

Cyfarwyddwr Addysg a Gwasanaethau Corfforaethol

Directorate of Education and Corporate Services

EOTAS Strategy



Background

The Local Authority (LA) is committed to ensuring that all learners have equality of opportunity and recognise the right of all children and young people to receive high quality education, no matter where that education may be delivered (as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 28)).

Caerphilly County Borough Council recognises that children and young people who may require provision outside of school at a given time, that is Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) provision, are some of our most vulnerable learners. These children and young people often come from chaotic and challenging backgrounds. They can frequently experience family breakdown and mental health issues, and are often exposed to substance misuse and domestic violence. It is no surprise, therefore, that these children and young people often have less positive learning outcomes than their peers.

Section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 gives local education authorities the power to make 'arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them,' (Great Britain, 1996).

In realising our commitment towards this vulnerable group of learners, we must focus upon what is important for the individual, and what will work best for them. In this regard the pupil voice is vital. The principles here are consistent with the Welsh Government approach to reshaping the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) agenda in terms of person centred practice.

Underpinning this is the undertaking to ensure:

- a core entitlement for all learners
- a high quality workforce who have access to appropriate professional learning
- a high quality bespoke curriculum and progression pathway for learners
- a focus on reintegration into mainstream education
- collaboration and partnership working is a priority

- a focus on preventative strategies to:
 - make sure that any additional support needs that children have are recognised as early as possible
 - appropriate intervention is in place as early as possible
 - reduce the number of children and young people requiring alternative provision as far as possible, linked to appropriate early intervention
 - suitable arrangements are made to avoid exclusion
 - reduce the numbers of young people who are becoming Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)
- clear processes and procedures
- rigorous monitoring and evaluation
- excellent leadership and management

Current Context

The LA has rigorous and robust established processes for identification and provision for those who require education other than at school (EOTAS). Both nationally and locally the number of those pupils in need of this provision have increased. Currently, there is provision within Caerphilly as well as access to procured external providers. This provision can vary considerably in terms of cost and quality. Through our self-evaluation, we have concluded that current provision could be further developed and enhanced in order to improve pupils' outcomes and value for money. It is the Council's priority to provide the best possible education for all pupils, particularly those most vulnerable to under-achievement. There is a commitment and determination to develop a centre of excellence through a portfolio Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) approach to ensure an enhanced offer which will meet the needs of all pupils and provide a bespoke pathway appropriate to their needs. Following consultation with schools, providers and pupils, it is clear that we are in a position to proceed to significant change in how this service will work.

A new centre for vulnerable learners will be aspirational and will be established to deliver the best in terms of learning experiences and support for wellbeing.

An expanded Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) will be the hub and, as part of its portfolio, there will be a primary phase PRU (The Learning Centre), youth education settings (Innovate), as well as strong links with schools through Learning Pathways Centres (LPCs) and the delivery of tuition. Bespoke packages will continue to include links with outdoor education and the colleges.

Pupils will be assessed to identify appropriate pathways and interventions required. These interventions will be monitored for impact. There will be access to an appropriate behaviour curriculum and relevant therapies, as well as continued involvement in enrichment activities. As often as possible, pupils will be reintegrated into mainstream provision. It will be important to forge strong working relationships with all partners and to extend support to families.

The Vision

Schools across the authority share the same commitment to Inclusion. In accordance with this, the development of Wellbeing is prominent in all improvement plans and professional learning opportunities. In nearly all cases, disengagement with learning, individual needs and challenging behaviour are addressed and resolved in mainstream school. In a very few instances however, it is evident that individual needs cannot be met at a mainstream school and, under such circumstances, the local authority is developing Cwmpawd.

Cwmpawd / *Compass* is based on the following principles:

- We are all committed to equity and excellence
- Every young person deserves the best start in life
- No successful journey was ever made without a passport and a guide book
- We all need to stop now and again to check we are travelling in the right direction
- The future prosperity of our communities and nation depend on what we do today.

Cwmpawd will be the LA's EOTAS provision with its budget managed by the Headteacher.

Students at Cwmpawd will continue their educational journey in order to grow as lifelong learners. They will develop as ambitious, enterprising, ethically informed and healthy citizens of Wales.

Students will be referred to Cwmpawd via the half-termly panel. Aligned with the principles of collaboration and integration, and with student-voice at the forefront of all decisions made, multi-agency working will ensure effective placement initially within Cwmpawd and then subsequently to the most appropriate satellite provision.

Referrals will be received at set times throughout the school year. They will be scrutinised by members of the Behaviour Support Service, Educational Psychology team and other senior members of the Inclusion Service. When it is clear that the graduated response policy has been followed and that the appropriate professionals have been involved with the young person, the referral to panel will be authorised.

At panel the discussion will centre around individual learning and wellbeing need. Staff from all provisions will attend along with representatives for the Behaviour Support, Educational Psychology and Statutory teams. Once decisions are made, there will be appropriate timescales to ensure clear communication and seamless transition.

Cefnogaeth (Support) meetings are the hallmark of the work we will undertake to ensure that from an emotionally and physically perspective, our students are able to learn and make progress in our environment. Following the initial meeting set as part of the transition phase, regular dates will be set to discuss bespoke curriculum and intervention needs, review progress and re-integration plans. These will also ensure that all statutory duties are undertaken correctly where additional learning needs have been identified. Ensuring the appropriate people are round the table, including

representatives from mainstream schools, increase the probability of progress and potential re-integration. Appropriate partners will work together to maximise opportunities for success.

Learning and ambition will be at the heart of what we do. All students within Cwmpawd will develop their own **targets** that run alongside agreed targets developed by staff and parents. As part of our self-evaluation and quality assurance calendar, progress towards targets meetings will be held on a termly basis at Cwmpawd and all satellite provisions.

The hub of Cwmpawd will be our Centre for Vulnerable Learners (CVL). Within this building there will be a combination of classrooms, working spaces, intervention and calm rooms. Facilities will include dedicated staff areas for both relaxation and professional learning, a library for students and facilities for both families and the community to share the work the young people are doing. We will have specialist expressive arts and digital media suites alongside the partnering health facilities.

Students will be transported to and from Cwmpawd.

Alongside the CVL we will have a discrete KS2 / 3 provision at **The Learning Centre, Glanynant**, providing education for pupils experiencing social emotional and behavioural difficulties.

As with all of our provisions, students will be supported here to help them learn to understand and manage their emotions and improve their behaviour before a possible return to mainstream.

Further satellite provisions will include the current **Innovate** project which is run in conjunction with the Youth Service. This Project based on two sites allows young people to grow in confidence, self-esteem and independence by learning new skills. Bespoke learning plans are utilised on each site with the focus on self-regulation and behavioural needs.

The **HIVE** is a small group setting with a high ratio of adult support for pupils that have reported high levels of anxiety who may be supported by Caerphilly My Support Team (CMyST), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) or open to Social Services. It is underpinned by Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA), Thrive and Mindfulness. Pupils have a Pathway Plan which identifies transition need and support. Programmes support pupils and include GCSE & Entry Pathways and Youth Work qualifications.

In addition to the above, Cwmpawd work with school current Learning Progress Centres (**LPC**) provisions to support young people as they transition back towards mainstream education. Our centre at Lewis Pengam focuses specifically on intervention to facilitate a short turnaround whilst the centre at Heolddu caters for high functioning Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) students.

All students will receive a broad and balanced **curriculum** as part of their entitlement. This will allow them to focus appropriately on all Areas of Learning, to address individual learning needs and relevant therapies. The bespoke interventions at each centre will help distinguish Cwmpawd from other mainstream schools.

Where this is not possible within Cwmpawd, partnerships will be developed so that resources within mainstream schools are used.

Collaboration with the authority's Caerphilly Adventures Group and Positive Futures will allow us to expand our curriculum offer further, whilst utilisation of Coleg Gwent and independent providers will ensure specialisms can be followed where appropriate.

As part of our extra-curricular programme students will conduct visits to areas of significant local and national interest, have the opportunity to go to the theatre, spectate at live sporting events, represent Cwmpawd at various competitions and attend places of worship.

We recognise that all our young people require a passport (in the form of formal qualifications) and a guide book (in the form of emotional and wellbeing support) in order to allow them to successfully navigate adult life and make a positive contribution to society.

Our curriculum will deliver a blend of both.

Skills are fundamental to progress. Whilst Literacy, Numeracy and the Digital Competence Framework (DCF) form the basics, these are intertwined with the development of thinking skills, resilience, creativity, collaboration and innovation as we instil in the young people the skills necessary to exist and thrive in adult life.

Staff at each centre will deliver lessons on site, in the community and will work as part of our outreach service within mainstream schools.

Interventions will focus on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) and trauma informed practice to support students. We will also follow a Human Givens approach with Thrive - (an approach to develop healthy, happy and confident children) and ELSA being at the heart of training and work. Whilst the majority of our time will be spent working directly with young people, staff will also allocate intervention and educational work with friends and family members of the young people at Cwmpawd.

Within Cwmpawd there will be a clear leadership structure to ensure vision and aims are realised. The Headteacher is joined by a Professional Learning lead, Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (ALNCO) and Designated Safeguarding Officer to ensure both staff and students are supported, challenged and make the progress expected.

As an organisation we are committed to the principles underlying **Schools as Learning Organisations**. All staff are committed to professional growth and an extensive menu will be available to commit to action based research and aspire to be a better teacher are all underpinned by the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership.

The development of Cwmpawd will allow us to refine the work of the Behaviour Support Service. The team will deliver professional development sessions, interventions at student and adult level, both within Cwmpawd and in mainstream schools.

Therapeutic approaches

It is well recognised that experiences in childhood can affect us throughout our life and can lead to long term harm. In the context of education this may impact on engagement in education, academic performance and outcomes. Supporting children's wellbeing is therefore essential.

In order to ensure that all children can access the educational opportunities available the Council works in partnership with the consortia, Health Services and Social Care to provide a range of services that support the development of wellbeing (physical and emotional).

People who know young people well are best placed to identify wellbeing concerns, build resilience and deliver low-level therapeutic input.

Relationships between pupils, young people in EOTAS settings, teachers, youth workers and parents are key to developing safe and healthy schools where young people are able to achieve and there should be clear mechanisms and structures which support positive relationships.

In order to support the most vulnerable learners services such as educational psychology and school based counselling are continuing to develop the range of interventions and training to ensure that schools build capacity to address emerging needs (see Wellbeing Strategy 2020).

In relation to children who may require provision outside of school the Council is committed to developing the support to the portfolio of provisions and enhancing this in line with Welsh Government vision.

A person centred approach, robust assessment of need, and early identification are underpinning principles of the strategy. Services will continue to develop in order to ensure that children's needs are clearly understood on the basis of a comprehensive set of information and that interventions are targeted appropriately whether from school based or more specialist services.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Key Performance Indicators for this service exist at individual, satellite provision and Cwmpawd level. Standards in relation to qualifications gained, average points score, and attendance and exclusions will be tracked in detail. Progress towards targets meetings ensure starting points are also taken into consideration when measuring performance.

Bespoke wellbeing measures are fundamental in the progress of Cwmpawd to ensure interventions are appropriate and re-integration a realistic outcome.

Rates of re-integration and progression pathway planning which impact on NEET figures will contribute significantly to the range of performance measures we use.

The Headteacher for Cwmpawd will develop and implement an extensive self-evaluation calendar which ensures all areas are scrutinised and actions within the Improvement Plans will be monitored. Progress towards targets meetings will be supplemented by observations, learning walks, stakeholder engagement events and work scrutiny. Responding to the Pupil Voice will be a priority and Cwmpawd will engage in support and challenge activity provided by the Education Achievement Service (EAS).

The development of the Management Committee will ensure progress is challenged and celebrated each term and attendance of senior members of the LA within this committee will provide further rigour.

At local authority, reports will be generated at all levels from Senior Management Team through to Cabinet to ensure the work carried out on a daily basis is aligned with the corporate aims and vision.

The impact of this strategy will be reviewed annually and pupil outcomes will be reported at Senior Management Team and Scrutiny Committee meetings.

Links to other strategies / key documents

Welsh Government - Inclusion and Pupil Support 203/2016

Public Health Wales – Report 1 Aces

Estyn – Happy and Healthy (2019)

Estyn – Education other than at school (2016)

Public Policy Institute for Wales: Promoting Emotional Health, Well-being, and Resilience in Primary Schools 2016

National Behaviour and attendance review (2008)

Wellbeing of Future Generations Act

Additional Learning Needs Act (2018)

Shared Ambitions (2019)

Behaviour Strategy (2020)

Wellbeing strategy (2020)

Inclusion and ALN Strategy (2020)

Managed Moves Policy

Elective Home Education Protocol

Safeguarding Policy