

Meeting of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1

12 October 2023

Recommendations / Information requested

	Recommendations / Information Requested:	Response:
<p>Whole-School Approach to Emotional and Mental Wellbeing</p>		
<p><u>Recommendations:</u></p>		
1	<p>That an audit of schools be undertaken to identify the significant level of School Governor vacancies along with an audit of School Governor skills to assist Members in understanding what can be done to attract more people with the right skills to becoming Community School Governors, and the outcome of the audits be made available to the Committee for information in the first instance.</p>	<p>Schools (through their clerks to governors) are responsible for the advertisement and recruitment of Community School Governors and the local authority is not routinely notified of any changes when community governors join or leave.</p> <p>School governing bodies are encouraged to complete the Governor Self-Evaluation toolkit and this includes an audit of skills. The local authority is looking into the possibility of creating an online survey to collect this information (but is mindful of asking governors to complete the same information twice in different arenas)</p> <p>The local authority is only responsible for the recruitment of local authority governors.</p>
2	<p>That the Bridgend Governors' Association be requested to clarify that all School Governing Bodies are included on distribution lists for their upcoming meetings and that all Local Authority and Community Governors are circulated with the promotion of their upcoming training sessions.</p>	<p>The School Support Team is working with Pupil Services Team to try to create a suitable distribution list to reach more governors. A full distribution list is problematic due to the number of governors and GDPR considerations, so they are exploring the use of lead governors and headteachers.</p> <p>Currently (via the clerks to governors) all governors are sent the training offer from Central South Consortium and the full programme of training offer from the local authority at the beginning of each term. They are also notified of additional training sessions when they are arranged.</p>

Meeting of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1

12 October 2023

Recommendations / Information requested

	Recommendations / Information Requested:	Response:
		All training is booked and managed by Pupil Services.
3	That the Committee write a letter to Welsh Government requesting that more be done at a national level to raise the profile of / incentivise recruitment and retention of school support staff, as these important roles are significant in delivering requirements and ensuring well-being is at the forefront, however support staff are leaving to work in jobs outside the sector.	<p>A letter from the Chair of the Committee has been sent to the Welsh Minister (11 March) and a response has been received (28 March).</p> <p>https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s32057/SOSC1toWGreSchoolSupportStaff.pdf?LLL=-1</p> <p>https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s32217/ResponseTrWGHTS12Oct23.pdf?LLL=-1</p>
4	That the invaluable practice of requesting appropriate Headteacher Invitees to attend for the reports being considered by this Committee, be continued.	The Scrutiny team will continue to ensure that the presence of the appropriate Headteacher Invitees are requested to attend SOSC 1 meetings.
<u>Information Requested:</u>		
5	The document being constructed by Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Health Team to analyse the Perform and Grow Programme linked to their self-evaluation tool, for Members to get an understanding of mental well-being across the county borough.	Please refer to Appendix 1
6	A breakdown of the Welsh Government: Whole-School Approach to Emotional and Mental Wellbeing Grant received by the Local Authority referred to in the report, to include:	<p>Please refer to Appendix 2 – School based Activity</p> <p>General evaluations included on embedded document, more in-depth analysis will be ready by the end of the summer term 2024.</p>

Meeting of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1

12 October 2023

Recommendations / Information requested

Recommendations / Information Requested:	Response:
<p>a. The reasons for the increase in Activity funding during 2022-23 and the decrease in 2023-24.</p> <p>b. What the funding provides, including how many sessions of counselling and if this is sufficient.</p> <p>c. Whether there are any alternative funding streams for the Activities listed in the tables and whether they are adequately funded.</p> <p>d. The Council's contribution towards the Activities listed in the tables.</p>	<p>The funding mentioned within the document was supplied by BCBC, however, supported by the CTM UHB Healthy Schools Team, who provided other training opportunities linked to the Whole School Approach to Emotional and Mental Well-being, namely a Family Engagement Event and behaviour support training.</p> <p>Working together avoided duplication and was how we were able to cover many aspects highlighted at the start of the 2023-24 financial year WSA SET.</p> <p>The activities completed were adequately funded for the opportunities provided, however, more work needs to be completed to ensure that schools continue to implement and embed the practice. This support will continue to be provided by the schools' Healthy School practitioner.</p> <p>The Whole School Approach to Emotional and Mental Wellbeing counselling funding has enabled therapeutic staff such as counsellors and play therapists to be employed to address waiting lists for support. During the last year we funded a year 6 counsellor (24 hours per week); full time Community Counsellor; Play Therapist (6 hours per week) and a peripatetic school-based counsellor. We have estimated that approximately 53 children will be seen each month and over 200 counselling sessions undertaken. The posts have been funded via agency as recruitment and retention of counselling staff has proved challenging. We still have waiting lists for support the longest being for play therapy. Counselling is also funded via core funding and the Children and Communities Grant. However, the Children and Communities Grant is oversubscribed and this impacts on the number of therapeutic staff funded from this grant.</p>

Meeting of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1

12 October 2023

Recommendations / Information requested

	Recommendations / Information Requested:	Response:
7	The outcomes and evaluation of the review of the framework referred to in the report which was planned to ensure it was fit for purpose during late 2022.	The national review of the WSA. Please refer to Appendix 3.
8	Information regarding support mechanisms and the sickness absence procedures for staff and headteachers and their role in supporting the recruitment and retention of staff.	<p>The absence policy is being reviewed to bring in line with the Council's health and wellbeing agenda. A group of Headteachers have had the opportunity to shape the new policy.</p> <p>There is a Wellbeing Charter for staff and headteachers in schools as well as a Wellbeing guidance to assist headteachers support staff and themselves.</p> <p>The Council has a new provider for Employee Assisted Programme, Vivup which all staff have access to, and regular information emails on support and services they provide are circulated to schools. School staff have also access to the Health and Wellbeing portal on the Council intranet and Occupational Health Service.</p> <p>Since January 2024, exit interviews/surveys have been sent to all staff resigning from schools which will help inform why staff are leaving the Council, which will enable us to improve retention.</p>
9	An update on those schools that did not have breakfast clubs and the plan going forward for their provision to ensure that all learners can receive breakfast, particularly given the cost of living and the colder weather.	Recruitment exercises for supervisory staff continue fortnightly for all schools where there is currently no free breakfast provision. These schools are Trelales Primary School, Brackla Primary School and Coety Primary School. Without sufficient staff, the local authority is unable to reopen these provisions.

Meeting of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1

12 October 2023

Recommendations / Information requested

	Recommendations / Information Requested:	Response:
10	The Committee requested an update on the timescale of the publication of the Welsh Government Home to School Transport review.	A letter from the Chair of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the Welsh Ministers and response: https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31981/AppendixALettertoDeputyMinisterforClimateChange.pdf https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31979/AppendixBResponsefromWGClimateChange14December2023.pdf
11	A copy of the recently published Welsh Government Guidance and summary relating to elective Home Education, that sets out the requirements and how the interface with local authorities and parents in this area works.	Please refer to Appendix 4 https://www.gov.wales/elective-home-education-guidance