

Meeting of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1

8 May 2025


Responses to Recommendations and Additional Information Requested

	Recommendations / Information Requested:	Response:	Accepted / Partially Accepted / Not Accepted:
Pupil Behaviour, Attendance and Exclusions			
Recommendations:			
1	<p>The Committee discussed the financial challenges for the local authority, the number of schools with deficit budgets and the impact these are having on the reduction of therapeutic and other support staff.</p> <p>a. Members expressed concern regarding the impact the complex budgetary situation was having on counselling and early intervention services and recommended that a referral be made to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) to ensure that these matters are prioritised for funding in the next budget round and that if budgetary savings are required that these are found elsewhere.</p> <p>b. In addition, given the adoption of a minimum operating model across all projects funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund, the directorate's Inspire+ projects, which provide vital support to vulnerable pupils and young people, many of whom face behavioural</p>	<p>a. Scrutiny actioned referral to COSC/ Scrutiny Budget Working Group.</p>	

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	challenges and/or attendance issues in both school and community settings, Members requested the figures on how the fund is split between directorates be shared with COSC / Scrutiny Budget Working Group.	 SPF Budget breakdown by Directc	
2	<p>The Committee recommended that the local authority, through the Communication and Relationships Team, other agencies and schools to explore and share best practice in respect of pupil behaviour, attendance, and exclusions. In particular, Members expressed a need to embed trauma-informed practice in schools and to promote an understanding of boundaries, values, and what it means to be part of a good school community. Members highlighted that this should take account of findings in the latest Estyn thematic report, "<i>Fostering mutual respect – promoting positive behaviours in secondary school</i>", that strong leadership, consistent behaviour management, and community engagement were key to helping improve pupil behaviour across secondary schools in Wales.</p>	<p>As part of the programme of spend to support the Improving Behaviour and Reducing Exclusions in Bridgend Schools (IBREBS), we intend to map out recommendations included across a range of national reports including:</p> <p>Fostering mutual respect – promoting positive behaviours in secondary school</p> <p>Curriculum for Wales Enabling Learning</p> <p>National Behaviour Summit 22.05.25 Behaviour in schools and colleges Wales Final Report</p>	

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		The IBREBS programme has a significant focus on trauma informed practice and providing additional training opportunities and support to both school staff and officers.	
3	The Committee recommended that training in classroom management and conflict resolution be provided as part of a programme of continuous professional development for teachers including strategies and techniques to handle disruptions and to strengthen relationships and foster a positive culture.	<p>Options to deliver whole-class behaviour management will be considered alongside the Team Teach training they already offer to all schools. Team Teach focuses on understanding the drivers of challenging behaviour, maintaining positive relationships, and providing ongoing support through resources. Nearly all schools are already Team Teach trained. Therefore, any additional whole-school training would need to work alongside and complement Team Teach.</p> <p>CART is a small team that currently provides advice, support and training to meet individual</p>	

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		pupil need, covering areas of need including speech and language support as well as support for pupils presenting with neurodevelopmental disorders.	
4	Members expressed concern about the ' <i>disparities across schools in Bridgend which suggests uneven implementation of effectiveness of attendance strategies across different school settings</i> ' and heard from headteachers that a positive school culture was best built from within at each school and an example was provided of the 'Bryntirion Way' developed at Bryntirion Comprehensive. The Committee therefore recommended that consideration be given to providing schools with an opportunity to share best practice and strategies and to develop a 'Bridgend Way' to improve the consistency of implementation of attendance strategies across the borough.	Agreed. There is a joint headteacher/local authority working group that has been in place for over two years. This group shares good practice and areas for development and has jointly developed a revised local authority attendance strategy.	

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5	<p>The Committee expressed concern regarding the impact of the long waiting lists for specialist provision at Ysgol Bryn Castell and the Bridge on the mental health, safety and wellbeing of learners awaiting such provision and learners and staff in mainstream schools and recommended that this issue be added to the Corporate Risk Register.</p>	<p>Access to Education Panel members worked with SLT at The Bridge and YBC to offer placements for 63 pupils for a September 2025 start, reducing the waiting list significantly.</p> <p>Options to consider ways to increase capacity at both settings have been considered.</p> <p>Welsh Government has approved a bid to use funds from the ALN Grant to install a double mobile classroom to expand capacity at YBC.</p> <p>Elements of the £1m additional funding will be used to support expansion of The Bridge. This includes working with the Youth Service to develop new alternative provision for secondary school age pupils.</p> <p>Good use of the management move protocol as part of the graduated response to escalating concerns, will potentially reduce</p>	

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		the number of pupils referred for support from The Bridge or YBC.	
6	<p>The Committee expressed their disappointment that given the importance of integrated working, there was no attendance from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) at the meeting and recommended that correspondence be sent to the Health Board expressing their disappointment and requesting the following information:</p> <p>a. The referral route and criteria for support from CAMHS</p> <p>and</p> <p>b. The current waiting lists and capacity.</p>	Scrutiny requested from CAMHS and chased.	
7	<p>The Committee acknowledged that the number of fixed-term exclusions in relation to care-experienced children were disproportionately high for the year 2023-24 and recommended that a report be presented to the</p>	Agreed.	

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	Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting regarding the support and guidance to learners in this situation.		
Additional information requested:			
8	The Committee acknowledged that missing data in the Tables throughout the report were due to issues of General Data Protection Regulations and requested that the missing data be shared with Members of the Committee on a confidential basis. Members also requested that the data be broken down into year groups, to assist their understanding of the extent to which these issues were affecting younger and / or older pupils.	A copy of the initial report (prior to legal advice) is provided on a CONFIDENTIAL basis and is attached to the email: '8 - CONFIDENTIAL - Exclusions by year group 24-25'.	
9	The Committee requested available data regarding the extent to which violent incidents are impacting on teaching staff sickness absence or leaving the profession.	Chased and awaiting response.	
10	The Committee requested written feedback be circulated to Members of the Committee on the outcomes from the National Behaviour Summit taking place on 22 May 2025.	The final report from the National Behaviour Summit was published on 23 July 2025.	

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		National Behaviour Summit 22.05.25 Behaviour in schools and colleges Wales Final Report	
11	The Committee requested that the slides shared by the Health and Well-being Promoting Educational Settings Programme Co-ordinator for Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board during the meeting be circulated to Members.	 BCBC Position update May 2025.pptx	Accepted
12	The Committee expressed concern that despite Welsh Government guidance advocating for trauma-informed schools, only 22% of educators in Wales reported receiving related training and requested the corresponding percentage of Bridgend educators trained, highlighting the risk that untrained staff may misinterpret trauma symptoms as defiance; potentially triggering exclusionary procedures.	We will share updated data with the Committee once we have received responses from schools.	

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13	The Committee were advised that a new Managed Moves Protocol has recently been launched so there is little data available, however, a previous Protocol was in place and Members requested those historical figures.	 Managed move data from 2021 to 2025.xls	
14	<p>The Committee requested regular updates be provided on:</p> <p>a. The work of the Weapons-Related Incidents in Bridgend Educational Settings Strategy Group.</p> <p>and</p> <p>b. Directorate-level management information on pupil behaviour, attendance and exclusions that is provided to monthly senior management team meetings.</p>	Agreed. Please schedule for subsequent Committee meetings.	
Forward Work Programme Update			
	The Committee requested that the following items be added to their FWP:	Scrutiny actioned with Scrutiny Chair in Work Planning Meeting.	

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15	<p>a. Bridgend Youth Justice Service and Youth Services.</p> <p>b. The future school modernisation planning process (to include an update on the progress of increasing specialist provision) and school maintenance.</p> <p>c. Digital learning and online safeguarding (to include the use of mobile phones/devices).</p> <p>d. A closure report on the Education and Family Support Strategic Plan, 2023-2026.</p> <p>e. Validated exam outcomes (due in January 2026).</p> <p>f. School budgets.</p>		