

Cyfarwyddwr Addysg a Gwasanaethau Corfforaethol

Directorate of Education and Corporate Services

Inclusion Compendium

Policy into Practice – Case studies and Pupil Voice



A greener place
Man gwyrddach



Introduction

Practice in schools and provisions is underpinned by an established vision and set of principles driven by the national and local context and self evaluation. Schools and provisions are required to have a set of policies that define how these are embedded. These policies should be documents that are underpinned by practice and take account of the views of stakeholders.

This document provides some examples of school based policies and examples of how these are translated into practice.

1. Examples of good practice in schools

St Martins Comprehensive School have developed provision to support students at both KS3 and KS4. With the former more established, a strong transition programme enables young people to be identified to access this provision providing essential support and reassurance as the students move from one school into another environment. There are key areas explored with the staff in particular 'how do I become a person in this school' and 'how do I achieve at St Martins?'

Alongside this specialist provision, all students are supported through their designated Wellbeing Team. Staff, such as designated safeguarding officer and school nurse, combine to form a team of professionals dedicated to providing the essential emotional support to help the students feel safe, comfortable and in the best place to succeed in the classroom.

St Martins school facilitate a popular staff forum which allows all staff to influence decisions across the school which may impact on their wellbeing. It also creates an essential culture of ownership in the strategic direction of the school. Team breakfasts, a virtual trip to Rome and adaptations to their quality assurance processes are all highlights which have their origins in a commitment to staff wellbeing.

St Cenydd School through a covid grant from the Welsh Government have recently appointed 4 Pupil Support Officers. Their role is to target specific groups of students and offer nurture support, and to be the first point of contact for many of the students. During the pandemic, they make regular calls to all of the pupils across the school, arranging work, free school meals and digital device support, as well as providing regular wellbeing check ins and liaising with safeguarding staff. After the pandemic these staff will be deployed to work across the whole school or specific key stages within their areas of expertise with the intention of enhancing the support that school can offer. These areas include community liaison, nurturing roles, transition, specific pupil group work (LGBTQ, LAC etc) and also work around challenging behaviour.

Blackwood Comprehensive School have a Nurture Provision (Llwyddo Base) for those year 7 pupils with significant ACE or Trauma backgrounds alongside ALN needs. There is also a social base that supports these learners. Nurture practice

continues for these pupils within a second classroom to support their transition into year 8, where there is a heightened focus on building resilience and independence to be fully integrated into mainstream education. There is also a CWTCH provision where the ELSA is based which is primarily used as a safe space provision during breaks for ALN/Nurture pupils, after leaving the Llwyddo provision, whilst offering a secure base for those learners suffering mental health concerns and/or accessing reduced curriculums due to mental health or medical difficulties.

Alongside this, the school has a HWB provision for learners who are at serious risk of FTE or have had numerous referrals to the school's 'R2L' (Ready to Learn) room. These pupils often display challenging behaviours and have significant attendance issues and have often experienced trauma/ACE's. These pupils are supported through a 'meet and greet' process and the HWB provision acts as their safe space where they receive a comprehensive support package to encourage improved emotional, social and physical wellbeing. Some learners will spend many of their lessons in the HWB and may study qualifications that will avoid them becoming NEET and may also access a part-time alternative curriculum, such as Military Prep. However, the ultimate aim is for these pupils to integrate back into mainstream learning.

During the current covid pandemic Blackwood comprehensive school have also set up a well-being provision specifically for KS4. School found that the need for this provision emerged from a series of emails and Class Charts Submissions, from learners and parents. This provision, which is supervised by 2 LSA's and a member of SLT, caters for up to 15 learners a day. This provision allows KS4 learners the opportunity to gain support with distance learning whilst encouraging engagement and a sense of routine and achievement. This provision also allows for any targeted well-being support or outside agency support. The creation of this specific provision for KS4 has highlighted the level of need, particularly around aspects of Mental Health concern such as anxiety, with many feeling overwhelming emotions and worries.

Other examples of supportive wellbeing practice during the pandemic include a dedicated health and wellbeing slot within the weekly distance learning timetable for KS3, with two slots for KS4. These slots cover a range of topics within the wellbeing framework that respond to the needs and concerns of the learners, as identified through half termly pupil wellbeing surveys and Class Charts Wellbeing Submissions. There is also a weekly Mindfulness Practice that is posted for use within each Google Classroom. This practice is used and encouraged during twice weekly 'Live' Check-in sessions carried out by every form tutor with their individual form classes. These check-in sessions have provided a further layer of well-being support where engagement in distance learning is encouraged, alongside self-care practices. They are also an opportunity to encourage tips around successful routines, self-regulation and allow reflection upon positive affirmations. The Mindfulness Practice techniques can be used during a lesson, unstructured time, or any time that the pupils feel that it will support them with the feelings they are experiencing.

Virtual assemblies are being carried out 2-3 days a week. The assemblies called Mindful Monday, Wonderful Wednesday and Focus Friday have been carried out by the Assistant Headteacher for Well-being and Equity and the Assistant Headteacher

responsible for Additional Learning Needs, in the main, with specific assemblies carried out by targeted members of staff. The virtual assemblies have been a further way of engaging learners and creating a very bespoke approach to key topic areas that have been well received and informative for the family as a whole. Initial topics were around creating a routine, being safe online, ensuring wellness with a specific focus on physical, mental and social well-being. Over the weeks there was an increased focus on developing a successful distance learning timetable based around learner and pupil feedback, independent learning, resilience and reintegration to school. These have been posted directly in each form class Google Classroom alongside being uploaded to the school website and social media.

An assessment timetable and an 11-week physical, social and emotional wellbeing plan (see below) has been developed for year 11 pupils to enable school to map and respond to learner's worries, which is tracked through the half-termly Pupil Well-being Surveys.

Physical, social and emotional well-being plan

- Week 1 - Information regarding examinations and what information we can trust. Liaising with college and finding out more before applications. Timetable with enrichment - mapping out our pathway
- Week 2- How can we gain mental resilience? Making SMART targets work for us.
- Week 3- Mindfulness sessions - progressive muscular relaxation, visualisation, circle of positivity.
- Week 4 - How Anxiety and worry affects the body and brain (how the brain works / how the body reacts / how we can recognise and use strategies to help).
- Week 5 - How Anxiety and worry affects the body and brain part two (how the brain works / how the body reacts / how we can recognise and use strategies to help).
- Week 6 - The importance of routines (sleeping / screen time / exercise / eating time / sensory breaks).
- Week 7 - The importance of routines part two (5 acts of self-care).
- Week 8 - Positive affirmations (acts of kindness...changing negative thoughts into positive ones / the negative stories we tell).
- Week 9 - Examination preparation (location, location, location, equipment, mapping what needs to be revised and what is not needed - being assessment savvy e.g., looking at past papers and criteria).
- Week 10 - Examination preparation: Planning a timetable, revising content how to help memory retention - tricks of the trade.
- Week 11 - Examination preparation: Tips for 'on the day' e.g., eating a banana for energy; quiet calm before entering and avoiding others who will make you panic! Allowing pupils to revise during the health and wellbeing at their own pace in wellbeing bubbles if necessary, to support.

A copy of the Blackwood Cluster/Blackwood Comprehensive School Wellbeing and Equity Strategy/Policy has been included below in Appendix 1.

Tyn-Y-Wern Primary employ two Thrive Licenced Practitioners in the School. All children are screened and those identified as needing further support with their emotional well-being are provided with additional support on an individual, group and whole class basis. This has continued throughout Covid 'lockdown' with tailored activities being provided for children to do at home as well as online face-to-face 'Teams' sessions with staff, pupils and their parents.

The school also hoststwo2 Nurture SRB's - one within foundation phase and one in KS2. The children present with a range of emotional and learning difficulties and are provided with a secure base in order to build supportive relationships and improve readiness for learning. The school has strong links with the local community and the children take part in an inter-generational allotment project every Monday. The children benefit hugely from working outdoors with older members of the local community.

The school has established a 'Lego League' for the more able and talented learners to encourage interest in real world themes and develop skills that are crucial for their future careers. They have taken part in National competitions.

The school also recognise that inclusivity needs to extend beyond the classroom and into the wider community, so have set up a school community cafe called 'The Bistro'. The cafe is open to the public every Wednesday afternoon (pre-Covid) and all pupils in Year 5 and 6 can 'work' there. Pupils spend the morning baking and preparing food and the afternoon serving customers. It has been very well received within the community and has regular patrons from the local OAP complex as well young mums with babies. The Bistro also houses a free uniform recycling scheme and toy lending library. The school has begun to build on the remit of the Bistro and have secured funding via the National Lottery to run free community classes such as Baby Yoga and Dementia Friendly sessions and hope to start these as soon as Covid restrictions end.

4. Case Studies of pupils in EOTAS Provisions to illustrate examples of inclusive practice

Case Study 1: L

L has been attending Innovate since September 2019. During this time, there were many occasions where L demonstrated challenging behaviour and a reluctance to engage. She would not conform to the rules of the project, her behaviour during lessons became extremely disruptive and her behaviour towards other young members of the project became quite volatile. A One Page Profile was completed with L, along-side an IDP. Staff continued to positively welcome L every morning, encouraging a positive environment, and initiating conversation on topics that she enjoyed to talk about. Staff began to see some improvement in her attitude towards them, but L still seemed unsettled and her disrespect towards her peers continued.

After many discussions with L and her mother, to try and work together to promote a collaborative way of working and a more positive engagement for L, it was decided to try and sit with L to complete an individual consultation and implement an Intervention Plan, that met her individual needs.

During the consultation with L, we discussed reasons why her behaviour was deteriorating. We re-visited her One Page Profile to see what was important to L and how best to support her. It was agreed that an alternative intervention was going to be put in place; L was to be moved from group 2 to group 3, which was a smaller and quieter group with less distractions. L's behaviour began to improve, however in the first few weeks L reverted to the disruptive behaviour. This was having an impact on the education of others in the group. L suggested to staff that she would like to work 1:1 out of class to complete work, as she found it easier to concentrate without others around her. A second intervention plan was put in place, which was planned and agreed with L, which specified this. During these 1:1 sessions, while L was completing tasks, we discussed various issues, feelings, struggles and the impact of negative behaviours on her-self and on others. We also implemented the THRIVE approach and ComIT which enabled L to build on her resilience and coping skills. These 1:1 sessions had a positive impact on L; she began to express herself more positively and was able to re-integrate in class with her peers.

Outcome: L is now in year 10 and has settled extremely well. Her behaviour is no longer a concern, and she is fully engaging in lessons. L seems more confident in herself and can now manage and regulate her emotions in a calmer and positive way. L fully engages in youth sessions and is very open on views of certain subjects. L is no longer clashing with members of her peer group; she is now able to understand the views and opinions of others a lot more and is more inclusive of others. L is currently engaged in 'Blended Learning' at home and is maintaining a good positive engagement with all staff.

Case Study 2: J

J was referred to EOTAS in 2019. J had experienced challenges with mental wellbeing, eating habits and self-harming. Many of these challenges were linked to adverse childhood experiences for which J had no one to talk to. Staff at the provision have been able to support J through collaboration with CAHMS and the development of coping strategies. These strategies have been shared with the students whilst allowing them the opportunity to engage in the activities they enjoy the most – in particular, through the power of sport and physical exercise.

Outcome: Student J has now settled into a more positive living environment and is continuing to work on improving self-confidence with staff. The students use sport to express how they are feeling that day, and this often helps improve mood throughout the day. They are aware there will be setbacks along the way, but Positive Futures will

continue to support, with the target for a return to full time education by the end of the year.

Case Study 3: J

J was only accessing two hours of education each day whilst he was in mainstream school; this was supported by a 1:1 who worked with him outside of the classroom. J was frequently excluded and at the point of permanent exclusion when he transferred to the Learning Centre (TLC). Upon his arrival at TLC, J presented as a very troubled and complex child. He was frequently withdrawn and supported in the thinking room as he found the classroom difficult. He was also unable to work or socialise with his peers.

J was provided with a bespoke package to create an individualised programme for him. This included: mentoring, GAS (Gwent Attachment Service) case formulation, Thrive, ELSA and a trauma informed approach. He also received maths and literacy interventions, resources to support his access to the curriculum, additional specialist speech and language teaching and access to Caerphilly Adventure Group. In addition to this, support was also provided support for his parent at home.

Outcome: As a result of this intervention, J has been able to maintain his placement and increase his hours within the classroom setting to full time attendance. Whilst there are still issues with his behaviour, J is happy and enjoys the experiences on offer in TLC. His behaviour is reported to have improved at home and his parent is happy with the progress that he has made. J is now able to work alongside others and has started to socialise appropriately. He will now join in with team games at breaktimes and group tasks within the classroom. J's academic ability has also improved; over the two years that he has been in TLC, he has made 4 years 1 months progress in Reading, 2 levels and 1 sub-level progress in writing and 2 years 6 months progress in Maths.

5. Pupil views of Inclusion

Focus group with Caerphilly Youth Forum

A focus group was held with Caerphilly Youth Forum on 1st February 2021 to explore young people's views about inclusion and what schools do well to support inclusion and a sense of belonging and what school could do better to support pupil's wellbeing and mental health. Six young people attended the focus group from years 9-11 and the group was facilitated by two staff from the educational psychology service. Questions asked are highlighted below in bold, with pupil responses underneath.

What does inclusion mean to you?

- Equality to everyone.
- Including everyone and making sure everyone has a say in the matter.

- Not leaving anyone out.

What do you think a good inclusive school might look like?

- School council having a significant voice.
- No racism/sexism/excluding people – treating everyone fairly.
- Ensuring that everyone has an equal and a fair amount of work given to them.
- No discrimination towards others, and to have consequences when someone is discriminatory towards others.

What makes you feel valued at school?

- When teachers notice your good work and good behaviour and they tell you about it, it makes you feel good. Being told personally that you have done well can help you to feel valued because the teacher has noticed it.
- Having support from both teachers and friends when going through a tough time helps me to feel valued – teachers giving good advice, having a chat, making me a cup of tea. Teachers will also deal with issues straight away and will notice when something is wrong. When teachers notice a change in my behaviour, they will do something about it and that will make me feel valued. The teacher I will go to for support will change based on how I feel. I like it when teachers show an interest in me and it helps me to build relationships.
- I feel that there is more pressure to do well in the higher sets and there is less recognition from teachers – there is the assumption that these pupils will always produce good work.
- Having good friends makes you feel valued – sometimes school doesn't do anything to support friendship groups to help them resolve issues. There's not a lot of chance at the moment to see friends and to socialise before the next lesson.
- **(Who would you speak to at school?)** It depends on my mood but it is always someone who notices me, so I know they are approachable.
- I would speak to staff who have shown an interest in me.

What makes you feel safe, supported, and secure in school? What helps you feel supported in school, both emotionally AND academically?

- Having smaller class with pupils in year 8 – year 11, where pupils can have 1:1 support. Teachers are helpful in supporting pupils both emotionally and academically. I like that pupils were included in selecting the staff members who run the group.
- Homework club at dinnertime and after school, helpful in supporting pupils when they are behind or when they are in need of extra support. I was behind with my work, and if I went there then I knew they could help me when I needed it.
- Having teachers/someone you trust there to talk to. Staff who are friendly and bubbly/chatty are the teachers that are easiest to talk to. Teachers who acknowledge me in class and teachers who are fair.

- You know school values you when they include pupils on selection panels and in other important decisions. It would be good if there were lots of focus groups to look at specific issues.
- Students are not always aware of the support that is available in their schools.
- Having positive feedback from staff who notice you.
- Having time in the school day to be able to have a laugh with my friends.
- Having opportunities to meet socially with friends while at school.

What things at school help you to cope when you face challenges?

- Having a classroom set up where pupils are able to do wellbeing activities e.g., mindfulness (COVID-19)
- After school sessions (Y10 and Y11) to support pupils academically with the lead up to exams
- Feeling like issues are going to be dealt with straight away
- Being listened to and having my views acted on
- I felt like I was dreading and drowning in school. There was no-where to go to meet people like me. It would be good if there was a place for pupils who feel isolated to go to.

Do you feel like you belong in school? How does your school make you feel that you belong? What makes you feel as though you don't belong?

- I feel like I belong in school, I wouldn't want to move. I have lots of friends and I like most of my teachers. School is a nice place to be.
- I'm new to this school, but I like it more than my last one – I didn't have the best experience in my old school. The teachers welcomed me to my new school, and I feel like I'm part of the family. I like going to the library and when I first went there, I made friends with a group who were also in the library as well. Having more friends helped me to boost my confidence and these friends also introduced me to staff members that I didn't know.
- I feel like I don't belong when teachers don't acknowledge me in class, like when I put my hand up to answer and they ignore me, but other than that I do feel like I belong. My friends laugh about it with me so that helps me to feel like I belong.
- From year 7 to year 10 the staff made me feel welcome, but the pupils didn't. In year 11 I made friends with a new boy who came to school and we formed a new friendship group, so now I feel like I belong more and I'm part of the community.
- If I had been put in touch with other pupils who had similar interest to me, that would have helped me to feel like I belong. Schools should have a group where pupils can go if they feel isolated, to give them the opportunities to meet other people.
- Teachers acknowledging me outside of class and saying hi in the corridors makes me feel like I belong.

Is there a staff member in school (we are not asking for names) that you feel you have a good relationship with that you could go to if you had any concerns?

(All 6 young people said 'yes' and stated that they had chosen these particular people because they feel acknowledged by the staff member)

- I would most likely go to a member of staff that I know really well as opposed to someone that I don't know well.
- It's really important to have someone that you know, because just going to someone who is a wellbeing person could be like talking to a stranger. Could have an assembly/ the wellbeing staff member could go to class and introduce themselves so that the pupils get to know them.

What do you think school could do to better support pupils wellbeing and mental health?

- More focus groups could be held by school with different groups of people so that the school hears everyone's opinions.
- Would be helpful if pupils were given more time for general check-ins.
- Used to have form time every day and now it's only once every 2 weeks, so there is no chance for staff to check up on us and for us to catch up with our friends.
- What makes a form time good? Teachers could have a standard set of questions that they could ask pupils, so pupils know they have that session coming up.
- Getting form time back would be really good for me.
- Teachers should make sure they do check-ups on pupils when they know that they are struggling with their mental health and with bullying. I felt like teachers weren't checking up on me.
- My school has a range of tools to help pupils calm down – magnets, Lego, fidget toys, mindfulness colouring.
- Teachers didn't listen to me in my old school – when you go and speak to them, they don't seem like they care. I have been sent away by a teacher when I told them that I was being bullied, and I was told to go and tell another teacher because they were my welsh bac teacher and she said that it wasn't her job to deal with bullying. I felt like I was on my own. Teachers didn't communicate with me to let me know what was going on after I had told them I was being bullied, so I didn't feel listened to or cared about. I didn't know if anything had been done.
- Teachers need to understand that if I am talking to them about something that worries me then it is because I trust them and want them to listen.
- The school should have asked me how I wanted to be supported with the bullying. I have high anxiety and they made me have a meeting with the bully to try and make things better, but I felt too anxious to cope.
- Teachers can make sure that if student's come to them for help, then they help them properly. Teachers not doing anything really affected me because I felt like what I said didn't matter.
- Sometimes I just need teachers to listen. Sometimes they want to just quickly solve the problem and get rid of you.
- Teachers asking pupils if they felt they were okay.

- Teachers who went out of their way to ask me how I felt a few times.

Group discussion with pupils on inclusion

'Inclusion is taking part, voices being listened to, being able to grow, feeling understood, being respected and accepting everyone'

Other points made during discussion with young people. Inclusion is:

- Team work
- Taking part
- Voices being listened to
- Being able to grow
- Feeling understood
- All being treated the same
- Including someone in something
- Being respected
- Accepting everyone

Pupil views on exclusion:

Pupil 1 (Innovate project)

What is my view on exclusion? My view on exclusion is that I find it unfair not because of the reasons why I was excluded or the reasons why anyone can be excluded but it is because you're left in the dark, you don't know what is happening other than a bunch of scary adults are talking about whether you can stay in the school or not. Also, we don't know whether we are staying or not! We get put on suspension for months then all of a sudden, we don't go back. I'd like for us, students to be part of the exclusion process to understand what is going on. I would like a member of staff to explain the process to me so I know what is happening and not just told you're going on suspension and you may not come back. I want us to be part of are exclusion because it is not just an exclusion it's a young person's future on the line.

What do I think of the inclusion at Innovate? In my opinion the project is still learning about inclusion. What they try to do is keep the students informed on what's going on with in the project for example if there is something that we need to know like whether we are closing for a day or two or there is a new rule I think we should be brought together and told as one big group. What we need more of is whole school activities where the whole project gets involved and we socialise with the other groups for example we could do a big group game where we all sit down together and play a game as a project. We also need clear information, so we don't get confused for example when explaining roles make it clear short and take the time to check that everyone understands. Other than those I have just suggested the project has

embraced inclusion really well. I think the Innovate project is a safe enjoyable place for all types of students that embrace inclusion very well.

Inclusion is hearing young people out. I feel that inclusion is about recognising young people's feelings and what they want to do, find out what works for each individual and meet somewhere in the middle. I think it is important to check in regularly to check if people's feelings have changed (I may not want to do something one day but may want to join in the next day).

Pupil 2: F (Innovate project)

I wouldn't like to be involved in a large group because I would get nervous and talk too much and not listen to anybody. I would need to be comfortable with everyone in the group to be able to feel included. Being forced into group work is not inclusion as we can feel uncomfortable and not want to be involved. Being able to make that decision would be inclusive.