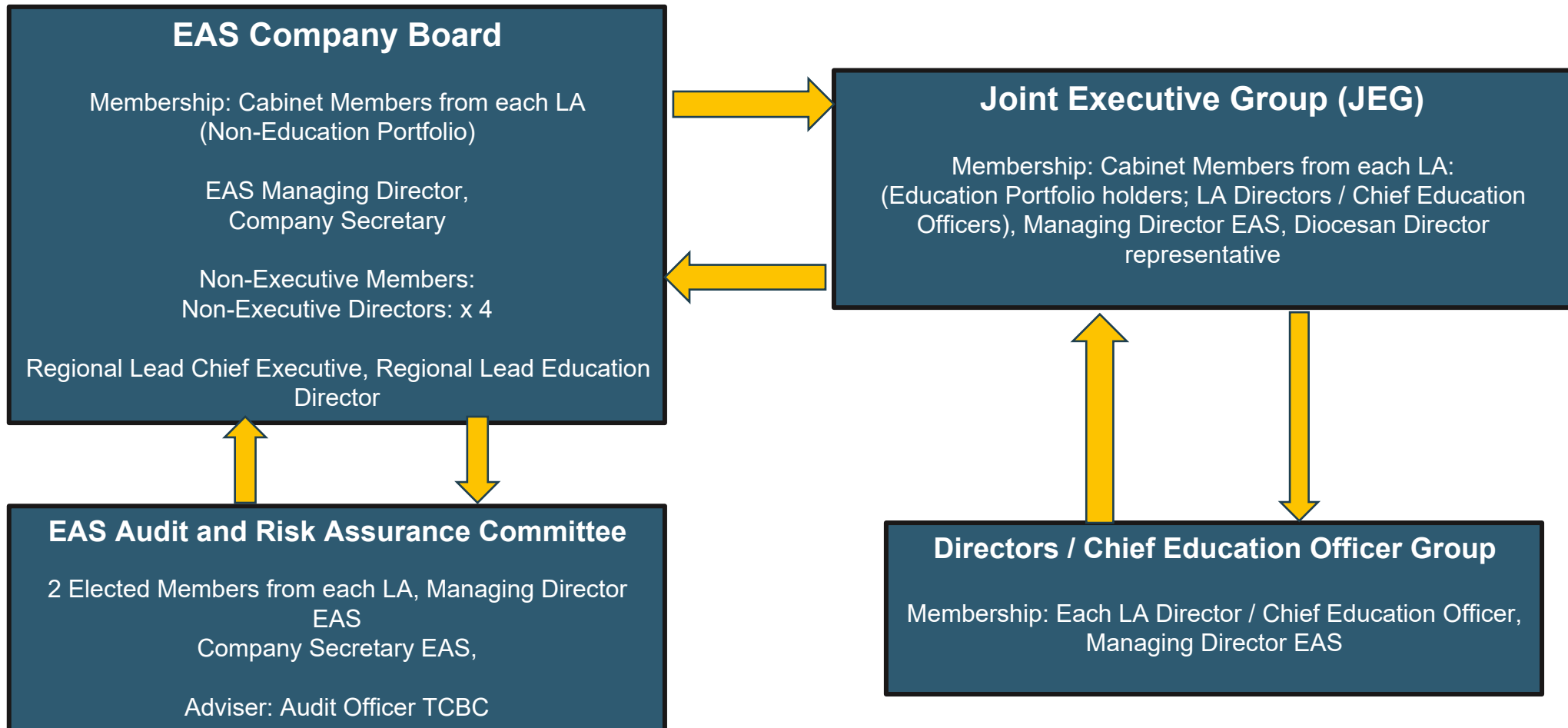
Info as at 24th Apr 24

4) Reduction in income to the EAS overtime which was previously generated through a trading model with schools (funding model inherited in 2012)

	2013/14	2014/15	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Income generated from PL deliver	£1,247,884	£1,089,664	£0	£0	£0	£0

EAS Governance Model

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All minutes from the Company Board, Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Joint Executive Group are available on the EAS website.

Governance Groups: Joint Executive Group (JEG)

The Joint Executive Group (JEG) has members who hold cabinet responsibility for education across the 5 local authorities. They might be considered the 'customer' of EAS as they represent the local authorities who originally set up the company to deliver school improvement provision.

They are there to:

- Make sure that the best outcomes are achieved for learners across SE Wales
- Ensure the realisation of the business plan which has been agreed to meet these outcomes
- Provide recommendations, challenge and support to improve outcomes further
- Make decisions around key aspects such as regional grants and ongoing governance
- Keep their respective council informed and provide two-way communication about EAS
- Act as the local authority shareholder at the AGM

They expect:

- The EAS company board to review their recommendations
- EAS management to provide the right information to allow them to make informed decisions and then to act on their recommendations

Governance Groups: Company Board

The Company Board is responsible for the performance of EAS. They provide strategic governance and set the vision, mission and values of the company whilst holding overall accountability for its success. They agree the strategy and delegate the delivery of this to the Managing Director.

They are there to:

- Appoint and monitor the performance of the Managing Director
- Act as a 'critical friend' and ensure that all possibilities and perspectives have been examined
- Oversee all operational aspects of the company and ensure that it remains on track, remains compliant with all aspects of company law, approving the staffing and delivery structure to deliver the business plan, and the setting and monitoring of financial budgets specific to that of the company

They expect:

- The JEG to agree and communicate business plans, provide oversight and scrutiny and to communicate effectively with their local authorities. The JEG should not become involved with operational aspects of EAS
- The management team to carry out all operational aspects as agreed and to supply the board with clear information as required to allow them to provide effective governance

Governance Groups: Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

An additional layer of support for the board is provided by ARAC. They take responsibility for aspects of compliance (although final accountability will rest with the EAS Board)

This includes:

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Monitoring and reviewing all aspects of finance including internal audits and recommending terms of engagement of external auditors

- All aspects of risk management
- Compliance with law and regulations including HR, Welsh language, technology, conflicts of interest, health and safety and governance
- Reporting on impact and value for money



Governance Groups: EAS Management Team

The management team is there to deliver the strategy which will provide support and challenge to schools in order to improve learner outcomes

This includes:

- Agreeing the strategy and formulating the associated business plan
- Delivering the business plan and monitoring outcomes
- Leading the company to satisfy the needs of all key stakeholders
- Recruiting, developing and monitoring the performance of staff to ensure that a high quality service is delivered

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They expect:

- The Company Board to provide scrutiny and challenge to the expectations of JEG, oversee what they are doing and provide strategic guidance and challenge which will help them to succeed and which recognise the delivery challenges faced
- JEG to provide high expectations of performance, feedback on key issues and to provide additional challenge around business plans which will be picked up by the company board



Education Achievement Service
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How does the LA ensure that the EAS meets the needs of Caerphilly schools and local priorities?

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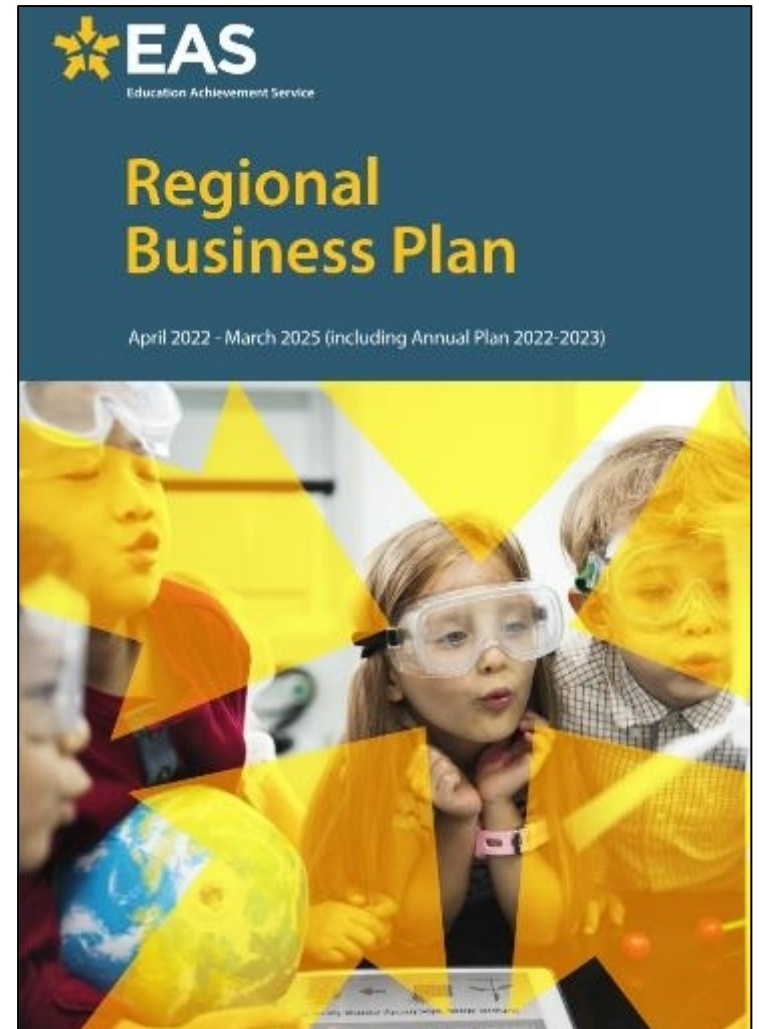
Serving the communities of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen



EAS Business Plan 2022-2025

- The Business Plan is created using the priorities from each LA, using a thorough consultation process with a wide range of partners.
- Final agreement of the plan is given by JEG members.
- Regular progress reports are given to JEG and Company Board.
- Multiple reports are provided to Caerphilly LA throughout the year that are nuanced to their local priorities and schools.

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EAS Business Plan priorities

Improvement Priorities

- a. To know and monitor schools and settings, providing appropriate challenge, bespoke, support and intervention through the regional school improvement model.
- b. Review the impact of support in schools causing concern, particularly those who remain in a statutory category for too long, to ensure that the support meets the needs of the school to secure an appropriate rate of improvement.
- c. Continue to refine the consistency, usefulness, and accuracy of written reports so that the information we provide to local authorities is accurate and timely, enabling them to monitor and identify shortcomings at an early stage.
- d. Capture the impact of our work on:
 - Supporting schools to become effective learning organisations.
 - Knowing schools and settings well and providing effective support and challenge.
 - Supporting schools and settings to develop effective procedures for self-evaluation and improvement planning.
 - Support for vulnerable learners.
 - Supporting schools with curriculum reform, with a focus on assessment and progression.
 - Supporting the use of Welsh as an integral part of Curriculum for Wales.
 - Supporting effective professional learning at all levels in schools and settings, particularly for leadership and teaching.
 - Supporting schools and settings to share good practice and learn from each other.



EAS Business Plan priorities



- e. Increase the first-hand evidence base that is used to evaluate:
 - The progress of learners, including all groups of learners overtime.
 - Teaching and learning experiences.
 - The effectiveness of leadership and management in securing improvements.
- f. Review and refine the regional professional learning offer for teaching to ensure that it offers support and guidance for schools to improve on relevant elements of teaching.
- g. Implement a team around the cluster model to support the development and implementation of cluster priorities.
- h. Extend opportunities to engage with children and young people on aspects of their learning and priorities, using the findings to shape service delivery.
- i. Work with local authority partners to develop a sustainable funding model that enables effective longer-term planning to take place.

EAS Business Plan priorities

Priority 1: School Improvement

Priority 2: Leadership and Teaching

Priority 3: Curriculum for Wales

Priority 4: Health Wellbeing and Equity

Priority 5: School Governance

Priority 6: EAS Organisational Foundations

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The success criteria is what we need to demonstrate impact against.



Priority 4: Health Wellbeing and Equity	
Provide professional learning and support for health, wellbeing and equity to improve the outcomes of vulnerable and disadvantaged learners building capacity in all schools supporting the development of effective inclusive learning organisations.	
Link to Our National Mission: high standards and aspirations for all.	
Objective 3: a positive education experience for all: A positive education experience for everyone, with learners and staff supported in their wellbeing and resilience, which is essential for improving education outcomes and life chances.	
Objective 5: community-based learning: Community-based learning, with strong institutions engaging, integrating and being empowered by their communities.	
Objective 6: Cymraeg belongs to us all: Cymraeg belongs to us all: Encourage the use of Welsh across the education system, as an integral part of Curriculum for Wales, our Cymraeg 2050 ambitions and expanding provision post-16 to study through Welsh and opportunities to learn the language as active and engaged citizens.	
Link to Contributory Factors: 1, 5, 6, 8	
Success Criteria	LA Partnership Working
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All schools and educational settings have an appropriate vision and approach to health, wellbeing and equity. This integrated and responsive approach is reflected in each school's SDP and is having an impact on teaching and learning strategies. 2. Schools and educational settings requiring targeted or intensive support, receive timely and appropriate professional learning in relation to Health, Wellbeing and Equity that supports improvement in the educational attainment and wellbeing outcomes of vulnerable and disadvantaged learners. 3. Professional learning, support and guidance assists schools to develop systems and processes to reduce the impact of poverty on vulnerable and disadvantaged learners. 4. Schools' own evaluations of provision, teaching and learning for vulnerable and disadvantaged learners are appropriately informed by the professional learning provided. As a result, whole school strategic interventions are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the EAS and local authority services are joined up to support the regional provision for Health, Wellbeing and Equity. • Support the review and impact of the use of Pupil Development Grant (PDG). • Identify schools and educational settings who require additional support and share relevant information. • Promote and support the regional and national professional learning offer. • Support the EAS in keeping under review learning network school capacity to support the wider system sharing information where relevant.

Caerphilly LA: Local priorities

LA Partnership Working in Caerphilly 2023-2024	
LA Priorities and Success Criteria	EAS targeted actions agreed with LA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equip leaders with the skills to have a significant impact on progress, attainment and provision and wellbeing. • Ensure the effective implementation of Curriculum for Wales. • Improve digital skills for all learners. • Close the gap in attainment between those learners from low-income backgrounds and those who do not live in poverty. • Further improve provision and support for young people (post-16). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide bespoke support for schools working with a school improvement partner (SIP) via the universal, targeted and intensive model. • Provide bespoke support via Partner Schools where required. • Provide support from the curriculum team focusing on Curriculum for Wales and skills. • Undertake cluster professional discussions with all schools. • Undertake CSSRs in identified schools, to establish specific areas for support. • Undertake thematic reviews which provide a position statement on identified areas to include questionnaires, focused visits and feedback from SIPs. • Continue to provide Professional Learning and associated support for the implementation of the Raising the Achievement of Disadvantaged Youngsters programme (RADY). • Tackling Aspects of Poverty (TAP) professional learning (PL) programme to be delivered. • Implement the universal Professional Learning programme, including professional networks, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Governor Pathway professional learning programme in all schools. • leadership and delivery of digital skills. • Welsh. • Progression and assessment. • Continue to support schools to deliver the SEREN programmes. • Continue to support schools to achieve the Cymraeg Campus Award. • Pilot a Governor Professional Learning programme delivered on a cluster basis.
<p>LA Estyn Recommendations</p> <p>July 2012: R1 implement improvement strategies and specific actions to improve outcomes for learners especially at key stages 3 and 4; R2 strengthen the level of challenge to its secondary schools; R3 improve the robustness of self-evaluation and target <u>setting</u>; R4 align corporate and partnership strategic planning processes in order to make best use of available resources to improve outcomes for children and young people; and R5 take urgent action to reduce surplus capacity in schools generally and secondary schools in particular.</p>	
<p>LA Education Strategy Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide robust approaches to safeguarding of children and young people based on emerging needs and demands as an outcome of the Covid-19 pandemic. • Equip leaders with the skills to have a significant impact on progress, attainment and provision and wellbeing. • Ensure the effective implementation of Curriculum for Wales. • Accelerate the progress of vulnerable learners. • Improve pupil attendance and reduce exclusions, with particular focus on vulnerable groups. • Further improve provision and support for young people (post-16) • Close the gap in attainment between those learners from low-income backgrounds and those who do not live in poverty. • Improve digital skills for all learners. 	

Caerphilly LA: Local priorities

LA Education Strategy Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide robust approaches to safeguarding of children and young people based on emerging needs and demands as an outcome of the Covid-19 pandemic. • Equip leaders with the skills to have a significant impact on progress, attainment and provision and wellbeing. • Ensure the effective implementation of Curriculum for Wales. • Accelerate the progress of vulnerable learners. • Improve pupil attendance and reduce exclusions, with particular focus on vulnerable groups. • Further improve provision and support for young people (post-16) • Close the gap in attainment between those learners from low-income backgrounds and those who do not live in poverty. • Improve digital skills for all learners.

LA Themes			Reporting impact: EAS Stats and Stories		
Autumn 2023	Spring 2024	Summer 2024	Autumn 2023	Spring 2024	Summer 2024
Schools' response to post-covid baseline assessments in Early Years.	Provision for and progress of disadvantaged learners.	Digital skills (update on progress from summer 2023, including a focus on digital qualifications at Key Stage 4).	A position statement on provision for and standards of Welsh in English Medium schools with a focus on opportunities for pupils to develop and use the language outside Welsh lessons.	An overview of how schools have used baseline assessments to address the impact of Covid on Early Years learners, including case studies of a range of schools.	A position statement on provision for and progress of disadvantaged learners, including a focus on how schools track progress and how leaders ensure equity for learners.

How does the EAS capture the impact of its work in Caerphilly schools?



INTENT

What are we trying to do? What is our intention? This considers what characterises effective school improvement and helps frame clear success criteria to measure impact against.



IMPLEMENTATION

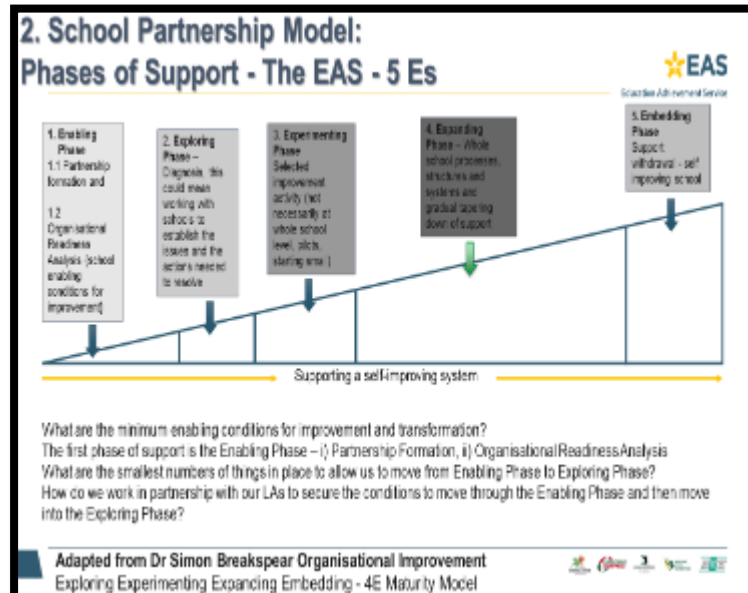
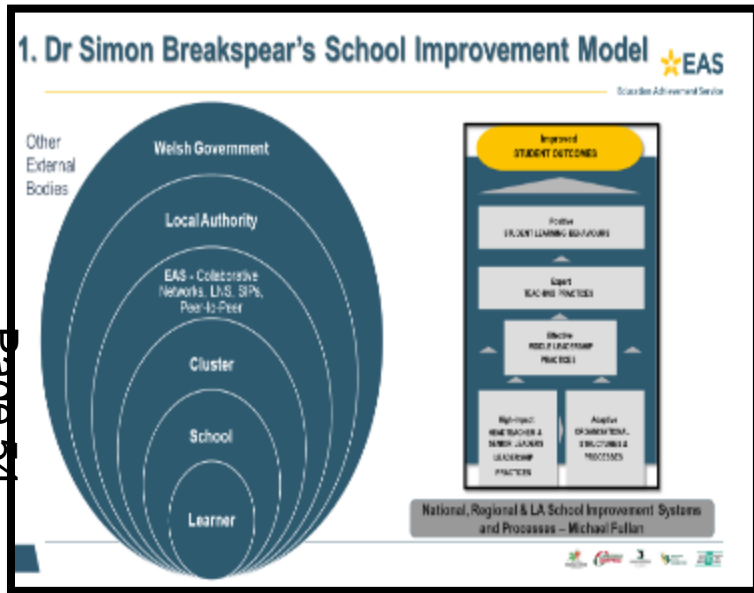
Where are we on this improvement partnership journey? How can we evaluate where we are and where we go next? Where are we in the implementation of our organisational change journey? Is this supporting the school to become an effective learning organisation?



IMPACT

What impact are we having on an individual or organisational improvement journey? What first hand evidence can we use to capture progress and impact of professional learning? How long with this impact take, over what time scales can we expect to see impact? Are schools and settings better placed to lead and evaluate their own progress and plan for ongoing improvement?

Intent, Implementation and Impact (III) approach



What?

- What are we trying to do?

Where?

- Where are we?

How?

- How will we know?

Practitioner Impact Pathway

What opportunities are there to capture impact?

Tools to help capture impact

- EAS PL planning document
- Success Criteria – all PL planning, NOAs, professional learning calendar, PL offer
- Pulse points – short questionnaires/ polls
- Attendance & Engagement data (during)
- Stats and Stories capture tool and Evaluation capture 1

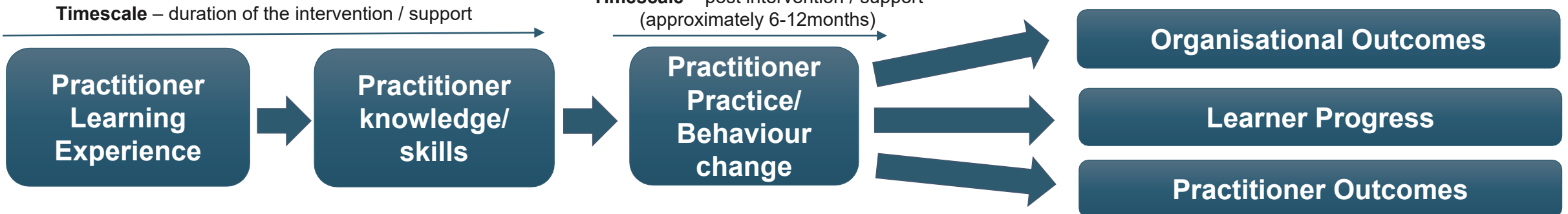
- Engagement data (programme end point)
- Stats and Stories capture tool
- End of programme participant questionnaire - Evaluation capture 2
- Evaluative Impact Report (EIR) Practitioner Learner Experiences
- Supported Self Evaluation tools (SSEF / EIR)

- Triangulated questionnaires: Participant , Line Manager / Headteacher / SIP
- Evaluative Impact Report
- Supported Self Evaluation tools (SSEF/EIR)
- Case Study – sampling tool
- Stats and Stories capture tool
- Evaluation capture 3

Timescale – post intervention / support (approximately 12months +)

Timescale – duration of the intervention / support

Timescale – post intervention / support (approximately 6-12months)



How does the EAS capture its work in Caerphilly schools?



South East Wales
Education Achievement Service

School Support Overview (SSO)

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Company Registration Number - 08155408

Guidance for SIPs when completing the School Support Overview (SSO)

The School Support Overview consists of a range of tabs, including:

- 1. The Support Plan:** This details the support the school will access from the EAS, aligned to the School Development Plan. The sheet also provides a termly update on the school's progress towards each of its improvement priorities.
- 2. Notes of Activity (NOA):** This is an ongoing log of visits that take place from all EAS teams, including the SIP. All activity should be aligned to the agreed support plan.
- 3. Supported Self-Evaluation (SSE):** SIPs undertake termly supported self-evaluation activity in all schools / settings. This should be aligned to school development plan priorities. EAS teams may also undertake supported self-evaluation activities – these are recorded on a different tab.
- 4. Pre-inspection Commentary (PIC) Evidence Base:** This provides a high-level evaluation of key areas: learning and progress, teaching, wellbeing and leadership. The evaluation will be used to generate the PIC which details key strengths and areas for development.

When completing any writing, please refer to the EAS Writing Guide:
Intent, Implementation, Impact.
WAGOLLs are available for all SIP activity.

Further guidance for each is available on the guidance tabs, G1, G2, G3, G4

School Support Overview includes:

- School Support Plan
- Notes of activity
- Termly Supported Self-Evaluation
- Evidence base for Pre-inspection Commentary
- School on a page, to include all professional learning activity.

Impact of professional learning: Video examples

Term	LA	School / Governing Body	Purpose/focus of the recording	Youtube Hyperlink (Eng)
Spring 2024	Caerphilly	Cwmcarn Primary	Provision for and progress of disadvantaged learners.	https://youtu.be/v8lcpqtGfgs
Spring 2024	Caerphilly	Idris Davies Cluster	Promoting Cluster collaboration amongst Governing Bodies	https://youtu.be/hstVDUQPAEc
Spring 2024	Caerphilly	Blackwood Primary	Developing the Outdoors for Authentic learning	https://youtu.be/SVzezSF01Zw
Autumn 2023	Caerphilly	Risca Primary	Effective learning environments and pedagogy	https://youtu.be/fQAZQqtvR48
Autumn 2023	Caerphilly	Hendre Infants	Effective outdoor learning	https://youtu.be/esWmZ6zb_gg
Autumn 2023	Caerphilly	Tiddlers Wrap Around	Observations to inform planning.	https://youtu.be/oJ_Gor8O2-8
Summer 2023	Caerphilly	Lewis Girls Secondary School	Developing pupil independence through the school's 'learning fit' approach	https://youtu.be/vouTTzIT4LQ
Summer 2023	Caerphilly	Heolddu Comprehensive	Using Walthrus and an instructional coaching tool to improve the quality of teaching and learning	https://youtu.be/LX3XI0f2PKM

Impact of professional learning: Short story examples

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CAERPHELLY
LOCAL AUTHORITY

Evaluative Impact Report: School Improvement

Caerphilly

Blaenau Gwent
CAERPHELLY
MONMOUTHSHIRE
WYLLYMPIA

EAS
intent
implementation
impact

EAS

Evaluative Impact Report: Caerphilly Local Authority Termly Theme Autumn 2023

Date of the report	January 2024
Link to Business Plan priorities	School Improvement: Provide support to schools and education settings which is aligned to their needs. Create and facilitate collaborative networks of professional practice.
Element of bespoke support	Universal, targeted, and intensive provision provided by SIPs.
Focus for the Evaluation	How do schools and settings ensure learners in early years make strong progress over time?

Background and Context (Intent):

This report provides the Local Authority with a clear and evidenced-based picture of provision and progress in early years in schools and settings and looks at how this supports learners to make strong progress. It also notes strengths and areas for development to inform a wider discussion about where good practice exists which can be shared across all schools. Working with the LA, the EAS will aim to improve provision and progress in early years settings and schools across the borough.

The focus was developed following a series of professional discussions with schools where heads noted the impact of Covid and the cost-of-living crisis on some young children's learning and development. High-quality early education is essential to children's development. The experiences, knowledge and skills needed for life-long learning, active citizenship and future employment start in early years.

For the purpose of this thematic review early years is defined as nursery aged children (3-4 years inclusive of rising 3's) and reception children.

Although Action Short of Strike was a limiting factor in the systematic gathering of evidence for this report, a minority of schools nevertheless shared practice in early years. This was supplemented by information from recent Estyn reports from early years settings and EAS knowledge of working directly with the early years settings in Caerphilly. This provided a wide enough sample to inform this report.

Across Caerphilly there are 69 schools which provide education for early years learners. Federations have been considered as separate schools. 13 settings deliver early education in funded non-maintained settings in Caerphilly. Of these, 7 deliver through the medium of

CAERPHELLY
LOCAL AUTHORITY

EAS

How does Caerphilly LA hold the EAS to account?

Meetings with Schools

Multi-agency Meetings
Team Around the School
Meetings

SDP Professional Discussions
Outcomes and information from these meetings, along with the NOA for each school will feed into monthly meetings.

Monthly EAS and LA Partnership Meetings

LA Meetings

Wider Group Meetings
ALN and Inclusion
Scrutiny Meetings

Outcomes and information from these meetings will feed into monthly meetings.



Overview of information exchange 2022-2023

Planned schedule of information shared from EAS to LAs

The following table captures the information that the EAS will share with each local authority on a systematic basis (process dependent). This overview is based upon current agreed regional processes and school improvement protocols. Where changes occur to the agreed approaches then the table will be updated accordingly.

Much of this information will also be shared with EAS governance groups, usually as appendices to reports and usually at LA or regional level, as appropriate.

Item / Document	Frequency	Distribution method	Suggested suitability / usage
1. Notes of Action: all EAS activity	Real time	Hwb	LA Officers
2. Access to grant profiles for all schools in each LA	Real time for current year Archived previous years	Uploaded into the specific LA folder on Hwb	LA Officers / Elected Members
3. Partnership Meetings: NOAs, nominated schools, SCC impact capture, overview of professional discussions	Monthly	Uploaded into the specific LA folder on Hwb	LA Officers
4. School on a page overview	Updated termly	Uploaded into the specific LA folder on Hwb	LA Officers / TBC
5. Overview of EAS activity and update on LA priorities	Termly (first 2 weeks of each term – retrospective view)	Uploaded into the specific LA folder on Hwb	LA Officers / Elected Members
6. Overview of cluster conversations (cluster, LA and regional level)	LA and regional; Bi-annual updates	Uploaded into the specific LA folder on Hwb	LA Officers / Elected Members / Headteachers / Governors
7. LA Stats and Stories	Termly (first 2 weeks of each term – retrospective view)	Uploaded into the specific LA folder on Hwb	LA Officers / Elected Members / Headteachers / Governors

Overview of Information Exchange



Education Achievement Service
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EAS Staffing and Delivery Model in Caerphilly LA

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Serving the communities of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly,
Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen



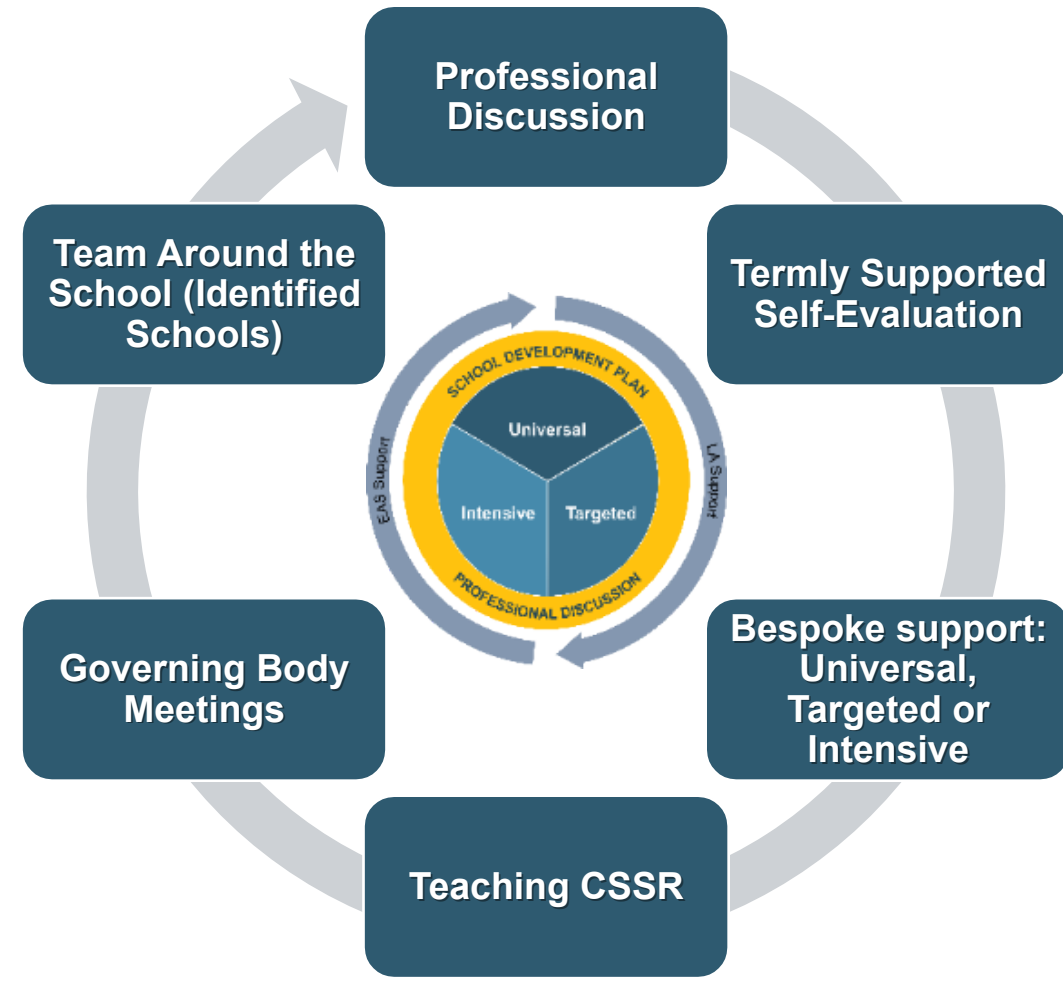
How does the EAS support the LA to know its schools and support them?

EAS School Improvement Partner
Universal Activity Overview 2022 – 2023: Autumn Term

Schools should upload the SDP and Curriculum Summary onto Hwb by the 30/03/23

Activity	Visit Type	Completed by
Autumn Term 2022		
Wellbeing check in with Headteacher	Virtual / Physical	Start of the autumn term
Reflect and review the SDP for 2022 with the headteacher (see SDP guidance): • Has the previous year's plan been reviewed/updated? Impact of grant spend? Is the plan based on robust and accurate, full and self-evaluation? • Does the SDP meet statutory requirements? Suitable number of appropriate objectives? • Are actions, outcomes, criteria and the monitoring activities clear and detailed? • Detail the school's appropriate/realistic in relation to the school's SDP priorities. • Does the plan include the agreed support from EAS and the LA?	Virtual / Physical	Friday 20 th October NCA entry
Agree dates for: • Supported self-evaluation (SSE) for the year – 1 year term and at least 2 term cycles • Attendance at governing body meeting to present SSE overview • Teacher CPD pilot (where appropriate) to include Performance Management (see guide)	Virtual / Physical	Friday 20 th October – record at date in NCA
Complete Single Plan Overview (SPO) send on NCA SSE and the number of days discuss each priority	Virtual / Physical	Friday 20 th October – record at date in NCA
Write the inspection commentary with the Headteacher (See guidance material and example)	Virtual / Physical	October half term or if PD is arranged, record at NCA
Complete SSE activity aligned to school's SPO cycle. Complete report (use template and remember LA theme)	Physical	Before end of term or before professional discussions – record on NCA and upload report
Complete SDP progress commentary	Virtual / Physical	End of autumn term / first week of spring term
Provide bespoke / targeted support as detailed within support overview	Virtual / Physical	Ongoing throughout term
Spring Term 2023		
Wellbeing check in with Headteacher	Virtual / Physical	Start of the spring term
Complete a SSE activity aligned to school's SPO cycle. Complete PACR (see template)	Physical	End of spring term – record on NCA and upload Hwb on Hwb
Update pre-inspection commentary as appropriate	Virtual / Physical	End of spring term
Complete SDP progress commentary	Virtual / Physical	End of spring term / first week of summer term
Provide bespoke / targeted support as detailed within support overview	Virtual / Physical	Ongoing throughout term
Summer Term 2023		
Wellbeing check in with Headteacher	Virtual / Physical	Start of the summer term
Complete SSE activity aligned to school's SPO cycle. Complete SDP template (see template)	Physical	End of summer term – record on NCA and upload Hwb on Hwb
Update pre-inspection commentary as appropriate	Virtual / Physical	End of summer term
Complete SDP progress commentary	Virtual / Physical	End of summer term / first week of autumn term
Support with a drafting and finalising SDP based on SSE evidence	Virtual / Physical	End of summer term
Provide bespoke / targeted support as detailed within support overview	Virtual / Physical	Ongoing throughout term

- Universal Activity Overview.
- Termly supported self-evaluation activity aligned to the school's own evaluation calendar.
- Additionally, schools/settings will receive bespoke support in line with SDP priorities.
- SIPs can provide or broker targeted support.
- All combined SIP activity provides a forensic overview of the school.
- All SIP activity is detailed in the Note of Action (NOA).



Improvement Partner workforce: Context overtime

Towards a school-led system

Central team of Challenge Advisers

School Improvement Partners from within and beyond the region

Significant financial investment and transparency

Support for a school requiring higher levels of support from a range of providers

LNS holistic support for schools requiring higher levels of support

Enhanced the credibility of those providing support and challenge to schools

‘Now is not the time to lose your nerve but to renew your efforts.’
Steve Munby: October 2020

Joined-up support which has increased the capacity and credibility of the school improvement offer

Central team of subject advisers

CfW LNS Model delivered by schools, coordinated by small team

Expansion of practitioner networks and equity of access to reform experiences

Use of expertise from secondary schools outside the region

Expanded S2S capacity at secondary school level

Team Around the School (TAS) Approach

Regional Approach Team Around the School

2022 -2023 (updated June 2023)



- In place for all schools in Caerphilly requiring additional support.
- Schools meet regularly with the LA and EAS to consider school improvement activity through an appropriate balance of support and challenge.
- The approach focuses on working with the school to problem solve and be solution focused, based on the school's needs.

Team Around the Cluster Approach

- Caerphilly has 2 link EAS Principal School improvement partners.
- Each cluster will be supported by School Improvement Partners and EAS team members to ensure the EAS and the LA knows its schools and clusters well and that they are effectively supported.
- Additional support / brokerage of support for schools.

Cluster Support could include:

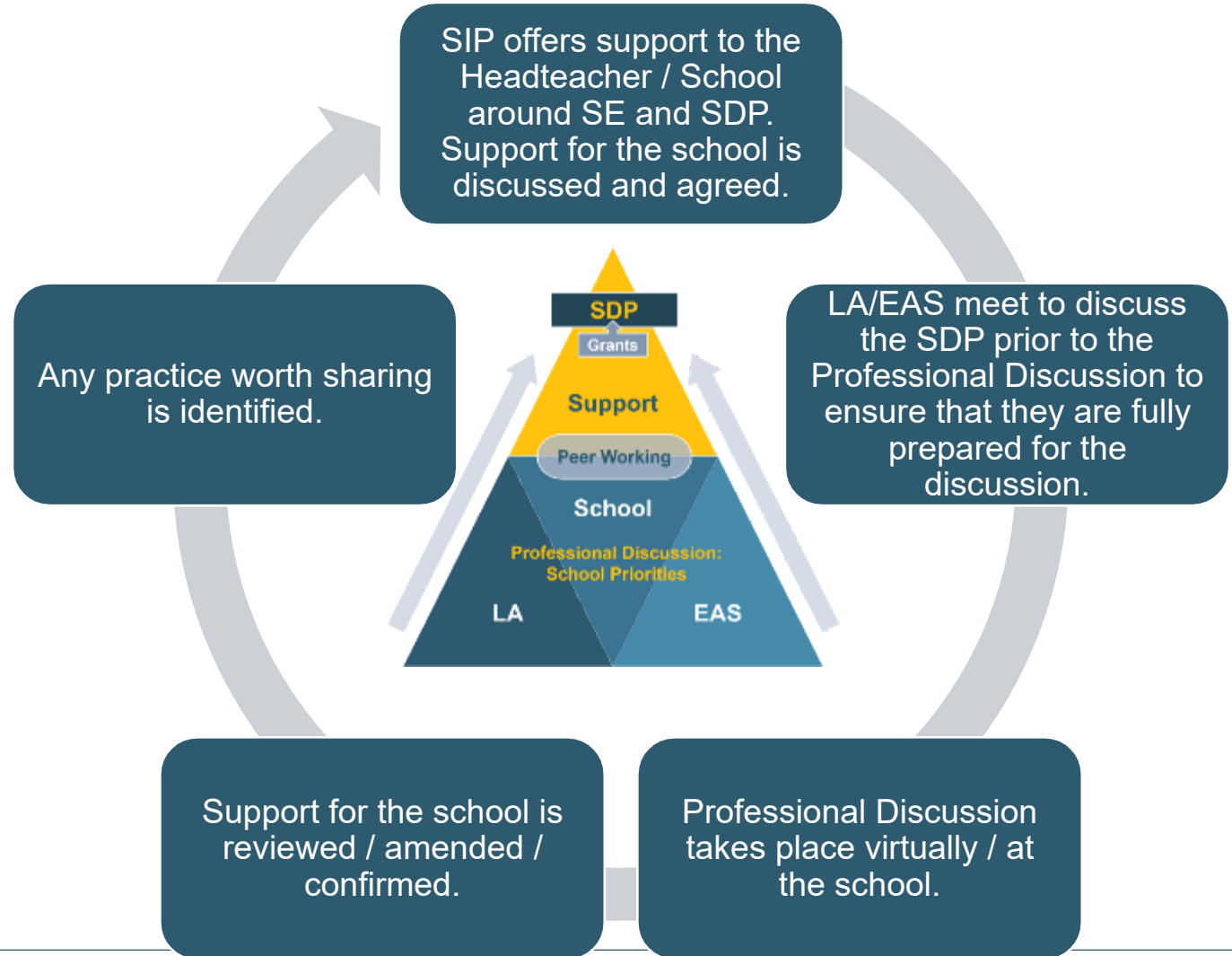
- Cluster INSET
- Attendance at Cluster Meetings
- Support for Curriculum Design, Progression and Assessment within and across AOLES
- Development of a Teaching and Learning Strategy and related professional learning across the cluster.
- Development of a cluster strategy and related professional learning for talking all aspects of poverty.
- Governor Professional Learning.



Professional Discussions

- Schools will take part in a discussion during the academic year.
- Supports schools to share the priorities arising from their self-evaluation processes.
- The discussion also helps to determine the ongoing support needs of the school from both the LA and EAS and identify where practice is worth sharing.
- The planning meeting will support the LA and EAS to understand the priorities across schools and settings, at a local and regional level.

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Professional Learning and Partner Schools Overview

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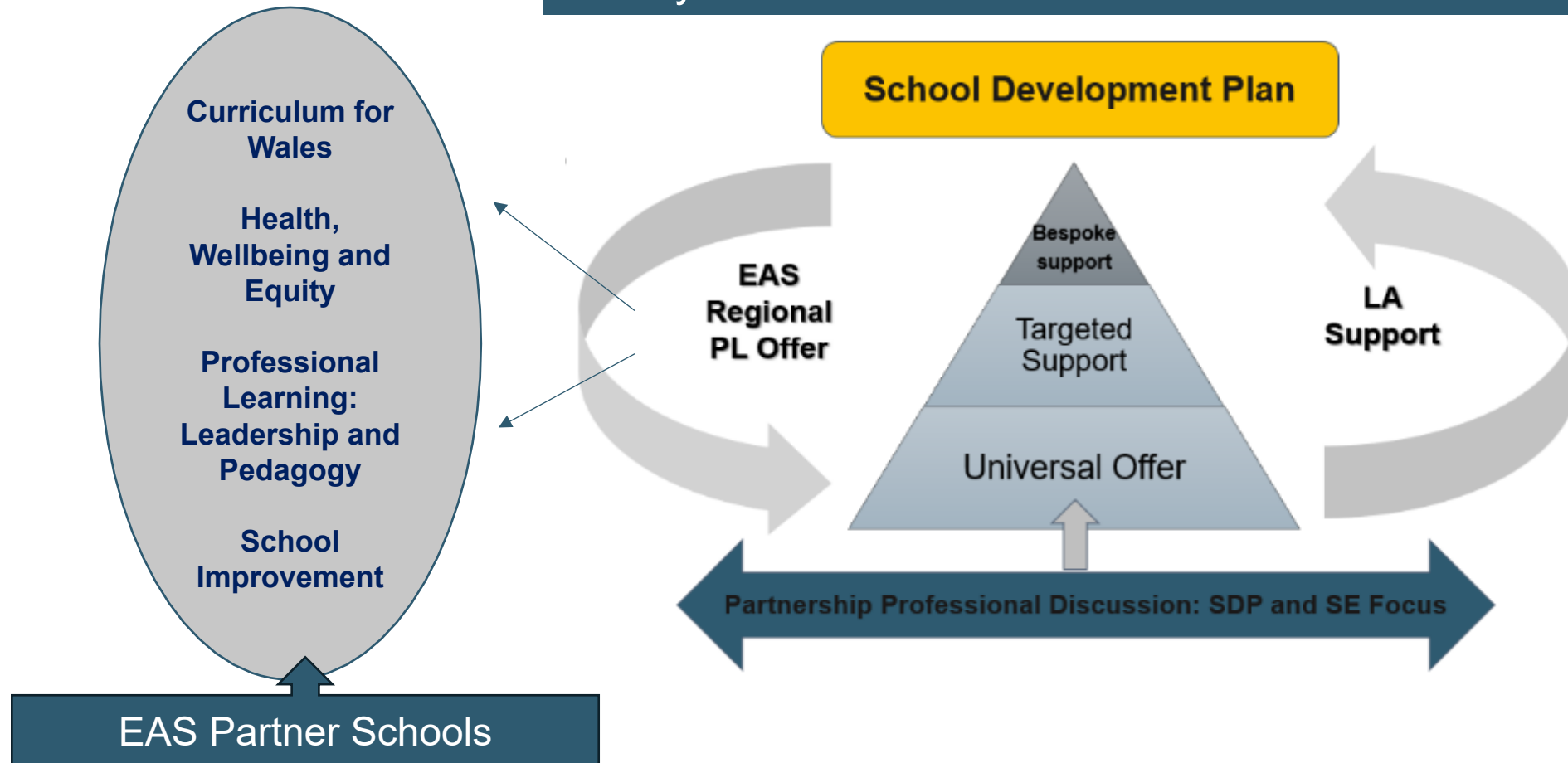
Serving the communities of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen



Regional Support Model: School led professional learning

What are your support needs as a school. What do you need from both the LA and the EAS?

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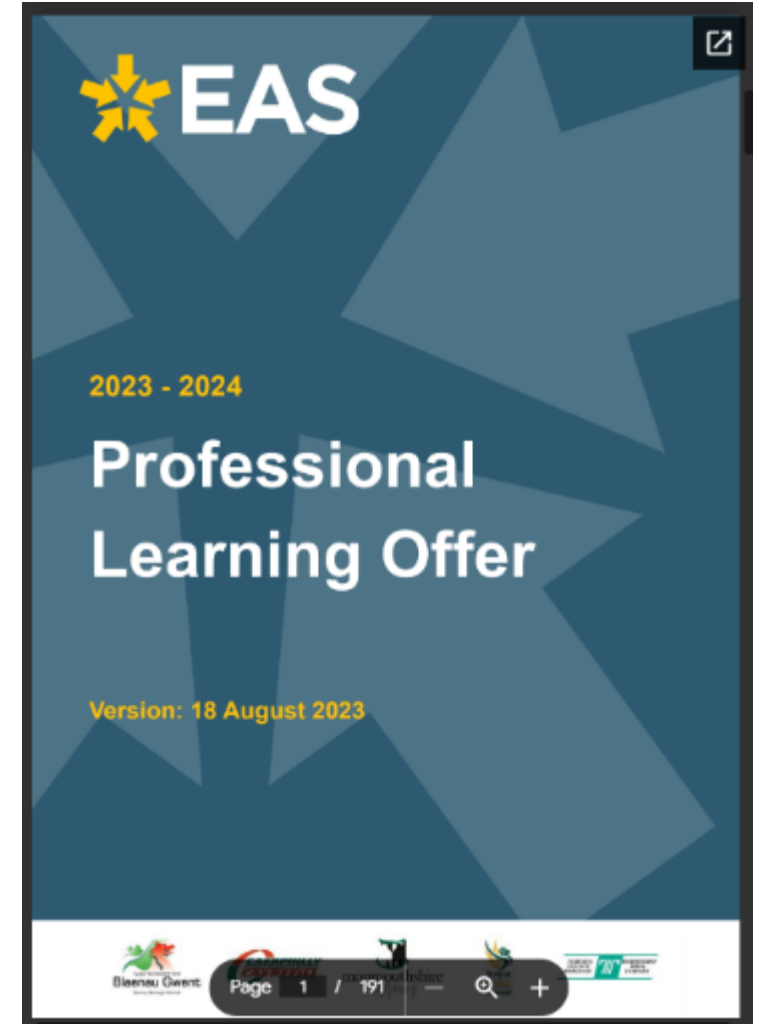


PL Brochure: EAS PL Offer (SOSS)

Our professional learning, networking opportunities and guidance provide schools and settings with a range of support across the Health and Wellbeing Area of Learning and Experience and the cross-cutting themes of Human Rights, Diversity, and Careers and work-related experiences.

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A range of professional learning, networking opportunities and guidance is also available to schools to support in developing their approaches to improve the outcomes of vulnerable and disadvantaged learners within their communities, including support for tackling aspects of poverty, family and community engagement and teaching and learning.



Professional Learning Offer

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[Link to Current Live Version](#)



Supplementary Offer includes partner school offers

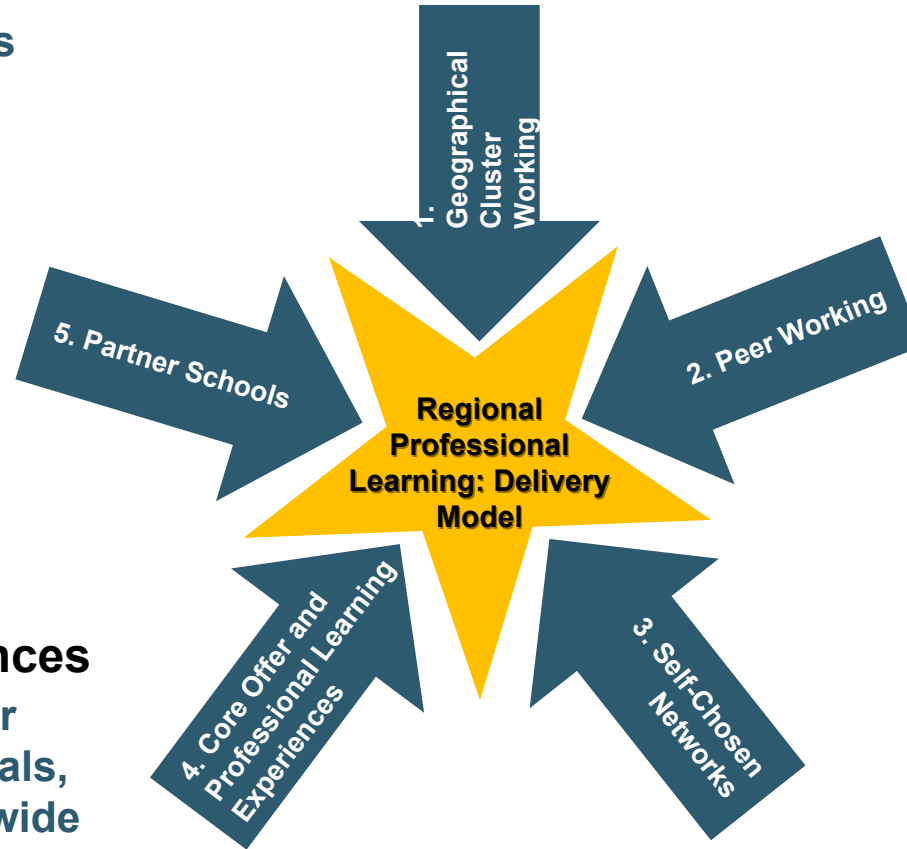
2	Curriculum	Curriculum for Wales (CFW)	20
		Expressive Arts	22
		Humanities	28
		Languages, Literacy and Communication (LLC)	
		- LLC Cymraeg - Welsh in Education	35
		- LLC Cymraeg - Welsh and Bilingualism (English medium schools)	36
		- LLC Cymraeg - Welsh and Literacy (Welsh medium)	52
		- LLC English and Literacy	55
		- LLC International Languages	65
		Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE)	67
		Skills Challenge Certificate (SCC) / Welsh Baccalaureate	71
		Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM)	73
		STEM Digital	74
		STEM Maths	87
		STEM Science	98

Area	Sub-Area	Page / Hyperlink
Curriculum	Skills Challenge Certificate (SCC) / Welsh Baccalaureate	3
	Humanities	5
	Expressive Arts	7
	Languages, Literacy and Communication (LLC)	
	- LLC English and Literacy	9
	- LLC Cymraeg - Welsh and Literacy (Welsh medium)	22
	STEM Maths	28

Delivery of professional learning for a school or cluster within Caerphilly LA

5. EAS Partner Schools

Where schools engage with schools across or beyond the region to develop practice in teaching, learning and leadership



1. Geographical Cluster Working
Working together to secure collective accountability of learner progress

2. Peer Working
Working together and learning with colleagues to secure improvements in teaching, learning and leadership that secures improved outcomes for all learners

3. Self-Chosen Networks
Where schools engage with networking opportunities, practitioners are able to share and develop practice to improve leadership, teaching and learning within their own contexts, particularly within the secondary phase

4. Core Offer and Professional Learning Experiences

The EAS professional learning offer provides opportunities for individuals, school, clusters, to engage with a wide range of PL which is underpinned by the aims of the National Mission.

Partner Schools: Caerphilly Schools

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Partner School Model 2023/25
Expression of Interest Information Pack
Summer 2023

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Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, and other local authority logos.

Professional Learning Support School

Bedwas High School
Blackwood Primary
Glyn-Gaer Primary
Graig-Y-Rhacca Primary
Graig-Y-Rhacca Primary
Heolddu Comprehensive
Lewis Girls' School
Nant-Y-Parc Primary
Newbridge School
Penllwyn Primary
Pentwynmawr Primary
Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary
Risca Primary
St Gwladys Bargoed School
St James' Primary
Trinity Fields
White Rose Primary
Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni
Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili
Ystrad Mynach Primary

School To School

Bedwas Infants
Blackwood Primary
Hendredenny Park Primary
Lewis Girls' School
Markham Primary
Nant-Y-Parc Primary
Nant-Y-Parc Primary
Nant-Y-Parc Primary
Penllwyn Primary
Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary
Risca Primary
St Cenydd School

Curriculum

Provider	Area
Nant-Y-Parc Primary	Careers-Work Related
Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili, Ysgol Penalltau	Cymraeg / Literacy
Bedwas High School, Hengoed Primary, Heolddu Comprehensive, Lewis Girls' School	Design and Technology
Llancaeath Junior, Nant-Y-Parc Primary	Digital Competence
Newbridge School	Drama
Blackwood Primary, Nant-Y-Parc Primary, Risca Primary	Early Years (N-Y2)
Heolddu Comprehensive, Lewis Girls' School, Risca Primary, Newbridge School	English / Literacy
Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary	Film-digital media-dance
Newbridge School	Geography
Bedwas High School, Blackwood Primary, Heolddu Comprehensive, Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary, St Gwladys Bargoed School, Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni	Global Futures / International Languages
Gilfach Fargoed Primary, Lewis Girls' School, St Gwladys Bargoed School	Health and Wellbeing AoLE
Penllwyn Primary	Humanities
Gilfach Fargoed Primary, St Gwladys Bargoed School, Ysgol Penalltau, Newbridge School	Mathematics
Ysgol Gymraeg Y Castell	More Able and Talented Learners
Blackwood Comprehensive	RADY
Bedwas High School, Hengoed Primary, Tir-Y-Berth Primary	Science
Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni, Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon	Siarter Iaith
Glyn-Gaer Primary, Hendre Junior, Llancaeath Junior	Welsh (English Medium) / Bilingualism

EAS Partner Schools

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This screenshot shows the top portion of the EAS Partner Schools website. The header features the EAS logo and the title 'EAS Supporting Our Schools'. Below the header is a navigation menu with the following items: Home, What you need to know this week, Key dates / Information, Planning for School Improvement, What support does the EAS provide?, EAS Professional Learning Offer, Health, Wellbeing and Equity, Professional Learning for Teaching and Leadership, Curriculum and Assessment Support, School Governance, Welsh Government updates, Information from partner organisations, and EAS Distance and Blended Learning.

This screenshot shows the main content area of the EAS Partner Schools website. It features a list of bullet points:

- Re-launch and communicate the support to schools
- Use this review as an opportunity to re-launch and re-refresh the support offer to all schools, explaining the changes that have been made and plans to take this forward.
- Publish a short prospectus outlining the new support offer, roles played by different types of schools and the expectations around how clusters will be working forward.

 Below the list is a section header: 'EAS Partner Schools - How do I access support?'. The text below the header states: 'There are two possible routes through which support from partner schools can be brokered'.


This screenshot shows the main content area of the EAS Partner Schools website, featuring a flowchart and a section header. The section header is: 'EAS Partner Schools - Who are they and what can they offer?'. Below the header are three images with captions:

- Partner Primary Schools (Image of children in boots)
- Partner Secondary Schools (Image of colorful chairs)
- Partner Special Schools Pupil Referral Units (Image of feet on stairs)

 The flowchart above the images is titled 'EAS Partner Schools - Who are they and what can they offer?' and is divided into two columns: 'Self-provision' and 'EAS Lead'.

- Self-provision:**
 - Headteacher and SIP agree the most appropriate form of support from the existing internal professional learning offer.
 - Progress and impact of professional learning are monitored and evaluated and recorded on the school support overview.
- EAS Lead:**
 - SIP or School Leader contacts the EAS Lead (from the dashboard).
 - EAS Lead identifies appropriate support from partner school, taking with the SIP recipient and partner school to agree an appropriate package of support.
 - Progress and impact of professional learning are monitored and evaluated (by all) and recorded on the school support overview (by partner school).

EAS Supporting Our Schools - Partner Schools



Blackwood Primary

EAS Partner School Role(s)

- School to School
- Professional Learning Support School
- Early Years (N-Y2) | Global Futures / International Languages

School Context

NOR: 410 FSM: 33.6% ALN: School Action (1.2%), School Action+ (5.1%), Statemented (0.2%), Individual Development Plan (0.0%)

No of Teaching Staff: 17.2 No of Teaching Assistants: 12.5

School Contact Details

School website: <https://www.blackwoodprimary.org>

Contact details: Blackwood Primary School, Apollo Way, Blackwood, NP12 1WA

Telephone: 01495 224111 Email: blackwoodprimary@sch.caerphilly.gov.wales

Estyn Inspection Information: [Inspection | Estyn \(gov.wales\)](https://www.gov.wales/estyn)

School to School

As an experienced head teacher and distributed senior leadership team, we have the capacity to support a school with leadership including governance and support for teaching and learning. Our governing body is a strength of the school. They are fundamental in the process of self evaluation and support the school through an established committee structure and carefully designed governor days. PL is important to the school and the governing body is included within this process. Support for teaching and learning would need to be discussed at an individual school basis. We have a distributed leadership model that would provide the opportunity to support schools in a bespoke way

Professional Learning: Leadership and Teaching

Blackwood Primary School is committed to providing the best learning experiences for our children in a no blame, risk taking culture where staff are encouraged to engage in research, professional enquiry and use external expertise. Staff view Professional Learning as an entitlement that supports and builds coherence linked to pedagogy and curriculum design. Leaders consolidate what has been learned in a culture that encourages staff to use PL opportunities to evaluate and improve approaches to teaching and learning. PL is planned through a combination of whole staff, phase, team and individual foci. Strong links with EAS have provided opportunities to work with different models of research. As a result staff value the professional learning that has an impact on their teaching. Leaders within the school recognise the importance of providing time and resources to enable effective professional learning and the senior leadership team and governors are committed to supporting all staff with their engagement in continuous professional development. We have a wealth of experience on which we are able to support colleagues through our extensive work as a PL regional and lead school over time and contribute to the regional professional learning offer for teaching assistants, teachers and leaders.

Curriculum: Global Future / International Languages

Blackwood Primary School recognises the importance of developing international language skills in line with the objectives of the Curriculum for Wales. We are committed to collaboration with other schools in the EAS and beyond to share resources, knowledge, and expertise. Our International Languages lead ensures that we offer our pupils a wide range of languages and increased exposure to different cultures and ways of thinking. We believe that this is an important step towards creating a more inclusive learning environment that values all forms of communication.

Curriculum : Early Years

The pedagogy of the Foundation Phase has been the main driver for the curriculum from nursery to year 6 at Blackwood Primary School. A strong focus for curriculum reform has been working on effective pedagogy to support independent learning for all pupils. Staff have worked over several years to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to apply, use, consolidate and extend skills using a blended learning approach. The learning environment at Blackwood Primary School is a key enabler for the curriculum. It has been developed in such a way that encourages pupils to be independent, to have a say in their own learning and to take increasing responsibility for it. The areas within the learning environment have been designed to allow all pupils to experience authentic learning opportunities both indoors and outdoors.

The role of the adult is extremely important when facilitating effective learning opportunities. Highly effective whole school PL has driven planning and assessment to support staff with progression throughout the school. We are able to offer support for nursery to year 2 but can also demonstrate how this pedagogy can be effective to embed real life skills up to year 6.

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EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 20TH MAY 2024

**SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF ESTYN INSPECTION OUTCOMES UNDER
THE NEW COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK (CIF) –
JANUARY 2022 TO MARCH 2024**

**REPORT BY: EDWARD PRYCE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, EDUCATION
ACHIEVEMENT SERVICE (EAS)**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform members of the judgements made by Estyn inspection teams of Caerphilly schools from January 2022 – March 2024 (where published).
- 1.2 To seek members' views on the Estyn outcomes.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The schools included in this report were inspected from January 2022 onwards. Each of them was inspected under the arrangements for inspections that came into effect from 1 January 2022, with the first two terms being considered pilot arrangements. The report identifies the schools and the dates on which the inspections took place, together with the follow up category. This cumulative report includes outcomes already reported between January 2022 and March 2023.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members are asked to scrutinise the contents of the report and ask questions and offer views about overall school outcomes.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility for monitoring educational outcomes within its schools and members should be made aware of the outcomes of inspections in Caerphilly schools.

5. THE REPORT

Previous Estyn Common Inspection Framework (Sept 2017 onwards)

- 5.1 From September 2017 schools in Wales were inspected under the Common Inspection Framework (CIF). This judged schools under 5 Inspection Areas (IA):
1. Standards
 2. Wellbeing and attitudes to learning
 3. Teaching and learning experiences
 4. Care, support and guidance
 5. Leadership and management
- 5.2 There was no separate judgement on 'current performance' and 'prospects for improvement'. The previous 4-point judgement scale remained, but its wording was amended to focus on actions to be taken to support improvement:
- Excellent – Very strong, sustained performance and practice
 - Good – Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
 - Adequate and needs improvement – Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
 - Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement – Important weaknesses outweigh strengths
- 5.3 There were 3 follow-up categories of support, as the previous Local Authority monitoring has ceased as an Estyn category. The last two remained as statutory categories:
- Estyn Review
 - Significant Improvement
 - Special Measures

Estyn Common Inspection Framework (From 1 September 2022)

- 5.4 The new inspection framework commenced on 1 September 2022, however in the Spring and Summer of that year a small number of pilot inspections took place. This report therefore includes information from 1 January 2022.
- 5.5 Estyn's new approach to inspection in schools and Pupil Referral Units across Wales, no longer focuses on a grading, detailing instead how well providers are helping a child to learn. This means that inspection reports will no longer include summative gradings (e.g. 'Excellent', 'Good' or 'Adequate').
- 5.6 A key overview of findings is included in each report headline focusing on a school's strengths and areas for development. Estyn also produce a separate report summary for parents/carers which allows access the key information they need about an inspection quickly.
- 5.7 Estyn's new approach aligns with the personalisation of the new curriculum for Wales. Inspections also involve more in-person discussions, placing less emphasis on achievement data. They intend that their new inspection approach will make it easier for providers to gain meaningful insights that help them to improve without the spotlight on a judgement. Additionally, to reflect the Welsh Government's decision to

no longer require statutory teacher assessment at the of various stages of education, Inspection Area 1 was renamed from Standards to Learning, to reflect the broader range of holistic evidence required about learner outcomes and progress.

- 5.8 There is however no change to the statutory categories of special measures and significant improvement. The category of Estyn Review is also retained.
- 5.9 Estyn have reduced the notice period for inspections from 15 to 10 working days. Estyn have committed to continue to work with partners and stakeholders to gather views as they look to further evolve our inspection framework, including moving towards more regular inspection across providers.
- 5.10 Comparisons over time with the previous framework are not possible, given that there are no judgements for the 5 Inspection Areas to compare.
- 5.11 It is also to be noted that this is a sample of judgements that are available for a proportion of Caerphilly schools, not for a full Estyn cycle. At the time of writing reports were available for 34 in total, comprising 28 primaries, 4 secondaries, an all through school, a PRU, with a further 1 school awaiting publication of their report.

Caerphilly

- 5.12 The following Caerphilly schools have been inspected since January 2022, under the New Framework. Follow up category, the only summative data available is included in the table below (No Follow Up, Estyn Review, Significant Improvement, Special Measures)

School	Phase	Inspection Date	Follow-Up Category * = Estyn Case Study
Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili	Primary	Feb-22	No Follow Up
Aberbargoed Primary	Primary	Jun-22	Estyn Review
Bryn Primary	Primary	Jun-22	No Follow Up
Risca Comprehensive	Secondary	Sep-22	Significant Improvement
Cefn Fforest Primary	Primary	Oct-22	No Follow-Up
Crumlin High Level Primary	Primary	Oct-22	Special Measures
Lewis Girls' Comprehensive	Secondary	Oct-22	No Follow-Up (*)
Ysgol y Lawnt	Primary	Oct-22	No Follow-Up
Markham Primary	Primary	Nov-22	No Follow-Up (*)
Pontllanfraith Primary	Primary	Nov-22	Estyn Review
Glanynant Learning Centre	Special	Dec-22	Significant Improvement
Fleur-de-Lys Primary	Primary	Feb-23	No Follow Up
Pengam Primary	Primary	Feb-23	No Follow Up
St Helens Catholic Primary	Primary	Mar-23	No Follow Up
Blackwood Comprehensive	Secondary	May-23	No Follow Up (*)
Tynewydd Primary	Primary	May-23	Estyn Review
Idris Davies 3-18 School	All	May-23	No Follow Up
Upper Rhymney Primary	Primary	Jun-23	No Follow Up
Machen Primary	Primary	Jun-23	No Follow Up
St Gwladys Bargoed School	Primary	Jun-23	No Follow Up (*)
Hengoed Primary	Primary	Jun-23	No Follow Up
Coedybrain Primary	Primary	Jul-23	No Follow Up

Ysgol Cwm Derwen	Primary	Nov-23	No Follow Up
Ystrad Mynach Primary	Primary	Nov-23	No Follow Up
Park Primary	Primary	Nov-23	No Follow Up (*)
Gilfach Fargoed Primary	Primary	Nov-23	No Follow Up (*)
Cwmfelinfach Primary	Primary	Nov-23	No Follow Up (*)
Ysgol Ifor Bach	Primary	Dec-23	No Follow Up
Pantside Primary	Primary	Dec-23	No Follow Up
Tiryberth Primary	Primary	Dec-23	No Follow Up
Ty Sign Primary	Primary	Jan-24	Significant Improvement
Newbridge School	Secondary	Jan-24	No Follow Up
Derwendeg Primary	Primary	Feb-24	No Follow Up
Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary	Primary	Feb-24	No Follow Up
Brynawel Primary	Primary	Mar-24	Not published at time of writing

5.13 A range of case studies are now available on the Estyn website [Improvement resources search | Estyn](#)

5.14 The following case studies have been completed by Caerphilly Schools.

School	Estyn Case Studies
Lewis Girls' Comprehensive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact of professional learning on teaching and learning, curriculum development, and leadership Direct Link Broadening pupils' horizons and developing a culture of belonging Direct Link
Markham Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively engaging the school community Direct Link
Blackwood Comprehensive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing and improving learners' digital competence skills at Blackwood Comprehensive School Direct Link Developing a culture of self-evaluation and continuous professional learning at Blackwood Comprehensive School Direct Link
St Gwladys Bargoed School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How St. Gwladys Bargoed School develops pupils' independence in the early years and how this continues as pupils move through the school Direct Link
Park Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a cohesive team for a successful federation Direct Link
Gilfach Fargoed Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a cohesive team for a successful federation Direct Link
Cwmfelinfach Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to developing pupils' independent learning skills highly effectively,

	especially as confident writers, for dissemination on Estyn's website (not yet published).
Idris Davies 3-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The leadership of effective school support for disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils.

5.15 Estyn inspections of schools are informative for the LA and the EAS in a number of ways. Although they report on a school in a specified period of time, they can be helpful in confirming that the school is receiving appropriate support and challenge and triangulate judgements which have been made prior to the inspection. Where schools are a cause for concern, recommendations made by Estyn will be the focus for intervention and the tracking of progress made. If the school is placed in a statutory category, then the LA can invoke powers of intervention immediately. Where excellent practice is identified, then schools can be asked by Estyn to produce case studies which are then shared with other schools, via publication on the Estyn website.

5.16 The table below summarises the recommendations for each Caerphilly school inspected.

School	Recommendations
Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili	<p>R1 Provide more opportunities for pupils to write at length across the curriculum.</p> <p>R2 Strengthen opportunities for pupils to develop as independent learners.</p>
Aberbargoed Primary	<p>R1 Address the standards of teaching and low expectations for pupils in Years 3 to 6.</p> <p>R2 Create opportunities to develop pupils' independent skills and further challenge pupils in Years 3 to 6.</p> <p>R3 Ensure that senior leaders robustly monitor and evaluate learning and teaching to identify key areas for improvement.</p> <p>R4 Develop the roles of leaders at every level to secure improvement.</p>
Bryn Primary	<p>R1 Focus self-evaluation and improvement work more sharply on what pupils know, understand and can do.</p> <p>R2 Improve pupils' confidence and ability to speak in Welsh, both in lessons and around the school.</p> <p>R3 Ensure that teachers' feedback addresses errors in pupils' learning more robustly.</p>
Risca Comprehensive	<p>R1 Raise standards and improve performance at key stage 3 and key stage 4.</p> <p>R2 Improve the achievement of more able pupils.</p> <p>R3 Strengthen approaches to co-ordinate and implement teaching in literacy and numeracy across the curriculum to improve pupils' skills.</p>

	<p>R4 Improve the quality of teaching and assessment.</p> <p>R5 Refine the roles and responsibilities of senior and middle leaders to focus on raising standards and improving teaching.</p> <p>R6 Improve self-evaluation procedures to inform development planning, and to set clear and appropriate priorities and targets for improvement</p>
Cefn Fforest Primary	<p>R1 Raise standards in Welsh.</p> <p>R2 Increase opportunities for pupils to influence how and what they learn.</p>
Crumlin High Level Primary	<p>R1 Establish and maintain effective leadership and governance to support school improvements.</p> <p>R2 Improve the quality of teaching and assessment practices across the school.</p> <p>R3 Improve pupils' extended writing skills.</p> <p>R4 Improve pupils' numeracy skills.</p> <p>R5 Ensure that the provision for Welsh improves pupils' oracy skills.</p>
Lewis Girls' Comprehensive	<p>R1 Improve the provision for developing pupils' Welsh language skills and their knowledge of Welsh culture.</p> <p>R2 Strengthen the provision for monitoring and improving pupils' attendance, particularly for those eligible for free school meals.</p> <p>R3 Revise the leadership of additional learning needs, so that it ensures a strong strategic direction and supports the full implementation of the ALNET act.</p>
Ysgol y Lawnt	<p>R1 Improve pupils' Welsh reading skills.</p> <p>R2 Share best practice in teaching across the school.</p>
Markham Primary	<p>R1 Improve outdoor provision to enrich all pupils' learning experiences.</p> <p>R2 Improve attendance.</p>
Pontllanfraith Primary	<p>R1 Develop and implement effective evaluation and improvement processes.</p> <p>R2 Ensure that teaching supports pupils to develop the full range of skills progressively as they move through the school and that pupils have opportunities to use these skills in their work across the curriculum.</p> <p>R3 Develop effective partnerships with parents.</p>
Glanynant Learning Centre	<p>R1 Strengthen improvement planning by ensuring self-evaluation activities focus on pupil progress and the standards they achieve.</p> <p>R2 Ensure that all members of the management committee and the local authority have a good</p>

	<p>understanding of the PRU's strengths and areas for development.</p> <p>R3 Improve attendance and pupils' engagement in full-time education.</p> <p>R4 Improve pupils' literacy, numeracy and digital competence skills.</p> <p>R5 Ensure that teachers' feedback enables pupils to know what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve.</p>
Fleur-de-Lys Primary	<p>R1 Improve teaching and assessment to ensure that all pupils are challenged appropriately and that learning activities meet their developmental needs</p> <p>R2 Improve opportunities for pupils to develop their independence and effectiveness as learners</p> <p>R3 Improve pupils' speaking and extended writing skills</p> <p>R4 Strengthen school improvement processes to ensure that leaders provide suitable challenge for staff on the impact their teaching makes on pupils' progress</p>
Pengam Primary	<p>R1 Improve teaching and assessment to ensure that all pupils are challenged appropriately and that learning activities meet their developmental needs</p> <p>R2 Improve opportunities for pupils to develop their independence and effectiveness as learners</p> <p>R3 Improve pupils' speaking and extended writing skills</p> <p>R4 Strengthen school improvement processes to ensure that leaders provide suitable challenge for staff on the impact their teaching makes on pupils' progress</p> <p>R5 Improve attendance of pupils, particularly those pupils eligible for free school meals</p>
St Helens Catholic Primary	<p>R1 Ensure that teachers' feedback targets the next steps in pupils' learning effectively</p> <p>R2 Provide more opportunities for pupils to make decisions about how they organise and present their work</p>
Blackwood Comprehensive	<p>R1 Raise standards, particularly in key stage 4</p> <p>R2 Plan more effectively for the progressive development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills</p> <p>R3 Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and written feedback</p> <p>R4 Strengthen leadership arrangements and improve the rigour and consistency of self-evaluation and improvement planning to secure sustained improvements in pupils' standards</p>
Tynewydd Primary	<p>R1 Improve pupils' ability to write at length across a range of curriculum areas</p>

	<p>R2 Increase opportunities for pupils to develop independence and creativity in their learning</p> <p>R3 Ensure that senior managers and governors are involved at all stages of self-evaluation and planning for improvement</p>
Idris Davies 3-18 School	<p>R1 Improve attendance and reduce the levels of persistent absenteeism</p> <p>R2 Strengthen the planning for the progressive development of pupils' literacy, in particular writing and advanced reading skills</p> <p>R3 Address the specific areas for improvements in teaching and assessment identified in the report</p> <p>R4 Ensure sufficient time for personal and social education in key stage 4</p>
Upper Rhymney Primary	<p>R1 Challenge all pupils through consistent and effective teaching</p> <p>R2 Plan effective progression in pupils' numeracy and digital skills as they move through the school</p> <p>R3 Ensure that the quality of teachers' feedback targets the next steps in pupils' learning across the school</p> <p>R4 Improve the resources and outdoor learning opportunities for younger pupils</p>
Machen Primary	<p>R1 Improve opportunities to develop pupils' deeper understanding and application of skills across the curriculum, especially when engaged in independent learning</p> <p>R2 Ensure consistency in the quality and use of pupil feedback to support pupils to make improvements to their work</p> <p>R3 Extend opportunities for pupils to develop their creative and problem-solving skills in purposeful, real-life activities</p>
St Gwladys Bargoed School	<p>R1 Address the safeguarding issues identified by the team during the time of the inspection</p> <p>R2 Further develop the evaluation of pupils' learning, improvement work and grant spending</p>
Hengoed Primary	<p>R1 Ensure that the new leadership practices improve the consistency and effectiveness of teaching across the school</p> <p>R2 Provide better opportunities to promote pupils' independent skills</p> <p>R3 Improve the strategic leadership of the governing body</p>
Coedybrain Primary	<p>R1 Improve pupils' digital skills</p> <p>R2 Develop pupils' independent skills</p>

	R3 Develop the outdoor provision for pupils under seven years old
Ysgol Cwm Derwen	R1 Ensure consistency in teaching practices across the school R2 Plan jointly to improve pupils' numeracy and extended writing skills R3 Improve the quality and provision of outdoor learning experiences, particularly for the youngest pupils
Ystrad Mynach Primary	R1 Provide opportunities for pupils to take ownership of their learning and to develop their thinking and problem solving skills independently R2 Improve pupils' Welsh oracy skills
Park Primary	R1 Ensure that teaching and learning experiences develop pupils' digital and mathematical skills coherently and systematically R2 Provide opportunities that support pupils to think for themselves and extend their independent learning skills
Gilfach Fargoed Primary	R1 Ensure that teaching and learning experiences develop pupils' digital and mathematical skills, coherently and systematically R2 Share the strong practice across the school to support pupils to think for themselves and extend their independent learning skills
Cwmfelinfach Primary	R1. Improve pupils' reading skills in Welsh and their use of Welsh outside of formal sessions R2. Improve opportunities for pupils to consider and to respond to the feedback from teachers in more detail R3. Develop the role of governors in the self-evaluation process"
Ysgol Ifor Bach	R1 Develop pupils' independent writing skills
Pantside Primary	R1 Sharpen self-evaluation processes to focus more clearly on the impact of teaching on learning R2 Improve teaching to ensure that all pupils are challenged effectively R3 Refine the curriculum to ensure that pupils make systematic progress in developing their knowledge and skills across all Areas of Learning and Experience
Tiryberth Primary	R1 Sharpen self-evaluation and improvement processes to ensure that they focus precisely on the quality of teaching and progress in learning R2 Improve pupils' reading skills R3 Continue to improve attendance

Ty Sign Primary	<p>R1 Improve self-evaluation and school improvement processes so that they focus on the school's immediate needs and fully include all staff and governors</p> <p>R2 Improve attendance and punctuality</p> <p>R3 Ensure that all staff engage in high quality and strategically planned professional learning that supports whole school improvement, in particular by addressing inconsistencies in teaching</p> <p>R4 Develop a whole-school understanding of, and plan for, progression in the curriculum to improve the progress pupils make as they move through the school</p>
Newbridge School	<p>R1 Strengthen strategic planning to improve important aspects of the school's work, including the development of pupils' Welsh language skills, raising attendance and ensuring well-being support is joined up and proactive</p> <p>R2 Sharpen self-evaluation processes to ensure timely progress against specific targets</p> <p>R3 Develop the governing body's role as a critical friend of the school</p>
Derwendeg Primary	<p>R1 Sharpen self-evaluation processes to focus more keenly on the quality of teaching and learning</p> <p>R2 Improve teaching to provide suitable challenge to all pupils and develop their independence as learners</p> <p>R3 Strengthen the curriculum to provide richer opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their skills and knowledge</p>
Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary	<p>R1 Further develop a whole-school shared understanding of progression to ensure that teachers' planning and feedback meet the needs of all pupils</p> <p>R2 Improve pupils' independent learning skills, including opportunities for them to reflect on and make decisions about their learning, and use teacher feedback appropriately to understand their next steps in learning</p>

5.17 During this period there are also a number of schools that have were originally inspected under the previous arrangements and have since had monitoring visits. Since January 2020, the following schools have had monitoring visits, with the dates and status being listed.

School	Original Inspection Date	Original Inspection Date	Follow up Visit Date	Current Status
Ysgol Bro Sannan	Oct-19	Significant Improvement	Mar-22	Removed from SI
Ysgol Gilfach Fargoed	Oct-19	Significant Improvement	Jun-22	Removed from SI

- 5.18 In addition the following schools that were placed in a follow up category have since been removed by Estyn.

School	Original Inspection Date	Original Inspection Outcome	Follow up Visit Date	Current Status
Aberbargoed Primary	Jun-22	Estyn Review	Dec-23	Removed form Estyn Review
Pontllanfraith Primary	Nov-22	Estyn Review	March-24	Removed form Estyn Review

- 5.19 The schools that have been removed from an Estyn statutory category have been supported to do so by both the Local Authority and the EAS. Support and where required specific intervention are initially co-ordinated through a Post Inspection Action Plan conference.

Conclusion

- 5.20 This report provides members with information on the outcomes of Estyn inspections in Caerphilly Schools. Given the significant change to the framework, to date approximately one third of Caerphilly schools have been inspected. We will continue to provide members with annual updates on the profile of inspection outcomes.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1. There are no specific assumptions.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This report is for information only therefore no Integrated Impact Assessment is required.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 This work is funded through the EAS Business Plan, therefore there are no specific financial implications.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 The draft report was distributed as detailed below. All comments received have been

reflected in this version of the report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000, Children's Act 2004, Standards and Framework Act 1998

Author: Edward Pryce, Assistant Director, EAS, edward.pryce@sewaleseas.org.uk

Consultees:

- Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive
- Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services
- Councillor Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member for Education and Communities
- Councillor Teresa Parry, Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee
- Councillor Brenda Miles, Vice Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee
- Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
- Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer
- Sue Richards, Head of Transformation and Education Planning and Strategy
- Sarah Ellis, Lead for Inclusion and ALN
- Sarah Mutch, Early Years Manager
- Paul Warren, Strategic Lead for School Improvement
- Jane Southcombe, Financial Services Manager
- Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
- Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Service and Monitoring Officer
- Ros Roberts, Business Improvement Officer.

Links

[Link to Inspection Explanation](#)



EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 20TH MAY 2024

SUBJECT: FEDERATION OF SCHOOLS

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND
CORPORATE SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek Scrutiny endorsement on the recommendation to Cabinet to proceed to consultation, in partnership with each Governing Body, in respect of the Federation of Cwmaber Infants School and Cwmaber Junior School, with effect from the start of term January 2025.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report provides a background to the Welsh Government's Federation of Maintained School in Wales Regulations introduced in 2014. It outlines processes and practical aspects of establishing a federated school governing body.
- 2.2 The report identifies the Schools and Governing Bodies who wish to proceed to formal consultation in partnership with the Local Authority (LA).

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Prior to a report being presented to Cabinet, Scrutiny Members are asked to: -
- a) Note the contents of this report
 - b) Endorse the recommendation to Cabinet, via vote, to proceed to consultation, in partnership with each Governing Body, in respect of the Federation of Cwmaber Infants School and Cwmaber Junior School with effect from the start of term January 2025.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To seek Scrutiny Member endorsement to Cabinet to proceed to formal consultation on the proposal to federate the following schools:

- Cwmaber Infants School and Cwmaber Junior School

4.2 To work in partnership and support the schools identified in 4.1 in undertaking a consultation exercise on federation which if approved will formalise the successful collaboration that has been in place for a number of years.

5. THE REPORT

Background

5.1 The term “Federation” describes a formal and legal agreement by which a number of schools share Governance arrangements.

5.2 The Welsh Government’s Federation policy objective is to promote collaboration between all parts of the education system to improve outcomes. School federation is a more formal way of extending collaboration and promoting closer working relationships and is the principal initiative for achieving formal partnership working amongst schools to improve performance and narrow the attainment gap for deprived pupils.

Summary of Federation Regulations

5.3 The federation of schools is a legal process which enables schools to work together through a formal structured process by sharing a governing body that will make decisions in the best interest of all the schools, staff and pupils in that federation.

5.4 The term federation describes a formal and legal agreement by which a number of schools (between two and six) share governance arrangements and have a single governing body.

5.5 The most important reason for considering federation must be the benefits such an arrangement would bring for children and young people in the federating schools by enhancing educational provision through working together efficiently to raise standards, improve services and increase opportunities.

5.6 A federation can provide a foundation for sustainable long term development and improvement.

5.7 To be successful, federation needs to be based on a commitment to work as a group of schools and a willingness to do things differently for the added benefit of all pupils, their well-being and achievements.

5.8 One of the advantages of federation is that schools that federate remain in their communities and keep their individual identity. However the existing governing bodies will be dissolved and replaced by a new, single governing body which will have oversight of, and equal responsibility for, the work of all schools within the federation.

5.9 The membership of a governing body for a federation of schools is almost identical to the membership of an ordinary governing body with all stakeholders being represented although there is more flexibility in the proportions of representation of each category of governor. This means that a governing body of a federation can choose a constitution and membership which suits their particular circumstances as

long as they have a minimum of 15 governors and no more than a maximum of 27 governors and adhere to the minimum and maximum numbers of governors set out in the regulations.

- 5.10 Schools in a federation will also be able to maintain their own delegated budget, name, character, school uniform and ethos, but will be able to explore the advantages of sharing resources such as facilities, IT, staff, school buildings, etc.
- 5.11 A decision to federate by either schools or LAs will not override the need for a LA to intervene or act on school improvement or school organisation issues.
- 5.12 Each school can retain its headteacher if it wishes although if a single headteacher and deputy headteacher post is created to manage all of the schools in the federation, those posts do not have to be advertised nationally if one of the headteachers or deputy headteachers expresses an interest in the post.
- 5.13 Each school has its own Estyn inspection, though increasingly these are co-ordinated to happen at the same time for all schools within the federation to minimise stress and disruption.
- 5.14 The governing body of a federation can use budget, resources and staff across the federation to improve the educational outcomes for all pupils.
- 5.15 An audit trail must be kept and separate accounts produced for each school in the federation.
- 5.16 The governing body of a federation cannot require existing staff to work across all schools within the federation, but they can negotiate with the school staff unions over whether flexible contracts can be introduced.
- 5.17 New staff can be appointed to work across schools in the federation.
- 5.18 It is a statutory requirement to seek the views of stakeholders on federation proposals, whether the federation has been proposed by the respective school governing bodies or the LA or in joint partnership.
- 5.19 Local authorities must allow the governing bodies 20 school days (excluding inset days) to respond to proposals and cannot establish a federation until a period of at least 100 days has expired from the date they publish proposals.

5.20 **What are the benefits of Federation?**

By entering into a Federation, the schools will agree to work together for the benefit of all pupils in the local area. There will be a formal arrangement where the schools share a single governing body. The schools retain their separate legal status and have their own budget allocations and Estyn inspections.

The shared governance structure will allow the schools to:

- Work together efficiently and sustainably to raise standards, improve services and increase opportunities for pupils and staff;
- Share resources, expertise and facilities;

- Federations do not bring cashable savings to the Local Authority but they may ease financial pressure within schools because resources can be shared and deployed across the Federation;
- A single strategic Federation Governing Body means that the schools can work formally together to improve opportunities for children. This may lead to:
 - Broader learning and social experiences for children;
 - Better continuity of provision from early years to the end of the primary schooling;
 - Strong leadership using more strategic leadership and management structures, allowing school-based leaders to focus on teaching, learning and raising standards;
 - Opportunities to develop future leaders;
 - An aligned and coherent curriculum, increasing the opportunity to fulfil individual pupils' needs, extending curriculum entitlement and giving the potential to share resources;
 - A single Federation Development Plan, single school policies, reducing duplication;
 - More opportunities to share resources, particularly for arts, music and sport.
- A Federation would allow each school to keep its own individual character within a strong overarching partnership and each school will be able to learn from each other.

There is no blueprint for a Federation but schools will have the opportunity to work together to shape their Federation, so that it is able to meet the needs of the pupils and communities.

5.21 **What are the challenges of Federation?**

Some of the challenges to taking forward a Federation are as follows:

- Building trust between governors and school communities;
- Need to ensure full commitment from all schools involved;
- Need to develop and agree a shared vision for the school;
- Need to ensure clear governance and leadership structures;
- Need to ensure sufficient time for all parties to be at ease with the proposed changes;
- All partners should feel equally valued;
- Increasing the workload of governors, particularly during inception and first year of establishing a Federation;
- Potential loss of experienced governors;
- Operational issues - increased workload for a single headteacher;
- Estyn inspections – currently, Estyn inspects each school within a Federation separately.

For a Federation to succeed, it is imperative that trust is developed between the governors and individual school communities. It also requires full commitment from the schools involved and a shared vision for the development of the Federation.

- 5.22 Due to the successful informal collaboration already established between both schools the majority of the challenges identified in 5.21 have already been successfully addressed

5.23 **Composition of the Governing Body**

The regulations stipulate that each federated governing body should have a minimum of 15 Governors and a maximum of 27 with a proposed composition made up as follows for each federated school:

- (a) at least one but no more than two parent governors elected or appointed to represent the interests of parents of registered pupils at that school;
- (b) at least one but no more than two teacher governors;
- (c) at least one but no more than two staff governors;
- (d) at least two but no more than four LA governors;
- (e) at least two but no more than four community governors;
- (f) the head or acting head of the federation, if one is appointed or the headteacher or acting headteacher of each school in the federation unless those persons resign as a governor.

5.24 The present position with both governing bodies is as follows:

Cwmaber Infant School / Cwmaber Junior School

The schools have been informally “collaborating” since September 2020. Both schools share the same Head Teacher.

The Governing Body of both schools have agreed to proceed to formal consultation for federation status in partnership with the Local Authority, subject to Cabinet approval.

A draft Proposal Report has been produced.

The Federation process

In establishing a Federation the following steps need to be noted:

Step 1: Exploration and Preparation

This phase involves:

- Report specified as an item on Governing Body agenda;
- Governing Body to give preliminary consent to an agreement to explore Federation options from School(s) involved and the Local Authority;
- The co creation of an initial briefing paper for consideration of staff and governing bodies;
- Agreement of the key drivers and purpose for Federation;
- Informing staff in both schools of the process and any implications and keeping unions informed;
- Setting up a working group with representatives from both schools to draft a formal Proposal Report;
- Determining a date for the operative start of Federation.

Step 2: The report and consultation

- The governing bodies in partnership with the Local Authority to prepare a formal Proposal report to consult with all stakeholders.

This report will:

- Include full details of proposal including the size/composition of single governing body, senior staff arrangements and management arrangements, admissions, authority (ies) deadline for comments – 20 days from publication;
- Explain reasons for Federation and benefits (and how potential challenges would be met);
- Include the date for when Federation takes place – must be at least 100 days from the date proposals are published, i.e. sent to stakeholders;
- Consultation with stakeholders – Local Authority, parents/carers, staff of all schools, school staff unions.

Step 3: Post consultation

- Governing bodies and local authority to consider responses;
- Provide a summary report of responses for each governing body to consider.

Step 4: Implementation

- Governing bodies and local authority meet to make the final decision on nature and timing of Federation;
- Governing bodies and local authority inform stakeholders of decision;
- Local Authority in consultation with the governing bodies liaise over the new Instrument of government and election and appointment of new governors;
- Consider making arrangements for governor support for the Federating schools in the interim before the joint governing body is in place;
- Senior leadership roles and responsibilities formalised;
- Joint Committee of governors is established and provides strategic planning and roll out the Federation;
- Single governing body meets to elect chair and vice chair;
- Calendars and professional processes aligned;
- Look at how new technologies can support Federation development.

Step 5: Evolution

- Implementing new systems and structures, policies and practice;
- New staff roles operating (Performance Management structure and process);
- School Development Plan targets resources and expertise at raising standards across the Federation;
- Monitoring and review by governing body, staff and the local authority.

5.25 Officers have met with all Governing Bodies concerned who have formally agreed to proceed to formal consultation on the proposal. Although the Governing Bodies could proceed in isolation each Governing Body have requested the Local Authority consider the proposal and agree to proceed in partnership with the individual schools to formal consultation.

5.26 The next stage of the process, subject to Cabinet approval, would be to commence the consultation process for all 4 groups of schools. It is expected that this process will commence early in the Autumn term, subject to the detailed timeline, being agreed by each Governing Body.

5.27 A draft consultation document is attached at Appendix 1 which will be adapted for each of the school federations outlined above should the proposals be endorsed.

5.28 **Conclusion**

Members are asked to endorse the recommendation to Cabinet, via vote, to proceed to consultation, in partnership with each Governing Body, in respect of the Federation of Cwmaber Infants School and Cwmaber Junior School with effect from the start of term January 2025.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 No assumptions have been made in relation to this report.

7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 As the proposal seeks to Federate the two school governing bodies only, and they are have been in an established collaboration since September 2020, there is no requirement under the statutory process to undertake a wider Integrated Impact Assessment in this instance.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The Federation process does not bring any savings to the Local Authority but may ease financial pressures within schools by sharing resources which can be deployed across the federation.

9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Due to collaboration arrangements already being in place, in both schools, for a number of years there are no personnel implications anticipated directly resulting from this proposal.

9.2 Governing Bodies have the responsibility for the management of staffing within schools.

10. **CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 The draft report was distributed as detailed below. All comments received have been reflected in this version of the report.

11. **STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Federation of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2014
School Organisation Code 2013 (Welsh Government)

School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013

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Mark S Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment
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Councillor Teresa Parry, Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny
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Councillor Brenda Miles, Vice Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny
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Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
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Ben Winstanley, Head of Land and Property Services
Stephen Pugh, Corporate Communications Manager

Background Papers:

None



EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 20TH MAY 2024

SUBJECT: SAFEGUARDING

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND
CORPORATE SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members regarding the work of the education department to support schools.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Safeguarding children and young people is a key statutory duty of the Council and is embodied in the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014 & Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019).
- 2.2 The Local Authority (LA) is focused on ensuring a culture of safeguarding is embedded, and has clear policies and procedures linked to safeguarding children in education services, which are reviewed and updated when required. Safeguarding underpins priorities within the Directorate Plan (2023 – 2028) and all related plans and reflects the introduction of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019) within its principles and practices.
- 2.3 On an annual basis, the LA undertakes a self-evaluation of its Directorate safeguarding arrangements, designed to give an understanding of how 'safeguarding' is currently being achieved in our service area and how practice might be developed. In addition, Education contributes to the Corporate self-assessment which provides the Council with an overview of safeguarding practices across all its service areas, to ensure that safeguarding duties are being effectively met. Data metrics are also collated to inform the National Multi-agency Safeguarding Performance Framework (NMSPF) report, requested annually by the Gwent Safeguarding Board to report on certain performance measures so that each region can be assured of safeguarding arrangements.
- 2.4 The LA works in partnership with Children's Services, Health, Police, education providers, parents/carers, and other partners to ensure that there is a robust multi agency approach towards safeguarding arrangements in schools/settings.
- 2.5 The LA has a pivotal role in safeguarding activities at a national, regional, and local level for example the National Safeguarding in Education Group (SEG), the regional

Safeguarding Board, the regional South East Wales Consortium (SEWC) SEG, in conjunction with Caerphilly Local Safeguarding Network (LSN) and Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) groups. This ensures that policy and practice are well informed to support schools/settings.

- 2.6 The LA Safeguarding Policy for schools/education settings directly reflects the 'Keeping Learners Safe' Circular 270/2021 & Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019).
- 2.7 Schools/settings are robustly supported with managing allegations against practitioners with engagement from education, social services, Human Resources (HR) and other relevant professionals.
- 2.8 The LA provides robust training and support to schools/education settings & Governors. The LA have a sustainable model in place that will enhance the capacity for schools to effectively manage safeguarding issues.
- 2.9 There are robust monitoring arrangements in place with regards to the scrutiny of restricted physical interventions. This ensures schools/settings practice is safe and is aligned with policy and guidance.
- 2.10 Operation Encompass alerts from Police are shared with schools daily in order that the wellbeing of learners is adequately supported in schools following a domestic incident. Fortnightly updates resulting from Multi Agency Risk Assessment Committee (MARAC) meetings are also provided to schools to strengthen this process and assist with risk management and safety planning. This aligns with the VAWDASV National Framework.
- 2.11 The LA has an established Chanel process and has responded effectively to the Counter Terrorism Act 2015 by ensuring that the duty of the LA is incorporated into existing policies and procedures. Schools/settings are made aware of the Prevent Duty through safeguarding, and specific 'Prevent' training.
- 2.12 There are robust systems in place for schools/settings regarding the recording and monitoring of discriminatory incidents. Guidance is updated to reflect any new categories as they are defined. Stonewall has recognised the LA as developing good practice in this area.
- 2.13 The LA has responded to Welsh Government guidance, produced in 2021 in relation to Peer-on-Peer Sexual Harassment which provided education settings with practical tools to prevent and respond to instances of peer sexual abuse, exploitation and harmful sexual behaviour taking place both inside and outside of school. This includes digital abuse and exploitation. Education Safeguarding will continue to promote the principles within the recently published Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) Peer on Peer Action Plan.
- 2.14 The LA has a good system of audit for schools/settings to audit their responses to safeguarding responsibilities. The audit itself supports schools/settings in ensuring compliance with current guidance/legislation. Any actions arising from the audits are undertaken and checked by managers.
- 2.15 Any updated information from the Gwent Safeguarding Board, subgroups, Education Wales, Local Safeguarding Network or DSO group is circulated to staff across schools/settings.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members are requested to note the contents of the report.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Supporting schools/settings in relation to safeguarding is a priority and it is important that Members are apprised of relevant work undertaken in this area.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 Safeguarding children and young people is a key statutory duty of the Council and is embodied in the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014. Processes and procedures are identified within the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.
- 5.2 The LA has a clear Corporate Policy for Safeguarding outlining the intention of the council in relation to safeguarding. As part of the Council's commitment to safeguarding, we work proactively with our partners under the auspices of the Gwent Safeguarding Board to ensure that statutory guidance is followed, and schools/settings' practices are safe and effective.
- 5.3 The LA has a clear definition of safeguarding linked to the Wales Safeguarding Procedures and clearly defined responsibilities as outlined in the Corporate Policy including areas such as Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDA&SV) and Counterterrorism and risk of radicalisation (Prevent).
- 5.4 There is excellent partnership working across Education, Children's Services, and other key stakeholders in safeguarding to ensure that there is a robust approach towards safeguarding arrangements. There is on-going representation from education in the broader context, in relation to Multi Agency Risk Assessment Committee meeting (MARAC), Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation meeting (MASE), Case Practice Review's (CPR'), Procedural Response to Unexpected Deaths in Childhood (PRUDIC) and Operation Encompass Task & Finish Group. Information from schools/settings is shared within these forums to contribute towards the multi-agency approach to keeping learners safe – any actions/recommendations are then disseminated back to schools/settings to implement.
- 5.5 The Education Safeguarding Team provides effective advice to schools/settings daily regarding a broad range of safeguarding issues, which supplements the support from other partner agencies, such as Information, Assistance and Advice Team (IAA), Child Protection Coordinator and HR (where appropriate). The role of the Education Safeguarding Team will continue to ensure there is an appropriate level of ongoing support and guidance to schools/settings and Youth Services in relation to safeguarding and provide challenge where necessary.
- 5.6 The LA has a clear Safeguarding Children in Schools/Education Settings Policy, adopted by all schools/settings in the Borough; this is reviewed annually in readiness for the new academic year each September. This directly reflects 'Keeping Learners Safe' Circular 270/2021. When updates are made to the policy, schools/settings are emailed the new information and related paragraph number for ease.

- 5.7 The local authority promotes responsibilities for safe recruitment processes for all schools/settings (including any directly recruited and paid through the school). The revised Safer Recruitment Policy (agreed January 2021) places greater emphasis on safeguarding responsibilities for recruiting officers, which is re-enforced within safeguarding training. Education Safeguarding will collaborate with HR colleagues to promote to schools/settings around Safer Recruitment so all education staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities; this includes the new Safeguarding Protocol for contractors/suppliers who may come into contact with children in our learning environments.
- 5.8 The LA has a clear process of self-evaluation; schools/settings are required to submit an up-to-date SER to the LA as part of their routine three yearly safeguarding Audit. For those schools/settings who are not due for audit, the LA will request a copy of their SER on an annual dip sample basis. This system supports schools/settings to identify any gaps in processes/arrangements relating to safeguarding and provide advice/guidance where necessary.
- 5.9 Allegations against practitioners are managed robustly with engagement from Education, Social Services, HR, and other relevant professionals. Following allegations schools are supported by the LA to ensure appropriate risk management plans are in place and that disciplinary investigations are conducted robustly. Education Safeguarding also support with bespoke training and reflective practice sessions to improve outcomes and learning. Following conclusion of the Section 5 (S.5) process where an employer investigation is recommended, a meeting is held between Education Safeguarding, the school/setting, Chair of Governors, and Human Resources to support schools to determine how the investigation will be conducted. A further meeting is then held jointly with the investigating officer, school/setting, and HR colleagues to set out terms of reference and timescales; built into this will be a mid-point review meeting to avoid drift. Commissioned providers or agencies are also provided with pre-meetings where relevant, held to establish clear guidance and terms of reference regarding the expectation of employer investigations.
- 5.10 A 'train the trainer' Tier 2 safeguarding training model is delivered by Education Safeguarding to Heads/DSP's in schools/settings to ensure there is a sustainable model in place that will enhance the capacity for schools to effectively manage safeguarding issues; this is delivered to Heads/DSP's at least 2-3 months in advance of their three-year rolling due date. This training is then rolled out by Heads/DSP's to 'whole school' staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff, governors, and other partners. Schools/settings are requested to update the LA when whole school training has been delivered so accurate records can be kept and schools/settings are subsequently then reminded when this is next due under the 3-year rolling programme.
- 5.11 Education Safeguarding delivered specific DSP training throughout 2023. A total of 9 training sessions were delivered, which consisted of a pre-course module and attendance at a 4-hour face to face training session at Ty Penallta. This was aimed at school/setting's senior leadership team members and designated safeguarding persons to enhance their knowledge of local/regional guidance/legislation and wider safeguarding issues. A total of 129 staff attended the Tier 3 training.
- 5.12 Governor training is delivered annually by the Safeguarding Team; two sessions are held annually for Designated Safeguarding/Chair of Governors and three sessions held for Governing Body members via the GB Network. A full GB training schedule is sent out by the LA /EAS each year to GB members and schools/settings, advising of training dates so advanced notice is given. The LA's contribution to the safeguarding

training for Governors will ensure high standards are maintained and compliance is met in schools/settings.

- 5.13 Within the broad remit of safeguarding there are several key areas of focus such as Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDA&SV) and Counterterrorism and risk of radicalisation (Prevent). Schools/education setting staff are encouraged to complete the mandatory VAWDASV Level 1 training and front facing staff will complete Level 2 Ask & Act live virtual training sessions. Education is represented at strategic groups such as the Whole School Approach to VAWDASV, Operation Encompass Task & Finish Group and Gwent Prevent Forum to ensure that school/setting Heads/DSP's are kept up to date of latest updates in guidance/legislation and that information is cascaded to all staff.
- 5.14 Since the introduction of the Counter – Terrorism and Security Act 2015, specific duties have been placed on Local Authorities and education providers to have due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism. Safeguarding training ensures schools/settings are aware that the LA have an effective Channel panel in place and how to refer. When accessing the internet in schools the LA adopt controls via the web filtering solution where specific sites or site categories are restricted; hate, discrimination, extremism, and radicalisation are blocked as part of the policies. School/setting staff receive Prevent Home Office training via e-link and access support via Safeguarding & Community Safety partners to ensure they are aware of their duties. Schools can evaluate their performance in line with Respect and Resilience self-assessment toolkit and can evidence how they undertake their duty during Estyn Inspection. On 2 May 2023, the Government published the draft Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill, also known as Martyn's Law, for pre-legislative scrutiny by the Home Affairs Select Committee. Schools are aware of the need to consider their preparedness for, and protection from, a terrorist attack and align with relevant risk assessment and security plan.
- 5.15 In response to the recently published report commissioned by the Gwent Safeguarding Board focusing talking racism in Wales the LA is developing an action plan to identify support for schools and activity for the LA and is working with partners regionally to ensure a collaborative approach.
- 5.16 Head Teachers and Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSP) in all schools/settings are regularly updated by Education Safeguarding, via the half termly Safeguarding Bulletin, of relevant documentation, training resources and available safeguarding courses e.g. Stop it Now, County Lines, Human Trafficking, Safety On-line, Hwb on-line courses and any new local/national guidance/legislation. The Bulletin actively promotes special events such as Internet Safety Day, Mental Health Awareness Week, Anti Bullying, and National Safeguarding Week, for example. It also includes 7 Minute Briefing and Serious Case Review learning information. All schools/settings are aware that further information/courses can be accessed via the Gwent Safeguarding Board.
- 5.17 'Understanding Safeguarding' and 'How to make a Duty to Report', is highlighted within the safeguarding training delivered by Education Safeguarding and promoted within all schools and education settings, along with recognising when a child is at risk or in need of services. The different forms of abuse are explored within this training, as well as the wider safeguarding concerns relating to human trafficking, county lines, FGM, Suicide & Self Harm. With increased awareness of safeguarding matters, schools/settings are more confident to identify harm/need for support and routinely refer to IAA. In terms of 'data' to support this, reports made to IAA by education staff from 1st April 23 include 1097 DTR's submitted, 534 DTR's submitted on open cases and 250 JAFF referrals made for support services for families. This is testament to the

high levels of advice, support and training offered to schools/settings by the Education Safeguarding Team.

- 5.18 Great emphasis is placed on the S.5 Practitioner Concerns process within all safeguarding training delivery for schools and education settings to ensure staff across the Directorate have good knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities in this section of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019). Also, the 'duty to report' any concerns about a staff member in both their employment capacity and in the context of their personal circumstances. Additional specific S.5 training sessions was delivered at Deputy Heads Forums and to Secondary Heads, jointly delivered by education safeguarding and HR colleagues for completeness and a joined-up approach. Between 1.04.23 – 20.02.24 a total of 32 practitioner concerns reports were made to IAA, only 10 of which progressed under S.5. Again, the increased levels of awareness to schools/settings are likely to have contributed to the increase in the identification of practitioner concerns reports.
- 5.19 There is an effective process for monitoring incidents of physical intervention and restraint in schools/settings. There are clear criteria to trigger follow up visits with schools. Physical interventions are received by Education Safeguarding within 24 hours of the intervention taking place; these are subsequently reviewed on a weekly basis by Education Safeguarding & CLA Coordinators (both Team Teach trained) to ensure the correct Team Teach approaches are used and any safeguarding concerns are identified/followed up. Schools are regularly contacted for clarity and offered guidance/advice or bespoke reflective sessions from a safeguarding or Team Teach perspective. Guidance Use of Physical Intervention and Reasonable Force to Restrain Pupils, along with the Time Out Policy have been reviewed and available for schools/settings to adapt/adopt.
- 5.20 As a result of Estyn's thematic review Autumn 2021, a number of recommendations were made to consider the prevalence of peer-on-peer sexual harassment and how schools' safeguarding culture encourages and empowers pupils to keep safe, stand up to their peers and report all forms of sexual harassment. The LA leads meet to develop a local education action plan in relation to Peer on Peer Sexual Harassment/Harmful Sexual Behaviours, bringing together support from education safeguarding, healthy schools and the wellbeing team to support schools/settings to identify, implement and monitor 'sexually motivated behaviour' as a specific type of behaviour through school bullying / discriminatory recording and reporting procedures.
- 5.21 In response to Everyone Invited and the recently released WAG Peer on Peer Sexual Harassment Action Plan/Statement, the LA will continue to support all schools and education settings in Caerphilly to be actively reviewing the culture and processes they have in place to safeguard learners, including fostering a culture where incidents of sexual harassment and abuse are not normalised and learners are encouraged to, and feel confident in, reporting incidents. In relation to secondary schools, Education Safeguarding have been working directly with those schools to undertake an earlier audit, reviewing policies, safeguarding self-evaluation, and safeguarding practices more broadly. There is a range of current guidance and training resources, which has been made available to schools and education settings on issues relating to peer sexual harassment and abuse, exploitation and harmful sexual behaviour which are routinely promoted and distributed by Education Safeguarding; schools are also provided with advice on practical tools to prevent and respond to instances of peer sexual abuse, exploitation and harmful sexual behaviour taking place both inside and out of the settings, including on-line and digital abuse. Secondary schools have been requested to submit a copy of their own action plans for LA scrutiny and support.

- 5.22 In terms of promoting the message around on-line safety, the LA Safeguarding Policy for schools/settings includes specific guidance relating to internet safety, which also aligns itself to the KLS guidance. The LA Customer and Digital Services apply the All-Wales filtering standards as an example, hate, discrimination, extremism, and radicalisation are blocked as part of the policies. The 360 Degree Assessment Tool is also promoted to schools/settings via safeguarding training to enable them to review their own internal systems, so they are safe for learners.
- 5.23 In partnership with Gwent Police, the LA has engaged with Operation Encompass since 2019, regularly attending quarterly Task & Finish Groups. The LA has developed a robust process of ensuring that schools receive daily information regarding incidents of domestic abuse so that they are able to fully support the needs of their learners in a safe environment; feedback continue to indicate that this is welcomed by schools and enables them to identify potentially vulnerable pupils.
- 5.24 There is a robust system for recording and monitoring a range of discriminatory incidents requiring schools to submit returns to the LA on a termly basis which are scrutinised by LA officers. This is updated with any additional characteristics linked to discrimination as required. Schools/settings are offered support and guidance from Education Psychology Services, Healthy Schools and Safeguarding as required.
- 5.25 The LA has a good system of audit for schools/settings to examine their responses to safeguarding responsibilities. This aligns with the 'Keeping Learners Safe,' using the Estyn model of audit. Additional checks are built into this process to ensure that the audits themselves are robust. The LA rates audits using a traffic light system and undertakes follow up actions with schools as required. Often, recommendations are made, even if there are no safeguarding 'actions' identified; any recommendations made are to enhance schools/settings safeguarding practices and approaches, for example to access additional training such as Ask & Act, access guidance Young Carers (due to the increased number of identified young carers in the school), or to undertake pupil surveys. Any safeguarding actions arising from the audits are undertaken and checked by managers, however, recommendations are reviewed via a follow-up monitoring form.
- 5.26 Any safeguarding themes/updates are also promoted within the DSP termly meetings so SLT in schools/settings are furnished with all current legislation/guidance.

5.27 Conclusion

- 5.28 Safeguarding underpins all priorities within the LA. The LA contributes to national and regional groups to ensure up to date practice across the Education Directorate and schools. There are several areas of focus for the work of education safeguarding including advice and support, training, audit, and support for practitioner concerns, to enhance safeguarding practices in schools/settings; this ensures that, not only safeguarding compliance is met, but that there is a robust and effective culture of safeguarding which is centred on the welfare of young people, protecting them and creating conditions for them to thrive.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 In considering the recommendations the following assumptions have been made:
- Safeguarding children and young people is a key statutory duty of the Council. The LA providing on-going advice, guidance and support to schools/settings remains a critical

element of this and as such must be reported to scrutiny to ensure that members are kept informed.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This report provides information and therefore an integrated impact assessment has not been completed at this time.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no financial implications.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 The report reflects the views of the consultees based on consultations undertaken to date.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Social Services and Wellbeing Act
Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
Education (Wales) Act 2014
Education Act 1996 - Equality Act 2010
Additional Learning Needs and Tribunal Act 2018

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Sarah Mutch, Early Years Manager
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
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