

# Education and Youth Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

15 Sept 2025

## Recommendations / Additional Information Requested

	Recommendations / Information Requested:	Response:	Accepted / Partially Accepted / Not Accepted:
<b>Mental Health and Wellbeing Support for Learners</b>			
<b>Recommendations:</b>			
<b>1</b>	Given the evidence provided by Officers and Headteachers regarding the impact of any removal of grant funding for mental health support for pupils in schools, the latter referencing that any removal would potentially be 'catastrophic'; Members <b>recommended</b> that a letter be drafted to Welsh Government from the Chair to highlight their concerns and their support for the growth bid to ensure sustainable funding for mental health support services in schools.	Scrutiny actioning with Scrutiny Chair.	Accepted.
<b>2</b>	Officers reported that in many cases pupils who moved schools often did so prior to any information regarding the pupil being shared between the schools, potentially affecting or delaying any necessary support these pupils might require to be put in place immediately. Officers reported that schools were bound by Welsh Government policy to accept a transfer immediately. The Committee therefore <b>recommended</b> that as part of the Chair's letter to Welsh Government a request be made to consider revising this policy, in order for schools to share information prior to a pupil moving to another school, so that any necessary support pupils might need can be planned for and put in place with no delay.	Scrutiny actioning with Scrutiny Chair.	Accepted.
<b>3</b>	The Committee reiterated their <b>recommendation</b> made at their May 2025 meeting asking for the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure that matters around the funding of mental health support	Recommendation already referred to COSC and Recommendation added to scope of EEYYP Deep Dive to be considered on 6 October.	Accepted.

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	<p>services such as counselling and early intervention services are prioritised in the next budget round and not considered as areas for any potential savings. This was of particular concern given the information reported by Headteachers that many schools were already using part of their delegated budgets towards this support, in addition to the grant funding. Members further <b>recommended</b> that the Education Deep Dive Group formulated as part of the Scrutiny Budget Working Group consider this area as part of their remit, exploring the current costs, what grants are potentially at risk and what future funding would be required to continue providing the necessary support to pupils.</p>		
<b>Additional Information Requested:</b>			
<b>4</b>	<p>It was agreed that any future research and data gathered in collaboration with Welsh Government on the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) programme, would be shared with Members of the Committee.</p>	Agreed.	Accepted.
<b>5</b>	<p>The Committee requested that a briefing session be held for the Committee Members to explore what support the Local Authority provide for pupils who are home schooled.</p>	Scheduling to be discussed in Forward Work Planning meeting with Chair of Committee and Corporate Director.	Accepted.
<b>6</b>	<p>The Committee requested clarification over how pupils are measured and classed as NEET (Not in Education, Employment of Training).</p>	The local authority runs a termly early identification tool known as the Vulnerability Assessment Profile (VAP). The VAP takes a range of school based, and external services	Accepted.

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		<p>information to categorise pupils' performance (red, amber or green) and their likelihood to become NEET. This information forms the basis of a panel meeting with the school to allocate lead worker support.</p> <p>The Youth Support Service also receives a monthly report from Careers Wales identifying young people who are 16 to 18year-old and NEET. This information is part of a proactive offer of support from the services Inspire 2 Work+ team.</p>	
7	<p>The Committee requested information relating to the protocol for 'Managed Moves' as well as figures showing how these were being monitored to evaluate their success.</p>	<p>New Managed Moves Protocol in place. Focus has initially been on Secondary School.</p> <p>The Managed Moves Panel monitor all Managed Moves.</p> <p>Since the implementation of the new Protocol in May 2025 there have been eight managed moves. One has been successful, two have failed and the remaining five are still within the 6-week managed move period.</p>	<p>Accepted.</p>

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8	Whilst acknowledging the development of the Family Commissioning Strategy, Members commented on the fact that this strategy very much focused on children of greatest need, who were the most vulnerable and requested clarification as to whether there was any such strategy that focused on the wider context and looked at, or picked up on, all children.	This feedback will be shared with colleagues in Social Services and Wellbeing who are the authors of the strategy.	Accepted.
<b>Forward Work Programme</b>			
9	The Committee commented on the fact that the report referred to lots of activity and outputs relating to support for pupils with mental health issues, but there was little mention of outcomes and how these were being measured. Evidence received from head teachers also highlighted that the situation seemed to be getting worse with more pupils having mental health issues. Members queried how this was known and how it was being measured. Future consideration, therefore, by the Scrutiny Committee, should incorporate how the Authority and schools are measuring and monitoring the situation and how we are evaluating the effectiveness of any support provided.	Agreed	Accepted.
<b>Information Report - Quarter 4 / Year End Performance 2024-25: Requests for additional information and progress updates</b>			
10	Members referred to DEFS 156 in the report 'Number of schools judged by Estyn to be in 'significant improvement' or 'special measures' and requested	School Improvement Partners (IPs) work collaboratively with school leaders and local authority officers	Accepted.

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	clarification as to how exactly the Local Authority monitored schools and their performance so that if a school is placed in special measures, it does not come as a big surprise.	<p>to identify strengths and areas for improvement for each school.</p> <p>This partnership is built on regular engagement and a shared commitment to raising standards. Self-evaluation is central to this process and includes a range of activities such as lesson observations, book scrutiny, listening to learners, learning walks, data analysis, and safeguarding audits.</p> <p>These activities provide a comprehensive understanding of the school's performance based on the evidence shared. Improvement plans are developed based on a thorough analysis of self-evaluation evidence.</p> <p>School leaders and IPs monitor the progress and impact of these priorities regularly.</p> <p>Officers, including IPs, update the local authority's information system to ensure accurate and current records for each school and this information is shared with schools</p>	

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		<p>annually to confirm its accuracy and support ongoing improvement.</p> <p>Where schools require additional support, this is identified promptly and provided in a timely and proportionate manner.</p> <p>In some cases, this includes regular support meetings to evaluate the impact of the support and the progress made against strategic priorities.</p> <p>These processes ensure that potential vulnerabilities are identified early, and that appropriate support is put in place to secure improvement.</p>	
11	<p>Members requested progress updates on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WBO3.4.2 'Open Welsh-medium childcare in the Ogmore Valley and Bettws, with 32 full-time-equivalent childcare places'.</li> <li>BO4.4.4 Provide a new two-form entry English-medium school to replace the existing Afon Y Felin and Corneli Primary Schools.</li> </ul>	<p>After a delay over the summer, the identified provider for Bettws has signed the required declaration that enables the building to be handed over. However, there is some contention over a grant provided by Mudiad Meithrin that is causing further delay and could put the contract in jeopardy. The local authority is working to mediate between the two parties.</p>	Accepted.

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		Interviews were held in September for the opportunity to run childcare provision from the Blackmill site and a provider has been identified. The standstill period ends on 24 October 2025 upon which the successful provider will be notified.	