



EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 13TH JANUARY 2015

SUBJECT: IMPROVING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the progress being made in improving attendance in schools within the borough.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The information contained in the National Statistics First Release *Absenteeism from Secondary Schools in Wales, 2013/14*, published as SDR 146/14 gives a national overview of secondary school attendance and absence rates - (to view data please refer to www.statswales.gov.uk) Primary School National release tables will be available in January 2015.
- 2.2 During the academic year 2013/14 there was an increase in both primary and secondary school attendance in comparison with 2012/13. There remains evidence of a strong correlation between poor attendance and those children and young people eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) as indicated in the above Statistical release. Improving attendance remains a priority for the Local Authority (LA) and is a target in the Learning Education and Inclusion Service Improvement Plan.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

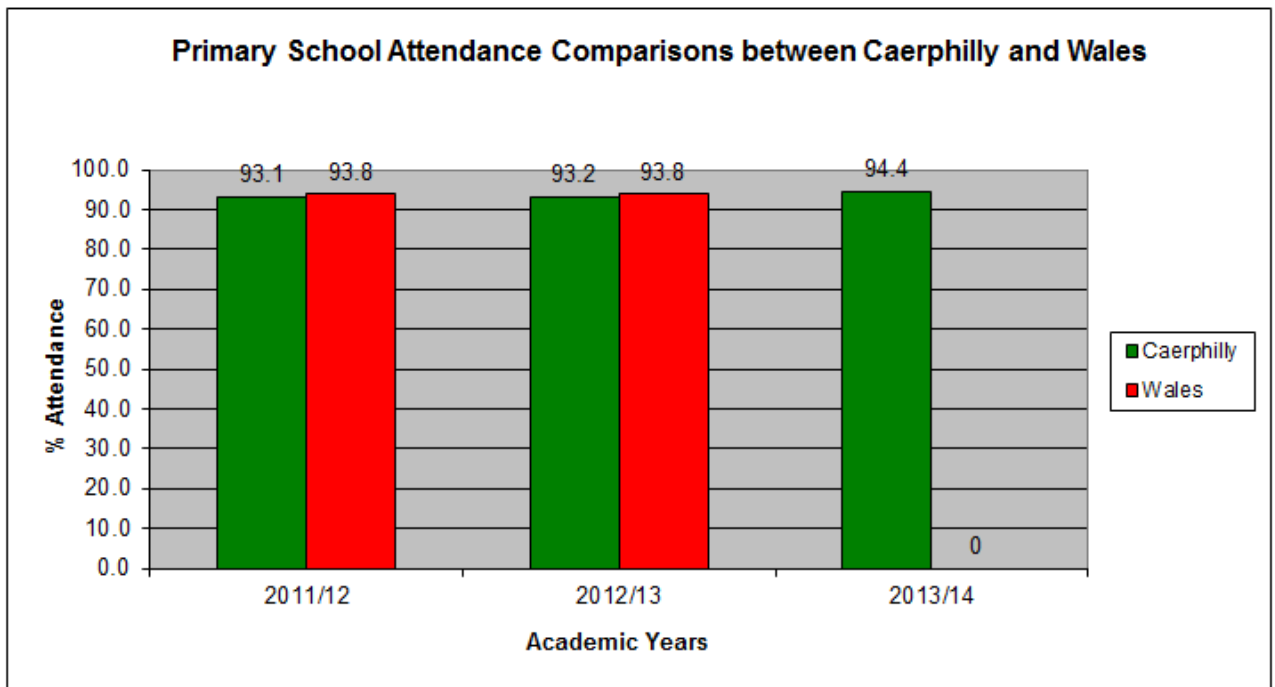
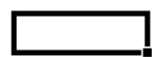
- 3.1 This report links directly with the NEETS Strategy, Single Integrated Plan, the Inclusion Strategy and Learning Education and Inclusion Service Improvement Plan.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Attendance within primary schools in Caerphilly has continued to improve. Figure 1 provides an overview of the local data and indicates that for the academic year 2013/14, there was an overall LA improvement of 1.2%. The national validated primary data is due in January 2015.

Figure 1

Primary School 3 year attendance comparisons between CCBC and Wales			
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Caerphilly	93.1	93.2	94.4
Wales	93.8	93.8	TBC

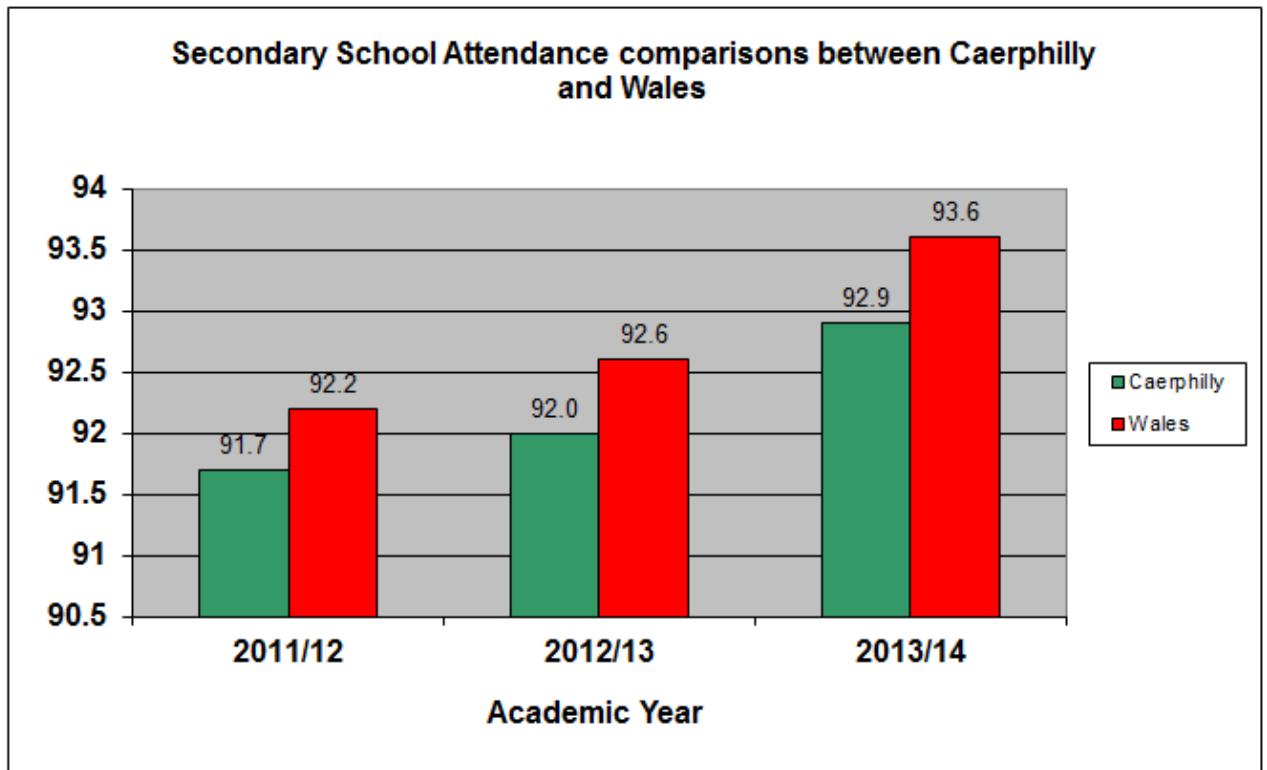


4.2 National and local data confirm that there have been improvements in attendance within Caerphilly Secondary schools over the past 4 years. The 2013/14 figure of 92.9%, records an overall 0.9% increase as indicated in figure 2 below.

Figure 2

Secondary School Attendance comparisons between CCBC and Wales

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Caerphilly	91.7	92.0	92.9
Wales	92.2	92.6	93.6



- 4.3 The Secondary school statistical release, reports that 21 out of the 22 Local Authorities in Wales are recorded as having improved secondary school attendance for 2013/14 compared with 18 the previous year. The data also indicates that the LA was ranked 19th with Merthyr Tydfil and Newport.
- 4.4 Local comparisons confirm that:
- 66 of the 75 primary schools show improved attendance from the previous year;
 - 63 of the 75 primary schools matched or exceeded the LA attendance target of 93.2%;
 - All 14 secondary schools show improved attendance from the previous year with 13 schools matching or exceeding the LA attendance target of 92.3%.
- 4.5 The Senior Education Welfare Officer has undertaken additional visits, to monitor progress and give support and guidance. Of the 28 Primary schools having had targeted visits, as indicated in Figure 4, 25 have recorded improved attendance for the academic year 2013/14.

Figure 4

School	Visit date	2012/13 Attendance %	2013/14 Attendance % (LA Target 93.2%)
Aberbargoed Primary	01/10/2013	90.8	93.0
Abercarn Primary	21/03/2014	93.4	94.5
Bedwas Infants	11/11/2013	94.7	95.5
Cefn Fforest Primary	23/10/2013	92.4	93.7
Crumlin High Level Primary	03/09/2013	93.3	95.4
Cwm Glas Infants	20/11/2013	90.4	92.3
Cwmaber Junior	05/03/2014	92.4	93.7
Cwmfelinfach Primary	15/01/2014	93.3	95.4
Deri Primary	08/01/2014	90.3	93.8
Derwendeg Primary	13/11/2013	91.1	94.0
Hendre Infants	13/09/2013	91.4	93.3
Llancaeach Junior	15/11/2013	93.4	94.4
Llanfabon Infants	11/10/2013	91.9	93.8
Maesycwmmmer Primary	22/11/2013	93.4	94.4
Markham Primary	22/01/2014	92.6	93.9
Nant Y Parc Primary	12/11/2013	91.6	93.2
Park Primary	06/02/2014	93.2	93.7
Penllwyn Primary	07/07/2014	93.6	94.7
Plasyfelin Primary	22/01/2014	92.5	94.1
Pontllanfraith Primary School	18/02/2014	92.4	94.4
St James Primary	Jun-14	92.2	93.5
The Twyn School	07/02/2014	92.2	93.3
Tynwydd Primary.	12/11/2013	91.6	92.5
White Rose Primary	28/01/2014	92.6	93.4
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Allta	22/10/2013	93.6	94.9
Cwm lfor Primary	27/03/2014	93.0	92.8
Phillipstown Primary	13/11/2013	91.6	91.4
Tyn-y-Wern Primary	18/02/2014	94.9	94.9

- 4.6 Welsh Government (WG) funding has been made available to Consortia across Wales to improve school attendance across the regions. In South East Wales Professor Ken Reid is leading on an attendance project with 6 schools selected to engage in bespoke attendance training.
- 4.7 In order to strengthen approaches to inclusion and safeguarding, The Fixed Penalty Notice Regulations (The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013) came into force in September 2013. The scheme, introduced by the WG, made available to LA's an additional legal sanction in the form of Penalty Notice Fines.
- 4.8 Penalty Notices are one option amongst a wide range of interventions and support strategies available, to promote improved school attendance and children's educational prospects and to avoid putting them at risk of criminal or anti-social behaviour. The measures will also support LAs and schools in ensuring parents and carers fulfil their legal responsibilities to ensure their children regularly attend school.
- 4.9 CCBC's Local Code of Conduct has been developed to ensure that powers are applied consistently and fairly across the LA and sets out the procedures and protocols for administration of the scheme.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The LA is committed to ensuring that all children and young people gain maximum benefit from their education by regular attendance at school, regardless of the individual or family characteristics of those children and young people.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no personnel implications.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 All responses are reflected in the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Members are requested to note the content of the report.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Improving attendance is a priority at both a national and local level.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Education Act 1996.

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