

# Public Document Pack

## Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr Bridgend County Borough Council

Swyddfeydd Dinesig, Stryd yr Angel, Pen-y-bont, CF31 4WB / Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB



Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Rhowch wybod i ni os mai Cymraeg yw eich dewis iaith.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh. Please let us know if your language choice is Welsh.



**Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive's Directorate**  
Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line : 01656 643148 / 643694 / 643513  
Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Gwasanaethau Democraidd

Ein cyf / Our ref:  
Eich cyf / Your ref:

**Dyddiad/Date:** Dydd Iau, 1 Mai 2025

Annwyl Cynghorydd,

### **PWYLLGOR CRAFFU TESTUN 1**

Cynhelir Cyfarfod Pwyllgor Craffu Testun 1 Hybrid yn Siambraeth y Cyngor - Swyddfeydd Dinesig, Stryd yr Angel, Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr, CF31 4WB/ O Bell Trwy Timau Microsoft ar **Dydd Iau, 8 Mai 2025** am **11:00**.

### **AGENDA**

#### 1 Ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb

Derbyn ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb gan Aelodau.

#### 2 Datganiadau o fuddiant

Derbyn datganiadau o ddiddordeb personol a rhagfarnol (os o gwbl) gan Aelodau / Swyddogion yn unol â darpariaethau'r Cod Ymddygiad Aelodau a fabwysiadwyd gan y Cyngor o 1 Medi 2008.

#### 3 Cymeradwyaeth Cofnodion

5 - 10

I dderbyn am gymeradwyaeth y Cofnodion cyfarfod y 31/03/25.

Gwahoddwyr

Y Cyngorydd Martyn Jones – Aelod Cabinet dros Addysg a Gwasanaethau Leuenctid

Lindsay Harvey - Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol dros Addysg, Blynnyddoedd Cynnar a Phobl Ifanc

Nicola Echanis - Pennaeth Addysg, Blynnyddoedd Cynnar a Phobl Ifanc

Mark Lewis – Rheolwr Grŵp, Blynnyddoedd Cynnar a Phobl Ifanc

Gail Biggs - Rheolwr Grŵp, Cynhwysiant

Megan Apsee – Rheolwr Tim Ymgyslltu Addysg

Lloyd Hughes - Arweinydd - Tîm Cyfathrebu a Pherthnasoeedd

Michelle Joyner – Pennaeth *Y Bont Darpariaeth Amgen*

Andrea Williams - Uwch Seicolegydd Addysg (a chyswilt CAMHS awdurdodau lleol)

Jayde Adams - Gwasanaethau Iechyd Meddwl Plant a'r Glasoed (CAMHS)

Clare Shears - Cydgysylltydd Rhaglen Hybu Lleoliadau Addysgol Iechyd a Lles Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Cwm Taf Morgannwg

Prifathrawon

Ravi Pawar - Pennaeth, Ysgol Gyfun Bryntirion a Cadeirydd Cymdeithas Penaethiaid Ysgolion Uwchradd Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr.

Kath John - Pennaeth, Ysgol Gynradd Bracula a Chadeirydd y Ffederasiwn Ysgolion Cynradd

Ryan Davies – Prifathro, Ysgol Gyfun Brynteg

Rachel John – Pennaeth, Ysgol Gynradd y Drenwydd

Helen Ridout – Pennaeth, Ysgol Gynradd Bryn Castell

Jonathan Lewis – Pennaeth, Ysgol Gynradd Coety

5 Casgliadau ac Argymhellion6 Diweddarriad Rhaglen Gwaith

35 - 56

7 Materion Brys

I ystyried unrhyw eitemau o fusnes y, oherwydd amgylchiadau arbennig y cadeirydd o'r farn y dylid eu hystyried yn y cyfarfod fel mater o frys yn unol â Rhan 4 (pharagraff 4) o'r Rheolau Trefn y Cyngor yn y Cyfansoddiad.

Nodyn: Bydd hwn yn gyfarfod Hybrid a bydd Aelodau a Swyddogion mynchyu trwy Siambry Cyngor, Swyddfeydd Dinesig, Stryd yr Angel, Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr / o bell Trwy Timau Microsoft. Bydd y cyfarfod cael ei recordio i'w drosglwyddo drwy wefan y Cyngor. Os oes gennych unrhyw gwestiwn am hyn, cysylltwch â cabinet\_committee@bridgend.gov.uk neu ffoniwch 01656 643148 / 643694 / 643513 / 643159.

Yn ddifuant

**K Watson**

Prif Swyddog, Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Rheoleiddio, AD a Pholisi Corfforaethol

**Dosbarthiad:**

Cynghorwr:

JPD Blundell  
RJ Collins  
HJ David  
H Griffiths  
D M Hughes  
J Llewellyn-Hopkins  
I M Spiller  
T Thomas  
JH Tildesley MBE  
A Ulberini-Williams  
AJ Williams  
E D Winstanley

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PWYLLGOR CRAFFU TESTUN 1 - DYDD LLUN, 31 MAWRTH 2025COFNODION CYFARFOD PWYLLGOR TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU PWNC 1 A GYNHALIWYD YN HYBRID YN SIAMBR Y CYNGOR - SWYDDFEYDD DINESIG, STRYD YR ANGEL, PEN-Y-BONT AR OGWR, CF31 4WB DDYDD LLUN, 31 MAWRTH 2025 AM 11:00Yn Bresennol

Cynghorydd A Ulberini-Williams – Cadeirydd

JPD Blundell

HJ David

Yn Bresennol yn RhithwirRJ Collins  
I M SpillerH Griffiths  
T ThomasD M Hughes  
AJ WilliamsJ Llewellyn-Hopkins  
ED WinstanleyYmddiheuriadau am Absenoldeb

Angela Clarke

Cynrychiolydd Cofrestredig – Yr Eglwys yng Nghymru

Becca Avci

Cydlynydd Cynllun Cymraeg mewn Addysg

Gwahoddedigion / Cynrychiolwyr Cofrestredig:

Y Cynghorydd Martyn Jones

Aelod Cabinet dros Addysg a Gwasanaethau Ieuenctid

Lindsay Harvey  
Gaynor Thomas  
Deborah Exton  
Justin Kingdon  
Jason Burton  
Stephanie ThomasCyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol - Addysg, y Blynnyddoedd Cynnari a Phobl Ifanc  
Rheolwr Rhaglen Ysgolion  
Dirprwy Bennaeth Cylid  
Rheolwr Grŵp Landlord Corfforaethol  
Prif Gynorthwydd Pensaerniol  
Rheolwr Tîm Blynnyddoedd Cynnari a Gofal Plant

Penaethiaid:

Adam Raymond  
Delyth Davies  
Mike Stephens

Pennaeth Ysgol Gynradd Pencoed  
Pennaeth Ysgol y Ferch o'r Sgêr  
Pennaeth Ysgol Gyfun Porthcawl

Swyddogion:

Kelly Watson  
Meryl Lawrence  
Stephen Griffiths

Prif Swyddog – Gwasanaethau Rheoliadol a Chyfreithiol, AD a Pholisi Corfforaethol  
Uwch Swyddog Gwasanaethau Democraidd – Craffu  
Swyddog Craffu

Datgan Buddiannau

AJ Williams JPD Blundell H Griffiths	Personol – Eitem 4 – Cadeirydd y Llywodraethwyr yn Ysgol Gynradd Coety Personol – Eitem 4 – Llywodraethwr yn Ysgol Gyfun Bryntirion Personol – Eitem 4 – Cadeirydd Llywodraethwyr yn Ysgol Gynradd Ffaldau a Choleg Cymunedol y Dderwen
E. D. Winstanley I.M. Spiller	Personol – Eitem 4 – Llywodraethwr yn Ysgolion Cynradd Afon-y-Felin a'r Ferch o'r Sgêr Personol – Eitem 4 – Plant yn Ysgol Gyfun Bryntirion

**67. Cymeradwyo Cofnodion**

Y Penderfyniad a Wnaed	<u>PENDERFYNWYD:</u>  Cymeradwyo cofnodion cyfarfod y Pwyllgor Trosolwg a Chraffu Pwnc 1 ar 16 Ionawr 2025 yn gofnod gwir a chywir.
Dyddiad Gwneud y Penderfyniad	31 Mawrth 2025

## Moderneiddio Ysgolion

Y Penderfyniad a Wnaed	<p><u>PENDERFYNWYD:</u></p> <p>Yn dilyn ystyriaeth fanwl a thrafodaethau gydag Aelod o'r Cabinet ac Uwch Swyddogion, gwnaeth y Pwyllgor yr argymhellion canlynol:</p> <p><b>Argymhellion:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>Roedd y Pwyllgor yn cydnabod yr angen i fod yn ymwybodol o'i rôl ei hun wrth fonitro, rheoli a lliniaru prosiectau moderneiddio ysgolion ar ran yr awdurdod lleol, fel bod prosiectau'n cael eu cyflawni ar amser ac ar gyllideb a <b>gwnaeth gais</b> fod <b>adroddiad strategol a blaengar</b> yn cael ei gyflwyno i'w ystyried gan yr Aelodau mewn cyfarfod yn y dyfodol, a fyddai'n cynwys y canlynol:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Archwiliad</b> o gyflwr pob ysgol yn Sir Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr.</li><li>Dadansoddiad o'r <b>gwersi a ddysgwyd</b> o'r prosiectau moderneiddio ysgolion sydd wedi digwydd neu sydd yn y broses o gael eu cynllunio a'u hadeiladu, gan gynnwys effaith grymoedd gwleidyddol ac economaidd ehangach. Byddai angen i'r adroddiad ystyried materion fel rôl a gwerth capiau prisiau; rheoli a lliniaru risg, gan gynnwys effaith ecoleg ar amseru a chostau prosiectau; caffael; caffael tir; effaith newidiadau dylunio i brosiectau; a rheoli a goruchwylia prosiectau, yn enwedig o ran cyfraniad y Cabinet a'r Bwrdd Rheoli Corfforaethol.</li><li><b>Demograffeg</b> y dyfodol yn y Fwrdeistref Sirol, ac effaith datblygiadau tai newydd ac arfaethedig, a'r effaith bosibl ar ddal gylchoedd ysgolion a niferoedd disgyblion.</li><li>Dyfodol moderneiddio ysgolion a chyllid prosiectau yng Nghymru.</li></ul></li><li><b>Argymhellodd</b> y Pwyllgor, o ystyried yr heriau sylweddol yn sgil y cynnydd ym mhoblogaeth y Sir yn unol â'r datblygiadau newydd o fewn y Cynllun Datblygu Lleol a'r ffaith fod Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr yn ardal twf strategol sydd yr un mor bell oddi wrth Gaerdydd ac Abertawe, fod angen mynd i'r afael â materion datblygu ysgolion yn y dyfodol gyda <b>Llywodraeth Cymru</b>, yn enwedig yn y lle cyntaf, a bod angen codi a thrafod materion yn ymwnedd â hyblygrwydd wrth gynllunio ar gyfer niferoedd disgyblion arfaethedig a dyfodol rhagleni a chyllid Llywodraeth Cymru ar gyfer moderneiddio ysgolion.</li></ol>
Dyddiad Gwneud y Penderfyniad	31 Mawrth 2025

## Adroddiad Gwybodaeth - Perfformiad Chwarter 3 2024-25

Y Penderfyniad a Wnaed	<u>PENDERFYNWYD:</u> Ystyriodd y Pwyllgor gynnwys adroddiad Perfformiad Chwarter 3 2024-25, Dangosfwrdd Perfformiad Corfforaethol Chwarter 3 2024-25 a'r Traciwr Rheoleiddiol a ddiweddarwyd ar gyfer Chwarter 3 2024-25 o fewn cylch gorchwyl y Pwyllgor ac ystyriodd y dangosfwrdd a'r traciwr wrth ystyried adroddiad Blaenraglen Waith y Pwyllgor.
Dyddiad Gwneud y Penderfyniad	31 Mawrth 2025

## 70. Diweddarriad am y Flaenraglen Waith

Y Penderfyniad a Wnaed	<u>PENDERFYNWYD:</u> Cydnabu'r Pwyllgor, yn dilyn Argymhelliaid Archwilio Cymru a wnaed yn ei adroddiad ar Drefniadau Gwneud Penderfyniadau yng Nghyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr ym mis Medi 2024, y bydd y Flaenraglen Waith yn cael ei chryfhau i fod yn fwy blaengar, mewn ymgynghoriad â'r Cadeirydd, i alinio â Blaenraglen Waith y Cabinet yn ogystal ag atgyfeiriadau gan y Pwyllgor Trosolwg a Chraffu Corfforaethol a'r Pwyllgor Llywodraethu ac Archwilio a gwneud y mwyaf o'r cyfleoedd ar gyfer craffu cyn penderfynu.  Bod y Pwyllgor wedi cymeradwyo'r Flaenraglen Waith yn Atodiad A yn amodol ar gynnwys yr argymhellion isod, nododd y Daflen Gweithredu Monitro Argymhellion yn Atodiad B a nododd y byddai'r Flaenraglen Waith, fel y cymeradwywyd gan y Pwyllgor, yn cael ei hadrodd i cyfarfod nesaf y Pwyllgor Trosolwg a Chraffu Corfforaethol.  Gwnaeth y Pwyllgor <b>gais</b> i'r canlynol gael ei gynnwys yng nghwmpas yr adroddiad ar <b>Ymddygiad, Gwaharddiadau a Phresenoldeb Disgyblion</b> , i'w ystyried gan yr Aelodau yn y cyfarfod ar 8 Mai: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Diweddarriad ar Gadw Dysgwyr yn Ddiogel gan gynnwys, os yn briodol, unrhyw ddiweddarriad ar y gweithgor arfaethedig a sefydlwyd gan yr Aelod Cabinet yngylch Diogelwch Disgyblion (casgliadau, os oes o gwbl ar hyn o bryd, neu rywfaint o eglurder ynglŷn â'r aelodaeth a'r</li></ul>
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	<p>gweithgareddau).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Effaith y <b>rhestr aros ar gyfer darpariaeth arbenigol</b> ar ymddygiad heriol a gwaharddiadau mewn ysgolion prif ffrwd.</li></ul> <p>Gwnaeth y Pwyllgor <b>gais</b> i'r canlynol gael ei gynnwys yng nghwmpas adroddiad i'w ystyried gan yr Aelodau mewn cyfarfod yn gynnar yn 2025/26 Blaenraglen Waith:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Cynlluniau Datblygu Unigol.</li><li>Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol.</li><li>Darpariaeth Arbenigol.</li></ul> <p>Gofynnodd y Pwyllgor i'r cynlluniau ar gyfer cyflwyno'r adroddiadau canlynol a'r sesiynau briffio aelodau gael eu cytuno a'u cyflwyno mewn iteriad o'r Flaenraglen Waith yn y dyfodol:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Cynlluniau gwella ysgol – Cyfarfod ar ddechrau 2026.</li><li>Perfformiad ysgolion - Adroddiadau Estyn - Briff Aelodau - Cynnwys manylion ar lefel ysgol.</li><li>Diffygion ysgol – ar ffurf adroddiad i'r pwyllgor neu Friff Aelodau.</li></ul>
Dyddiad Gwneud y Penderfyniad	31 Mawrth 2025

## 71. Materion Brys

Y Penderfyniad a Wnaed	Dim
Dyddiad Gwneud y Penderfyniad	31 Mawrth 2025

I wylio trafodaeth bellach a gynhaliwyd ar yr eitemau uchod, cliciwch ar y [ddolen](#) hon.

Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 13:39.

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# Agenda Item 4

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>8 MAY 2025</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>PUPIL BEHAVIOUR, ATTENDANCE AND EXCLUSIONS</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>LINDSAY HARVEY CORPORATE DIRECTOR - EDUCATION, EARLY YEARS AND YOUNG PEOPLE</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>GAIL BIGGS GROUP MANAGER - INCLUSION</b>  <b>MARK LEWIS GROUP MANAGER - EARLY YEARS AND YOUNG PEOPLE</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>There is no effect on policy framework or procedure rules.</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<p>Issues regarding pupil behaviour in Bridgend schools have risen due to multiple factors, with the COVID-19 pandemic playing a key role. Challenges include mental health concerns, resource limitations, and societal issues, leading to increased exclusions and disruptions.</p> <p>The Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate is implementing strategies to improve behaviour, attendance, and pupil wellbeing. While progress has been made, persistent absenteeism and behavioural concerns remain a challenge.</p> <p>The local authority has seen improvements in attendance, exceeding the all-Wales average, but disparities across schools remain.</p> <p>Support services, including wellbeing programmes and attendance initiatives, are in place to address these issues.</p> <p>Ongoing collaboration and sustained efforts are crucial to achieving long-term improvements in school environments.</p>

## **1. Purpose of report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 (SOSC1) on the current position relating to pupil behaviour, wellbeing, exclusions and attendance in Bridgend schools.

## **2. Background**

2.1 The increase in behavioural issues in Bridgend schools, and nationally, stems from a complex interplay of factors, with the pandemic serving as a significant catalyst. The challenges range from mental health concerns to resource limitations and broader societal issues.

2.2 Addressing behavioural problems in schools requires a multi-faceted approach that considers both the immediate management of disruptive behaviour and the underlying causes. The Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate ('the directorate') has begun to implement strategies and targeted interventions to monitor pupil wellbeing, improve behaviour, reduce exclusions and support increases in pupil attendance.

2.3 There is no quick resolution to the issues we are currently faced with. However, understanding the factors is essential towards developing effective interventions that can improve the educational environment and outcomes for all learners and staff across Bridgend schools.

2.4 The interconnected nature of attendance, behaviour and wellbeing issues highlights the importance of holistic approaches. The directorate demonstrates clear ambition to improve outcomes. However, success will depend on sustained collaborative efforts across all three domains amid the context of potential budget constraints and the continuing aftereffects of the pandemic.

2.5 Recent data has revealed concerning trends in pupil behaviour across Bridgend schools and in schools throughout Wales. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant and lasting effect on learner behaviour. Following the end of the pandemic-related restrictions, schools have experienced deteriorating standards of behaviour with noticeable consequences.

2.6 The National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) reports the number of violent incidents in Welsh schools has nearly tripled since 2019, rising from 2483 in 2019-2020 to 6446 in 2023-2024. Over a third (35.5%) of teachers reported being physically abused or attacked by pupils in the past year while 92% experienced verbal abuse. Nationally, poor pupil behaviour is damaging teacher morale, with 79% reporting negative impacts and 55% considering leaving the profession.

2.7 The Children in Wales Member's Report 2022 on the impact and legacy of COVID-19 highlights that the pandemic lockdown measures inadvertently intensified household stressors, increasing the risks of domestic abuse, parental substance misuse, and neglect. Children in South Wales, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, experienced heightened exposure to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) due to confined living conditions and limited access to protective community services.

2.8 Prolonged social isolation and disrupted education negatively impacted students' emotional regulation and socialisation skills. The Children's Society found that 69% of teachers in Wales attributed post-lockdown behavioural challenges, such as aggression and defiance, to pandemic-induced developmental delays. Neurodiverse pupils and those with pre-existing mental health conditions were disproportionately affected, as remote learning often failed to meet their specific needs.

2.9 The behaviours being witnessed are predominantly increases in verbal and physical aggression towards adults and other children, along with persistent disruptive behaviour.

2.10 A Co-SPACE study was created to collect data from parents/carers of children and young people aged 4-16 years. The Co-SPACE study tracked parents, children and young people's mental health between March 2020 and July 2021. This was followed up with participating families between March 2022 and March 2023. The Co-SPACE study documented a 35% increase in emotional dysregulation among primary school-aged children during lockdowns, with persistent symptoms observed upon their return to school. These factors contributed to a challenging environment marked by frustration and disengagement, often manifesting as verbal and physical aggression towards staff. The study found that secondary school pupils reported a reduction in emotional difficulties and an increase in restlessness during lockdown periods.

2.11 Educators faced the difficult task of managing heightened behavioural issues while simultaneously navigating their own pandemic-related stress. A 2023 NASUWT survey revealed that 84% of Welsh teachers reported declining mental health, with 61% citing inadequate support from senior leadership as a primary stressor.

2.12 Schools struggling with behavioural issues sometimes resorted to punitive measures, including fixed-term exclusions and reduced timetables. However, these approaches can exacerbate marginalisation. Excluded pupils face a significantly increased risk of criminal exploitation. The NASUWT found that 65% of Welsh schools rely on outdated behaviour policies, ill-equipped to address post-pandemic challenges, with 49% of teachers reporting leadership's reluctance to revise existing protocols.

2.13 Declining mental health has played a crucial role in behavioural challenges learners are exhibiting. During the pandemic lockdown periods, self-reported mild or severe depression doubled with around one third of adults, nationally, reporting that their

mental health was worse than before the pandemic. Young people have been particularly affected. The pandemic created significant disruptions to their social development, routines and sense of security. As schools returned to in-person learning, many pupils struggled to adjust to structured environments after extended periods of isolation and altered learning conditions.

- 2.14 The connection between wellbeing issues and attendance is notable, addressing wellbeing concerns are key in ensuring pupils reach their full potential in all aspects of life, including achieving a good education. Wellbeing interventions are seen as not just supporting learners' mental health but as fundamental to improving educational outcomes.
- 2.15 Local authority officers and schools work collaboratively with Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) as part of the Schools In Reach Emotional Wellbeing Service (SHINE). The SHINE project aims to:
  - offer school-based psychoeducation for children and young people, school staff and parents/carers;
  - provide access for both individual and group-based sessions within school;
  - increase confidence in promoting and addressing emotional health issues;
  - support school staff to discuss and raise safeguarding issues;
  - assist with identifying vulnerable groups or factors that may influence vulnerability of our children and young people;
  - offer training for school staff to build confidence as trusted adults; and
  - provide consultations for secondary schools to discuss concerns.
- 2.16 The Health and Well-being Promoting Educational Settings Programme Co-ordinator for Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board has met with local authority officers to discuss the scheme priorities for 2025-2026. Health practitioners continue to support schools to work towards the standards set out in the Welsh Network of Healthy School Scheme National Quality Award (NQA) Framework until the launch of the new standards.
- 2.17 Despite Welsh Government guidance advocating for trauma-informed schools, only 22% of educators report receiving related training. Untrained staff may misinterpret trauma symptoms as defiance, potentially triggering exclusionary cycles.
- 2.18 Trauma-informed practice can significantly reduce exclusions by creating a more supportive and understanding environment for pupils, addressing the root causes of challenging behaviours, and fostering positive relationships. This approach prioritises the emotional, social and psychological well-being of pupils, promoting a sense of safety and belonging, which can lead to improved engagement and reduced disciplinary issues.

2.19 Community-focused schools play a prominent role in tackling the impact of poverty and socio-economic disadvantage on educational attainment. High-quality learning and teaching has a major impact on the outcomes of socio-economically disadvantaged learners, but the home environment and the wider community are also significant influences. By working collaboratively across schools, homes and the community we can support our children and young people more effectively.

2.20 Research shows that a well-developed community school approach can improve attendance, behaviour, attainment and aspirations of children and young people (Illustrating the Promise of Community Schools, Rand (2020)).

2.21 The family engagement officer (FEO) role has been highlighted as being effective in bridging the gap between children and their parents and families in their home life contexts and school staff and school contexts. Many parents and family members may have had a poor educational experience themselves and may be anxious when engaging with the school. The FEOs can help to understand these broader factors and support all parents to feel valued, welcomed, listened to and supported.

2.22 The local authority has made good progress in improving pupil attendance rates since the pandemic with current figures above the all-Wales average. However, significant challenges remain across the attendance, behaviour and wellbeing domains. The 'Team Bridgend' approach continues to be a cornerstone of educational strategy, though recent incidents and persistent absenteeism indicate ongoing obstacles that require sustained attention and resources.

2.23 Poor pupil attendance creates cycles where learners fall behind academically, causing frustration and disengagement that can manifest as behavioural issues when they do attend. The local authority in collaboration with schools across Bridgend have been implementing various measures to address this including the 'Miss School, Miss Out' campaign to emphasise the importance of school attendance. These strategies aim to improve pupil confidence, self-esteem and sense of belonging.

2.24 The inappropriate use of social media has been identified as a contributing factor to behavioural problems. There is an increase in inappropriate social media use among learners. The pandemic accelerated the integration of technology into young people's lives, often with limited supervision. Social media has created new avenues for conflict, cyber bullying and exposure to inappropriate content that may manifest as behavioural issues in school settings.

### **3. Current situation/proposal**

3.1 The Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate has set a clear target to improve pupil attendance rates demonstrating a commitment to addressing these issues through measurable objectives.

- 3.2 Despite positive initiatives and collaborative approaches, there are concerns about the sustainability of support services due to financial pressures. Diminishing resources have hampered schools' ability to address behavioural challenges effectively. Of the 60 schools in Bridgend, 40 (33 primary, 5 secondary and 2 (both) special schools) in Bridgend County were expected to run a budget deficit for 2024-2025. These financial pressures have significant implications for behaviour management.
- 3.3 Schools have made cuts to school therapeutic staff that has impacted behaviour management capabilities. The lack of funding for staff replacement has resulted in teachers having to cover multiple subjects, reducing their effectiveness. Some schools have had to exclude pupils for the first time because the pupils were not receiving appropriate support, causing their behaviour to deteriorate.
- 3.4 Early intervention and proactive measures to manage dysregulation in schools have been significantly reduced due to the reduction in support staff available in schools.

## **Inspire 2 Work/Achieve**

- 3.5 The Inspire 2 Work/Achieve programmes provide a vital engagement and support service for young people aged 11 to 25 within the county and is central to support those children who are or could be at risk of not being in education, employment or training (NEET). The project operates under the core principles of the Welsh Government's Youth Engagement and Progression Framework, with a strong focus on early identification of young people who are not maximising their potential during statutory education.
- 3.6 By engaging young people early and providing positive role models and opportunities, Youth Work helps to prevent issues such as unemployment, anti-social behaviour, or mental health struggles from escalating. By addressing and removing physical and emotional barriers, the initiative ensures that young people are 'work ready' when they leave statutory education, equipping them to transition into sustainable employment.
- 3.7 The project directly supports the local authority in meeting its commitments within the Corporate Plan (Wellbeing Objectives 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7). Specifically, it contributes to increasing employment and training opportunities for young people aged 16 to 24 within the county borough. A key focus of the project is targeting the most vulnerable young people through a comprehensive tracking exercise. This approach helps to build resilience and provides tailored support to enable them to reach their full potential.
- 3.8 Following the adoption this year of a minimum operating model across all projects funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund, the operating budget for the directorate's Inspire+ projects has been reduced from £1,562,423 to £960,520. An earmarked reserve of £112,375 is also available. These projects provide vital support to

vulnerable pupils and young people, many of whom face behavioural challenges and/or attendance issues in both school and community settings. This reduction in funding will inevitably result in less support for young people.

- 3.9 A managed move in Wales is a voluntary process designed to provide a pupil with a fresh start at a new school, often as an alternative to permanent exclusion. It is a planned transfer, agreed upon by the school, parents, and potentially the local authority, with the aim of alleviating difficulties the pupil is experiencing in their current placement. Managed moves ensure the pupil is not formally excluded from their previous school.
- 3.10 The directorate has adopted a new Managed Move Protocol in March 2025 taking account of Welsh Government's circular 'Effective Managed Moves – a fresh start at school for children and young people' and following consideration of the Newport Managed Move Protocol, which has been identified as good practice by regulators. Managed moves are an important tool in providing pupils with the opportunity of a fresh start in a new school. They can also reduce the need for permanent exclusions and minimise the negative outcomes associated with them. Schools will need to demonstrate that they have explored and utilised all strategies/support mechanisms available to them and be able to evidence that these have met with limited or no success. They can also reduce the need for permanent exclusions and minimise the negative outcomes associated with them. At the core of any managed move must be the best interest of the child in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the seven core aims in the Welsh Government document 'Children & Young People: Rights to Action.'
- 3.11 The Communication and Relationships Team (CART) has established regular training programmes to upskill school staff. Training recently delivered includes Lego Therapy, Massage Stories and Positive Relationships and De-escalation. All training will be reviewed and updated as required to reflect the current needs of pupils and the resulting demands and pressures on schools. The CART has delivered Team Teach Level 1 training to 12 schools this school year, training nearly 400 staff in the key values of de-escalation and appropriate physical interventions where reasonable, proportionate and necessary. The CART has also delivered Team Teach Level 1 training to additional support officers within the directorate to ensure they are able to best support learners they work with. Whole-school twilight sessions have taken place at nine schools and the training offer will be updated in the summer term following feedback and input from schools.
- 3.12 Bridgend provides a variety of support services for pupils presenting with emotional, social and behavioral difficulties (ESBD). Educational psychological profiling (PERMA profile) has been implemented in 24 schools to monitor pupil wellbeing.
- 3.13 Due to the increasing number of referrals to Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board (CTMUHB) for children and young people to be assessed for

neurodevelopmental disorders, there is an increased demand for additional support or specialist placements from both schools and parents.

- 3.14 Available pupil spaces within the Communication, Autism, Resource Education (CARE) bases and Learning Resource Centres (LRCs) have been limited resulting in pupils identified for specialist provision remaining in mainstream settings with additional adult support required to meet their needs. This school year, we were unable to accommodate 44 pupils across all key stages.. The remaining 10 pupils each receive a package of ancillary support to meet their needs to remain in mainstream settings. In addition to this we were unable to accommodate 20 pupils identified for an Observation Class and LRC for moderate learning difficulties within the available provision at the start of the school year. 20 pupils received individual support packages to remain in mainstream environment.
- 3.15 Funding for three additional learning resource centres has been agreed by Council as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2025-2029. This includes a new Foundation Phase class for pupils with ESBD and an additional secondary school CARE base. Discussions with schools have begun and two primary schools have agreed to locate classes on their sites. However, a location for the secondary school provision is yet to be agreed. A public consultation will progress when the potential location all three classes have been , identified with the intention of opening new classes in September 2025.
- 3.16 There are over 100 emotional literacy support assistants (ELSAs) trained across Bridgend schools to provide intervention support. There are ten training places reserved every year to train new staff. Training and support is provided by Educational Psychology Service (EPS) alongside half-termly supervision for all trained ELSAs in all schools.
- 3.17 The NASUWT report on behaviour in Welsh schools in 2023 reveals that 38% of respondents experienced physical abuse or violence from pupils in the last 12 months, 95% experienced verbal abuse or violence from pupils and 91% were sworn at by pupils. Physical violence includes being hit or punched (12%), kicked (9%) and shoved or barged (43%). These experiences have taken a toll on the teaching professional, with 86% reporting that abuse has affected their morale and enthusiasm for their job, while 62% experienced stress and 53% experienced anxiety.
- 3.18 The local authority follows the statutory guidance stipulating that exclusion decisions should only be taken in response to serious breaches of the school's behaviour policy or if allowing the pupil to remain in the school would harm the education or welfare of themselves or others. However, in exceptional circumstances, it may be appropriate to permanently to exclude a learner for a first or one-off offence. The local authority recognises that a school's decision to permanently exclude should be the final step in the school's graduated response.

3.19 Recent studies show a concerning increase in violent incidents among school-aged children across the UK. National research indicates an 81% rise in violent incidents on school property since the COVID-19 pandemic (The Times, 2024). However, only 12% of offences known to the Bridgend Youth Justice Service (BYJS) are violent. This discrepancy suggests a potential gap in awareness among wider services regarding incidents occurring in schools, potentially hindering children from receiving necessary and timely support.

3.20 Studies by the Youth Justice Board (2023) show that a significant percentage of youth offenses involve first-time offenders, highlighting the need for early intervention. Research from the Education Endowment Foundation (2023) found a correlation between school exclusion and later criminal involvement, emphasising the importance of preventative measures within educational settings.

3.21 The Relationship Building Together (RBT) project in Bridgend aims to provide comprehensive support to vulnerable children and families (ages 10-21) entering Youth Development, Youth Justice, Edge of Care, or Early Help Services through a psychology-led, trauma-informed approach. This involves multi-agency case formulation for complex situations and a focus on understanding each child's unique experiences, needs, strengths, and protective factors to guide interventions.

3.22 Forty staff members across these four services have received extensive Trauma Recovery Model (TRM) Academy training, with additional training for senior managers and four dedicated trauma leads, supported by a psychology team for consultancy and complex cases. A thorough assessment process utilising trauma-specific screening tools and the "voice of the child" toolkit, alongside collaborative information gathering, will inform a three-tiered intervention strategy. This ranges from guidance for case managers to in-depth multi-agency formulation led by trauma leads or a clinical psychologist, ensuring tailored support and regular reviews.

3.23 The project is committed to equitable and culturally sensitive delivery through ongoing staff training, community engagement, accessible communication, and culturally appropriate assessments. Collaboration is central, involving various agencies like health, probation, and education, alongside the core services. The anticipated impact is improved relationships, trauma recovery, and better outcomes for approximately 204 young people participating in the intervention.

3.24 The directorate has successfully held two relationship building together plus multi-agency timelining meetings, which notably included the participation of clinical psychologists. This collaboration provided a more profound understanding of the children's psychological needs and enabling more informed, effective intervention strategies through a holistic and nuanced assessment. We observed a significant improvement in meeting attendance across schools, largely due to the proactive efforts of the trauma leads. Their direct engagement with schools, explaining the

benefits of a multi-agency, holistic approach and the value of universal assessments, significantly enhanced participation and fostered a more collaborative environment.

3.25 The directorate successfully completed the recruitment phase, closing with a total of 405 children and young people engaged in the project. Significant strides have been made in developing relationship building practice resources specifically for Pupil Services, that will be instrumental in expanding knowledge and approaches to wider service areas. This expansion of resources will contribute to a more integrated and consistent approach across the organisation in addressing the needs of children.

3.26 The Welsh Government Cabinet Secretary for Education has committed to supporting schools and local authorities to address poor behaviour. 'Behaviour in schools' was a key focus of discussion at the Welsh Government secondary school headteacher conference in November 2024. It was also the subject of a meeting between the Cabinet Secretary for Education and the with education trade unions, where discussions covered the impact poor behaviour is having on the education workforce staff and potential solutions. A national behaviour summit will take place on 22 May 2025 as a key part of the work to explore further, the issues raised, their causes, and the actions needed to tackle poor behaviour in schools.

## **Exclusions**

3.27 The number of permanent exclusions across Bridgend schools has trebled since 2021-2022. There were 9 permanent exclusions in 2021-2022. The number of permanent exclusions issued as at 11 April 2024 were 23 compared to 11 April 2025 when there have been 22 permanent exclusions. As at 11 April 2025, 3 permanent exclusions were overturned at an independent appeal panel.

**Table 1** Comparative permanent exclusion data during the period 2021-2022 to 31 March 2025

	<b>School year 2021-2022</b>	<b>School year 2022-2023</b>	<b>School year 2023-2024</b>	<b>01/09/2024 to 11/04/2025</b>
<b>Primary schools</b>	0		7	
<b>Secondary schools</b>	9	13	23	19
<b>Special schools</b>	0		0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>22</b>

3.28 Furthermore, there were 7 primary school and 23 secondary school learners permanently excluded in 2023-2024. There have been 19 secondary school learners permanently excluded this school year to date (2024-2025).

**Table 2** Permanent exclusions In Bridgend schools by reason during the period 2023-2024 and 2024-2025

Permanent exclusion data		
Reasons	2023-2024	01/09/2024 to 11/04/2025
Damage to property		
Drug and alcohol related		
Persistent disruptive behaviour		
Physical assault on a pupil		
Physical assault on an adult		
Theft		
Sexual misconduct		
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult		
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour towards a pupil		
Other		
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>22</b>

3.29 There were 1136 fixed-term exclusions in Bridgend schools between 1 September 2023 and 31 March 2024 compared to 1221 between 1 September and 31 March 2025, an increase of 85 fixed-term exclusions (7.48%). This equates to 2143.5 days lost because of fixed-term exclusions between 1 September 2023 and 31 March 2024 compared to 1976.5 days between 1 September 2024 and 31 March 2025, a decrease of 167 days or -7.79%.

**Table 3** Fixed-term exclusion data during the period 2021-2022 and 2024-2025 (until 31 March 2025)

		2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	01/09/2024 to 31/03/2025
<b>Primary schools</b>	Number of exclusions	166	248	280	163
	Number of days lost	351.5	441	553	267.5
<b>Secondary schools</b>	Number of exclusions	1224	1355	1309	984
	Number of days lost	2359	2574.5	2400.5	1604.5
<b>Special schools</b>	Number of exclusions	74	67	97	74
	Number of days lost	124.5	154	204.5	104.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>Number of exclusions</b>	<b>1390</b>	<b>1603</b>	<b>1589</b>	<b>1221</b>
	<b>Number of days lost</b>	<b>2710.5</b>	<b>3015.5</b>	<b>2953.5</b>	<b>1976.5</b>

**Table 4** Fixed-term exclusion data for pupils attend Bridgend primary, secondary and special schools during the period 2023-2024 to 31 March 2025

<b>Fixed-term exclusions by reason</b>		
<b>Reason</b>	<b>2023–2024</b>	<b>01/09/2024 to 31/03/2025</b>
Bullying		
Damage to property	38	29
Drug and alcohol related	26	20
Persistent disruptive Behaviour	554	460
Physical assault on a pupil	261	162
Physical assault on an adult	106	93
Racist abuse		
Theft		
Sexual misconduct		
Verbal Abuse/Threatening behaviour against an adult	349	256
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour towards a pupil	106	50
Other	203	116
<b>Total</b>	<b>1686</b>	<b>1221</b>

3.30 Although fewer days have been lost during the autumn 2024 term, it should be noted that schools are issuing more fixed-term exclusions but for shorter durations. It is important to note that the trends in exclusions in Bridgend reflect a broader trend seen throughout South Wales.

3.31 Out of the above, there were 83 incidents of fixed-term exclusions in relation to care-experienced children out of the 1686 fixed-term exclusions issued in 2023-2024

3.32 There have been 80 incidents of fixed-term exclusions in relation to care-experienced children out of the 1221 fixed-term exclusions issued this year-to-date in 2024-2025.

#### **Weapons-Related Incidents in Bridgend Educational Settings Strategy Group (WRIBESSG)**

3.33 The local authority has established a Weapons-Related Incidents in Bridgend Educational Settings Strategy Group (WRIBESSG) which acts as the main forum for sharing information and driving forward improvements to reduce weapons-related incidents in educational settings in Bridgend.

3.34 The main purpose of WRIBESSG meetings is to allow senior officers, senior representatives from Bridgend's two headteacher representative groups, a senior representative from Bridgend College and the Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services to discuss strategic and key operational issues that relate to weapons-related incidents in educational settings in Bridgend.

3.35 The inaugural meeting of the WRIBESSG was held on 26 March 2025. The meeting was chaired by the Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services. The next meeting of the group is scheduled for 16 June 2025.

3.36 The 'use of weapons' reason was removed when the Welsh Government guidance changed. Consequently, the local authority does not have accurate data for the fixed-term exclusions in relation to the reason. In 2023, Bridgend's crime rate was 99 per 1,000 people. This is 25% higher than the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region average (79 per 1,000). This places Bridgend among the top 10 highest crime rates for small towns.

### Pupil attendance

3.37 Pupil attendance in Bridgend schools remains lower than pre-pandemic rates. This is further compounding behavioural issues. Pupil attendance levels across primary schools in Bridgend have increased by 2.2% from 2021-2022 to 2023-2024. Bridgend primary school pupil attendance for 2023-2024 is 0.2% above the all-Wales average. Pupil attendance levels across secondary schools in Bridgend increased by 2.4% from 2021-2022 to 2023-2024. Bridgend secondary school pupil attendance for 2023-2024 is 3.6% above the all-Wales average.

3.38 Attendance data for pupils attending Bridgend primary and secondary schools in the school years from 2021-2022 to the spring term 2024-2025 is highlighted in the table below (pp = percentage points).

**Table 5** Attendance data for pupils attending Bridgend primary and secondary schools during the period 2021-2022 to 2024-2025

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	Autumn Term 2024-2025	Spring Term 2024-2025
<b>Bridgend primary schools</b>	90.1%	91.5%	92.3%	93.8%	93.9%
<b>All-Wales primary schools</b>	89.9%	91.4%	92.1%	92.8%	N/A*
<b>Difference</b>	+0.2pp	+0.1pp	+0.2pp	+1.0pp	N/A
<b>Bridgend secondary schools</b>	86.5%	87.9%	88.9%	89.9%	88.8%
<b>All-Wales secondary schools</b>	84.3%	85.1%	85.3%	89.1%	N/A
<b>Difference</b>	+2.2pp	+2.8pp	+3.6pp	+0.8pp	N/A

\* N/A = not available at time of writing this report

3.39 The comparative attendance data of the highest performing and lowest performing primary and secondary schools in Bridgend from 2021-2022 to 2024-2025 (autumn and spring term cumulative) is provided below.

**Table 6** Comparative attendance data for the highest and lowest performing Bridgend primary and secondary schools during the period 2021-2022 and 01/09/2024 to 11/04/2025

		Highest	Lowest	Gap
01/09/2024 to 11/04/2025	<b>Primary</b>	96.2%	90.1%	6.1%
	<b>Secondary</b>	93.2%	85.4%	7.8%
2023-2024	<b>Primary</b>	95.2%	89.3%	5.9%
	<b>Secondary</b>	91.1%	85.7%	5.4%
2022-2023	<b>Primary</b>	95.2%	86.9%	8.3%
	<b>Secondary</b>	90.4%	83.4%	7.0%
2021-2022	<b>Primary</b>	94.0%	85.2%	8.8%
	<b>Secondary</b>	90.6%	82.7%	7.9%

3.40 Persistent absenteeism remains a significant concern. Approximately 7% of primary school pupils and 16% of secondary pupils had attendance rates of 80% or below during 2023-2024 school year. More concerning is that around 5% of secondary school pupils attend school for 50% or less of the time. These figures highlight the magnitude of the attendance challenge despite overall improvements.

3.41 There continues to be disparities across schools in Bridgend which suggests uneven implementation of effectiveness of attendance strategies across different school settings.

3.42 In 2022-2023 (data for 2023-2024 has not yet been published), all-Wales persistent absenteeism data for primary schools was reported at 28.9% (based on a 90% threshold).

3.43 In 2023-2024, all-Wales persistent absenteeism data for secondary schools was reported at 37.1% (based on a 90% threshold).

**Table 7** Persistent absenteeism data for Bridgend primary and secondary schools during the period 2023-2024 to September 2024 to 11/04/2025

		% persistent absence (less than 90%)			% persistent absence (less than 80%)			% persistent absence (less than 50%)		
		Highest	Lowest	Gap	Highest	Lowest	Gap	Highest	Lowest	Gap
01/09/2024 to 11/04/2025	Primary	34.9%	5.9%	29pp	16.8%	0%	16.8pp	4.8%	0%	4.8pp
	Secondary	44.6%	19.2%	25.4pp	22.8%	8.3%	14.5pp	7.4%	1.6%	5.8pp
2023-2024	Primary	42.9%	7.6%	35.3pp	16.4%	1.0%	15.4pp	4.1%	0.0%	4.1pp
	Secondary	54.9%	38.2%	16.7pp	26.7%	11.6%	15.1pp	7.5%	2.6%	4.9pp

3.44 There are currently nine full-time equivalent education welfare officers (EWOs) that sit within the Education Engagement Team (EET) and are deployed on a school cluster basis. There are an additional three grant-funded, full-time equivalent EWOs who are deployed on a peripatetic basis.

3.45 For the school year 2025-2026, it is proposed that EWOs will be deployed on a needs basis to either those schools with lower levels of attendance and/or challenges with persistent absenteeism levels. This approach has been endorsed by Estyn and will support narrowing the gap and reducing persistent absenteeism.

### Additional learning needs

3.46 Bridgend County Borough Council is responsible for implementing the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 which aims to improve rights, planning and services for learners with special needs. Children with additional learning needs (ALN) face unique challenges that can manifest as behavioural issues. These learners may not be able to respond in the same way to behaviour strategies and behaviour that causes problems may escalate and become persistent.

3.47 The local authority is working with partners to ensure sufficient opportunities for ALN learners and to strengthen relationships to improve transition for learners with ALN. In Bridgend, children experiencing emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA) present with high scores in emotional difficulties, hyperactivity and peer problems.

Without adequate support, these children are particularly vulnerable to behavioural problems and educational disengagement.

- 3.48 The EPS has developed materials for schools and support agencies to support EBSA and delivered training to EWOs. There is further training planned for FEOs. In addition, the Senior Educational Psychologist is completing a small-scale piece of research/pilot on EBSA with Bryntirion Comprehensive School. The initial results show a positive impact of the intervention, and the pilot is now being extended across all secondary schools in the next phase.
- 3.49 Increased stressors at home can impact pupil behaviour at school. Schools play a fundamental role in protecting children. ACEs can affect the wellbeing of children throughout life and increase health harming behaviours both immediately and long-term.

### **Counselling services**

- 3.50 The local authority approved a budget reduction in 2025-2026 in relation to counselling services for children and young people. The reduction will be challenging as counselling is crucial for supporting children's mental health and wellbeing. It can act as a preventive measure, early intervention and support alongside specialist services. Due to the increase in demand for counselling services the directorate has utilised specific grants differently to maintain and increase counselling resources for children and young people.
- 3.51 There remain strong collaborative efforts across agencies. School improvement officers work effectively with officers from Central South Consortium to support schools. The School Improvement Group (SIG), consisting of senior officers and elected members, regularly reviews schools causing concern. The local authority works with schools and partner agencies to respond to incidents. The multi-agency approaches help to ensure that complex issues affecting pupils receive coordinated attention from relevant services.

### **Community Focused Schools**

- 3.52 The directorate adopts the community focused schools approach. This aims to create learning communities that support lifelong learning and community wellbeing. FEOs in Bridgend play a crucial role in engaging with parents and the community that can positively impact pupil attendance and behaviour. The community focused schools' approach and the role of FEOs are integral to improving educational outcomes and community cohesion in Bridgend.
- 3.53 There are currently nine FEOs working to adopt community-focused school approaches in Bridgend. The FEOs support relationships between families and

schools and can encourage and develop links which have a positive impact on pupil attendance.

3.54 Since the restructure of early help services in Bridgend, the Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate has seen an increased referral rate for services of 39.9% compared to 2023-2024. The number of family assessments undertaken by FEOs has also increased by 35.5%.

### **Access to Education Panel**

3.55 The Access to Education Panel meets half-termly, working collaboratively in the best interests of pupils and to ensure that pupils' needs are met and provision provided within a timely manner. Referrals are submitted to the panel by schools to request provision or intervention for pupils they have exhausted all support options within the mainstream school environment. Panel members will consider any planning or additional support required while pupils await provision and ensure that there is responsibility and accountability for ownership of individual pupils.

3.56 Each panel has a headteacher representative for primary, secondary and special school settings who work with a range of local authority officers to review each referral. Since January 2024, members of senior leadership teams across all schools have been invited to observe panel meetings to better understand the process and for professional development.

3.57 The number of referrals to the Access to Education Panel has continued to increase over the last few years in line with the increase in exclusions. At the end of the last school year, the panel was able to ensure all pupils identified for specialist provision had a placement confirmed within two terms of being put on the waiting list.

**Table 8** Access to Education Panel referrals in Bridgend during the period 2022-2023 and 2024-2025

<b>Access to Education Panel new referrals received</b>	
2022-2023	60
2023-2024	117
2024-2025	109 (two terms only)

3.58 Panel members have worked hard to find creative solutions to provide support for pupils identified for specialist provision. Availability of available specialist provision is reviewed every meeting. The directorate has prepared a five-year ALN Provision Plan. Positive progress has been in respect of opening additional resource bases in mainstream schools from September 2025. However, expanding specialist provision for pupils with ESBD and complex ALN will require additional accommodation and investment and has an estimated completion date of September 2027.

3.59 Where pupils are supported in mainstream settings the potential for further fixed-term or permanent exclusion remains high. While schools work hard to support learners who display challenging behaviour within existing provision, this places additional pressure and risk for all staff and behavioural support systems, and can impact on the learning environment for other learners.

### **The Bridge Alternative Provision and Ysgol Bryn Castell**

3.60 Both The Bridge Alternative Provision and Ysgol Bryn Castell (YBC) are operating at full capacity and have no space to expand provision any further. Escalating exclusions in mainstream schools and a lack of space in provision has resulted in an increase in pupils accessing support with out-of-county providers. While this supports access to education for individual pupils, attendance at both out-of-county provisions and virtual tuition has resulted in lower predicted 'Capped 9' predicted scores for Year 11 pupils. The 'Capped' measure refers to a performance indicator that evaluates a student's best nine GCSE or equivalent results. This measure includes specific subject requirements like English/Welsh, Math/Numeracy, and Science, along with the remaining six best results. The Capped 9 is used to assess a school's overall performance and can be used to compare schools or learners.

<https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-07/guidance-on-the-calculation-of-the-capped-9-points-score-interim.pdf>

**Table 9** The Bridge Alternative Provision 2024-2025

<b>Average attendance including all pupils</b>	65%
<b>Average attendance excluding pupils attending offsite provision</b>	72%

**Table 10** The Bridge Alternative Provision, Capped 9 Predicted Scores for end of autumn term 2024

<b>Whole school - Year 11 Pupils (244 Predicted Score)</b>	<b>Overall</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>eFSM*</b>	<b>nFSM**</b>
<b>Number of pupils</b>	24	7	17	12	12
<b>Capped Nine Score</b>	217	204	222	220	215
<b>Virtual - Year 11 Pupils (120 Predicted Score)</b>	<b>Overall</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>eFSM</b>	<b>nFSM</b>
<b>Number of pupils</b>	6	2	4	3	3
<b>Capped Nine Score</b>	112	97	120	89	135
<b>Outside providers - Year 11 Pupils (246 Predicted Score)</b>	<b>Overall</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>eFSM</b>	<b>nFSM</b>
<b>Number of pupils</b>	3	2	1	1	2
<b>Capped Nine Score</b>	199	168	261	145	226
<b>The Bridge - Year 11 Pupils (293 Predicted Score)</b>	<b>Overall</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>eFSM</b>	<b>nFSM</b>
<b>Number of pupils</b>	15	3	12	8	7
<b>Capped Nine Score</b>	262	301	253	278	245

\* eFSM = pupil eligible for free school meals

\*\* nFSM = pupil not eligible for free school meals

3.61 The Bridge Alternative Provision Portfolio Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) provides education for pupils aged 5 to 16 years. There are four sites including the PRU, which has delegated responsibilities to arrange and oversee all the education other than at school (EOTAS) provision for the local authority. Admission to the PRU is through the CAMHS Panel or the Access to Education Panel. There are currently 95 pupils on roll at The Bridge.

3.62 YBC is a maintained special school for pupils aged 7-19 years who have ESBD and a wide range of other needs including autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). There are 181 pupils on roll at the school, with almost 50% of those pupils either diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), or who have been referred for, neurodevelopmental pathway assessment.

3.63 An independent review of capacity at YBC took place in the summer term 2024, reporting that the school was at capacity and there is insufficient space to meet future demand.

3.64 Both YBC and The Bridge offer bespoke alternative packages for pupils who are unable to access onsite provision due to emotional based school avoidance, trauma and risk assessments.

3.65 A recent Estyn inspection at The Bridge spotlighted three areas of good practice:

- well-being, care support and guidance;
- therapeutic support; and
- equity of curriculum offer.

3.66 There has been a significant increase in demand for immediate support for pupils who have been permanently excluded putting additional demand on places at The Bridge and YBC when both provisions are constantly running at capacity.

3.67 Staff retention and recruitment can be challenging due to the level of challenging behaviour and expert support required. Trade unions continue to challenge the suitability of pupils placed in provision and the support available to staff when dealing with risk.

3.68 It is not possible to quantify precisely why there has been an increase in the number of pupils with ALN. However, it is important to recognise this is not unique to Bridgend. National data suggests contributing factors impacting on our service demands include:

- the increase in demand for complex medical support as well as emerging needs within the early years sector, which may in part be as a result of babies surviving more complex medical conditions from birth;
- there is a greater awareness of additional learner needs by parents and teachers; and
- one area in particular has seen a significant increase is pupils on the pathway for, or diagnosed with, neurodevelopmental (ND) needs such as ASD and ADHD.

3.69 Inclusion Group staff are working collaboratively with health colleagues on a pilot programme with the aim to reduce waiting times for those children and young people where an accurate ND diagnosis can be made from written information submitted at the point of referral by family/school. While support within the directorate is available based on need not diagnosis, the health board recognises the frustration with long waiting times for ND assessment and potential diagnosis.

3.70 Most schools take advantage of outside agencies to improve the learning experiences and support the engagement of pupils. These can be free to schools and provide opportunities for interactive learning. In some cases, the schools can, for example, attend a university for these engagement days at no cost to the schools. Recently there has been two occasions for schools to participate in Science,

Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) days for pupils of their choice within their schools.

- Brynteg School has expedition days where pupils will engage in a variety of activities and lessons around an Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLE).
- A common practice across primary schools is to have an 'immersion' day or week, to introduce a new topic. These opportunities provide a variety of creative, stimulating and engaging activities for pupils. While immersed in these multi-sensory activities, pupils are given time to reflect and think about the experiences their new topic could provide.
- Immersion days or weeks can allow for experts from different industries and workplaces to come into schools to talk to the children about a topic or area of learning they are exploring.
- Pupil voice is often the driving force behind a school's curriculum planning. Pupils help to identify topics and decide what they want to learn and how they will learn it.
- Some primary and secondary schools provide 'enrichment days' or 'enrichment lessons' where pupils can choose an activity that would support their interests, health, and wellbeing.
- Curriculum for Wales provides more flexibility to schools to offer a range of digital learning. Many schools enrich digital learning with a Digital Competence Framework 'planning for progression' resource which suggest a range of innovative teaching and learning activities than can be applied across all curriculum areas (for example, podcast making, sound and music production, animation, photography, cyber security).
- Schools are being supported with the introduction of Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI) resources and schools are developing learning around responsible and ethical use of Gen AI to reflect the increased use of AI in society.
- Schools ensure learners have access to technology platforms within the Hwb platform. This platform provides learners with cloud technology, Gen AI, communication tools and are modern technology resources than support Curriculum for Wales and wider technology activities.
- Schools are developing and offering opportunities to enrich learning through 'gamification' (gaming) resources (for example, Minecraft Education and Scratch computational thinking software).

- Pencoed Comprehensive School's Year 8 Girls have taken part in CyberFirst National Competition and have been crowned champions. The event, a collaboration between CyberFirst Wales and 'About Women in Cyber', highlighted the crucial need for greater female representation in the cyber security sector and the need for understanding the concepts of cyber and digital security.

3.71 Progress on behaviour, attendance and exclusions are reported at the directorate's monthly senior management team meetings and are a key part of the Education Early Years and Young People Directorate Strategic Plan (2023-2028) Themes 1, 2, 3, 4 and 12. Outcomes and progress made are reported monthly within the directorate's performance management system.

#### **4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)**

4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts because of this report.

#### **5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives**

5.1 The well-being goals and principles prescribed for within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 connect directly to the approach to supporting children, young people and their families. The approach is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle and more specifically as follows:

<b>Long term</b>	The approach family support services focus on meeting the needs of a wide range of service beneficiaries including children, young people, adults, and families.
<b>Prevention</b>	The focus of family support services is upon early identification of need and ensuring that there is appropriate provision in place to meet individual needs.
<b>Integration</b>	The approach to family support services addresses the need for a coherent delivery of economic, social, environmental, and cultural outcomes.

<b>Collaboration</b>	A fundamental principal of the approach to family support focuses on improving collaboration and creating a unified system.
<b>Involvement</b>	Ensuring that children, young people, adults, and families are at the heart of the system and that needs are discussed in a person-centred way.

## **6. Climate change implications**

6.1 There are no climate change implications resulting from this project. However, we are committed to supporting the implementation of the local authority's 'Bridgend 2030 – Net Zero Carbon Strategy' and Welsh Government's carbon reduction commitments.

## **7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

7.1 The directorate has a robust approach to safeguarding, and this is detailed within the directorate's strategic plan. The Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate Strategic Plan 2023-2026 is aligned with Bridgend County Borough Council's (BCBC's) Corporate Parenting Strategy.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications specifically relating to this report.

## **9. Recommendations**

9.1 Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 is asked to:

- consider the contents of the report; and
- provide feedback.

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# Agenda Item 6

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>8 MAY 2025</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL &amp; REGULATORY SERVICES, HR &amp; CORPORATE POLICY</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>MERYL LAWRENCE SENIOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER – SCRUTINY</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<p>The work of the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committees relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Council's Policy Framework and consideration of plans, policy or strategy relating to the power to promote or improve economic, social or environmental wellbeing in the County Borough of Bridgend. Any changes to the structure of the Scrutiny Committees and the procedures relating to them would require the Bridgend County Borough Council Constitution to be updated.</p>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<p>The Council's Constitution requires the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to develop and implement a Forward Work Programme for the Committee.</p> <p>The Council's Constitution also provides for each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee to propose items for the Forward Work Programme having regard for the Council's Corporate Priorities and Risk Management framework, for the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to have oversight and refer any cross-cutting topics to a Committee or Research and Evaluation Panel.</p> <p>The Committee is asked to consider and agree its Forward Work Programme, identify any specific information it wishes to be included in and any invitees they wish to attend for the reports for the next two Committee meetings, identify any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the criteria set out in the report, consider the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet and note that the Forward Work Programmes for the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees will be reported to the next meeting of COSC.</p>

## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- a) Present the Committee with the Forward Work Programme updated at the previous Committee meeting (**Appendix A**) for discussion and consideration;
- b) Request any specific information the Committee identifies to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wish to attend;
- c) Request the Committee to identify whether there are presently any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 3.6 of this report;
- d) Present the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet (**Appendix B**) to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meetings;
- e) Advise that the Committee's Forward Work Programme as updated by the Committee will be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC), with those from each respective Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee (SOSC), following their consideration in this cycle of Committee meetings.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 The Council's Constitution requires the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to develop and implement a Forward Work Programme for the Committee.
- 2.2 The Council's Constitution also provides for each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee to propose items for the Forward Work Programme having regard for the Council's Corporate Priorities and Risk Management framework, for the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to have oversight and refer any cross-cutting topics to a Committee or Research and Evaluation Panel.

### Best Practice / Guidance

- 2.3 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny's (CfGS) Good Scrutiny Guide recognises the importance of the Forward Work Programme. In order to 'lead and own the process', it states that Councillors should have ownership of their Committee's work programme, and be involved in developing, monitoring and evaluating it. The Good Scrutiny Guide also states that, in order to make an impact, the scrutiny workload should be coordinated and integrated into corporate processes, to ensure that it contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.
- 2.4 Forward Work Programmes need to be manageable to maximize the effective use of the limited time and resources of Scrutiny Committees. It is not possible to include every topic proposed. Successful Scrutiny is about looking at the right topic in the right way and Members need to be selective, while also being able to demonstrate clear arguments for including or excluding topics.

2.5 The CfGS's guide to effective work programming 'A Cunning Plan?' makes the following reference to the importance of good work programming:

*'Effective work programming is the bedrock of an effective scrutiny function. Done well it can help lay the foundations for targeted, incisive and timely work on issues of local importance, where scrutiny can add value. Done badly, scrutiny can end up wasting time and resources on issues where the impact of any work done is likely to be minimal.'*

### **3. Current situation / proposal**

#### Forward Work Programme

3.1 Following the approval of the schedule of Scrutiny Committee meeting dates at the Annual Meeting of Council on 15 May 2024, the standing statutory reports to Scrutiny Committees of: the Corporate Plan, the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Budget, Performance and Budget Monitoring, etc. have been mapped to the appropriate timely meeting dates into a Forward Work Programme.

3.2 The Forward Work Programmes for each Scrutiny Committee have been prepared using a number of difference sources, including:

- Corporate Risk Assessment;
- Directorate Business Plans;
- Previous Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme report topics / minutes;
- Committee / Member proposed topics;
- Policy Framework;
- Cabinet Work Programme;
- Discussions with Corporate Directors;
- Performance Team regarding the timing of performance information.

3.3 There are items where there is a statutory duty for Policy Framework documents to be considered by Scrutiny, e.g., the MTFS including draft budget proposals considered in January 2025, following which COSC coordinated the conclusions and recommendations from each of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees in a report on the overall strategic overview of Cabinet's draft Budget proposals to the meeting of Cabinet on 4 February 2025.

3.4 An effective Forward Work Programme will identify the issues that the Committee wishes to focus on during the year and provide a clear plan. However, at each meeting the Committee will have an opportunity to review this as the Forward Work Programme Update will be a standing item on the Agenda, detailing which items are scheduled for future meetings and be requested to clarify any information to be included in reports and the list of invitees. The Forward Work Programme will remain flexible and will be revisited at each COSC meeting with input from each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee reported and any updated information gathered from Forward Work Programme meetings with Corporate Directors.

3.5 The Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programmes will be reported to the next meeting of COSC, with the comments from each respective Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee for coordination and oversight of the

overall Forward Work Programme. The SOSC Forward Work Programmes will be included in the standing Forward Work Programme Update report from then on with any feedback from each SOSC meeting included.

### Identification of Further Items

3.6 The Committee are reminded of the Criteria Form which Members can use to propose further items for the FWP which the Committee can then consider for prioritisation at a future meeting. The Criteria Form emphasises the need to consider issues such as impact, risk, performance, budget and community perception when identifying topics for investigation and to maximise the impact scrutiny can have on a topic and the outcomes for people. Criteria which can help the Committee come to a decision on whether to include a referred topic, are set out below:

#### Recommended Criteria for Selecting Scrutiny Topics:

PUBLIC INTEREST:	The concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen for scrutiny;
ABILITY TO CHANGE:	Priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically influence, and add value to;
PERFORMANCE:	Priority should be given to the areas in which the Council is not performing well;
EXTENT:	Priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or large parts of the County Borough, or a large number of the Authority's service users or its population;
REPLICATION:	Work programmes must take account of what else is happening in the areas being considered to avoid duplication or wasted effort.

#### Reasons to Reject Scrutiny Topics:

- The issue is already being addressed / being examined elsewhere and change is imminent.
- The topic would be better addressed elsewhere (and can be referred there).
- Scrutiny involvement would have limited / no impact upon outcomes.
- The topic may be sub-judice or prejudicial.
- The topic is too broad to make a review realistic and needs refining / scoping.
- New legislation or guidance relating to the topic is expected within the next year.
- The topic area is currently subject to inspection or has recently undergone substantial change / reconfiguration.

### Corporate Parenting

3.7 Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the responsibility of a local authority towards care experienced children and young people. This is a legal responsibility given to local authorities by the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. The role of the Corporate Parent is to seek for children in public care the

outcomes every good parent would want for their own children. The Council as a whole is the 'Corporate Parent', therefore all Members have a level of responsibility for care experienced children and young people in Bridgend.

- 3.8 In this role, it is suggested that Members consider how each item they consider affects care experienced children and young people, and in what way can the Committee assist in these areas.
- 3.9 Scrutiny Champions can greatly support the Committee in this by advising them of the ongoing work of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting and particularly any decisions or changes which they should be aware of as Corporate Parents.
- 3.10 The Forward Work Programme for the Committee is attached as **Appendix A** for the Committee's consideration.
- 3.11 The Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meetings is attached as **Appendix B**.

#### **4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)**

- 4.1 The Protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

#### **5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives**

- 5.1 The Act provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with 5 Ways of Working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The following is a summary to show how the 5 Ways of Working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:
  - Long-term - The approval of this report will assist in the planning of Scrutiny business in both the short-term and in the long-term on its policies, budget and service delivery.
  - Prevention - The early preparation of the Forward Work Programme allows for the advance planning of Scrutiny business where Members are provided an opportunity to influence and improve decisions before they are made by Cabinet.
  - Integration - The report supports all the wellbeing objectives.
  - Collaboration - Consultation on the content of the Forward Work Programme has taken place with the Corporate Management Board, Heads of Service and Elected Members.

- Involvement - Advanced publication of the Forward Work Programme ensures that stakeholders can view topics that will be discussed in Committee meetings and are provided with the opportunity to engage.

5.2 When setting its Forward Work Programme, the Committee should consider how each item they propose to scrutinise assists in the achievement of the Council's 7 Wellbeing Objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** as follows :-

1. A County Borough where we protect our most vulnerable
2. A County Borough with fair work, skilled, high-quality jobs and thriving towns
3. A County Borough with thriving valleys communities
4. A County Borough where we help people meet their potential
5. A County Borough that is responding to the climate and nature emergency
6. A County Borough where people feel valued, heard and part of their community
7. A County Borough where we support people to live healthy and happy lives

## **6. Climate Change Implications**

6.1 The Committee should consider how each item they scrutinise affects climate change, the Council's Net Zero Carbon 2030 target and how it meets the Council's commitments to protect and sustain the environment over the long term. There are no Climate Change Implications arising from this report.

## **7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

7.1 The Committee should consider how each item they scrutinise affects care experienced children and young people, and in what way the Committee can assist in these areas. Safeguarding is everyone's business and means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. There are no Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications arising from this report.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **9. Recommendation**

9.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Consider and approve the Forward Work Programme for the Committee in **Appendix A**.
- b) Identify any specific information the Committee wishes to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wish to attend;

- c) Identify whether there are presently any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 3.6 of this report.
- d) Note the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet in **Appendix B** to track outstanding responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meetings;
- e) Note that the Committee's Forward Work Programme as approved by the Committee will be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC), with those from each respective Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee (SOSC), following their consideration in this cycle of Committee meetings.

### **Background documents**

None.

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**Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1**  
**2024-25 Forward Work Programme**

18 July 2024 at 11.00am		
Report Topic	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Home-to-School/College Transport Policy	<p>Outcome of the HTST policy public consultation.</p> <p>To include aspects relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safe routes to schools</li><li>• Implications of revised LDP</li><li>• School catchment areas</li><li>• Pupils' admission numbers</li><li>• New school builds</li></ul>	<p><b>Cabinet Members</b> Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services.</p> <p><b>Officers</b> Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People. Head of Education and Family Support Group Manager (Strategy, Performance and Support)</p> <p><b>Headteacher Nominees</b> Headteacher Maesteg Comprehensive Headteacher Nottage Primary</p>

Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 11.00am –		
Report Topics	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate Strategic Plan 2023-26 Update	To include update on ALN and Budget implications from 2024-25	<p><b>Cabinet Members</b> Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services.</p> <p><b>Officers</b> Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People.</p> <p><b>Headteacher Nominees</b> Headteacher Brackla Primary School and Chair of Primary Federation Headteacher Pil Primary School Headteacher Brynteg Comprehensive</p>

## APPENDIX A

<b>Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 11.00am</b>		
<b>Report Topics</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
Pupil Attendance	To include the consistent themes / concerns regarding pupil non-attendance in schools and the support in place.	<p><b>Cabinet Members</b> Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services.</p> <p><b>Officers</b> Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People. Head of Education and Family Support Group Manager, Early Years and Young People Interim Manager of Education Engagement Team Group Manager, Learner Support</p> <p><b>Central South Consortium</b> Principal Improvement Manager</p> <p><b>Headteacher Nominees</b> Headteacher Coety Primary School Assistant Headteacher Ysgol Gyfun Llangynwyd</p>

<b>Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 11.00am</b>		
<b>Report Topics</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-26 to 2028-29  And  Draft Terms of Reference for School Improvement Research Evaluation Panel	Pre Decision	<p><b>Cabinet Members</b> Leader of Council Deputy Leader of Council and Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services</p> <p><b>Officers</b> Chief Executive Chief Officer, Legal &amp; Regulatory Services, HR &amp; Corporate Policy Chief Officer, Finance, Housing &amp; Change Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People.</p> <p><b>Headteacher Nominees</b> Chair and Vice Chair of the Schools Budget Forum</p>

## APPENDIX A

<b>Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 at 11.00am</b>		
<b>Report Topics</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
School Modernisation		<p><b>Cabinet Members</b> Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services.</p> <p><b>Officers</b> Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People.</p> <p><b>Headteacher Nominees</b> Headteacher of Pencoed Primary School Headteacher of Ysgol Y Ferch O'r Sger</p>

<b>Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 11.00am</b>		
<b>Report Topics</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
Pupil Behaviour, Attendance and Exclusions (update)	<p>Committee requested the following be included in the scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- That Attendance be included within the scope of the Behaviour and Exclusions report scheduled for the March meeting to see what progress has been made as a result of some of the measures which would have been implemented.</li> <li>- An update on Keeping Learners Safe including, if appropriate, any update on the proposed working group set up by the Cabinet Member regarding Pupil safety (conclusions, if any at this stage, or some clarity about the membership and workings)</li> <li>- The impact of the waiting list for specialist provision on challenging behaviour and exclusions at mainstream schools</li> <li>- Referrals from COSC numbered 2, 3 and 4 below.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cabinet Members</b> Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services.</p> <p><b>Officers</b> Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People.</p> <p><b>CSC</b></p> <p><b>Headteacher Nominees - TBA</b></p> <p><b>External</b> Health Board Youth Council</p>

## APPENDIX A

	<p>Committee requested the following invitees be invited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Secondary school headteachers</li> <li>- Invitation be sent to Ysgol Bryn Castell</li> <li>- Health Board</li> <li>- Youth Council</li> <li>- A staff member within the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision team that specifically deals with and supports children with behavioural difficulty.</li> <li>- CAMHS</li> <li>- Chair of BASH and Chair of Primary School Federation</li> </ul>	
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<b>Wednesday 3 July 2025 at 11.00am</b>		
<b>Report Topics</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
TBC		<p><b>Cabinet Members</b> Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services.</p> <p><b>Officers</b> Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People.</p> <p><b>CSC</b></p> <p><b>Headteacher Nominees - TBA</b></p> <p><b>External</b></p>

<b>Monday 15 September 2025 at 11.00am</b>		
<b>Report Topics</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
TBC		<p><b>Cabinet Members</b> Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services.</p> <p><b>Officers</b> Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People.</p> <p><b>CSC</b></p> <p><b>Headteacher Nominees - TBA</b></p> <p><b>External</b></p>

**Potential Items to be scheduled.**

- ALN Provision and Implementation Update
- Review of school improvement services
- Review of post inspection plan
- School mergers
- Nursery Provision
- Safeguarding
- Future School Improvement Arrangements (SOSC 16 January 2025)
  - to be scheduled in early 2026 following Cabinet approval 4 February 2025 to monitor how it has been embedded into the system after 12 months.
- Mental health and wellbeing support for learners (SOSC 1 18 November 2024)
  - to include a holistic focus on the mental health and wellbeing support provided to learners to assist them to attend education.
  - to include information regarding any support regarding any support available from Social Services, General Practitioners, the Health Board and third sector.
- A **strategic and forward-looking report** to include the following: (SOSC 1 31 March 2025)
  - An audit of the condition of all schools in Bridgend County.
  - An analysis of the lessons learned from the school modernisation projects that have happened or in the process of being planned and built, including the impact of wider political and economic forces. The report would need to consider such issues as the role and value of price caps; risk management and mitigation, including the impact of ecological ones on project timing and costs; procurement; land acquisition; the impact of design changes to projects; and project management and oversight, especially in terms of the contribution made by Cabinet and the Corporate Management Board.
  - The future demography of the County Borough, and the impact of new and proposed housing developments, and the potential knock-on impact on school catchment areas and pupil numbers.
  - The future of school modernisation and project finance in Wales.
- A report to include the following to be scheduled early on the 2025/26 Forward Work Programme: (SOSC 1 31 March 2025)
  - Individual Development Plans.
  - Additional Learning Needs.
  - Specialist Provision.
- At its meeting on 31 March 2025, the Committee requested the following be added to the FWP:
  - School improvement plans – for scheduling early 2026.
  - School performance - Estyn reports – Member Briefing – To include school-level detail.
  - School deficits –in the form of a report to the Committee or a Member Briefing

**Members Briefing sessions.**

- New Estyn Inspection Framework / Local Government Education Services (LGES)
- Reporting of learner and pupil attainment outcomes - Session to be held to update Members on recommencing of reporting exam results.
- School Safeguarding Audits – Summary
- Update on Effective School Governing Bodies – Support and funding. Invitation to be extended to Governors Association.
- Future School Improvements - Member Development Briefing

**Information reports to be provided.**

- English Language School's catchment areas / capacity
- Appointment of Local Education Authority (LEA) governors – Policy and rules - Criteria and procedure for the appointment and removal of local authority school governors'
- Corporate performance

**Research and Evaluation Panel**

- School Improvement Research and Evaluation Panel (REP)

**Referred from COSC as Potential Items**

**1. COSC 24 October 2024:**

The Committee expressed concern regarding the significant projected overspend in learner support and additional learning needs and the costs of providing the related statutory home to school transport. The Committee **recommended** that the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 request a report to explore whether alternative models of delivering these services could contribute to cost savings.

**Committee to consider for their FWP or allocation to Working Group.**

**2. COSC 28 January 2025 – Actioned:**

The Committee discussed legacy issues from the pandemic impacting on pupil behaviour leading to an increase in exclusions and the significant increase in demand for ALN provision, expressed concern that the increase in demand may not be solely due to pandemic and asked whether further work was necessary to fully understand all of the reasons driving the increase in demand and overspend in ALN services.

The Committee were advised that educational specialists in Welsh Government were undertaking a detailed piece of work looking at the reasons for the additional demand and requested that the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 consider requesting a report detailing the outcome of the exercise referred to above, when available, or to include it in the report on Behaviour scheduled to that Committee, as appropriate.

**Outcome: Included in report request for the report: Pupil Behaviour, Attendance and Exclusions being reported to 8 May 2025.**

**3. COSC 17 March 2025 - Actioned:**

The Committee expressed concern that the PI target of 100% relating to the roll-out of individual development plans (IDPs) delivered using the online IDP system had not been achieved (0%) and requested that SOSC 1 consider requesting a report to monitor the situation.'

**Outcome : Cttee requested report to be added to the FWP at meeting on 31 March 2025**

**4. COSC 17 March 2025 - Actioned:**

The Committee explored the possible link between pupil behaviour and permanent exclusions, and support for pupils with additional learning needs and the waiting lists for specialist provision.

The Committee therefore requested that the scope of the report regarding Pupil Behaviour scheduled to SOSC 1 on 8 May 2025 include a summary of the draft 5 year plan developed to address the demand on support services, specialist provision and schools.

**Outcome: Included in report request for the report: Pupil Behaviour, Attendance and Exclusions being reported to 8 May 2025.**

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**Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1****RECOMMENDATIONS MONITORING ACTION SHEET 2024-2025**

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
16 January 2025	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-26 to 2028-29	Members requested more information on what other local authorities were doing to set a balanced budget which Officers advised once they had the wider Wales view they would be content to share with The Committee.	Corporate Director - Education, Early Years and Young People	Recommendations circulated requesting response – to be provided. Chased.	
16 January 2025	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-26 to 2028-29	Members discussed the implications of Legal Services for schools expressing Their concerns with more complex Casework involving behaviour, Attendance, health and safety legislation.  Headteachers advised they have external arrangements with legal services who are knowledgeable and are able to turn things around in a timely manner to support schools. Headteachers stated that the conflict came where the Local Authorities' legal team may not agree with the external legal advice which could be a challenge for the schools. The Committee <b>requested</b> that this is investigated further as to whether the external legal	Corporate Director - Education, Early Years and Young People	Recommendations circulated requesting response – to be provided. Chased.	

APPENDIX B

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		support was sustainable, manageable, affordable and whether the support was sufficient for today's demands on schools.			
16 January 2025	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-26 to 2028-29	The Committee requested more Information with regards to the Welsh Governments revenue support grant and Other grants that might be forthcoming.	Corporate Director - Education, Early Years and Young People	Recommendations circulated requesting response – to be provided. Chased.	
31 March 2025	School Modernisation	<p>The Committee acknowledged the need to be mindful of its own role in monitoring, managing and mitigating school modernisation projects on behalf of the local authority, so that projects are delivered on time and on budget and <b>requested</b> that a <b>strategic and forward-looking report</b> be submitted for consideration by Members at a future meeting, that would include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An <b>audit</b> of the condition of all schools in Bridgend County.</li> <li>▪ An analysis of the <b>lessons learned</b> from the school modernisation projects that have happened or in the process of being planned and built, including the impact of wider political and economic forces. The report</li> </ul>	Scrutiny / Chair SOSC 1/ Corporate Director - Education, Early Years and Young People	Scrutiny to action with Chair of SOSC 1 in Forward Work Planning meeting with Corporate Director - Education Early Years and Young People.	

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		<p>would need to consider such issues as the role and value of price caps; risk management and mitigation, including the impact of ecological ones on project timing and costs; procurement; land acquisition; the impact of design changes to projects; and project management and oversight, especially in terms of the contribution made by Cabinet and the Corporate Management Board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The future <b>demography</b> of the County Borough, and the impact of new and proposed housing developments, and the potential knock-on impact on school catchment areas and pupil numbers.</li> <li>▪ The future of school modernisation and project finance in Wales.</li> </ul>			
31 March 2025	School Modernisation	The Committee <b>recommended</b> that given the significant challenges of the population growth in the County in line with the new developments within the Local Development Plan and that Bridgend is a strategic growth	Corporate Director - Education, Early Years and Young People	Recommendations circulated requesting response	

**APPENDIX B**

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		area equidistant between Cardiff and Swansea, there is a need to address issues of future school development with the <b>Welsh Government</b> , in particular in the first instance, issues about flexibility in planning for prospective pupil numbers, and the future of Welsh Government programmes and finance for school modernisation need to be raised and discussed.			
31 March 2025	Forward Work Programme Update	<p>The Committee <b>requested</b> that the following be included in the scope of the report on <b>Pupil Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance</b> to be considered by Members at the meeting 8 May:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An update on Keeping Learners Safe including, if appropriate, any update on the proposed working group set up by the Cabinet Member regarding Pupil safety (conclusions, if any at this stage, or some clarity about the membership and workings).</li> <li>• The impact of the <b>waiting list for specialist provision</b> on challenging behaviour and exclusions at mainstream schools.</li> </ul>	Scrutiny / Corporate Director - Education, Early Years and Young People	<p><b>Actioned:</b> Scrutiny included in the report request for report to meeting on 8 May 2025</p>	Report provided to SOSC 1 meeting on 8 May 2025

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
31 March 2025	Forward Work Programme Update	<p>The Committee <b>requested</b> that the following be included in the scope of a report to be considered by Members at a meeting early in 2025/26 Forward Work Programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individual Development Plans.</li><li>• Additional Learning Needs.</li><li>• Specialist Provision</li></ul>	Scrutiny / Chair SOSC 1/ Corporate Director - Education, Early Years and Young People	Scrutiny to action with Chair of SOSC 1 in Forward Work Planning meeting with Corporate Director - Education Early Years and Young People.	
31 March 2025	Forward Work Programme Update	<p>The Committee requested that plans for the submission of the following reports and member briefings be agreed and presented in a future iteration of the FWP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School improvement plans – Meeting at the start of 2026.</li><li>• School performance - Estyn reports – Member Briefing – To include school-level detail.</li><li>• School deficits –in the form of a report to the committee or a Member Briefing.</li></ul>	Scrutiny / Chair SOSC 1/ Corporate Director - Education, Early Years and Young People	Scrutiny to action with Chair of SOSC 1 in Forward Work Planning meeting with Corporate Director - Education Early Years and Young People.	

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