



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
CYNGOR BWRDEIS TREF SIROL RHONDDA CYNON TAF**

A Meeting of the **Corporate Parenting Board** will be held at the
on

12 July 2021 at 10.00 am

Contact: Hannah Williams - Council Business Unit, Democratic Services (01443 424062)

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Welcome Members and Officers to the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board. Also to receive any apologies for the meeting.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

To receive disclosures of personal interest from Members in accordance with the Code of Conduct

Note:

1. Members are requested to identify the item number and subject matter that their interest relates to and signify the nature of the personal interest: and
2. Where Members withdraw from a meeting as a consequence of the disclosure of a prejudicial interest they must notify the Chairman when they leave.

3. MINUTES

To approve, as an accurate record, the minutes of the meeting of the last meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held on the 22nd March 2021.

(Pages 5 - 8)

**4. CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD -DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME
FOR THE 2021 - 2022 MUNICIPAL YEAR**

To consider the Corporate Parenting Board Draft Work Programme for the 2021/ 2022 Municipal Year.

(Pages 9 - 16)

5. CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2020 / 2021

To Receive the Draft Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2020 / 2021.

(Pages 17 - 46)

6. YOUNG CARERS ANNUAL REPORT 2020/ 2021

To Receive the Young Carers Annual Report 2020/2021.

(Pages 47 - 58)

7. REGISTERED CHILDCARE PROVISION - QUALITY UPDATE REPORT

To receive the report of the Group Director, Community & Children's Services, providing the Corporate Parenting Board with the Registered Childcare Provision Annual Update 2020 /2021

(Pages 59 - 74)

8. PUPIL DEVELOPMENT GRANT - EVALUATION OF CLUSTER BASED MODEL.

To consider the report in respect of the Pupil Development Grant-Evaluation of cluster based model.

(Pages 75 - 118)

9. TROS GYNNAL PLANT (TGP) CYMRU

To consider the report from the Tros Gynnal Plant (TGP) providing Members with the progress report.

(Pages 119 - 140)

10. TO CONSIDER PASSING THE FOLLOWING UNDER-MENTIONED RESOLUTION:

"That the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended) for the next item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 13 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Act."

11. SOCIAL SERVICES QUARTERLY COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

To receive the report of the Group Director, Community & Children's Services providing the Corporate Parenting Board with an overview of the operation and effectiveness of the statutory Social Services complaints procedure.

(Pages 141 - 156)

12. REGULATION 73 REPORTS

To receive the report from the Group Director, Community & Children's Services, containing exempt information

Circulation:

County Borough Councillors:

Councillor C Leyshon (Chair)
Councillor G Hopkins (Vice-Chair)
Councillor J Rosser
Councillor S. Rees-Owen
Councillor E Griffiths
Councillor S Rees
Councillor L Hooper

Officers:

Paul Mee, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Christian Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Cara Miles, Childcare Solicitor
Ann-Marie Browning, Head of Children's Looked After Service
Annabel Lloyd, Service Director, Children's Services
Ceri Jones, Head of Access & Inclusion
Jayne Thomas, Complaints & QA Manager, Social Services

Tros Gynnal Plant Cymru – Electronic copy

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD
Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held on Monday, 22 March 2021
at 10.00 am .

County Borough Councillors - Corporate Parenting Board Members in attendance:-

Councillor C Leyshon (Chair)

Councillor G Hopkins Councillor J James
Councillor S. Rees-Owen Councillor E Griffiths

Officers in attendance

Mr P Mee, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Ms C Miles, Childcare Solicitor
Ms A Lloyd, Service Director, Children's Services
Ms C Jones, Head of Access & Inclusion
Ms J Thomas, Complaints & QA Manager, Social Services
Ms S Edwards, Service Manager, Children's Services

Others in attendance

29 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed the attendees to the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board and apologies for absence was received from County Borough Councillors J. Rosser and R. Yeo.

30 Declaration of Interest

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, there were no declarations made pertaining to the agenda.

31 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve as an accurate record, the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held on the 25th January 2021.

32 Fostering Service Quality of Care Annual Report 2019-20

The Service Manager thanked Members of the Corporate Parenting Board for the opportunity to present the Annual Fostering Service Quality of Care Report. Firstly the Officer apologised for the delay in presenting the report and explained that this was due to the demands of responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The Service Manager explained that the Quality of Care Report is compiled as a requirement under the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016. Regulation 52 of the Local Authority Fostering Services (Wales)

Regulations 2018. Members also acknowledged that there is a requirement to the local authority manager to put suitable arrangements in place to establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and improving the quality of service.

The Service Manager continued and informed Members of the current staffing structure of the service. It was explained that currently the service consists of four teams:

- Regional Recruitment Team;
- Placement and Assessment Team;
- Kinship Assessment Team; and
- Fostering Support Team.

In relation to the delivery of the service progress was made in relation to carer support and consultation, education and the establishment of the regional front door was very pleasing to see.

The Service Manager presented Members with an overview of the quality of Service provided across the fostering teams which can be found under the following four sections of the report:

1. People feel their voices are heard, they have choice about their care and support and opportunities are made available to them;
2. People are happy and supported to maintain their on-going health, development and overall well-being
3. People feel safe and protected from abuse and neglect; and
4. People live in accommodation the best support their well-being and achievement of their personal outcomes.

The Service Manager highlighted that foster carers are encouraged to participate in learning and development opportunities and this works both ways, during this reporting period the RCT fostering service has undertaken a series of consultation events where we have gained foster carer views and experiences in order to improve the service.

Members were also updated on the Fostering Wellbeing programme, the National Fostering Framework which Members found it pleasing to see that RCT has actively signed up to ensuring that this new framework is rolled to our carers.

The Service Manager concluded her report by explaining that RCT Children's Services will continue to ensure the support is there for children, foster carers and families and presented Members with the priorities for the year ahead which were:

- Consultations – Improve reporting systems and enhance understanding of foster carers , young people and parents experiences;
- Foster Carer Profiles – Available for young people in a child friendly format and the social workers to improve the matching process;
- Health and Education – Improve how data can be collected and contribute to the monitoring process;
- Pioneer Foster Carers – Encourage development and links with education and provide advise and guidance to foster carers;
- Parent and Child training- Encourage existing foster carers to transfer to this provision;
- Recruitment campaigns – Assess and recruit foster carers locally;
- Kinship Care – Monitor the resources available to respond to demand;

- and
- Foster Panel – Annual training event to support the Quality Assurance role of the foster panel.

The Chair thanked the officer for her report and opened up the meeting for Members questions and observations.

A Member commented that they were pleased to see the establishment of the Kinship Assessment team and explained that the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee had recently received a report in relations to Kinship Care which had be brought to the Committee from a Notice of Motion that had been presented to Council. The Member wanted reassurance from Officers that once any work had been updated on the service it would be reported back to the Scrutiny Committee for further discussion.

Another Member referred Officers to Page 18 of the report and wanted clarity in relation to the fostering wellbeing project, the Member asked if the Board could receive data to evidence the outcomes in future reporting.

After further deliberation Members **RESOLVED** to Acknowledge the content of the report and receive updates in due couse.

33 To consider passing the following under-mentioned Resolution:

It was **RESOLVED** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act (as amended) for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of the exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of the Schedule 12A of the Act.

34 Social Services Quarterly Complaints & Compliments

The Service Improvement, Engagement & Complaints Manager provided the Corporate Parenting Board with an overview of the operation of effectiveness of the statutory Social Services complaints procedure between 1st October 2020 – 31st December 2020.

The report contained information on the number of complaints received, the nature of the complaints and any lessons learnt, as well as detailing Councillor, A.M and M.P enquiries and the number of complaints received.

Following consideration, Members **RESOLVED** to acknowledge the content of the report.

This meeting closed at 11.15 am

**Cllr C Leyshon
Chairman.**

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

12th July 2021

WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATION

Author: Hannah Williams, Council Business Unit - 01443 424062

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Board with a draft Work Programme for the Corporate Parenting Board for the Municipal Year 2021/22.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 Members provide comment as appropriate on the draft work programme (which is attached as Appendix 1 to the report)
- 2.2 Subject to any amendments, Members approve the draft work programme as a basis, which can be amended to reflect any changing priorities throughout the year.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Following the Corporate Parenting Board's production of its Annual Report, the need to ensure that the areas identified as 'Going Forward' are considered by the Board.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In April 2016, the Board published its first Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Board, which provided a summary of the role and work of the Board undertaken during the 2015/16 Municipal Year.
- 4.2 As part of the report, the Board also outlined areas that it wished to consider over the 2016/17 Municipal Year, along with the usual updates that are presented to the Board in a timely manner.

- 4.3 At the meeting of the Board on the 20th July, 2016 (Minute 11) the Board agreed to the production of a work programme to assist Members with the Committees workload, although it was noted that this was to be a fluid document to be amended with changing priorities.
- 4.4 Following the successful introduction of the work programme, the Board felt it was necessary to continue the practice, to enhance transparency. Members will also have the opportunity to raise any matters that they would like to add to the programme during the year.

5. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME

- 5.1 Corporate Parenting Board 'Going Forward'. - The areas identified in the annual report by Members for consideration over the Municipal Year were:-
- a. The review of performance data
 - b. Elected Member Training opportunities
 - c. Education, Employment and Training Opportunities
 - d. The Health and Wellbeing of Young People who are Looked After and Care Leavers
 - e. Further Interaction with young people
- 5.2 The Corporate Parenting Board will receive annual updates from the following services to continue to monitor the progress, achievements, and future aspirations:
- Miskin
 - Therapeutic Families Team
 - Resilient Families Service
 - Youth Offending Service
 - Vale, Valleys & Cardiff Regional Adoption Service
 - Fostering Services Quality of Care
 - Registered Childcare Provision
 - Young Carers
 - Youth Offending Service
- 5.3 It is proposed that each of the items are put forward against a scheduled Corporate Parenting Board meeting date, although depending on changing priorities the reporting dates may be subject to change.
- 5.4 Statutory reports which will regularly be presented to Members and are not included within the Work Programme include:-
- Regulation 73 Reports
 - Compliments & Complaints Reports
 - Tros Gynnal Plant Cymru Advocacy Updates

- Child Practice Review
- CIW Inspection Reports

5.5 During the Year, the Board will continue to invite representatives from the RCT Forum to attend meetings. The Board have identified the need to strengthen their relationship with the young people whose contribution has been invaluable.

5.6 Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the social distancing and home working arrangements implemented by Welsh Government and the Council, a decision has been taken to postpone the Elected Member Frontline Visits during the 2021-22 Municipal Year. It is hoped that such arrangements will recommence when safe to do so.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 The proposed draft work programme is a fluid document, allowing the programme to be amended with changing priorities. The programme is based on factors highlighted within the Board's Annual Report and does not include the statutory updates presented to the Board.

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CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD WORK PROGRAMME 2021-2022

A draft work programme of the Corporate Parenting Board is set out below. This is a fluid document, allowing the programme to be amended with changing priorities. The programme is based on factors highlighted within the Boards Annual Report and does not include the usual updates presented to the Board, or other items Officers deem appropriate to bring forward to the Corporate Parenting Board.

REPORT	BOARD DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	STATUS / COMMENTS
Corporate Parenting Board Work Programme	July, 2021	Hannah Williams	
Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2020-21	July 2021	Hannah Williams	
Registered Childcare Provision – Annual Update 2020-21	July, 2021	Jessica Allen / Zoe Lancelott	
Young Carers Annual Report 2020-21	July, 2021	Rachel Spry/Claire Williams & Young Person	
Pupil Deprivation Grant – evaluation of cluster based model.	July, 2021	Siriol Burford, the Central South Consortium /Hannah Bevan	
Housing Offer to Care Leavers	September , 2021	Cheryl Emery	

RCT Forum	September, 2021	Chris Dunn & Young Person Representative	
Children Looked After Website Advancements Presentation	September, 2021	Ceri Mann	
Youth Offending Service Annual Report 2020- 201	September 2021	Lyndon Lewis	
Resilient Families Service – Performance Data Update 2019-20	September, 2021	Zoe Lancelott	
Miskin Annual Report and Therapeutic Families Team Annual Report 2020-21	November, 2021	Matthew Free / Jay Goulding / Sarah Longhurst	
RCT Forum	November, 2021	Chris Dunn & Young Person Representative	
PDG LAC – Offer of Online Tuition Feedback	November, 2021	Kerry Webster	
Vale, Valleys & Cardiff Regional Adoption Annual Report	January, 2022	Annabel Lloyd	
Cwm Taf Fostering Front Door - Update on developments and impact of marketing campaigns	January, 2022	Alastair Cope	

Fostering Service Quality of Care Annual Report	January, 2022	Annabel Lloyd	
Youth Offending Service Annual Report 2021-22	March, 2022	Lyndon Lewis	
Registered Childcare Provision – Annual Update 2021-22	March, 2022	Jessica Allen	
Young Carers Annual Report 2021-22	March, 2022	Rachel Spry/Claire Williams & Young Person	

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

12th July 2021

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD – ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATION

Author: Hannah Williams, Council Business Unit - 01443 424062

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Board with the Draft Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Board for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Board:

- 2.1 Provide comment as appropriate on the draft Annual Report (which is attached as Appendix 1 to the report) before its presentation to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee, and finally to Cabinet.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Under the Leader's Scheme of Delegation (the 3A) the Corporate Parenting Board, comprising of a cross party membership was formed to take the lead in ensuring that the Council fulfils its responsibilities as corporate parent's to children who are looked after and formulate Council policy in respect of children who are looked after and children in need.
- 3.2 As part of the Board's Terms of reference, the Board must report its work to the Cabinet and it has been agreed that this will take the form of an Annual Report.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The first Annual Report for the Corporate Parenting Board was produced for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

4.2 The contents of the report acted as a useful basis for a number of upcoming topics which the Members felt needed particular attention in the 2016/17 Municipal Year.

4.3 This is the sixth Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Board, which seeks to provide a summary of the role and work of the Board undertaken during the 2020/21 Municipal Year and its ambitions going forward. The report is attached as Appendix 1.

5. THE WORK OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD 2020-21

5.1 During the 2020-21 Municipal Year, the Corporate Parenting Board considered the following vast range of reports, which led to challenging discussions:

- Regulation 73 Reports
- Complaints & Compliments
- Advocacy
- Employment, Education and Training Programmes for CLA
- Independent Reviewing Officer Report
- RCT Forum
- Overview of the Community Wellbeing and Resilience Service
- Independent Sector Monitoring
- CLA Educational Outcomes Improvement Strategy
- Cwm Taf Regional Fostering Front Door Update
- Miskin Annual Report 2019-20
- Therapeutic Families Team Annual Report 2019-20
- Vale, Valleys & Cardiff Regional Adoption Annual Report 2019-20
- Fostering Service Quality of Care Report 2019-20
- Child Practice Review

5.3 The Corporate Parenting Board has developed a robust and varied [Work Programme](#) for the 2021-22 Municipal Year, to continue good practice and to enhance transparency. Members can also raise any matters that they would like to add to the programme during the year.

5.4 The following key elements of focus have been identified by the Corporate Parenting Board for the 2021-22 Municipal Year:

- The review of performance data
- Elected Member Training opportunities
- Education, Employment and Training Opportunities
- The Health and Wellbeing of Young People who are Looked After and Care Leavers
- Further Interaction with young people

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 There is no consultation required for this report.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 7.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The report has been prepared in accordance with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's constitution.

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ FUTURE GENERATIONS – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

- 9.1 The work of the Corporate Parenting Board links directly to the Council's Corporate Plan priority – 'Rhondda Cynon Taf's Children will receive a great start in life...'
- 9.2 In respect of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, the work of the Corporate Parenting Board meets the Five Ways of Working:

1. Working together with other partners to deliver objectives

The Corporate Parenting Board considers reports and presentations from various service areas of the Council. Members are aware that a number of partners and areas must contribute to tackle the range of different issues, which young people may experience, such as mental health, education and budgeting.

2. Involving those with an interest and seeking their views

The Corporate Parenting Board provide looked after young people and care leavers in RCT with the opportunity to attend meetings and have their voice heard. It allows them to promote their life experiences at a strategic, policy and legislative level and provides Members with the chance to hear first-hand experiences.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The Corporate Parenting Board Annual report outlines the work undertaken in the 2020/21 Municipal Year and features the priority

areas to consider moving forward, which will ensure that the Council provides continuous improvement to the services that it delivers for its children and young people within the Looked After System.

RHONDDA CYNON TAF
CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD
ANNUAL REPORT
2020/2021



RHONDDA CYNON TAF



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FOREWORD



Councillor Christina Leyshon
Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Chair of the Corporate Parenting Board

It is with great pleasure, that I present to you the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report for the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

The Corporate Parenting Board is the principle place within the Council for cross-party Elected Members and officers to meet on a regular basis as critical friends, to support, challenge and strive for stronger collaborative working. By creating a non-judgemental environment, both officers and Members can freely voice their opinions to ensure the best possible outcomes for the children and young people who are looked after in RCT.

As such, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to all Members of the Corporate Parenting Board, both new and longstanding; and, of course, to the officers for their ongoing support.

During the 2020/21 Municipal Year, the Corporate Parenting Board have, once again, considered a vast range of reports, which were inclusive of various stories of success. Regular updates were more important than ever as the Corporate Parenting Board sought assurance that both staff and young people were provided with support through the pandemic. We have endeavoured to ensure the pandemic has not prevented the continuation of key services and we remain committed to ensuring that the children

and young people of Rhondda Cynon Taf are safe from harm and given the care and support that they deserve, regardless of numbers.



WHAT IS THE CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD?

The concept of Corporate Parenting was introduced in 1998 by the then Secretary of State for Health, Frank Dobson, who outlined the duties of members towards Children who are Looked After: *“For children who are looked after, your council has a legal and moral duty to try to provide the kind of loyal support that any good parents would give to their children...you should do your utmost to make sure that those children in public care get a good start in life...”*

➤ LEGISLATION

- **The Children and Social Work Act 2017 set out seven corporate parenting principles, to which councils should have regard in exercising their responsibilities to looked after children and care leavers:**
 1. To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those children and young people.
 2. To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings.
 3. To take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people.
 4. To help those children and young people gain access to, and make best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners.
 5. To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people.
 6. For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work.
 7. To prepare children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

- **The goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:-**
 1. A more Equal Wales - A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic circumstances);
 2. A Healthier Wales - A society in which people’s physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood; and
 3. A Wales of Cohesive Communities - Attractive, safe, viable and well-connected.

- **The Council’s Corporate Plan ‘Making a Difference’ 2020-2024, which is guided by the Vision of making Rhondda Cynon Taf “the best place in Wales to live, work and play, where people and businesses are independent, healthy and prosperous.**
 1. PRIORITY: Ensuring **PEOPLE**: are independent, healthy and successful
- Improving services for children and young people and ensuring the needs of children are considered in everything we do.

MEET THE CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD



Councillor C Leyshon
(Chair)



Councillor G Hopkins
(Vice Chair)



Councillor J Rosser



Councillor R Yeo



Councillor E Griffiths



Councillor S Rees-Owen



Councillor J James

“As Councillors, you have a major role to play in ensuring that those children who are cared for by your council have the best care that they can possibly receive...the duty on you is to do all you can to ensure these children can be the best they can be.”

Keith Towler, Children’s Commissioner for Wales, 2009.

➤ **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

- To take the lead in ensuring that the Council fulfils its responsibilities as corporate parent to children who are looked after and formulate Council policy in respect of children who are looked after and children in need.
- To ensure that all Groups and divisions within the Council work together in order to promote best outcomes for children who are looked after and children in need.
- To promote effective relationships with key partner agencies in the best interests of children who are looked after and children in need.

- To monitor the implementation of the Action Plan arising from the Best Value Review of Services to children looked after, in addition to monitoring outcomes for children looked after and children in need.
- To consider the outcomes and promote positive learning practices following consideration of Child Practice Reviews
- In accordance with HMIP to routinely review the offending rates of CLA by gender to ensure that the Corporate Parenting Board understand patterns of offending by girls and are able to take actions to address where necessary.
- To consider the impact of relevant other systems/agencies (e.g. health, courts, schools) and see how these could be improved.
- To seek the views of children looked after - the advocacy service will be asked to facilitate.
- To invite representatives from other agencies to attend as appropriate.
- To report directly to Cabinet through an Annual report of the Board.

CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF

Children Looked After remains a key priority and the Council continues to strive for a safe reduction in Children Looked After numbers and to deliver the best possible outcomes for the children and young people.

As at the 31st March 2021, there were a total of 694 children and young people within the Local Authority's care. The demographic has been broken down and compared to that of the previous year in the tables below.

Children Looked After by Age Group

Age Band	Total as at 31/03/2021	Total as at 31/03/2020
0-3	124	129
4-7	121	128
8-11	170	164
12-14	144	137
15	41	49
16	47	44
17	47	66
Total	<u>694</u>	<u>717</u>

Figures show that the highest age band remains at 8-11 years.

Children Looked After by Gender

Gender	Total as at 31/03/21	Total as at 31/03/2020
Female	297	303
Male	397	414
Total	<u>694</u>	<u>717</u>

The Gender figures show that as at 31st March 2021, 100 more males than females remain within the Local Authority's care, which is consistent with the figures from March 2020, where there were 111 more males than females.

Children Looked After by Placement Type

CLA Placement Type	Total as at 31/03/2021	Total as at 31/03/2020
Independent Sector Foster Placement	139	161
RCT Foster Carers	167	161
RCT Relative Foster Carers	234	233
Placed for Adoption	16	22
Placed with Parents	73	70
Education Placement	2	1
Other Lodgings	1	6
Independent Sector Residential Sector	50	53
RCT Residential Care	11	10
Secure	1	0
Total	<u>694</u>	<u>717</u>

It is recognised that each young person has a plethora of needs and that the most suitable placement type is unique to the individual.

The data shows that most children and young people within Rhondda Cynon Taf are placed in foster placements, and in particular, with Relative Foster Carers.

Where safe and possible to do so, children and young people are placed with their parents.

It is noted that a key priority of the Regional Adoption Collaboration is to increase its supply of adopters.

UPDATES TO THE CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

➤ **REGULATION 73 REPORTS**

Regular updates are presented to the Corporate Parenting Board in respect of the current position of the residential Children's Homes and respite service. The reports are exempt to ensure that the Board receive a detailed picture of the goings on at each home, and are inclusive of case studies, which inform us of the everyday challenges faced by our hardworking staff, any areas of concern and, of course, the wellbeing of the children who occupy the homes.

Each of the reports received during the Municipal Year, provided the Corporate Parenting Board with honest and reliable feedback from the young people who occupy the homes and further insight into the particular challenges associated with looking after and trying to develop young people who have been disadvantaged.

➤ **SOCIAL SERVICES COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS**

The Corporate Parenting Board receives quarterly updates in respect of the operation and effectiveness of the statutory Social Services complaints and compliments procedure. At each meeting, Members monitor the number of complaints received, the nature of the complaints and any lessons learnt, along with noting those enquiries received from Elected Members, A.M's and M.P's.

The importance of feedback from those who use the services is invaluable to the Corporate Parenting Board. During the year, Members were provided with detailed and honest feedback in response to questions around the updates. It was pleasing to note that the service had been used by Elected Members and A.M and M.P colleagues, which builds upon the already strong relationship with officers.

➤ **ADVOCACY**

Following the appointment of Tros Gynnal Plant (TGP) Cymru as the Local Authority's advocacy service, the Corporate Parenting Board have received regular and informative updates at its meetings. The Board are provided with a detailed breakdown of issues by age, gender, referral source and type, along with information on the take up of the active offer. This information enables both TGP Cymru and Children Services to discuss issues that affect service delivery in the community on a strategic level and to work in partnership to provide improved and better outcomes.

It was particularly pleased to note that during the January 2021 update, there had been a 55% increase in young people referred for advocacy support, a 41% increase on Active Offer referrals and a 65% increase on advocacy issues.

The Board had previously raised questions regarding the ethnicity of those using the service and were pleased to note that the service was moving in the right direction with an increase in mixed race and Asian users.

[More information on the services provided by Tros Gynnal Plant \(TGP\) Cymru can be found here.](#)

➤ **Employment, Education and Training Programmes for CLA**

Although not a statutory requirement, it has been customary in recent years, for the Corporate Parenting Board to receive an annual update in respect of the Council's dedicated programmes to support Children Looked After, Care Leavers and those with care and support needs into employment, education and training and support the transition into independent living.

The Corporate Parenting Board were provided with the following breakdown of outcomes from April 2019 – March 2020 in respect of the Step in the Right Direction, Care2Work and Cater2Work programmes:

Step in the Right Direction	Care2Work	Cater2Work
Trainees Recruited – 11	Referrals Received – 58	Number of Cohorts – 6 (each cohort is for 10 weeks)
Trainee Placements Secured - 19	Enrolments – 39	Number of participants – 15
Trainees securing employment in RCT Council - 9	Training/Further Learning/Education – 26	Training/Further Learning/Education – 8
Trainees securing employment externally - 2	Employment Outcomes - 5	Employment - 1

➤ **INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER UPDATES**

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (referred to as the SSWB Act) and the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (Wales) Regulations 2015 and 16 (referred to as the CPPCR Regulations) provide legislation and guidance pertaining to the role and functions of an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO). The Adoption and Children Act 2002 requires the Local Authority to appoint Independent Reviewing Officers to conduct reviews for Children who are Looked After and monitor the Local Authority's performance in relation to implementing the care plans for individual children. As such, regular reports are presented to the Board to monitor the activities of the IRO service.

➤ **RCT FORUM**

The RCT Forum provides looked after young people and care leavers in RCT with opportunities to have their voice heard and to enable their life experiences to contribute at a strategic, policy and legislative level both locally and nationally.

During the Municipal Year, the RCT Forum attended a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board to provide a summary of activity during April 2019 – March 2020. The Forum engaged with 32 care experienced children and young people in RCT, through monthly sessions focused on three main areas:

- a) Developing information resources from care experienced young people;
- b) Undertaking a training to become peer mentors who deliver wellbeing and self-care training to their peers; and
- c) A creative writing project focusing on mental health.

Receiving such feedback on the services provided by the Council for Children who are Looked After and care leavers to the Board is fundamental in helping the Board ensure that the provisions and support provided by the Council are adding benefit to the people that require them, and to ensure that the young people within the service are treated as equal to those young people outside of the service.

➤ **OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY WELLBEING AND RESILLIENCE SERVICE**

In November 2017, the Cwm Taf Public Services Board (PSB) agreed to work with the Welsh Government to undertake a joint collaborative approach to redesigning Early

Years arrangements across Cwm Taf. The aim of the work was to reconstruct the Early Years and Flying Start service, to create an integrated delivery model.

Receiving updates allows the Corporate Parenting Board to compare the annual data and to monitor the progress and impact of the service.

[More information on the Resilient Families Service can be accessed here.](#)

➤ **INDEPENDENT SECTOR PLACEMENTS MONITORING**

Our priority is to place children in the most suitable placement to meet their needs. However, to offer a range of suitable placement accommodation for Children looked after and to meet the increase in demand, it is necessary for RCT to commission placements with external fostering and residential providers, in addition to the in-house placement capacity.

External placement provision is provided by agencies which are either voluntary organisations, not for profit companies or private for profit companies. The Children's Commissioning Consortium Cymru provides support to all local authorities across Wales to manage the process of commissioning and monitoring providers on the All Wales Frameworks.

An annual update of RCT external placement activity is received by the Corporate Parenting Board, which highlights gaps in information available to 4c's, for Members to compile a full analysis of external placement provision.

➤ **CWM TAF REGIONAL FOSTERING FRONT DOOR**

The recruitment of mainstream foster carers remains a national challenge. As such, the Regional front door for Fostering recruitment was established in April 2019 as a joint collaboration between RCT CBC and Merthyr Tydfil CBC to address some of the concerns about the numbers of foster carers recruited, the speediness of responses to enquires and the quality of recruitment work being undertaken. The primary objective of the team is to achieve a net gain in approved mainstream foster carers.

In order to monitor the progress of the service, the Corporate Parenting Board receive an analysis of key performance data and details on the future developments of the service.

[More information on the Cwm Taf Regional Fostering Front Door service can be accessed here.](#)

➤ CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER 2019-2020 DATA AND EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY

It is noted that RCT has many Children Looked After, in comparison to other Local Authorities and that there are various risk factors which can adversely impact the educational outcomes of Children Looked After. Notwithstanding that, improving the educational attainment of Children Looked After remains a key focus of the Corporate Parenting Board and each year, Members receive performance data for the previous academic year.

Summary of Data for the academic year 2019-2020*

1. Incidents of Fixed Term (FT) Exclusions in Autumn and Spring term 2019/2020 involving RCT Children who are Looked After:

Cohort	Number of FT exclusions	Number of students with a FT exclusion	Cohort of pupils of statutory school age	% of statutory school aged pupils excluded
CLA	81	47	522	9%
Non CLA	1428	889	33,186	2.7%

Source: Plasc Jan 20 (33,708)

2. Attendance Levels of Children who are Looked between 02/09/2019 and 20/03/2020 compared with Non CLA:

Overall attendance in RCT schools	
CLA pupils	Non CLA pupils
93%	92%
Primary school attendance	
95.9%	93.3%
Secondary school attendance	

91%	91.4%
Through school attendance	
90.9%	90.8%
Special school attendance	
95%	88.1%

- 3. In response to the disrupted educational experience due to COVID -19, PDG LAC money provided an offer of online tuition in Maths or English for all Key Stage 4 pupils taking exams. Pupils who engaged with tuition in Years 10 and 11:**

Year group	No of pupils participating
11	16 out of 25 eligible pupils
10	23 out of 31 eligible pupils

**Note: Any overall data for the academic year 2019 – 2020 needs to be viewed with caution due to the impact of school closures in Summer Term 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic which means that direct comparisons with previous academic years are not possible.*

Further to the performance data update, the Corporate Parenting Board received information on a recent paper commissioned by Welsh Government: [An Integrated approach to improving educational outcomes for Children Looked After](#), which had been long requested by Members.

The report considers integrated Local Authority approaches to supporting CLA, with a particular focus upon how the Virtual School model in England and Scotland could be used as a basis for local authorities in Wales to promote the educational achievement of CLA.

Following a recommendation put forward to Welsh Government to establish Virtual Schools, all Local Authorities had been part of a discussion to consider its area's needs. In the context of RCT, it was the view that the introduction of a virtual school head would not only increase capacity within the local authority in relation to supporting educational outcomes but would provide an enhanced voice to advocate for CLA pupils at a senior management level in education – strengthening the corporate parenting role.

[More information on the Improvement Strategy in relation to RCT can be accessed here.](#)

➤ **MISKIN**

Miskin delivers intensive family focused evidence-based interventions, which aim to improve parenting capacity to enable families to care for their children with the minimum statutory intervention. Services are delivered through individual, family, group work and holiday programmes.

The focus of the Service includes:

- High level of need, and if intensive supports are not provided the child/children are at risk of being accommodated;
- Family need an intensive period of support for child/children to return to their care;
- High level of assessed need for a child looked after, risk of placement breakdown without intensive support; and
- Child looked after requires support to return from an out of county placement to either home or a more local placement.

The Corporate Parenting Board receive annual updates in respect of the Miskin service, to monitor the effectiveness of the service, particularly at a time when demand exceeds capacity.

➤ **THERAPEUTIC FAMILIES TEAM**

The Therapeutic Families Team (TFT) is a multidisciplinary team, created to offer consultation, therapeutic assessments and interventions to children and families in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Recently established, the Team works with:

- Families assessed as high need where support from the Families Therapeutic Team would add value to the Resilient Families Service intervention;
- Family receiving a service from statutory Children's Services and child/ren assessed as being at risk of becoming Children Looked After (CLA); Children Looked After whose placement has been assessed as being at risk of breakdown where therapeutic support could promote placement stability;

- Children Looked After who require therapeutic support to assist in a return home to live with parents/family/friends or live independently;
- Children Looked After placed out of county who require therapeutic support to assist in moving to local placements; and
- Families assessed as high need where support from the Families Therapeutic Team would add value to the statutory Children's Services intervention.

The Corporate Parenting Board received the first annual report of the Therapeutic Families Team and will continue to monitor the positive outcomes achieved following its first year of operation.

➤ **VALE, VALLEYS & CARDIFF REGIONAL ADOPTION ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20**

Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Adoption Collaborative (VVC) provides a regional adoption service to the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Cardiff Council and Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council. VVC is one of the five regional Collaboratives which form part of the National Adoption Service in Wales (NAS). All adoption services are required to provide an annual review of their service as set out in Regulation 22 of the Local Authority Adoption Service (Wales) Regulations 2007.

The supply of adopters remains a challenge for Local Authorities and as such, receiving the annual data and strategies for improvement of the Regional Adoption Service is vital to the Corporate Parenting Board.

The report was also considered in depth by the Council's [Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee](#).

➤ **FOSTERING SERVICE QUALITY OF CARE ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20**

The Fostering Service Quality of Care Annual Report is compiled as required under the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016. Regulation 52 of the Local Authority Fostering Services (Wales) Regulations 2018 also requires the Local Authority Manager to put suitable arrangements in place to establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and improving the quality of service.

The Corporate Parenting Board monitored the progress in relation to carer support and consultation, education, establishing the Regional Front Door Service and the priorities for the year ahead.

➤ **CHILD PRACTICE REVIEW**

A Child Practice Review is conducted in line with the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Children Board's duties under Working Together to Safeguard People Volume 3) which is issued under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

The process is focussed on positive outcomes for children and young people through learning lessons to improve multi agency safeguarding practice. It includes different types of reviews; concise and extended as well as multi agency practitioner forums. A panel established for the purpose conducts the review. The timeframe for such reviews is usually 12 months extending to 24 months in specific circumstances.

During the Municipal Year, the Corporate Parenting Board received the outcome of one Child Practice Review.

THE CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD – MOVING FORWARD

In the 2021/22 Municipal Year, key areas of focus of the Corporate Parenting Board will include:

➤ **REGULAR PERFORMANCE DATA**

It is essential that the Corporate Parenting Board regularly receive the qualitative data and statutory updates. The monitoring of regular performance data allows the Corporate Parenting Board to effectively analyse key areas and determine ways to further improve and enhance the services the Council provides provide. The updates will include:

- Regulation 73 Reports
- Complaints & Compliments
- Advocacy Updates
- CIW Inspections reports of the Children's Homes
- Child Practice Review

The Corporate Parenting Board will receive annual updates from the following services to continue to monitor the progress, achievements, and future aspirations:

- Miskin
- Therapeutic Families Team
- Resilient Families Service
- Youth Offending Service
- Vale, Valleys & Cardiff Regional Adoption Service
- Fostering Services Quality of Care
- Registered Childcare Provision
- Young Carers
- Youth Offending Service

➤ INTERACTION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

The Corporate Parenting Board welcome the attendance of looked after young people and care leavers at its meetings and recognise that their voice must be at the centre of all discussions. Often, the Board receive reports containing data and statistics, but there is nothing more important than hearing the first-hand experiences from the young person. Encouraging their participation will be key moving forward as it can often provide Members with a different perspective and further insight into the areas where improvements need to be made.

In 2018, RCT Children Services supported children who were looked after to complete the Your Life, Your Care Survey. The survey had been developed through the Bright Spots Programme to measure the well-being of children looked after.

Following the survey, the following areas of improvement were identified:

‘Social workers need to:

- *Ensure that children and young people understand who they are.*
- *Work with children and young people to involve them in decisions.*
- *Explain to every child why they are in care and regularly review this with them to establish if they would like more information.*
- *Continue to communicate with schools to identify and help children who feel bullied at school and those who feel that they do not have a good friend.*
- *Give carers further training in therapeutic parenting.*
- *Consider not just organised activities but contact with nature when reviewing opportunities to have fun/hobbies*
- *Regularly review contact plans taking into account children and young people’s wishes and feelings*
- *Be aware of gender difference and give opportunities to young people (11-18 years) to build self-esteem and a positive self-image.’*

The Corporate Parenting Board will monitor the implementation of the areas identified to ensure that they have been incorporated into improvement plans; and welcome further updates from future surveys, which would be conducted on a two year basis.

➤ **EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**

The Corporate Parenting Board recognise the educational disadvantages often experienced by young people who are looked after, which can have an adverse effect on opportunities moving into higher education and into adulthood.

The Corporate Parenting Board will focus on:

- Welsh Government's 'Virtual School' proposal and its benefits for the young people in RCT;
- Post-16 education, employment, and training opportunities for CLA; and
- Pupil Development Grant – An evaluation of the Cluster Based Model.

➤ **THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE LOOKED AFTER AND CARE LEAVERS**

In the Cwm Taf Statement of Intent for Children and Young People: 'A Shared Regional Strategy for Supporting Children, Young People and Families', emotional wellbeing was identified as a priority for improvement to better meet the needs of children and young people with complex needs.

Over the years, the Corporate Parenting Board and colleagues from Scrutiny have raised concerns regarding the level of services available to our young people and it is recognised that mental health has never been so important as we exit the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Corporate Parenting Board will focus on the provision available and the progress made by the Children and Young Persons Group to action the priorities of the Regional Strategy.

➤ **ELECTED MEMBER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**

It is recognised that the role of the Corporate Parent is a collective duty of the Council as a whole and as such, refresher training is welcomed to Board Members and to all Elected Members of the Council to further enhance knowledge and to strengthen the Council's commitment to the children and young people within our care.

➤ **THE WORK OF WELSH GOVERNMENT TO STRENGTHEN AND EXTEND CORPORATE PARENTING**

The Programme for Government, [Taking Wales Forward](#), commits to “examine ways of ensuring looked after children enjoy the same life chances as other children and if necessary reform the way they are looked after”. As part of its focus, Welsh Government policy intent is to strengthen corporate parenting across all departments within the local authority, which will enable better partnership between services to enhance the outcomes for Children Looked After.

The Corporate Parenting Board welcome future updates in relation to the work and the opportunity to consider any amendments to its Terms of Reference.

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD WORK PROGRAMME 2021-2022

A 2021-22 work programme for the Corporate Parenting Board is set out below. The work programme is a fluid document, which can be amended by Members at any given point to accommodate a change in priorities. The programme is based on factors highlighted within the Board's Annual Report and does not include the statutory updates presented to the Board.

REPORT	DATE
Corporate Parenting Board Work Programme	July, 2021
Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2020-21	July 2021
Youth Offending Service Annual Report 2020-21	July, 2021
Registered Childcare Provision – Annual Update 2020-21	July, 2021
Young Carers Annual Report 2020-21 <i>and attendance of a young carer</i>	July, 2021
Pupil Deprivation Grant – evaluation of cluster based model.	July, 2021
Housing Offer to Care Leavers	July, 2021
RCT Forum	September, 2021
Children Looked After Website Advancements Presentation	September, 2021
Resilient Families Service – Performance Data Update 2019-20	September, 2021
Bright Spots Survey Implementation Progress and Results	September 2021
Miskin Annual Report and Therapeutic Families Team Annual Report 2020-21	November, 2021
Mental Health Provision for CLA and the progress of the priorities identified within the Cwm Taf Statement of Intent for Children and Young People: 'A Shared Regional Strategy for Supporting Children, Young People and Families'	November, 2021
PDG LAC – Offer of Online Tuition Feedback	November, 2021

Employment, Education and Training Programmes <i>and attendance of young person who has accessed the service.</i>	November, 2021
Vale, Valleys & Cardiff Regional Adoption Annual Report	January, 2022
Cwm Taf Fostering Front Door - Update on developments and impact of marketing campaigns	January, 2022
Fostering Service Quality of Care Annual Report	January, 2022
Youth Offending Service Annual Report 2021-22	March, 2022
Registered Childcare Provision – Annual Update 2021-22	March, 2022
Young Carers Annual Report 2021-22	March, 2022

CONCLUSION

Thank you for taking the time to read the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report for the 2020/21 Municipal Year. The report seeks to highlight the scope of work undertaken during the past year and the Council's ongoing commitment to improving the outcomes for the children and young people who are looked after in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

In the 2020/21 Municipal Year, the Corporate Parenting Board will ensure that a full and varied work programme is set, which will focus on the above-mentioned reports, as well as any other topical or urgent business which may arise.

We will continue to seek the best possible outcomes for the children and young people in our care. Despite uncertain times and the national rise in the number of children who are becoming looked after, the Corporate Parenting Board and the Council as a whole are committed to its safeguarding duties.



Councillor Christina Leyshon
Chair, Corporate Parenting Board;
Cabinet Member for Children & Young People

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

12th JULY 2021

REPORT OF DIRECTOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES: YOUNG CARERS AND YOUNG ADULT CARERS REPORT

Author(s): Mari Ropstad, Service Manager – Carers, Engagement and Direct Payments

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Corporate Parenting Board members with an update on the work with young carers in RCT, particularly during the pandemic.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Acknowledge the information contained within the report.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 This is an information report.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 As part of several reviews carried out in 2018 of carer support services in RCT, the Young Carers Service was developed to fit into an all-age support model for unpaid carers.
- 4.2 Most notably, the assessment function for young carers and sibling carers was brought into the wider Information, Advice and Assistance Service for children and young people to meet statutory requirements.
- 4.3 ICF funding was successfully obtained to create an all-age Carers Hub centrally in Pontypridd. It is anticipated that this refurbished space will become the base for both the Carers Support Project and the commissioned young carer support service from September 2021.
- 4.3 The support service for young carers (aged 5-17) continues to be provided on a commissioned basis by Action for Children. Specific

support is available via an externally funded post for Young Adult Carers (aged 18-25). Sibling carers (children whose sibling has additional needs) receive limited support via the Carers Support Project.

4.4 The full report for RCT Young Carers and Young Adult Carers 2020/2021 is attached in Appendix 1. Members may wish to note the below key details:

- The young carers support service changed their support during the pandemic to provide more one-to-one session instead of group support. The most vulnerable were prioritised. At times when restrictions were eased, they were able to bring young carers together in smaller groups. Online support has worked well for the older young carers (aged 11+) but is not a substitute for face-to-face support.
- Referral rates for assessment of young carers dropped during the lockdowns and were closely linked to whether or not the schools were open. During Q1 2021/2022 the referral rate was above average.
- Securing online access for young carers was a priority during the pandemic and was achieved in many ways, including liaising with schools, delivering Chromebooks with mobile Wi-Fi and facilitating grant schemes for purchase of digital equipment.
- Efforts are being made to secure ongoing funding and resources to deliver specific support to sibling carers, who often have different needs to young carers. During 2021/2022 a pilot project will be funded to deliver outcome-focussed support over an intensive 6-week period. The course will concentrate on emotional wellbeing.
- RCT launched the Young Carer Card in March 2021. The card is a Wales-wide initiative led by Welsh Government and RCT were one of the early adopters of the scheme. A promotional video was launched during Carers Week 2021. The card allows young carers to highlight their role to education and health professionals without needing to tell their full story, and in time it is envisaged the card could be used to receive discounts and other benefits.

4.5 The Cwm Taf Morgannwg report on the regional work carried out during 2020/2021 is attached as Appendix 2 for information.

5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This is an information report.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 This is an information report.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

7.1 There are no direct financial implications aligned to this report.

8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

8.1 The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 came into force in April 2016 and is intended to transform the way services are delivered. It repeals the majority of community care legislation including the Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010.

8.2 The newly published National Plan for Unpaid Carers will become important for developing strategies and delivering support to carers of all ages going forward.

9 LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ FUTURE GENERATIONS – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

9.2 The business covered in this report contributes to the following well-being goals:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales.
- A healthier Wales.
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A globally responsible Wales

10 CONCLUSION

10.1 Young carers were significantly affected by the pandemic and support services going forward will need to focus on dealing with the ongoing consequences.

10.2 Work to adopt an all-age cohesive service approach to unpaid carers will continue, with the commissioned young carers service due to co-locate with the Carers Support Project from September 2021.

10.3 The new National Plan for Unpaid Carers will inform regional and local carers strategies and priorities.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

JULY 2021

APPENDICIES

Appendix 1 – RCT Young Carers and Young Adult Carers Annual Report
20/21

Appendix 2 – [Cwm Taf Morgannwg Carers End of Year Progress Report 220
– 2021](#)

Annual report
2020/2021

RCT Young Carers and Young Adult Carers



Mari Ropstad
Service Manager - Carers
Annual report 2020/2021

OVERVIEW

The last year has been a challenging and different one. With the global pandemic it has been necessary to adapt working practices and finding new ways of supporting young carers. Many young carers have also found their roles have changed significantly with many required to do more. In some instances, this has been coupled with additional anxiety in terms of catching or spreading the virus, as well as additional pressure to keep on top of schoolwork with distance learning. Our support services have tried to adapt by offering more individual sessions throughout the year, providing continued breaks for young carers in smaller groups when restrictions allowed and delivering food parcels and care packages.

This report attempts to summarise the support provided to young carers (aged 0-17) and young adult carers (aged 18-25) during a turbulent year and recognise some of the key developments achieved despite extremely challenging circumstances.

BACKGROUND

The Young Carers Service now sits within the wider all-age Carers Support Project following a review and restructure carried out towards the end of 2018/2019. The review identified a need for a strategic lead for carers within the authority and the Service Manager for Carers now has responsibility for all carer issues, including young carers, young adult carers and adult carers.

The restructure resulted in changes to the support provided to young carers. The service still has a dedicated Young Carer Assessor who now sits within the wider Information, Advice and Assistance function of Children's Services. This is to ensure that statutory obligations are met in terms of assessment and monitoring of young carers.

Staff within the Carers Support Project who were previously working with specific groups of carers (such as parent carers and sibling carers) are now working across all carer services and the project has absorbed the young carer work as part of the all-age carer support.

It was also recognised that greater integration was required with the third-sector commissioned young carers support service (currently provided by Action for Children) so this service will be integrated with the Carers Support Project in Gelliwastad Road once restrictions allow.

The support for young adult carers (aged 18-25) continues to be provided by a dedicated part-time worker, funded via the Families First grant. This funding has not yet been confirmed for 2021/2022.

YOUNG CARER SUPPORT SERVICE

The young carer support service is currently provided by Action for Children. From March 2020, when the first lockdown was announced, the service has been based primarily on virtual support with individual face-to-face support for the most

vulnerable young carers. The below year-on-year statistics illustrate how the service has changed:

	2018	2019	2020
April-June			
Number of referrals	11	10	4
1-to-1 sessions	19	5	62
Group work	24	27	8
July-September			
Number of referrals	15	14	11
1-to-1 sessions	17	6	5
Group work	21	18	20
October-December			
Number of referrals	9	12	8
1-to-1 sessions	12	4	29
Group work	18	18	20
January-March			
Number of referrals	5	10	11
1-to-1 sessions	18	8	12
Group work	27	27	24

There were several challenges to overcome for the staff and young carers:

- Not everyone had access to a computer or a digital device.
- Not all families had Wi-Fi to join in the virtual sessions or didn't have enough data on phones.
- Some young carers do not like engaging over Teams/Zoom.
- There were travel restrictions to consider when dropping off equipment and some staff had to self-isolate.
- Generally, the caring roles of young carers known to the project increased due to the lockdowns and being at home 24/7. This also impacted on their health and wellbeing.

The virtual groups allowed young carers to have contact with staff and peers and receive support if they needed it. This was combined with socially distanced one-to-one individual support, often face-to-face, for the most vulnerable young carers. Wellbeing visits were also made to families as required, following all restrictions and guidelines.

In between lockdown periods, Action for Children were able to re-start group sessions to provide a break away from home for some young carers. These groups have been smaller than normal groups and transport has been an issue for many as staff were not able to carry passengers in their cars as they would normally.

Every month from March 2020, Action for Children staff have posted out different care packages, including games, equipment, treats and gifts to young carers to help them through a very difficult time.

Many families were struggling financially, and Action for Children applied for more than £2,000 worth of grants their own Action for Children Covid Appeal. Through these grants families were able to purchase essential items such as gas, electric and food.

Many families were also unable to get shopping and staff supported with collections and deliveries, including collection prescriptions from families.

YOUNG CARER ASSESSMENTS

There is a dedicated worker responsible for assessing young carers who is located within the children's services Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) team. This means we can ensure statutory obligations are met for assessing and supporting young carers with greater ease and accuracy.

Referrals received

Q1 Apr-Jun	10
Q2 Jul-Sep	16
Q3 Oct-Dec	28
Q4 Jan-Mar	34
TOTAL	88

Referrals during the first two quarters were significantly lower than average due to the lockdown beginning, schools being closed and not as much contact with families.

Once schools returned in Q3 the referrals picked up again. More agencies were having contact with families again and this referral rate was above average for a quarter. The lack of awareness-raising in schools has likely contributed to the reduced referral rate.

So far for Q1 2021/2022, around 35 referrals have been received which is well above average.

Source of referrals

Children's Services	14
Resilient families	16
Family	14
School	12
Disabled Children's Team	7
Health	8
College	3
YEPS service	3
Adult Services	5
Carers Support Project/Young Carers Project	5
Miskin	1

A total of 113 reviews were completed during the year, mainly over the telephone due to the need to prioritise visits during lockdown restrictions. Overall, little progress have been made on support plans as the majority of support sessions have taken place online and this causes issues for many young carers due to access to IT, reliance on parents/carers to set equipment up or little confidence in engaging online.

Work during Covid-19

During initial lockdown period, most of the assessor's work involved carrying out welfare calls to the most vulnerable families, ensuring they had access to food and medical supplies.

Assessments were completed over the phone which was not ideal in terms of forming a relationship with the family, but any immediate needs were identified and support or referrals were provided.

Reviews were completed over the phone which was a way of carrying out welfare checks and identifying any support needed.

This period also involved a lot of work with the schools as many young carers didn't have the IT equipment needed to complete their online education. Many schools classed young carers as being vulnerable and loaned IT equipment out or arranged for work to be sent to their homes. It is likely our prior work on setting up and promoting the Young Carer Schools Award programme has contributed to increased awareness in schools of young carers and the reasons why they are vulnerable.

The emotional and wellbeing support offered to the young carers increased once visits (with appropriate PPE) could be carried out.

Most schools returned in September, but several young carers experienced a lot of anxiety about returning to school. Some were anxious about picking up the virus in school and infecting their vulnerable relatives and some had become even more isolated than they were pre-Covid and couldn't contemplate returning to a busy, noisy environment. A lot of joint working was completed with school staff to arrange flexible and staggered returns. Some young carers continued to work online. Some young carers have not yet returned to school due to the very vulnerable nature/health of their parent and schools continue to provide welfare calls to these families.

SIBLING CARERS

Sibling carers (those helping to care for a sibling with additional needs) continue to receive a limited specific support service via the Carers Support Project. Normally activities would be planned for school holiday periods to allow the sibling carers to spend some quality time with a parent and meet other children in a similar situation. During the pandemic, the support has been provided at a distance with welfare calls and delivery of Boredom Buster packs. During the autumn we were successful in obtaining some grant funding to allow us to plan and run a 10-week wellbeing course called Project S, focused on emotional wellbeing and resilience. This course allowed

11 sibling carers to attend regular Zoom sessions and completing tasks in their workbook in between. All who completed received a prize at the end.

Funding has been obtained to carry out a pilot project during 2021/2022 with sibling carers. They are offered the opportunity to engage in a 6-week programme focusing on the social and emotional aspects of being a sibling carer. There will be three programmes running during the year and sibling carers will have the opportunity to attend the programme twice in accordance with their identified needs. The programme will be a targeted package of support and aim to meet the needs of sibling carers identified at assessment stage. The young person will complete a pre/post evaluation to see if they have achieved outcomes set out in their support plan.

YOUNG ADULT CARERS SERVICE

The Young Adult Carer (YAC) Service has a dedicated part-time worker who is funded via a Families First grant. The worker is responsible for assessing the members of the group, which is currently 88, to provide evidence of how the service helps them develop resilience and mental wellbeing. The aim of the service is to support YACs with personal growth through educational workshops and some social events. It also provides a break from the caring role and a chance to learn new skills.

The service has been delivered exclusively online from March 2020 and young adult carers (YACs) have been provided with information and assistance via their closed Facebook group. A number of events have taken place to help support YACs through this difficult time and provide some light relief from caring, including mindfulness sessions, yoga, baking workshops, anxiety workshops and quiz nights.

The YAC service also supports the Caring and Supporting Each Other (CASE) group, which was set up as a charitable community interest group by the YACs. The CASE group has successfully applied for funding from the regional carers grant to allow them to organise a programme of educational and skills workshops this year, including a wellbeing festival, cooking skills, budgeting workshops, CV writing and how to write grant applications.

CARERS HUB

Following the restructure of the carers services in RCT, the Carers Support Project office in Gelliwastad Road required refurbishment in order to accommodate additional staff from Action for Children and making it suitable as a permanent office space. RCT Council invested in the refurbishment, installing a kitchen and re-designing the room layout to allow Action for Children their own room within the office.

A capital grant was awarded via the Intermediate Care Fund to allow the newly refurbished office to be used as a Carers Hub for carers of all ages in RCT. Items such as soft seating, a projector and screen, tables and chairs, soft furnishings, external signage and window transfers, a TV and kitchenware was funded by the grant to allow workshops, social events, skills sessions and young carer groups to use the space on a regular basis once restrictions allow.

YOUNG CARER ID CARDS

RCT Council are an early adopter for the Welsh Government's national ID card scheme for young carers. Our Young Carer Card was officially launched on Young Carer Action Day on 16th March 2021 and a promotional video was released during Carers Week in June. The videos are available here:

Welsh version: <https://youtu.be/fui0ePeRiQM>

English version: <https://youtu.be/1V3WxVBH6RA>

To date 36 cards have been issued to young carers in RCT. The purpose of the card is primarily for identification of young carers in schools, health and other settings as young carers have repeatedly indicated this as a need. We have however successfully attached a benefit via the Council's staff benefit scheme which entitles all successful applicants to also receive the Vectis card for local discounts on shopping. It is likely more benefits will in time be attached to the card, both nationally and locally.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Chromebooks

We have distributed 25 Chromebooks to young carers, sibling carers and young adult carers from December 2020. These were provided by Welsh Government and included 12-months worth of free mobile WiFi.

Young carer and young adult carer recognition evening

The recognition evening planned in June 2020 to celebrate the achievements and contributions of young carers and young adult carers was cancelled due to Covid. We have repurposed this funding to produce a celebratory film instead, focussing on the challenges carers of all ages have overcome this year. This film is currently in production.

Grant schemes

We have been required to repurpose much funding this financial year as our original plans were not able to take place due to Covid. For young carers we launched a wellbeing grant scheme which young carers could apply to for funding to purchase anything which would improve their emotional wellbeing and mental health.

FUTURE PLANS

Our key aims for the immediate future is to continue to provide young carers with support despite any restrictions. From September we hope to promote the Young Carer Schools Award programme to ensure young carers in all RCT primary and secondary schools are identified and aware of the support available to them.

The launch of the young carer ID card scheme will support this aim of early identification and support and should deliver several benefits to young carers.

The Sibling Carers pilot programme will be evaluated and used to hopefully secure ongoing funding and resources to provide a bespoke service for this group of young carers.

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

12th July 2021

REGISTERED CHILDCARE PROVISION – QUALITY UPDATE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Authors: Rachael Ceshion – Childcare Delivery Team Manager
Children and Young People's Service;
Jessica Allen – Children and Young People's Service Manager.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this Report is to update members on the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) registered childcare settings overseen by the Community, Wellbeing and Resilience Service (CWRS).

2. CORONAVIRUS

The Coronavirus pandemic had a significant impact on the delivery of the childcare, to ensure that those most in need of childcare had access to it. From a Flying Start childcare perspective, this required settings to amend their operations to provide emergency childcare within 48 hours of lockdown being announced. These included providing childcare for:

- Children aged 0 – 5years (as opposed to 2-3 years under normal circumstances);
- Full days between 07:30 – 18:00 (rather than sessional care of 2.5 hours daily);
- Available to children of critical workers and the children of the most vulnerable families (not only Flying Start eligible children).

CIW, with the support of Welsh Government, eased their National Minimum Standards for the delivery of childcare, which allowed local authority childcare settings to increase capacity to deliver the three amendments noted above.

The need for, and complexity of, risk assessments have significantly increased over the pandemic period. This has had an impact on staffing duties and teams have been innovative in meeting these requirements to keep children, their families and staff safe at all times.

This emergency childcare commenced in March 2020 and continued until the end of August 2020. Eligible children attending the Flying Start nurseries reverted back to

normal from 29th June 2020, although many of the health and safety practices have had to remain in place to keep all individuals safe.

3. KEY CHANGES FROM LAST REPORT

Following the report presented to the Corporate Parenting Board in May 2019, significant service developments have taken place in respect of childcare provision across Rhondda Cynon Taf. During this period, a new purpose-built Flying Start childcare setting has been established on the Llwynypia campus of Coleg Y Cymoedd. This has replaced the historical Flying Start provision in the previous Ynscynon Primary School site.

Flying Start Tonyrefail was transferred to an external provider to deliver the service. Little Inspirations Day Nursery Ltd approached the Council at the beginning of 2019, and the transition of the provision and responsibility for the building on Tonyrefail School site was completed in August 2019 in time for the new academic year.

Historically, RCT'S Flying Start Childcare offer provided 42 weeks of sessional childcare to eligible children. In 2019, a consultation exercise was held with internal setting staff, commissioned setting staff and Flying Start families, regarding the 42 week offer, and whether it was favourable to reduce that to 39 weeks and introduce 15 family fun days during the school holiday periods. The overwhelming response was to reduce to 39 weeks as many families did not wish to take up the three weeks during the summer holiday period as they would rather spend the time together as a family. Therefore, a recommendation was taken to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee and subsequently Cabinet, to reduce the offer to 39 weeks per year in line with most other Welsh local authorities. This was agreed, and meetings were held with staff and Trade Unions. Staff were offered the opportunity to reduce their contracts to 39 weeks, or remain on 42 week contracts and use the additional three weeks to support the family fun days. The 39-week offer was introduced in September 2019 for academic year 2019/20.

4. QUALITY REPORTS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY CHILDCARE SETTINGS

Within Rhondda Cynon Taf, there are five CIW registered childcare settings that are run by the Local Authority. These are:

- Aman Flying Start Childcare;
- Penrhys Flying Start Childcare;
- Tylorstown Flying Start Childcare;
- Ynscynon Flying Start Childcare;
- Pontypridd Day Nursery and Flying Start Childcare.

Set out in the table below are descriptions of each provision with corresponding commentary concerning the latest inspection feedback, summary of strengths, recommendations and action plans for necessary improvements.

Provision/ Setting	Service Description	Date of Last CIW Inspection	Inspection Feedback/Actions
Aman Flying Start Childcare	This childcare setting is based in the Aman Early Years Centre and managed by the CWRS. It provides sessional care (not full day care) to Flying Start children from the term after their second birthday to the term after their third birthday. The service provides 2.5 hours per day, 5 days per week, 39 weeks per year. Due to the numbers of children entitled to access Flying Start childcare in the area, there are two sessions delivered on a daily basis, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The setting is registered for a total of 30 children per session, therefore, up to 60 children	10 th January 2020	<p>Since the report presented to Corporate Parenting Board, May 2019 a Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection has taken place on the 10th January 2020.</p> <p>Summary of the findings from the CIW report:</p> <p>Children have excellent outcomes in terms of their well-being and learning. They are thriving and developing in a service that provides them with an excellent range of learning and play opportunities. Practitioners are very effective in supporting children’s individual needs and attentive in identifying specific and additional learning requirements. The environment is welcoming, spacious and well designed with an extensive range of resources and equipment to support children’s development. There are robust security systems in place to maintain a safe environment for children. There are strong partnerships with parents, other professionals, agencies and the wider community.</p>

	<p>can access the provision per day.</p>		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Theme</th> <th>Rating awarded by CIW</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Well-being</td> <td>Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Care and Development</td> <td>Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leadership and Management</td> <td>Excellent</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><u>Requirements and Recommendations</u> There were no areas of non-compliance or recommendations for improvement made by CIW during their inspection.</p>	Theme	Rating awarded by CIW	Well-being	Excellent	Care and Development	Excellent	Environment	Excellent	Leadership and Management	Excellent
Theme	Rating awarded by CIW												
Well-being	Excellent												
Care and Development	Excellent												
Environment	Excellent												
Leadership and Management	Excellent												
<p>Penrhys Flying Start Childcare</p>	<p>This childcare setting is based in the Penrhys Flying Start Centre and managed within the CWRS. It provides sessional care (not full day care) to Flying Start children from the term after their second birthday to the term after their third birthday. The service provides 2.5 hours per day, 5 days per week, 39 weeks per year. Due to the numbers of children entitled to access Flying Start childcare in the Penrhys and Ystrad area, there is one</p>	<p>13th February 2020</p>	<p>Since the report presented to Corporate Parenting Board, May 2019 a Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection has taken place on the 13th February 2020.</p> <p>Summary of the findings from the CIW report:</p> <p>Outcomes for children are excellent in terms of their wellbeing. They have very positive relationships with staff and have extensive opportunities to develop new skills and independence. They benefit from a wide range of developmentally, age appropriate play experiences and have a strong voice in the service. Staff are professional, well qualified and support children in a positive and warm manner, allowing children to thrive and grow in a nurturing environment. The premises is extremely well maintained and spacious with a broad selection of play resources and a stimulating and challenging outdoor area for physical play. Leadership of</p>										

	<p>session delivered each day in the afternoon. The setting is registered for 12 children per session, therefore, up to 12 children access the provision per day.</p>		<p>the service is effective in all areas, and there are robust quality assurance processes and good record keeping systems.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Theme</th> <th>Rating awarded by CIW</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Well-being</td> <td>Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Care and Development</td> <td>Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leadership and Management</td> <td>Good</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><u>Requirements and Recommendations</u> There were no areas of non-compliance. There was one recommendation made during the CIW inspection.</p> <p>Leadership and Management theme: To review the current system for recording children’s times of arrival and departure - ACTIONED and COMPLETE.</p>	Theme	Rating awarded by CIW	Well-being	Excellent	Care and Development	Good	Environment	Excellent	Leadership and Management	Good
Theme	Rating awarded by CIW												
Well-being	Excellent												
Care and Development	Good												
Environment	Excellent												
Leadership and Management	Good												
<p>Tylorstown Flying Start Childcare</p>	<p>This childcare setting is based next door to the Contact Centre facility in Tylorstown (the former library). It provides sessional care (not full day care) to Flying Start children from the term after their second birthday to the term after their third birthday. The service</p>	<p>31st July 2018</p>	<p>No CIW Inspection has occurred since report presented to Corporate Parenting Board, May 2019.</p> <p>The below is a summary of strengths and areas for development which were identified following an internal quality assurance monitoring assessment being undertaken in December 2020.</p> <p><u>Overview</u></p> <p>The setting received a score of 71% achieving an overall rating of GOOD.</p>										

	<p>provides 2.5 hours per day, 5 days per week, 39 weeks per year. Due to the numbers of children entitled to access Flying Start childcare in the area, there are two sessions delivered on a daily basis, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The setting is registered for 26 children per session, therefore, up to 52 children can access the provision per day.</p>	<p><u>Areas of strength</u></p> <p>It is evident that staff demonstrate very strong, sustained practice when supporting children to develop their skills in areas such as:</p> <p>Building trust, confidence and independence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regulation and social development • Encouraging choices and independent play • Planning for small group and individual interactions <p>Supporting and extending language and communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging children to talk with others • Staff actively listen to children and encourage children to listen • Staff support children’s language use • Staff are sensitive and responsive <p>Staff demonstrate many strengths and no important areas require significant improvement when supporting children to develop skills such as:</p> <p>Assessing learning and language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using assessment to support and extend learning and critical thinking • Assessing language development. <p><u>Areas for development</u></p>
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			<p>Staff demonstrate the need for development in the below areas, however, strengths outweigh weakness and improvements are required to support children to develop skills such as:</p> <p>Social and emotional well-being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting socio-emotional well-being <p>Supporting learning and critical thinking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting curiosity and problem solving • Encouraging sustained shared thinking through storytelling etc. • Encouraging sustained shared thinking in investigation and exploration • Supporting concept development and higher order thinking <p><u>Areas for training identified:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social and emotional well-being • Supporting learning and critical thinking • Assessing learning to support and extend learning and critical thinking
<p>Pontypridd Day Nursery and Flying Start Childcare</p>	<p>This childcare setting is based in the Graig Flying Start building and managed by the CWRS. The setting offers full day care from 7.30am to 6pm. The setting is registered for 19 children in total, offering 12 Flying Start</p>	<p>22nd June 2018</p>	<p>No CIW Inspection has occurred since report presented to Corporate Parenting Board, May 2019.</p> <p>The below is a summary of strengths and areas for development which were identified following an internal quality assurance monitoring assessment being undertaken in December 2020.</p> <p><u>Overview</u></p>

	<p>places. Flying Start children can access the term after their second birthday to the term after their third birthday, providing 2.5 hours per day, 5 days per week, 39 weeks per year. The setting operates one session which is delivered on a daily basis, in the morning. The day Nursery element offers 4 Day Nursery places in the morning and 4 Day Nursery places in the afternoon for children under the age of 8 years old.</p>		<p>The setting received a score of 65% achieving an overall rating of GOOD.</p> <p><u>Areas of strength</u></p> <p>It is evident that staff demonstrate very strong, sustained practice when supporting children to develop their skills in areas such as:</p> <p>Supporting and extending language and communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging children to talk with others • Staff actively listen to children and encourage children to listen • Staff support children’s language use • Staff are sensitive and responsive <p>Staff demonstrate many strengths and no important areas require significant improvement when supporting children to develop skills such as:</p> <p>Building trust, confidence and independence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regulation and social development • Encouraging choices and independent play • Planning for small group and individual interactions <p>Assessing learning and language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using assessment to support and extend learning and critical thinking • Assessing language development. <p><u>Areas for development</u></p>
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Ynyscynon Day Nursery and Flying	This childcare setting is based on the Llwynypaid Campus of Coleg Y Cymoedd and managed by the CWRS. It provides sessional care (not	3rd April 2017	No CIW Inspection has occurred since report presented to Corporate Parenting Board, May 2019.

<p>Start Childcare</p>	<p>full day care) to Flying Start children from the term after their second birthday to the term after their third birthday. The service provides 2.5 hours per day, 5 days per week, 39 weeks per year. Due to the numbers of children entitled to access Flying Start childcare in the area, there are two sessions delivered on a daily basis, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The setting is registered for 26 children per session, therefore, up to 52 children can access the provision per day.</p>	<p>The below is a summary of strengths and areas for development which were identified following an internal quality assurance monitoring assessment being undertaken in December 2020.</p> <p><u>Overview</u></p> <p>The setting received a score of 65% achieving an overall rating of GOOD.</p> <p><u>Areas of strength</u></p> <p>It is evident that staff demonstrate very strong, sustained practice when supporting children to develop their skills in areas such as:</p> <p>Supporting and extending language and communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging children to talk with others • Staff actively listen to children and encourage children to listen • Staff support children’s language use • Staff are sensitive and responsive <p>Staff demonstrate many strengths and no important areas require significant improvement when supporting children to develop skills such as:</p> <p>Building trust, confidence and independence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regulation and social development • Encouraging choices and independent play • Planning for small group and individual interactions <p>Assessing learning and language:</p>
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessing learning to support and extend learning and critical thinking.
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4. **THEMES:**

Where CIW inspections have been undertaken since the last report presented to the Corporate Parenting Board in May 2019 childcare settings have received ratings of excellent and good across all four themes.

There are common themes that have emerged across all five Local Authority childcare settings during both CIW inspections and internal quality assurance processes. These include the following identified strengths and areas for development:

Areas of Strengths:

- The practitioners at the setting support and encourage children to build on their language and communication skills. They provide a language rich environment, where children are supported well by practitioners who scaffold and model language. Staff are warm and responsive to all children and ensure that all children have individual time given to them on a one on one basis.
- The practitioners at the setting support children well to build trusting relationships with staff and their peers. Children are celebrated for their contribution which supports them to build confidence and promotes their independence skills to flourish.
- The practitioners demonstrate skills when supporting children's language skills to grow. They are confident when using strategies to extend children's language skills and plan effectively for this. Guidance is also provided when supporting parents/carers to extend this learning into the home environment.

Areas for development:

- Practitioners need support to develop their understanding and practices when enabling children to become fully active participants in their own play experiences. This approach requires practitioners to embrace opportunities for children to plan, evaluate and problem solve during their play, therefore, promoting opportunities for children to develop their critical thinking processes.
- Practitioners need support to strengthen and extend their practices when supporting children to understand their own emotions and needs and recognising them in others.

Moving forward:

- Embedding of practices to support the promotion of developing emotional literacy within the learning environment.
- Training undertaken to support the understanding and practices of how to promote critical thinking in young children.
- Continue to work creatively within the challenges faced when maintaining a 'COVID secure' environment to provide a high-quality experience to benefit the children and families who access the settings.
- Continue to develop strategies to proactively support the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and staff as a result of the pandemic.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

An Equality and Diversity Assessment is not required as part of this information report.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

There are no financial implications.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

The National Minimum Standards, as stipulated by the Care Inspectorate Wales, is the main legal framework underpinning the operation of the childcare settings. As stated above, these were relaxed during the Coronavirus pandemic, but will be fully reinstated from 1st July 2021.

However, other legislation is also considered in achieving a high-quality service, namely, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Children Act 2004 and the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010. In support of the legal framework are the Welsh Government Flying Start guidance, which, albeit not legally binding, are followed as a means of discharging the Council's duties under the Flying Start grant terms and conditions.

8. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ SIP

The childcare settings complement the Council's corporate priorities and Cwm Taf's Wellbeing Plan to promote independence and positive lives for everyone by ensuring Rhondda Cynon Taf's children and young people will receive a great start in life.

9. **CONCLUSION:**

The Coronavirus pandemic has significantly impacted on the type of provision the local authority's childcare settings have delivered over the past 15 months. The range of support provided has broadened, offering childcare support to additional families that would not have normally been eligible. This experience has helped staff to develop their professional practice as they have had to take on additional responsibilities, whilst new opportunities have expanded the team's knowledge and skill set. As a result, the service has created a legacy plan, where it incorporates the learning from the Covid-19 situation and takes the proven developments forward for a more effective post-Covid service.

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

12th July 2021

PUPIL DEVELOPMENT GRANT (PDG) LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) EVALUATION OF THE SCHOOL CLUSTER MODEL DURING THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2019/20.

REPORT OF GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES, IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR C LEYSHON

Author: Siriol Burford; Regional Lead PDG LAC Central South Consortium & Hannah Bevan; LACE Co-ordinator RCT.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Elected members with an update on the evaluation of the school cluster model for the Pupil Development Grant for Looked After Children (PDG LAC) funding during the financial year 2019/20 in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Board:

- 2.1 Consider the information contained with this report.
- 2.2 Scrutinise and comment on the information provided.
- 2.3 Consider whether they wish to receive a further report to evaluate the PDG LAC cluster model for 2020/21.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure that the Corporate Parenting Board is kept informed on the current cluster – based funding mechanism for distributing PDG LAC and the processes in place to evaluate its impact on the provision made for Children Looked After (CLA) in schools across Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT).

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Children Looked After Education Team works in collaboration with the Central South Consortium (CSC) to ensure that there is a consistent approach, based on good practice, to support children who are looked after in our schools. The CSC believes that every looked after and formerly looked after pupil has the right to appropriate provision and support that enables them to fulfil their potential and that high expectations for all pupils will lead to achievement for learners in the academic, personal and social aspects of their lives irrespective of their circumstances.
- 4.2 Welsh Government provides additional resources through the Pupil Development Grant for Children Looked After (PDG LAC) in order to enhance the provision made by Local Authorities for pupils who are CLA and those who are formerly CLA with the overarching aim of raising educational attainment and closing the attainment gap with that of their peers.
- 4.3 The grant continues to be managed centrally by the Central South Consortium (CSC). The Regional Lead for PDG LAC is line managed by the Lead for Equity and Well-being within CSC. Directors of Education from each local authority have agreed key priorities to enhance the educational opportunities for Children Looked After:
- Raising attainment/achievement
 - Improving attendance
 - Reducing exclusions
 - Enhancing the capacity of schools to improve the outcomes for pupils through training and support, through school to school working and the sharing of good practice (through a cluster-based model) and
 - Ensuring that partnerships across the region continue to develop within CSC, schools, Social Care and other agencies.
- 4.4 Across the CSC region, schools are required to submit cluster bids to access PDG LAC. Bids are assessed on whether they could enhance curriculum opportunities to support social and emotional development, which would subsequently have an impact on the agreed key priorities. Schools are expected to include the PDG LAC funding within School Improvement Plans (SIP) and identify outcome measures. Clusters are required to evaluate the effectiveness of their PDG LAC strategic plans at the end of the financial year with a focus on measuring outcomes.
- 4.5 School clusters are encouraged to consider evidence-based interventions and approaches that are particularly effective for pupils who are or were formerly CLA, although their potential beneficial impact upon all learners is acknowledged. Specific consideration must be given to evidencing arrangements for collaborative and partnership working to ensure that priorities are met jointly. These priorities are aligned with the CLA Friendly Schools Quality Mark performance indicators which was devised in partnership with CLA Education Teams in both RCT and MT.
- 4.6 The CLA Quality Mark supports the underpinning principles and key priorities identified for the effective use of PDG LAC funding. It provides documented evidence based good practice for schools to target funding bids and to prioritise the development of better practice within their settings. It is a key component in achieving consistent good practice that can be shared from school to school and within clusters. To date, 27 RCT schools have achieved the CLA Friendly Schools Quality Mark with 10 schools attaining Gold and 17 schools attaining Platinum awards. A further 10-12 schools within RCT are undertaking the Quality Mark for the academic year 2020/21.

5. CURRENT POSITION - FUNDING ALLOCATION

- 5.1 The overall PDG LAC allocation for the consortium is allocated as follows:
- Salary for Regional Lead based in Central South Consortium;
 - Support for CLA pupils placed outside of Wales;
 - Local Authority delegated Bursary Grant;

- Training calendar provided to school staff (see Appendix 6); and
 - School to school working through the cluster plans
- 5.2 The cluster plan grant allocation for RCT in 2018/19 was £366,686, £357,893 in 2019/20 and £395,026 for 2020/21 (see Appendix 2).
- 5.3 Schools have continued to make applications for funding on a cluster basis in line with expectations from the Welsh Government to regionalise PDG LAC funding throughout the four education consortia.
- 5.4 Appendix 1 highlights the total PDG LAC expenditure for 2018/19 to 2020/21. Allocation of funding was provided to school clusters based on Social Services data in 2020/21 as Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) is no longer collated for CLA pupils. To confirm the total number of CLA pupils in each RCT school, each school was consulted with to confirm their total CLA population. PDG LAC Cluster Leads within each cluster were required to provide comprehensive strategic plans outlining the intended spend.
- 5.5 A steering group of representatives consisting of Head Teachers from our educational settings across all 5 LA's within CSC, LACE Coordinators/ CLA Education Team members, finance members from CSC and the Regional Lead for PDG LAC scrutinise and quality assure the cluster business plans in relation to the underpinning principles of the grant and the agreed key priorities for improvement. Appendix 4 provides an example of a cluster bid application form which demonstrates the innovative ways in which our schools are working with CLA and previously CLA pupils. Appendix 5 provides the evaluations of 5 completed cluster plans.
- 5.6 As part of the PDG LAC, the Consortium also has a bursary fund to ensure Local Authority Looked After Children in Education teams can respond to additional needs that arise due to moves in placement and school and complex emotional/social difficulties. In RCT this has focused on supporting engagement with appropriate educational opportunities by supporting pupils at risk of exclusion or those who transition mid-year. In 2019/20 RCT was allocated £42,654 to support the development of therapeutic approaches and work with foster carers by providing additional training and resources for schools and foster carers. (see Appendix 3). Training was provided in the following areas: Supporting Education and development for Children Looked After, Importance of Attachments and Developing Key Relationships, Self Esteem and Identity, Managing Emotions, Loss & Bereavement, Active Listening and Social Skills.
- 5.7 A comprehensive training programme (see Appendix 6) provided by the CSC has been well received by RCT schools. The training has been planned to support the agreed regional key priorities to enhance the educational outcomes for CLA pupils.

6 EVALUATION OF THE PDG LAC CLUSTER MODEL APPROACH

- 6.1 The cluster model approach for the allocation of PDG LAC distribution has been in place since April 2018. As clusters, schools are required to submit thorough applications for PDG LAC funding. These are subject to approval and scrutiny of a steering group situated within the Central South Consortium. Members of the RCT CLA Education Team are involved in the Steering Group.
- 6.2 School clusters have been extremely proactive with their cluster planning for the financial year 2019/20 and have been able to implement innovative and creative resources, strategies and interventions. Overall, the cluster evaluations received from schools are positive and it is evident that schools have considered the needs and priorities for vulnerable learners within their settings (see Appendix 7). Unfortunately, the submission of evaluations has been challenging due to the current COVID-19 pandemic.

- 6.3 Areas of focus for many cluster applications for the financial year 2019/20 was to invest in Thrive training, licencing and continued Thrive CPD. Throughout previous years, schools have continued to invest in the Thrive training which can be seen to be fully embedded in a large number of RCT schools. Alongside this, schools highly value the ELSA training, another resource which is a significant feature in all RCT schools.
- 6.4 School clusters have also invested in Trauma Informed Schools UK training for this financial year as well as restorative approaches training. Many school clusters are invested in becoming CLA Friendly Schools and committed to undertaking the Quality Mark during the financial year 19/20. The CLA Education Team, in particular the Advisory Teacher, has ensured that schools are fully supported throughout this process to achieve the Quality Mark status at either Gold or Platinum level.
- 6.5 All clusters have benefitted from accessing the training calendar (see appendix 6) Level 2 and 3 CLA Friendly Schools, Relationship Based Play, Mindfulness. These courses have been well received and attended by RCT School staff. During the year 2019/20, 246 (35%) of the delegates who attended the CSC training were from RCT schools / Local Authority based staff.
- 6.6 The RCT CLA Education Team have strengthened links with the Care 2 Work Team along with the Youth Engagement and Participation Service to improve the known destination outcomes for our RCT CLA learners. This joint working has ensured that pupils who are nearing the end of their statutory schooling have planned destinations for further education, employment and training.
- 6.7 Members of the Corporate Parenting Board have already been presented with a report on the Virtual School Head Model proposed as an addition to the CLA Education Team. Pupil wellbeing is a significant priority for CLA learners with a particular focus on addressing the social and emotional needs of CLA learners. The CLA Education Team have conducted 20 Circles of Understanding meetings along with numerous Team around the Child meetings to enable schools and professionals to explore the wider wellbeing needs of our CLA learners.
- 6.8 A case study example relates to a year 1 RCT CLA learner who has been displaying concerning behaviour in his primary school. Members of the CLA Education Team have coordinated and responsive strategies to support the needs of this CLA pupil. A circle of understanding meeting was held to consider the child's current presentation and needs and to plan support. This looked at identifying further training for staff particularly in relation to Relationship Based Play. A key adult approach to supporting this pupil was identified as being appropriate and all professionals agreed to support his ongoing needs. Continued support has been offered to the school and further training opportunities have been made available.
- 6.9 An evaluation of the CLA Friendly Schools Quality Mark will be available in the Autumn Term.
- 6.10 Strengths of the PDG LAC cluster applications have been as follows:
- There is increasing consistency with applications between each cluster;
 - Schools remain highly motivated to gain CLA Friendly Schools status;
 - Common approaches are seen to be developing across the clusters and each school cluster seem to be working effectively;
 - There is acknowledgement between clusters that investing in vulnerable pupils and providing effective strategies to support well-being needs will assist schools to developing positive outcomes for all;
 - Schools value the opportunity to share good practice within the cluster group and meet termly to share positive outcomes. Good practice is also shared between local authorities. School clusters continue to benefit from the professional learning opportunities in place which have continued to be made available through virtual platforms. .
- 6.11 Areas of focus for development identified by RCT and CSC include:

- Promote the PDG LAC Roadshow and encourage schools to attend and participate ;
- Schools to meet earlier in the Summer term to ensure a rigorous and timely planning process for PDG LAC expenditure;
- Ensure that each school cluster submit robust evaluations and that they are considered to be a pivotal part of the PDG LAC planning process;
- To develop a more effective system of ensuring that the PDG LAC funding available to our CLA pupils placed in English authorities is closely monitored;
- The content of the CLA Friendly Schools level 1 training needs to be updated/ refreshed;
- Schools to be involved in identifying training needs;
- CSC and RCT to prioritise funding to focus on supporting the well-being needs of our vulnerable learners in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

6.12 The bursary element of the PDG LAC has enabled the RCT CLA Education team to respond to identified local needs. All aspects of the bursary workstream are evaluated (refer to Appendix 8) and inform future priorities for subsequent bursary bids. There remains to be a growing need to provide targeted literacy/ numeracy support to CLA learners. This has been very well received by those CLA learners identified and has been in increasing demand since the pandemic. This will remain an ongoing priority in the coming years.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The PDG LAC grant is a Welsh Government priority and therefore the terms and conditions of the grant are adhered to fully.

7.2 The purpose of the grant is to ensure that our most vulnerable pupils are given opportunities to develop well in schools and to ensure good achievement and Educational attainment.

7.3 The training that is organised focuses greatly on the importance of equity and equality in the classroom and on whole school approaches.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 There is no consultation required for this report.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

9.1 School clusters are allocated funding from the PDG LAC grand provided by the Welsh Government. Currently, this is a sum of money for Children Looked After according to Children's Services data for CLA pupils.

9.2 A lump sum of £3000 is also given to each cluster for the needs of formerly children looked after which is part of the terms and conditions of the grant. We are currently in the eighth year of this grant and updates are awaited from the Welsh Government regarding the allocation of this grant for future years.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

10.1 PDG LAC is administered according to Welsh Government guidance. There is a robust monitoring system in place to ensure effective use of the grant in line with the terms and conditions of the grant.

11. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

11.1 The underpinning principles of the PDG LAC support the Council's Corporate Priorities to build a strong economy and to promote independence and positive lives for everyone and ensures that the Sustainable Development principle and the Wellbeing Goals of the

Wellbeing for Future Generations Act (Wales) underpin the vision and working practices of the service.

12. CONCLUSION

- 12.1 Historically the high number of CLA learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) has impacted upon their ability to learn. This has also had a direct impact upon their social, emotional and behavioural development. Therefore there is a need to identify broader measures of progress that recognise the specific needs of these vulnerable learners to evidence the impact of PDG LAC (as outlined earlier in this report). Appendix 9 shows an example of best practice where an RCT primary school have identified transition support for CLA learners who are moving from year 6 to 7 (primary to secondary school provision).
- 12.2 Many clusters identify within their cluster evaluations that they would like to undertake PERMA training to enhance the measures of pupil well-being. The PERMA Model represents the five core elements of happiness and well-being. PERMA stands for Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishments. With the growing recognition of the impact that COVID-19 has had on all learners within our schools, schools are investing in PERMA as an approach to address the well-being needs of vulnerable learners. PDG LAC applications have therefore featured more requests for support through the implementation of PERMA.
- 12.3 Schools are fully committed towards broadening their skills and expertise to support vulnerable pupils, this can be seen in their desire to attend central training available to all schools.
- 12.4 An increasing number of RCT schools are undertaking the CLA Friendly Schools training with a further 10-12 schools anticipated to gain the quality mark during 2020/21 in addition to the 27 schools who currently hold CLA Friendly Schools status. Schools are now more familiar with expected processes in place to support the needs of CLA learners. Schools are expected to evidence success criteria in order to demonstrate CLA Friendly approaches and with growing monitoring from the CLA Education Team to ensure the most appropriate support structures are in place for CLA learners. Appendix 10 details a case study where an RCT school that has achieved the Platinum Award has developed the Key Adult approach to support the needs of CLA learners as a preventative approach.
- 12.5 The CLA Education Team provides a termly programme of training for Designated Persons for CLA in schools and Governors. The training supports the principles of the PDG LAC by facilitating networking and developing awareness and providing information on:
- Particular challenges for Children Looked After (CLA) within educational settings and meeting the needs of pupils who have experienced developmental trauma.
 - The local context of CLA in RCT, the support that is available and how it can be accessed.
 - The role and responsibilities of the Designated Person for CLA.
 - The importance of a Personal Education Plan (PEP), and the school's role and responsibility in developing and maintaining this statutory document.
 - Relevant guidance and policies and help to plan for any future changes/updates.
 - Support and guidance to ensure effective multi-agency working.
- 12.6 School clusters have been extremely proactive with their cluster planning for the financial year 2019/20 and have been able to implement innovative and creative resources, strategies and interventions. Overall, the cluster evaluations received from schools are positive and it is evident that schools have considered the needs and priorities for vulnerable learners within their settings (see Appendix 7). However, it is acknowledged that a more rigorous and comprehensive evaluation process will need to be established in order to evaluate fully the effectiveness of a cluster-based approach to allocating PDG LAC to our schools particularly

in light of COVID-19 and as a result of the wider impact this will have on all learners in RCT schools.

RCT PDGLAC funding per cluster 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21.

RCT PDG LAC Funding per Cluster	18/19	19/20	20/21
Aberdare Community School	£38,291	£34,721	£38,597
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School	£28,045	£25,714	£28,489
Cardinal Newman R.C. Comprehensive	£9,072	£11,616	£12,668
Ferndale Community School	£31,081	£22,581	£24,973
Hawthorn High School	£18,558	£23,364	£25,852
Mountain Ash Comprehensive School	£21,974	£21,797	£24,094
Pontypridd High School	£29,943	£30,805	£34,202
Porth County Community School	£13,625	£16,315	£17,942
Special Schools RCT	£29,563	£28,063	£31,126
St John Baptist C.I.W. High School	£11,348	£12,399	£13,547
Tonypandy Community College/Ysgol Nantgwyn	£21,974	£19,839	£21,897
Tonyrefail Comprehensive School	£34,117	£30,021	£33,323
Treorchy Comprehensive School	£26,527	£20,231	£22,337
Y Pant Comprehensive School	£23,492	£24,930	£27,610
Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda	£8,313	£10,049	£10,910
Ysgol Gyfun Garth Olwg	£8,313	£10,441	£11,350
Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun	£7,933	£10,441	£11,350
Ysgol Llanhari	£4,518	£4,566	£4,758
Total funding per cluster	£366,686	£357,893	£395,026

Funding allocations for RCT based on financial year 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 (as highlighted in paragraph 5.2)

Funding allocations for RCT CBC based on financial year	18/19	19/20	20/21
PDG LAC Funding for RCT	£366,687	£357,893	£395,026
LA Bursary	£42,592	£42,654	£70,983
Outside of Wales (£1,150 per pupil)	£10,350	£6,900	£5,750

PDG LAC RCT Bursary - Period of Agreement: April 2019 - March 2020

CYTUNDEB GWASANAETH LEFEL / SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

PDG LAC

1. Focus for Training/Support. Ffocws yr Hyfforddiant/Cefnogaeth

The CLA education team have developed our skills and services to be able to provide additional therapeutic support to children and young people in care as well as the carers and adults who are supporting them, including school staff. We want to embed these skills and increase our capacity for this type of support. Developing the capacity for carers and key staff (residential and educational) to use research based helpful approaches in meeting the needs of children and young people who have attachment needs.

The following training will be offered.

Mental Health First Aid – Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is a 2-day training course that originated in Australia and teaches people about mental health problems and provides them with skills to help people in crisis. Provision of the programme will increase the number of people within our workplaces and communities who understand and have the skills to support people with mental health problems and in some instances save lives. Two members of the team have been trained and will offer MHFA training to schools and Foster carers.

Target Audience: School staff, Foster Carers & Residential Home staff also PRUs.

Evidence: WG are promoting this initiative and feedback will be collated from evaluations.

ELSA for Foster Carers – A five-day course which has been offered twice this year and evaluated positively with supervision groups set up to meet termly. We will continue to offer ELSA twice each year and supervision three times.

This course has will also be provided to two local authority residential care homes.

Supporting Transitions – We are aware that children transitioning between schools can be a difficult time, particularly for children looked after. We would like to share good practice and support schools learning from each other to support the most vulnerable learners – working with the young person to prepare them for the upcoming changes as well as working with school staff to share what works to support the child.

Resources to support CLA Friendly Schools - We would like to build upon our current resources available to share with school staff to develop their CLA friendly school work.

Video Interaction Guidance (VIG) – VIG is an intervention through which a practitioner aims to enhance communication within relationships. It works by engaging clients actively in a process of change towards realizing their own hopes for a better future in their relationships with others who are important to them.

Two EPS are trained in VIG and will continue to be supervised and use this as part of their practice.

Target Audience: Foster Carers & school staff

Evidence: VIG is recommended as an evidence-based intervention for health visitors and midwives in the NICE guidelines 'Social and Emotional Wellbeing - Early Years' published

October (2012), and in several other NICE guidelines (e.g. Autism 2013, Attachment 2015). VIG has been selected by the NSPCC (2011) as one of its two chosen evidence-based interventions to tackle neglect.

Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP)- Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy is an attachment-focused approach in which a therapist supports the caregiver and child's relationship and the development of secure attachment by encouraging the reflective function of the caregiver, enabling attunement, regulating emotion and co creating meaning. The therapist interactions are characterised by PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy) and similar qualities are supported in the caregiver with the addition of love (PLACE).

3 members of the team are trained to Level 1 and will complete Level 2 training this year.

Target Audience: Foster Carers

Evidence: This approach has been well evaluated with foster carers and adoptive parents and recently elements of this model have been successfully introduced within residential child care (Becker-Weidman and Hughes, 2008).

Emotion Coaching – Two members of the team are trained to deliver emotion coaching training. Emotion Coaching is based on the principle that nurturing and emotionally supportive relationships provide optimal contexts for the promotion of children's outcomes and resilience.

Target audience - This will be cascaded to foster carers. ELSAs and bespoke training to schools around CLA children who require a different type of response and support.

Evidence - Emotion Coached children and young people:

- Achieve more academically in school
- Are more popular
- Have fewer behavioural problems
- Have fewer infectious illnesses
- Are more emotionally stable
- Are more resilient

(Gottman 1997)

Emotion Coaching – Wellness coach with EHCAP

Training for one person to become and coach and deliver training to the team, foster carers and Social workers.

The programme will develop the following skills and capabilities such that the fundamental needs of children, young people and families are addressed:

- understand the neuroscience of the effects of adversity (including abuse and neglect) in childhood on long term physical and mental health outcomes and integrate this understanding into safeguarding children, young people and families
- build skills and capabilities in managing the effects of early adversity through Dan Siegel's Hand Model and John Gottman's Emotion Coaching
- demonstrating the principles of person-centred care
- awareness of the importance of personal physical and mental wellbeing and incorporating compassionate self-care into your personal and professional life

Story Links - Story Links is a more specialised extension of Therapeutic Story writing, Groups and includes work with parents of vulnerable pupils. For many of these pupils the emotional difficulties that are getting in the way of their learning are related to attachment difficulties. Story Links uses therapeutic story writing to address behaviour issues, support positive attachment and improve pupils' reading. It is a solution-focused systemic programme delivered in weekly sessions in which the parent/carer and the child are facilitated to co-create a

story which is then used as the child's reading text during the week. Two members of the team have completed the training and will now deliver this approach in 3/ 4 primary schools.

Target Audience: Foster Carers/schools.

Evidence: Research funded by the TDA and conducted by the University of Chichester shows that Story Links improves parental engagement with their child's learning, reduces exclusion from the classroom and improves pupils' reading.

Reducing Exclusion and continuing engagement in education – Raising aspirations.

Starting in September for 6 weeks (2 days a week) 14 – 16 years of age pupils with behaviour issues. Gareth Noble providing mentoring support and alternative activities to re-engage young people with education working with key adult within our PRU. Pre and post questionnaire around engagement will be used. **Recommendations from CSC LACE teams**

Give us a break – Supporting loss and bereavement in schools – Training to train. 2-day training for 2 team members and then pilot training in 2 schools. This enables trained staff to become train the trainers and deliver training to all team.

Short term LSA intervention – We would like funds available to be able to provide additional support to those individuals who are finding a particular time of their life/education difficult. We envisage this intervention to be time limited.

Additional tutoring - for up to half a term. To support KS4 pupils to help manage gaps in education. 1 or 2 hours a week where school cannot provide this. (where all statutory requirements have been utilised and education needs are still not being met)

Pupil voice - Evaluations of our work through outside company - Dynamix. Evaluations of what work we have done and a review of how pupils feel regarding educational experiences.

In My Shoes – Computer program to help children and vulnerable adults communicate about their experiences, including distressing events or relationships, for a variety of purposes, including:

- experiences in family or other care settings
- assessment of the likelihood of significant harm and neglect
- assessment and planning about a child's rehabilitation to their birth family
- gathering a child's wishes and feelings about being fostered or moving to an adoptive family
- communicating about pain and discomfort, past or present, including children in hospital
- assessing the needs of a sibling group
- engaging adolescents who find face-to-face interviews challenging

Mike Church – Story telling project to support group of year 8 and 9 girls around developing positive sense of self.

Collar and Cuffs – feeling anxious and grumpy. Performance for carers and parents and children from 0 – 7.

Training in Relationship based play for foster carers – Helen Worrall

Training in Key adult approach for ELSAs – Helen Worrall

Ongoing training and support for schools and foster carers, including Emotion Coaching, Attachment training and supporting CLA quality schools.

2. Baseline for aspect in focus/Gwaelodlin ar gyfer yr agwedd mewn ffocws

Foster carers want to be able to support their young people at home and compliment what is being delivered in school, especially around their emotional wellbeing.

Supporting carers understanding of what schools offer and what they can do to support young people will help develop good working relationships between home and school and make interventions in school more effective.

School and foster carers often require more support during times of transition and CLA pupils need a stronger program to ensure information is shared, anxieties are managed, and support is appropriate in the new setting with the different demands.

The majority of requests for CLA education team involvement was around support from Psychology and therapeutic interventions. We need to develop a range of practices that support not only the young person but also the carers and those working closely with them.

Understanding that relationships is key to children and young people with attachment needs we have provided a range of training opportunities to support foster carers and ELSAs.

Listening to pupils to know what they feel, think, want and need is key in how we provide a service. We will seek to develop our practice in this area and complete research into what young people say about the educational experiences.

3. Overview of Expected Benefits/ Outcomes. Gorolwg o'r buddiannau/Deilliannau

The training and resources provided by the bursary fund will develop an understanding of the often complex needs of our CLA and the ability to meet these needs in a more focused and successful way. As a team we seek to promote and advocate for CLA pupils and work to ensure they receive good educational experiences and opportunities.

We recognise the importance of the care given to our vulnerable learners and value the role of foster carers and we hope to support them in their work to provide positive change.

We want to be able to provide sustainable training to develop skills and knowledge in our schools that enable staff to meet the emotional needs of pupils in order to facilitate future learning. These skills will benefit CLA and other vulnerable children in the future and the additional resources will also be available to children for years to come.

Costed Plan/Costau'r Cynllun

**Please note, all funding must be spent by the 31st March 2020
Cofiwch bod angen gwario'r cyllid erbyn y 31ain o Fawrth 2020**

Total Investment Funding/ Costau llawn y buddsossiad

£42,654

Programme / Priority Area Rhaglen/Blaenoriaeth	Key Actions Prif Weithgareddau	Time Scale Amserlen	Funding Cyllid		Monitoring / Evaluation Monitro/Gwerthuso	Monitoring/Evaluation Year End Update 31 st March 2020 Monitro/Gwerthuso diwedd y flwyddyn 31ain o Fawrth 2020	Actual Expenditure 31 st March 2020 Gwariant gwirioneddol 31ain o Fawrth 2020
			Staffing & Resources Staffio ac adnoddau	Cost			
Mental Health First Aid training	We have a team of 2 professionals who can provide 2 training sessions in the year to target audience including	Training completed in the first term and delivered to schools and foster carers in the spring and	2 trainers for 4 days (8 sessions)	£1000	Evaluations from participants.		

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	foster carers and teachers	Autumn term.					
ELSA Training.	Core programmes rolled out for ELSA course for foster carers. Two programs delivered to Residential homes. Files to be printed and copy of ELSA book to purchased.	Five day rolling programme over Autumn and spring.	2 trainers for 5 sessions (times 4) 6 Supervision sessions offered	£1000 Venue and resources Training costs £ 2000	Evaluations completed and Supervision offered and attended.		
Short term LSA intervention	Request for TA on short term basis to meet learning needs of CLA pupil.	ASAP after funds are delegated to LA.		£10000	Progress reports and invoice kept by CLA Ed. Coordinator.		
Tuition at KS4	Request for Tutor on short term basis to meet learning needs of CLA pupil.	Autumn and Spring term		£3000	Progress reports and invoice kept by CLA Ed. Coordinator.		
Resources to support CLA Friendly Schools	Resources available to share with school staff to support CLA Friendly Schools,	Will be purchased ASAP after		£500	Evaluation of CLA friendly schools		

	e.g. Adoptive friendly school book, Telling Tales, Attachment and Emotional Development in the Classroom	funds delegated.					
Video Interaction Guidance	Supervision for 2 EPs Registration x2 Conference			Supervision- £3000 Registration £420	Evaluation of intervention from foster carers		
Emotion Coaching Emotion coaching for families	Providing training to schools and foster carers. EHCAP	Autumn, Spring and summer term	2 trainers and one family coach	Delivering training (4 times) and resources £1000 Being trained and delivering program (twice) £1234	Completion of courses and evaluations.		
Give us a break –	2-day training and proving support to pilot program	Autumn, Spring and Summer	2 trainers	£1000 Cost of training	Completion of pilot program in two schools and evaluations		
Dyadic Development Psychotherapy	Training 3 EPs to level 2	Autumn	3 places	£2920	Feedback from Foster carers and pupils.		

Training in Key adult approach for ELSAs	1-day training by Helen Worrall	Spring	Cost of trainer and venue	£1250	Evaluations		
Mike Church –	Story telling project to support group of year 8 and 9 girls around developing positive sense of self.	Autumn/ Spring	Cost of project, organiser and resources/venue	£5000	Evaluations and outcomes from pupils involved.		
Collar and Cuffs	2 performances for carers and parents and children from 0 – 7.	Autumn/ Spring	Cost of Theatre company	£1000	Evaluations		
Training in Relationship based play for foster carers	1-day training by Helen Worrall	Spring	Cost of Trainer and venue	£1250	Evaluations		
Dynamix	Research to gain pupils voice and update information from previous research 3 years ago.	Spring	Cost of researchers and preparation of report	£5000	Research paper completed and used to inform next year's focus of support from CLA team		
Gareth Noble	Project to engage a group of Year 10 and 11 pupils not engaging in education through Ty Gwyn.	Autumn	Cost of Mentor/leader	£3000	Evaluations		

PDG LAC Cluster Strategic Plan Example 2019/20

Objective		Outcome / Intended Impact			
To ensure the CLA pupils within the cluster of schools achieve their potential. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLA training throughout schools: Level 2 & 3 • Thrive principles used throughout the schools • School to school working and sharing of good practice Building Resilient Schools training throughout the cluster 		To ensure all CLA pupils make expected progress if not accelerated progress in wellbeing, literacy and numeracy			
Activities/Actions	Success Criteria	Staff / School	Target Date	Monitoring and Evaluation	Cost/Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All schools to have Thrive practitioners in their school • Thrive licence for schools who use thrive • Wellbeing survey costs 	Individual pupils to be assessed using the thrive criteria Groups of pupils to be assessed using the thrive principles Teachers & parents use the strategies from thrive	Key staff in cluster schools	March 2020	Thrive practitioner evaluations Pupil results PASS Surveys / wellbeing surveys / pupil surveys	£5500 (thrive) £1000 (wellbeing surveys)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLA Level 3 training 	All school staff in cluster will have one person L3 trained All school staff to have a greater understanding of how to support CLA pupils	Key staff in cluster school	December 2019	All staff can effectively support CLA pupils	Supply costs: £165x3 = £495
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building a Resilient School training 	CLA Teachers & additional staff member	Key staff in cluster schools	March 2020	Wellbeing of pupils and staff	Supply costs for 8 adults (2 per school) £1320
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLA Networking sessions • Termly meetings to share good practice 	Sharing of good practice Effective links between all schools	Key staff in cluster schools	March 2020	Wellbeing of CLA pupils	£2082

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cluster Wellbeing Lead to work in all four schools: 1 day per week in x4 schools 	<p>Greater support for CLA pupils generally Effective transition links between cluster schools and x1 school to ensure CLA pupils achieve their potential</p>	<p>Appointed Cluster Wellbeing Lead</p>	<p>March 2020</p>	<p>Wellbeing of CLA pupils</p>	<p>TA practitioner for 2 terms £ 9442</p>
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Appendix 5

Evaluation Pupil Development Grant for Looked After Children 2019/2020

1. Cluster
School A

2. Local Authority
Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC

3. List of schools within cluster
Schools A, B, C, D, E

4. Areas of Focus
Elsa support; THRIVE; ELSA;

5. Summary of plan 2019-2020

ELSA training for 6 members of staff across the cluster, 2 from our school. Staff have been trained over a three month period to be ELSA's and are now delivering the sessions to groups of vulnerable learners. These have been identified through discussions with class teachers, Designated Teachers and ALNCo. Thrive to be embedded across all cluster school to ease transition and offer a consistent approach. 1:1 support or targeted interventions to pupils in need and track wellbeing of CLA pupils.

6. Evidence of learner outcomes (LAC/FLAC)

D is now on able to access a full timetable

There have been fewer exclusions for looked after children within the cluster

Wellbeing surveys show an increase in pupil wellbeing and self-esteem

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7. Student Voice Quote

Will ask on return to school.

8. Staff Quote

"The wellbeing tracking for our CLA pupils has been a great addition to Provision Mapping. We will continue to build on this and roll it out whole school. It is interesting to see trends in wellbeing and is a key tool for investigating the trends."

9. Evidence of Impact on Teaching and Learning

Pupils are now better able to self-regulate and recognise when they need help and support in the classroom. Skills from the ELSA sessions are being transferred to mainstream classes. 1:1 support has been the key to enable struggling pupils to attend more lessons.

10. Evidence of whole school impact

ELSA's have shared information about the project in a school staff meeting and there is now more of an awareness about the work of the ELSA/Thrive and how other staff can support this.

Thrive is used consistently across the cluster for a more consistent approach.

1:1 support enables the class teacher to focus on the whole class.

11. Opportunities for partnership working (e.g. school to school, external agencies)

A group has been established within the cluster to discuss the provision currently in place to help vulnerable pupils. A transition multi-agency meeting has been arranged to help inform the secondary school with Educational Psychologists, Social Services, School Liaison Officer and Counselling Service.

12. Planned next steps

Ensure that all schools complete the school evaluation toolkit provided with the PDG LAC Guidelines before planning a business plan for the cluster.

Supporting our CLA pupils with the transition back into education after the lockdown period.

Training provided to schools utilising PDG LAC 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21

List of Training Provided to Schools as per of PDG LAC 18/19

- ACE - Trauma Informed Practice for Primary Schools
- ACE Ambassadors Professional Learning day (Train the trainers)
- ACE's, Assessment, Adoption and Attainment
- Attachment & Education
- Children Looked After Friendly Schools level 2
- Children Looked After Friendly Schools level 3
- Developing Emotional & Social Skills using Creative Storytelling
- Getting it Right for Every Child
- Making a Difference and Introduction to Emotion Coaching
- Negotiating behaviour change
- Observational Checklist Training - children aged 5-11
- Observational Checklist Training - Pre-school
- Observing Adolescents with Attachment Difficulties in Secondary Schools
- Relationship Based Play
- Whole school approaches for better outcomes for LAC

List of Training Provided to Schools as per of PDG LAC 19/20

- ACE - Assessment, adoption and attainment: Adoption UK
- ACE – Trauma Informed Practice for Primary Schools - Level 2
- An Introduction to Restorative Approaches for Schools and Family Support Staff
- Building A Resilient school by Achievement for All (AfA)
- Children Looked After Friendly Schools Level 2

Children Looked After Friendly Schools Level 3
Core Strength and Structural Learning
Creating Wellbeing through Stories and Storytelling
Developing emotional and social skills using creative storytelling
Getting it Right for Every Child Adoption UK
How to aid school children with mindfulness and meditation
Improving the Wellbeing of Vulnerable Pupils
Negotiating behaviour change
Observational Checklist Training - Pre-school
Observing adolescents with attachment difficulties in secondary schools
Observing Checklist Training - children aged 5-11
Positive Psychology and Mindfulness for Building Resilience in School Staff
Positive transitions for looked after children
Relationship Based Play - Supporting Pupils with Attachment Difficulties
Whole School Approaches to support better outcomes for Looked After Children

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List of Training Provided to Schools as per of PDG LAC 20/21

Enhancing Teacher Wellbeing to help all Learners
Psychological First Aid - To help children who are distressed and negotiating behaviour change
ACE - Assessment, adoption and attainment: Adoption UK
Children Looked After Friendly Level 2
Anxiety in Children
Attachment Difficulties Training
Children Looked After Friendly Level 3
Observing Checklist Training
ACE - Assessment, adoption and attainment: Adoption UK
Relationship Based Play
Supporting Successful Transition

The role of Key Adults with vulnerable pupils in educational settings
Playing with Words: Action & Narrative Techniques to help emotional and mental
wellbeing for Vulnerable Learners

Example of PDG LAC Cluster Evaluation from 2 school clusters 2019/20

Cluster 1

1. Cluster
Cluster B
2. Local Authority
Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC
3. List of schools within cluster
X 8 schools within the cluster
4. Areas of Focus
THRIVE; ELSA; Nurture UK; CLA Friendly Schools Quality Mark; Mindfulness; Drama therapy / Art therapy / Music therapy / Play therapy; Attachment and Relationship Play;
5. Summary of plan 2019-2020
<p>The plan included time for the designated teachers of CLA to meet together to have a consistent approach of the CLA pupils within the cluster and to attend specific training to ensure that all schools have been trained at the CLA Friendly Schools training Levels 1-3. Other areas of training were from CSC including Relationship Based Play, Positive Psychology and Mindfulness for building Resilience in school staff, Observing Adolescents with attachment difficulties in Secondary schools, Getting it right for every child, Improving the well-being of vulnerable pupils, Identifying and supporting emotional and social difficulties in pupils ages 5-11 years and How to aid school children with mindfulness and meditation. Play therapy resources were also purchased to set up an area where the CLA pupils can express their emotions from play. Schools within the Cluster also developed and trained within the emotional literacy areas such as Thrive and ELSA and built resources for this to be carried out at a high level of competency.</p> <p>A big focus this year was the way to monitor pupils within the school by the use of a variety of different programmes including Class charts, Boxall Profile and My concerns. As all schools within the cluster use lego therapy with all CLA pupils resources were essential to keep this up and Lego sets were purchased for this to be maintained. Academic input was also a priority for the CLA pupils this year where we invested in a literacy programme for the primary pupils and mymaths and Mathswatch to help boost numeracy skills. Accelerated reading has also been able to continue for a consistent approach for the CLA pupils.</p>
6. Evidence of learner outcomes (LAC/FLAC)

When we finished school in March all CLA pupils at School A were accessing ELSA and had an environment to use for their times of need in school where an ELSA was present to advise them. All base line data from the skills and difficulties questionnaire which was used at the start of ELSA and Lego Therapy showed an improved for all CLA pupils. Progress had also been recorded on the accelerated reading programme where all CLA pupils had improved their reading age. This was also evident with numeracy from the use of the maths programmes the CLA pupils were able to use in school and at home. This progress is still being made at home now that the pupils are being home schooled as they have their passwords to access both literacy and numeracy programmes online at home. The use of class charts has also been extremely beneficial as the pupils are able to access this from their phones or tablets to complete a daily checking on their emotional well being in the section 'How do you feel today'. They have also been able to access work from all subject teachers on class charts which has helped them continue with their studies even in lock down very easily. Having more ELSA's/Thrive practitioners available has also helped the CLA pupils are the ELSA's contact pupils on a weekly basis and complete ELSA sessions over the phone. The training that staff have received has helped this be possible. A selection of CLA pupils have also started accessing the relationship based play resources and have noted that they are less anxious and feel as if they are cared for more with more one to one support at this time. The Boxall Profile was used to monitor the CLA pupils involved in the interventions and before school closure this was showing a positive impact on their profile. The hope to monitor outcomes was intended to be from the PERMA survey this year but as schools had to close then this will be the plan for future years.

7. Student Voice Quote

Pupil A

I am now being home schooled and have a weekly TA calling me and doing ELSA with me as I am finding my time at home boring. She talks about all the things we had done in school and gives me ideas to help keep me positive at home.

Pupil B

I use the online maths programmes every day at home to keep up my basic maths skills. I also do accelerated reading every day and Doodle English and Spell I am working on to help with my literacy.

Pupil C

When I used class charts to check in on line to see how I am feeling today I was called by a member of staff within the hour asking why I was feeling upset. This really helped me to feel supported again and make me feel more positive.

8. Staff Quote

The online learning approaches we have had access to have helped out the CLA pupils with their home school learning. They have a variety of different programmes that they could use so that they don't get fed up with the same ones all the time. We are monitoring how much work the CLA pupils complete and they have been doing very well. This is another way to check in on the pupils every day as you can tell if they have been online to complete their work. They are all trying very hard and this will stop their basic literacy and numeracy skills from falling behind.

Monitoring the pupils through class charts is also very beneficial as we can have their daily emotions recorded. We are in contact with the pupils weekly via the phone but checking in on class charts is another form of contact with the pupils.

9. Evidence of Impact on Teaching and Learning

All CLA pupils have shown improvement in their literacy and numeracy skills since September until March. This has helped the pupils in all lessons to access all areas of the curriculum easier. The key worker for CLA pupils have also had time this year to produce a one page profile on all CLA pupils which has been passed onto their teachers for all lessons. Included in this one page profile are the ways that the pupils learn best. This information has been circulated with staff to ensure that all CLA pupils are taught in the best way to suit them.

10. Evidence of whole school impact

All CLA pupils are tested for Access Arrangements and the correct arrangements are put in place immediately to ensure they have what ever arrangement they need as their normal way of working. All CLA pupils are also offered a reading pen for exams and for use in the class room if required. This has shown a positive impact on mock examination results which will now be used as teacher assessments for Year 11 pupils for the summer grades.

11. Opportunities for partnership working (e.g. school to school, external agencies)

All schools from the cluster meet three times a year to work in partnership with each other to ensure that all CLA pupils have the same approach. CLA pupils also have more transition into comprehensive school which unfortunately has not happened this year due to lock down. CLA pupils at School A have also worked with the RCT CLA team and the EP on a six week Bereavement course.

12. Planned next steps

When pupils return to school after the lock down experience most of the CLA pupils will need to have a lot of nurture available for them. They will need more support and the time of staff to find out their current needs. Emotional literacy, ELSA, Thrive, Nurture, Mindfulness, bereavement will all be a big focus within our cluster schools. The pupils may find the need to spend more time in the nurture environment working in small groups to build back their emotions and confidence within school life. Also with the amount of changes that are likely to happen to school life the continued use of online resources and programmes are vital for the pupils to keep on top of their literacy and numeracy skills. For the CLA pupils a Key worker is essential to always be there for the pupils when they return to school to ensure they can support them and help met their needs.

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Cluster 2

1. Cluster
Cluster C
2. Local Authority
Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC
3. List of schools within cluster
X 9 Schools within the cluster
4. Areas of Focus
Restorative Approaches;
5. Summary of plan 2019-2020
Priority - Developing and implementing Restorative Approaches within the School A Cluster Objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop relationships within the cluster between pupils, staff and pupils, staff and staff through Restorative Approaches (RA)• Reduce the number of incidents relating to relationship issues (ie. Reduce Exclusion and increase attendance)• Level 1 Training across cluster• Level 3 Training across cluster Outcome / Intended Impact: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good practice is shared and relationships between all stakeholders develops• Develop family engagement through a RA• All staff are trained to Level 1.• All key staff are trained to Level 2 and some move to Level 3
6. Evidence of learner outcomes (LAC/FLAC)

School C

- Circle time in Prep lessons are used to teach pupils how to build relationships and to learn to express opinion and value the opinions and feelings of others. Pupils have engaged well in restorative processes and participate in restorative conversations in order to develop empathy whilst repairing conflict between peers. There has been a reduction in serious incidents and staff have used the training to attempt to de-escalate situations and support children feeling anxious and angry. Nearly all pupils demonstrate empathy towards others and nearly all pupils are confident in reporting concerns using the correct channels. Pupils are happier to report issues and discuss them with peers. This is seen in a reduction of entries into anti-bullying log.

The positive relationships with pupils through a focus on restorative approaches has impact on behaviours, pupil wellbeing and attendance. Pupils are brought together for restorative meetings to develop pupils' empathy, responsibility, decision making and consequence.

The main evidence is the reduction in the number of exclusions and incidents this year. (Comparison over two terms only due to COVID-19). The number of days of exclusion reduced by a 1/3 and the number of incidents reduced by nearly a ¼ over the two terms.

Primary Schools

- Children have enjoyed being part of the start of the school journey to create a restorative school. They have been empowered to decide the values and needs that are relevant to them within their classrooms and so can relate to those rules more easily. Circle time activities have developed children's oracy skills and confidence in speaking in front of their peers.

- No exclusions or serious incidents recorded and a general reduction in behaviour issues.

- All pupils made at least expected progress. One out of the 3 (CLA) pupils made above expected progress. All three pupils no longer meet criteria for small group support for Literacy and Numeracy although it is still open to them as a learning boost if necessary.

- Pupils showed an increased engagement individually and a general greater flexibility to work with other learner. Oracy levels improved and a raised level of confidence in pupils to speak in front of others was seen by staff.

- All pupils, including CLA, ACE and ALN pupils have responded positively to the restorative approaches we have adopted. Raised awareness through prescribed lessons, teaching the physical and verbal techniques (building bridges mantra), environmental awareness through posters on process, follow through RA procedures following incidents - dealt with in a timely, consistent way using restorative vocabulary. This is evidenced through the reduction in the number of incidents of disruptive behaviour, verbal and physical abuse.

- Up until early March, the social and emotional aspects within learner groupings have progressed well although as the trauma is very deep rooted one pupil still has regular episodes of dysregulation which are contained and supported by our very skilled and understanding staff. All pupils within the FLAC groupings are engaged, happy, sociable and attend and cope within our mainstream settings though one pupil is supported within our SEBD Class. Furthermore the LAC pupil despite the significant traumas is managing mainstream integration superbly.

7. Student Voice Quote

“Working on Restorative Approaches in Prep classes has given us the skills to Build, Maintain and Repair relationships with other pupils and teachers as well. The use of circles in Senedd Ysgol meetings has made the experience more enjoyable as we all get an equal voice”

“Miss, can we sit here for five minutes in a circle to sort out what happened out the yard before we come back into class?”

“I like restorative meetings because everyone feel that have a chance to be listened to . I love check in time it makes me feel that I am important.”

“Checking in is fun, it makes me learn more about my classmates and now I realise that they are all just like me really.”

“I am getting to know which question comes next and I like it that I can talk about making things better with someone who has been nasty to me.”

“I like talking about my problems with my friends without getting too angry or upset.”

8. Staff Quote

“Working on Restorative Approaches has emphasised how important positive relationships are in nurturing the wellbeing and enhancing the outcomes of learners.”

“The atmosphere in school is calmer there isn't much shouting. Everyone follows the same questions and routine when any incident takes place.”

“Staff feel more empowered to deal with the day to day issues that arise within the classroom. There is a greater sense of belonging to a shared community with consistent and easy to follow process to resolve conflict.”

“Things have really changed for me. I've started to think more deeply about my learners as individuals and how I can best prepare them and engage them for tasks, rather than focusing on delivering for all. I think my responses to disruption are more considered and gradual too as I'm more mindful of each pupil and the challenges they are facing daily in and out of the classroom.”

“Restorative approaches have enabled our school to look at a more effective way of managing behaviour. Through adopting consistent approaches and delivery throughout the school, it has enabled us to develop a more cohesive school community, helping to foster a more productive and positive learning environment which is transparent for all stakeholders. R.A. engenders a sense of responsibility and purpose, promoting justice. This, in turn, produces a school where both pupils and staff are happy to attend and one where our wider school community can feel assured that practices, within our walls, are fair, inclusive and equitable.”

“The script of questions is very powerful and is a great tool to empower the learners and facilitate effective discussion, pupil accountability for actions thus leading to the restorative approach and the repair of damaged relationships.”

“Using Restorative Approaches allows everyone to have equal opportunities by listening to others opinions and learning to value and empathise.”

9. Evidence of Impact on Teaching and Learning

Evidence from School C

- All pupils have shown engagement with restorative approaches in developing positive relationships with staff and peers.
- 74% of pupils have a ratio of positive to negative behaviours of above 97%.
- 98% of pupils demonstrate a positive ratio of behaviour
- During circle-time in Prep, pupils engage in activities and discussions regarding qualities needed for effective learning such as how to develop confidence and resilience.
- Pupils are encouraged to act on feedback provided by teachers in order for pupils to improve the standard of their work. Pupils are given the opportunity to peer assess each other work and provide feedback and advice on how peers should improve their work.

- Teachers have received Restorative Approaches training to encourage the building of positive relationships with pupils in lessons.
- Pupils engage well in restorative meetings with teachers following ongoing issues within the classroom. Relationships are restored and progress is made as pupils overcome challenges
- Positive Relationships are encouraged and discussed in assemblies; e.g. celebrating school team/dept success, community links with attendance Awards and through school values.

Primary School evidence

• Staff are aware of the steps they need to undertake to build relationships with pupils. This has enabled teaching to improve as less time is generally being spent dealing with behavioural issues. Children have become more confident in speaking and better listeners.

• Plenary and introductions as circles in some settings and also using circles at the start of a topic to find out what the children already know.

• Consistent use of check in and circle time processes and practises.

Consistent script to resolve conflict issues.

Clear language shared by all members of staff.

Consistent displays in regards to classroom values.

• Staff Evaluation/Monitoring findings. Consistent approach to checking in. Planning updated to include more time for reflection/plenary in lessons. Increased time given to pupil voice, Frequency of pupil choice increased at keys stage 2.

• Following the introduction of RA the impact on teaching and learning has been to create a calm state, which is optimal for scholarship. RA has offered alternate and complementary approaches to traditional punitive methods based of action and consequences. It has promoted mindfulness in the classroom through introducing restorative conversations with individuals, pairs, groups, classes and cohorts. Circles of wellbeing have been a regular feature as have effective statements and collaborative agreements.

• Timetabled and / or impromptu check-ins give added opportunities for pupils to share. Gives pupils an added voice. Difficult to assess this presently due to CoVid disruption but this approach has embellished our good practice.

• Improved Behaviour management techniques. Deeper understanding of link between thoughts and feelings and behaviour.

10. Evidence of whole school impact

School C

- The positive relationships with pupils through focus on restorative approaches has impact on behaviours, pupil wellbeing and attendance

The attendance during the weeks prior to school closure due to Covid-19 was excellent and above school average

Restorative approaches embedded in the working of each year group to resolve conflict. Pupils supported in development of emotional intelligence. We foster positive relationships with our parents. The restorative and coaching programme supported us in effective communication. We also aim to involve the pupils as much as possible in all processes. The restorative approach is embedded in all our work with pupils, staff and parents. It has been successful in improving relationships and identifying solutions.

Primary Schools

- Throughout the school, children are more calm and considerate. There is a focus on discussing issues and coming to a consensus. Any conflict is always handled calmly by staff, the situation is diffused as quickly as possible and the pupil knows that issues are always dealt with in the same way.

- The facilitators trained have had a huge impact...staff training staff and bringing back ideas they have trialled in classrooms has had the biggest impact. Governing body meetings start with a circle too! Our school is a much calmer place

- Reduction in school exclusions. Improved behaviour. Reduction in referrals to behaviour support.

- New format for all meetings to include restorative approaches

Policies updated to include restorative approaches (Behaviour and Discipline)

School Improvement Plan updated and include restorative approaches actions and agreed success criteria.

Information shared with all stakeholders, so awareness of restorative approaches increased.

- We adopted the Restorative Approach in early Autumn Term following cluster training, prior to school starting in the 2019/2020 academic year. Adopting the approach has had an impact on all pupils throughout the school. We have a number of pupils with challenging behaviour issues. Not exclusively, but CLA, ACE and ALN children can find responding to guidelines and rules (which are essential in schools due to safeguarding protocols) sometimes challenging. Through simple prompts, repetitive and consistent words and RA actions, improvements in the number of incidents and behaviours have been evident. The premature ending of virtually the school year on March the 20th has not enabled us to calculate the evidence and present data in percentage terms in relation to impact on a whole school basis.

- Check-ins are used at the start of all staff meetings. All staff have feel empowered and supported by the 5 questions

- Reduction in disputes between pupils and members of staff. More positive mindset of staff and learners.

11. Opportunities for partnership working (e.g. school to school, external agencies)

- Sharing best practice Relationships Management Policy with other pilot schools .Linking up with schools linked with the RCT Steering group
 - The training has allowed teachers from different schools in the cluster to connect with other teachers to share experiences and good practice.
 - Small group learning sessions have helped to develop a consistent pattern throughout the cluster for dealing with challenging behaviour and conflict. The shared cluster understanding of the importance of creating a safe community ethos has been a vital in developing this new approach.
 - SIP sharing meeting where specific targets and outcomes could be worked on collaboratively.
- School to school checking in sessions and the opportunity for transition activities where pupils can share their ideas and opinions as well as any anxieties they may have.
- We have approached RA not only as an individual school but by working collaboratively with other cluster schools on common approaches. This has provided staff with a community of practitioners who can aid and assist with approaches going forward. We expect all visitors to the school, from our wider school community, such as School C transition teachers, LA peripatetic practitioners and instructors, external agency employees such as supply teachers and all who visit our school to engage with our RA approach.
 - At our last 2 Governing body Meetings (Autumn and Spring) our School Council has modelled approaches, particularly the 'check - in' - leading the 'check-in' at the start of every meeting, showing them how it is used around the classes and in their own School Council meetings too.

12. Planned next steps

The cluster is planning to move into phase 2 for the 2020-21 academic year to where we will continue to develop the use (RA) within our schools. It will be essential to ensure new staff joining school in September (and some current staff) are appropriately trained. Further work is planned to be completed with Parents and other stakeholders making the RA processes consistent across the cluster. All schools are striving to ensure RA are embedded in the values and policies of the schools and the developing and nurturing of wellbeing will be essential as we move forward, particularly in September when supporting pupils, staff and families post school closure. School will continue to develop the use of restorative rooms to provide pupils with break out/ time out spaces to allow the principles of RA to be put into practise.

RCT Bursary Evaluation 2019/20

Costed Plan/Costau'r Cynllun							
Please note, all funding must be spent by the 31 st March 2020 Cofiwch bod angen gwario'r cyllid erbyn y 31ain o Fawrth 2020							
Total Investment Funding/ Costau llawn y buddsossiad			£42,654				
Programme / Priority Area Rhaglen/Blaenoriaeth	Key Actions Prif Weithgareddau	Time Scale Amserlen	Funding Cyllid		Monitoring / Evaluation Monitro/Gwerthuso	Monitoring/Evaluation Year End Update 31 st March 2020 Monitro/Gwerthuso diwedd y flwyddyn 31ain o Fawrth 2020	Actual Expenditure 31 st March 2020 Gwariant gwirioneddol 31ain o Fawrth 2020
			Staffing & Resources Staffio ac adnoddau	Cost			
Mental Health First Aid training	We have a team of 2 professionals who can provide 2 training sessions in the year to target audience including foster carers and teachers	Training completed in the first term and delivered to schools and foster carers in	2 trainers for 4 days (8 sessions)	£1000	Evaluations from participants.	Training was evaluated. Invoices from training.	£1560 – 2 trainers delivered 2 day training in January 2020 for cohort of 15.

		the spring and Autumn term.					
ELSA Training.	Core programmes rolled out for ELSA course for foster carers. Two programs delivered to Residential homes. Venue costs Files to be printed and copy of ELSA book to purchased.	Five day rolling programme over Autumn and spring.	2 trainers for 5 sessions (times 4) 6 Supervision sessions offered	£1000 Venue and resources Training costs £ 2000	Evaluations completed and Supervision offered and attended.	Evaluations completed Invoices for venues	£1,327 Foster carer sessions 5 days 2 courses one in October one in January. 23 foster carers attended. 3 supervision sessions with groups of 8 Foster carers
Short term LSA intervention Tuition at KS4	Request for TA on short term basis to meet learning needs of CLA pupil. Request for Tutor on short term basis to meet learning needs of CLA pupil.	ASAP after funds are delegated to LA. Autumn and Spring term	12 young people were supported to access education. Funds used to meet ALN in short term while statement was requested, transition into new school and avoid exclusion.	£10000 £3000	Progress reports and invoice kept by CLA Ed. Coordinator. Progress reports and invoice kept by CLA Ed. Coordinator.	Invoices from school	£9,639.82 £7492.59 297.61 Altogether £17,430.02
Resources to support CLA Friendly Schools	Resources available to share with school staff to	Will be purchased ASAP after		£500	Evaluation of CLA friendly schools	Evaluations completed from all schools who participated.	

	<p>support CLA Friendly Schools, e.g. Adoptive friendly school book, Telling Tales, Attachment and Emotional Development in the Classroom Certificates, frames and celebration event from September 2020 for 11 schools. Food and beverages.</p> <p>Books and resources for schools purchased to lend.</p>	funds delegated.				Invoices provided	£496
Video Interaction Guidance	<p>Supervision for 2 EPs Registration x2</p> <p>Conference Supervision attended and one round of intervention completed and evaluated.</p>			<p>Supervision- £3000 Registration £420</p>	Evaluation of intervention from foster carers		£3420

Emotion Coaching Emotion coaching for families	Providing training to schools and foster carers. EHCAP Cost of training. Venues and beverages. Completed training not family coach. 1 session for foster carers completed and 3 school sessions. Evaluations completed	Autumn, Spring and summer term	Room costs 2 trainers	Delivering training (4 times) and resources £1000 Being trained and delivering program (twice) £1234	Completion of courses and evaluations.	Evaluations completed	£2234
Give us a break –	2 day training and providing support to pilot program for 3 and 2 to complete train the trainer. Give us a break project running in one high school for 8 sessions Cost of training and trainers and delivering the project/resources.	Autumn, Spring and Summer	2 trainers and on person to support	£1000 Cost of initial training plus £1800 2 people to complete the train the trainer	Completion of pilot program in one school and evaluations	Evaluations completed and invoices received.	£3120
Supporting transitions	Research visits to Bridgend to look at Transition project and implement pilot in RCT. Arrange shared day for all	Autumn	Travel and resources	£500	Evaluations	Evaluations completed	£383

	secondary schools and provide literature. Venue costs and producing information for schools. Travel costs.						
Dyadic Development Psychotherapy and supervision	Training 3 EPs to level 2 .Trained and DDP informed approaches being undertaken with foster carers, parents and young people.	Autumn	3 places	£2920	Ddp approaches being used. 3 families benefiting from approach. Feedback from Foster carers and pupils. Supervision attended.	Invoices and feedback from foster carers.	£3160
Training in Key adult approach for ELSAs	1 day training by Helen Worrall	Spring	Cost of trainer and venue	£1250	Evaluations	Not completed as undertaking project in CSC	Nil
Mike Church –	Story telling project to support group of year 8 and 9 girls around developing positive sense of self.	Autumn/ Spring	Cost of project, organiser and resources/venue	£5000	Evaluations and outcomes from pupils involved.	Story book produced and published by CLA pupils and will be distributed	£5000
Collar and Cuffs	2 performances for carers and parents and children from 0 – 7.	Autumn/ Spring	Cost of Theatre company	£1000	Evaluations	Company experienced illness so were unable to complete	Nil
Training in Relationship based play for foster carers	1 day training by Helen Worrall	Spring	Cost of Trainer and venue	£1250	Evaluations	Not completed as Trainer was not available and working in CSC providing the same training.	Nil

Dynamix	Research to gain pupils voice and update information from previous research 3 years ago.	Spring	Cost of researchers and preparation of report	£5000	Research paper completed and used to inform next years focus of support from CLA team	Delayed and then cancelled due to Covid	Nil
Gareth Noble	Project to engage a group of Year 10 and 11 pupils not engaging in education through Ty Gwyn.	Autumn	Cost of Mentor/leader	£3000	Evaluations The Young people enjoyed participating, however the barriers were arranging suitable sessions that suited the education provision	Invoice	£3000
Resources and updated assessments and books	Lego Books Games Folders Producing information leaflets. Wiat –lll uk Literacy assessment					Invoices	£48.61 £411 £127 £96 £52 £624.49
Transport – out of county visits and attendance and regional interest groups.	Sharing good practice with other LA's in UK. Visiting provisions.	Autumn	Travel	Not costed	Feedback from visits and minutes from meeting	Travelling expenses and minutes provided	£166

Total spend - £42,655

Best Practice Showcase July 2020- School A

Whole School Systems and Practice

Information about the school

- School A is a large school in RCT. We have 430 pupils on roll. We have mixed aged classes in early FP but a two-form entry from year 2-6. The school serves the communities of the local village, although there are many children attending from other nearby villages.
- We have close community links and parents/grandparents volunteer within our school.
- We have a full-time well-being officer
- We currently have 430 pupils on roll. 24% of our pupils are eFSM. 23% of our pupils are on the SEN Register. 0.93% of our pupils are CLA, 4 pupils in total.
- Outcome levels are not available this year due to Covid 19

Context and background to sector-leading practice

- All teaching and non-teaching staff had received Level 1 CLA Friendly School Awareness in 2019.

Description of nature of strategy or activity

- ALNCo and Year 6 teachers meet with ALNCo from School C and parents of the children to discuss the children's needs when they go to School C
- Vulnerable pupils are given Nurture provision
- Vulnerable pupils are also taken on additional transition visits to School C accompanied by their LSA or Key Adult to give them extra opportunities to see the School and discuss any issues that are of concern.
- Year 6 teachers meet with heads of year 7 from School C again to inform them of any children who are CLA or vulnerable
- Designated CLA lead discusses any CLA children with Designated CLA Lead from School C
- Well-being Officer works with vulnerable pupils and families supporting them with transition
- Year 6 pupils are taught some lessons (Welsh, French and Science) by teachers from School C to aid transition.

What impact has this work had on provision and learners' standards?

- Vulnerable pupils have a greater feeling of security about the process and have more opportunities to ask questions
- Vulnerable pupils appreciate the additional time they have to visit School C which makes the situation more familiar to them ready for when they go to the new school
- Pupils find the transition into Comprehensive school easier

How have you shared your good practice?

- Best Practice has been evidenced with CLA Education Team

Best Practice Showcase July 2019- School B

Preventative Approaches for CLA Learners

Information about the school

- School B is a Church in Wales secondary school of just under 1000 pupils situated in RCT – a very busy and inclusive school, that prides itself on the very high standard of care and wellbeing that is offered to all pupils
- The school has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Eco Schools Silver Award, the RRSA Bronze Award and phase 5 of the Healthy Schools Award
- Developing happy, caring, independent and well-rounded children is at the heart of the school
- Approximately 13.2% per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals
- English is the home language for all of the pupils
- Raising levels of achievement has been strongly and clearly highlighted as a major part of improving the life chances of children who are looked after and we are committed to playing a pivotal role in this

Context and background to sector-leading practice

DEVELOPMENT OF A KEY ADULT APPROACH

- The school currently has 9 young people who are looked after and all access nurture provision
- In line with local and national developments and to further align the Well Being arm of the school, we reshuffled well-being roles to create a CLA Key Worker position to accommodate our growing number of CLA learners and to ensure that this key group had consistency and quality of provision and support

Description of nature of strategy or activity

A key adult approach was set up to support all CLA learners with behaviour and emotional needs. Provision now includes:

- 1:1 sessions with a CLA Key Adult covering a range of topics including emotion coaching

- Key Adult role given prominence in foyer displays, in staff room, in information to visitors and supply staff, and in the new school policy
- One point of contact for all communication with learners, carers, social workers and the LA
- A bespoke Coffee Morning for CLA learners and their carers to introduce them to the school
- CLA Level 1 training delivered to all teaching and support staff, canteen, cleaners and the Governing Body to raise awareness and maintain the whole school focus on CLA learners
- A shared drive for all staff with the CLA Friendly Schools Handbook, strategies for supporting CLA learners, resources on attachment and trauma, and top tips for dealing with CLA and vulnerable learners
- One Page Profiles created for all CLA learners

What impact has this work had on provision and learners' standards?

- **All** CLA pupils have accessed this key adult support, with improvement seen in **all** pupils attending with regard to their behaviour and emotional development,
- CLA learners engaged with coping strategies for change, and other provision as appropriate including ELSA, Eye2Eye counselling and YEPS
- All staff have a specific point of contact for CLA learners which has improved communication and monitoring of CLA learners
- The mentoring has had a very positive impact on CLA attendance with the average attendance of all CLA learners being extremely high
- Very few behaviour points have been accrued by our CLA learners linked to the individualised support they have received from their key adult worker
- Several CLA learners have attended out of school provision which has helped to build confidence and self-esteem
- Several CLA learners have represented the school as Ambassadors at transition events which was a huge step forward in terms of their confidence and ability
- **All** of our children who are looked after have made academic progress in the last year. This can be seen on our tracking grids and assessment results.
- This academic year there have been no exclusions, truancies or unauthorised absences for children who are looked after in the new Year 7 cohort
- The key adult approach has enabled CLA learners to be tracked effectively and has highlighted areas where additional support may be required.

How have you shared your good practice?

- At local PLC meetings
- At Cluster meetings

- Best Practice has been evidenced with CLA Education Team and CLA Friendly School (PLATINUM) Quality Mark was achieved in July 2019 and celebrated at an awards event attended by Sirol Burford, CSC PDGLAC Strategic Lead.

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

12th July 2021

TROS GYNNAL PLANT (TGP) CYMRU UPDATE

1. **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Board with an update of progress made by Tros Gynnal Plant (TGP) Cymru.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Board:

- 2.1 Acknowledge the work undertaken by TGP Cymru, the content of which is attached at Appendix 1.

3. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is important for Members to note the progress, themes and issues highlighted by the TGP Cymru, in order to work in partnership to ensure the best possible outcomes are reached for those in our care system.

4. **BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 As part of the Board's Terms of reference, TGP Cymru are invited to attend meetings to enable both the TGP Cymru and Children Services to discuss issues that affect service delivery in the community on a strategic level and to work in partnership to provide improved and better outcomes.

5. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

6. **CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 There is no consultation required for this report.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

7.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

8.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report.

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ FUTURE GENERATIONS – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

9.1 The work of the Corporate Parenting Board links directly to the Council's Corporate Plan priority – 'Rhondda Cynon Taf's Children will receive a great start in life...'

9.2 The work of TGP Cymru links to the Future Generations Well-Being Goal of a more equal Wales, by ensuring that children and young people are supported when decisions are being made about them. This ensures that young people have access to a range of information in order to fulfil their potential.

9.3 In addition to the duty to listen to young people and involve them in decisions, the Part 10 Code of Practice (Advocacy) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 sets out the duties to consider the provision of independent professional advocacy in certain circumstances for:

- Children who are looked after (who should benefit from an active offer of professional independent advocacy) or have previously been looked after
- Children who are subject to an assessment of need or a care and support plan or child protection enquiries

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 TGP Cymru are invited to attend meetings of the Corporate Parenting Board, to provide a broader understanding and contribution into the services available to young people and vulnerable adults.

National Approach to Statutory Advocacy

Local Authority Report - RCT - 2020 - 2021

Collated Annual Report

April 20 - March 21

Headline Report

Over the year Covid-19 dramatically changed the way we work, forcing us to constantly adapt our practice to meet changing regulations in line with Welsh Government guidelines. The majority of visits have therefore been conducted virtually, either via Zoom or What's App, or by telephone, depending on availability and the child/ young person's preference. As many older young people engaged with peers virtually pre-Covid this caused little disruption to them, and many have preferred this type of communication. Engaging with children under eight has been more difficult due to their age and level of understanding. Some platforms have options to use backgrounds and change participant's appearances using funny faces and masks. These have been used as conversation starters and to help make the situation fun for younger children. Tools such as puppets, flash cards and cuddly toys have also been used, as well as many reports of family pets being used to break the ice and help build bonds. Advocates have also sent children and young people activities in the post prior to their meeting, to use as an engagement tool. Younger children have reported "having fun on the calls", which is positive. Complex cases, cases where young people are sharing information which is upsetting to them, or if the child/ young person has issues in relation to people they reside with, are harder to manage virtually due to sensitivity and the need to ensure young person is reassured and safe. Schools and residential settings have been extremely supportive, allowing young people to access equipment to undertake video calls away from the home environment. This has ensured a private and confidential discussion with an Advocate, in the knowledge that the adult is present and available to them after the meeting. Some young people asked to wait for advocacy until face to face visits resume and where the need has been urgent face to face visit have been requested and approved following the relevant guidance.

During the year referrals for Issue Based Advocacy rose steadily, with quarter four being the busiest quarter. Active Offer figures reduced and we continue to notice a large variance between children and young people eligible compared to referrals received.

Active Offer

During the year 61 Active Offer referrals were received. Quarter one was the highest with 19, while quarter two was the lowest with only 12. A total of 52 Active Offer meetings took place, with 42 young people moving onto access issue based advocacy support. Of the 61 young people 34 were female and 27 male. The majority of the Active Offers related to the Child Protection arena at 47. The age split was similar, with 28 young people aged between 6-11 and 26 aged 12-16. This year we also received five referrals for 0-5 year olds and two for the 17-19 age group.

100% of young people referred for Active Offer were contacted within 48 hours, while 87% were seen within five working days.

Issue Based Advocacy

Over the year 132 children and young people were referred to the service, with 80 of these being first time service users. Referrals have increased throughout each quarter, with quarter four seeing double the amount of referrals received in quarter two. Self-referrals have remained the highest source of referrals throughout the year with 76 coming through this way. Social Services have the second largest referrals at 38, with another 12 coming through IRO's. Foster carers have made four referrals, while residential care and third sector organisations also made one referral each over the year.

Headline Report Cont'd

Of the 132 children and young people referred we saw an equal number of males and females. CLA represented 60 of these referrals, while 56 were in the Child Protection arena, 11 Care and Support and five Care Leavers. The age representation was split with 59 being 12-16, 55 being 6-11, eight each from 0-5 and 17-19 age group and two aged 20-25.

Issues followed a similar pattern, seeing an increase each quarter and totalling 157 throughout the year. Support at meetings was the most prominent support request with 82.

Other issues referred this year were:

Placement issues x 22	Contact x 19	Social Services issues x 11	Emotional / wellbeing x 9	Home life x 8
Complaints x 2	School issues x 2	Care leaver issue x 1	Financial issues x 1	

100% of young people referred for IBA were contacted within 48 hours, while 92% were seen within five working days.

Service information

Staff have attended training virtually including training on homelessness rights, housing law, social media, safeguarding and Non Instructed Advocacy.

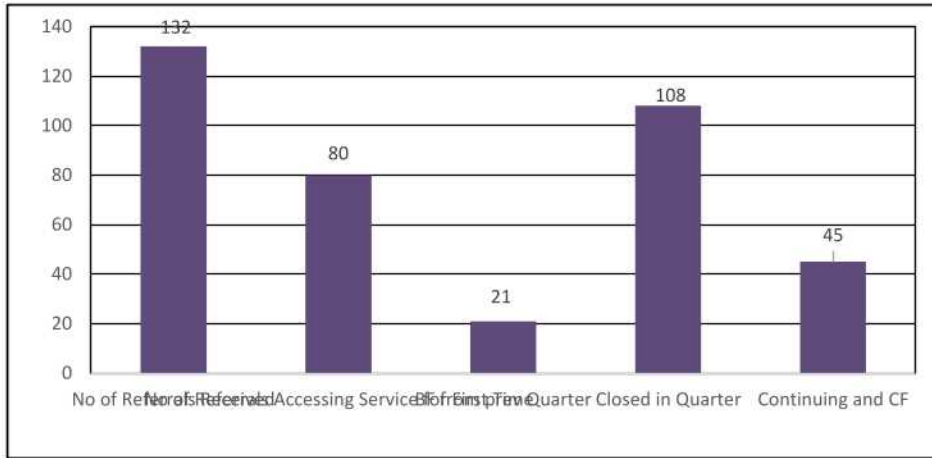
This year saw some staffing changes with the substantive manager going on Maternity leave in October 2020, and a temporary manager coming into post and a new casual advocate recruited to join the team.

Feedback provided has been positive with two quotes from different young people illustrated below:

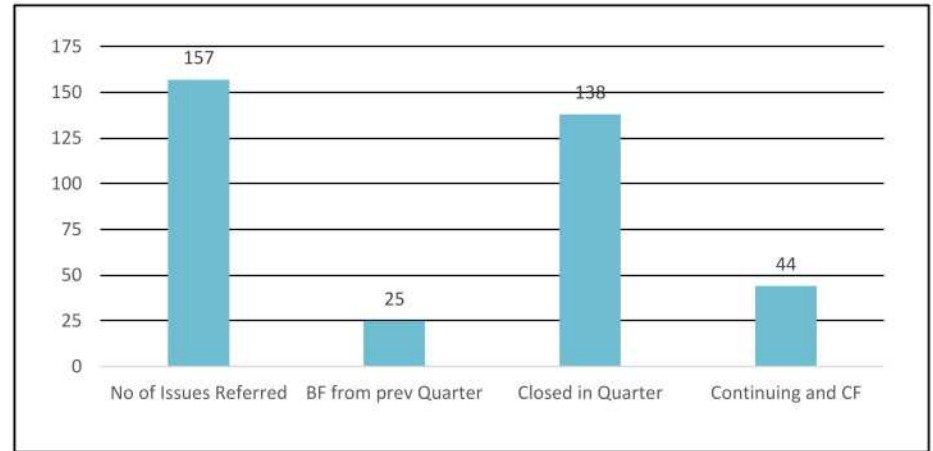
"I have had advocacy support and this has helped me explain to my social worker that I will be happier in a different placement which the social worker has now sorted" .

"I was able to tell my advocate that I feel like a ping pong ball because of number of placements recently. The advocate told my views to my social worker and I know have been told of a more permanent placement" .

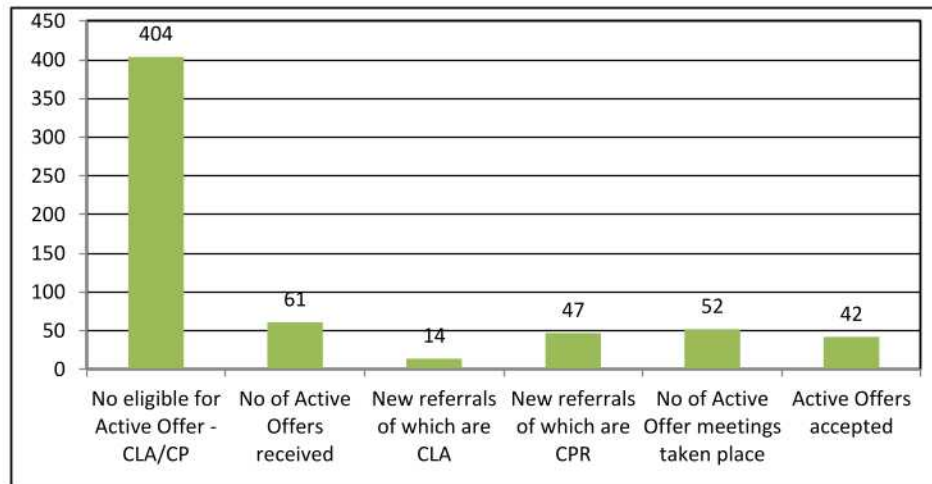
1a. Advocacy Cases - Young People - Issue Based Advocacy



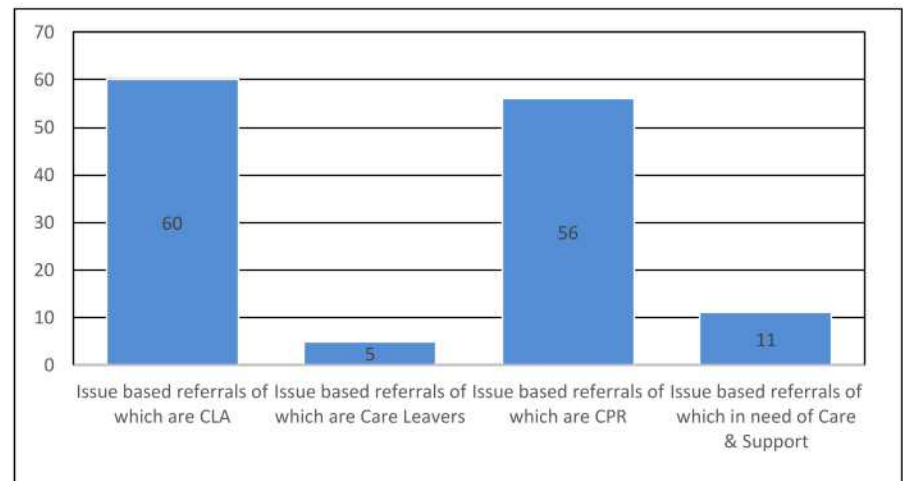
1b. Advocacy Cases - Interventions - Issue Based Advocacy



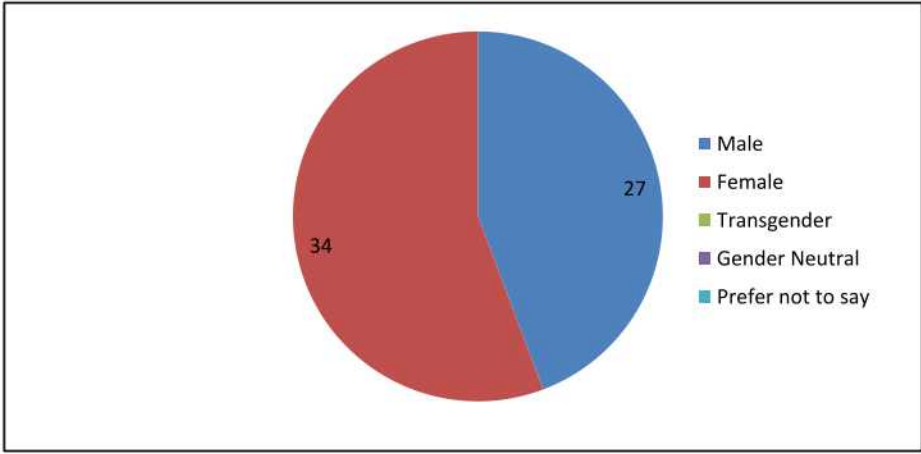
2a. Eligibility Criteria: Active Offer



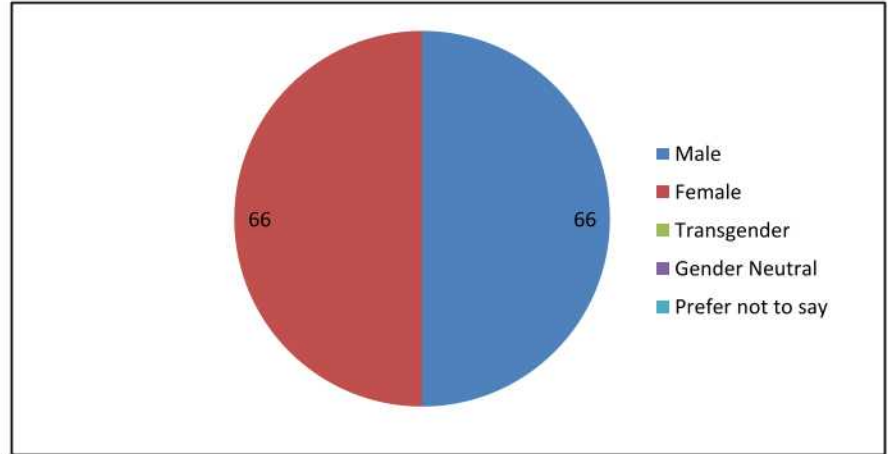
2b. Eligibility Criteria: Issue Based



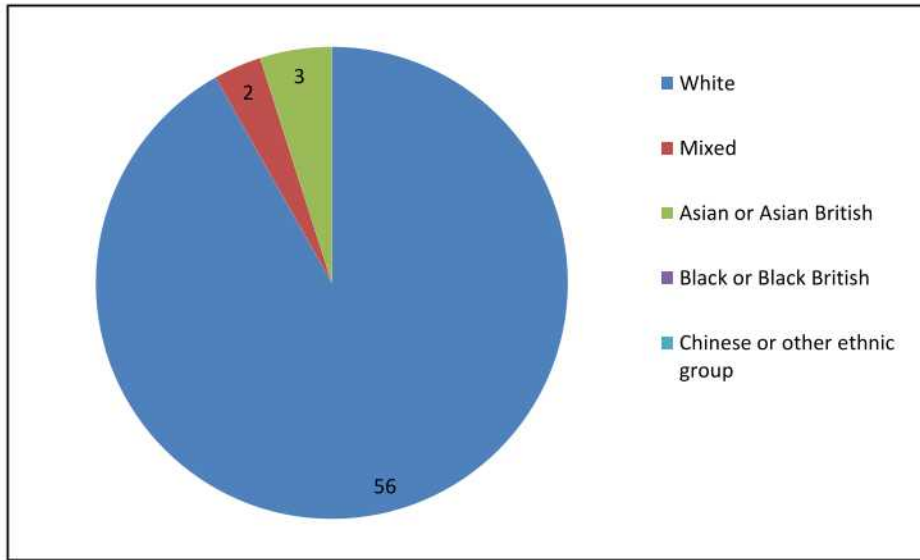
3a. Demographics: Gender - Active Offer



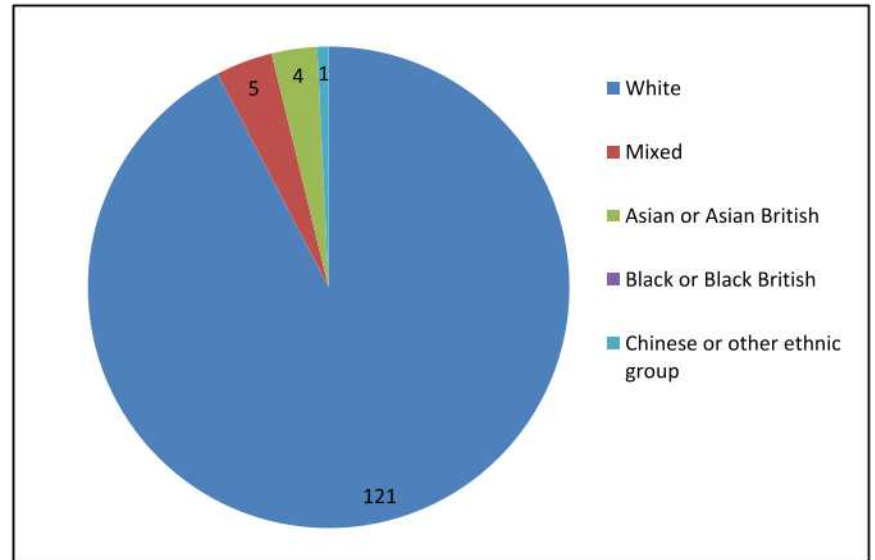
3b. Demographics: Gender - Issue Based



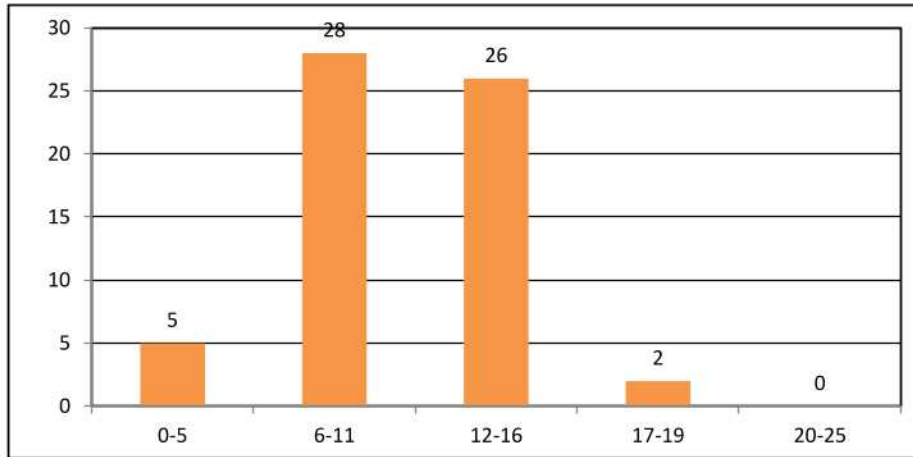
3c. Demographics: Ethnicity - Active Offer



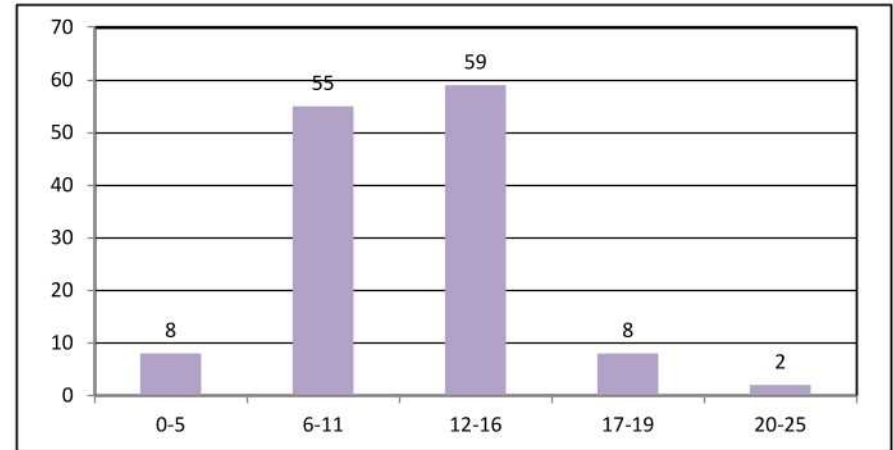
3d. Demographics: Ethnicity - Issue Based



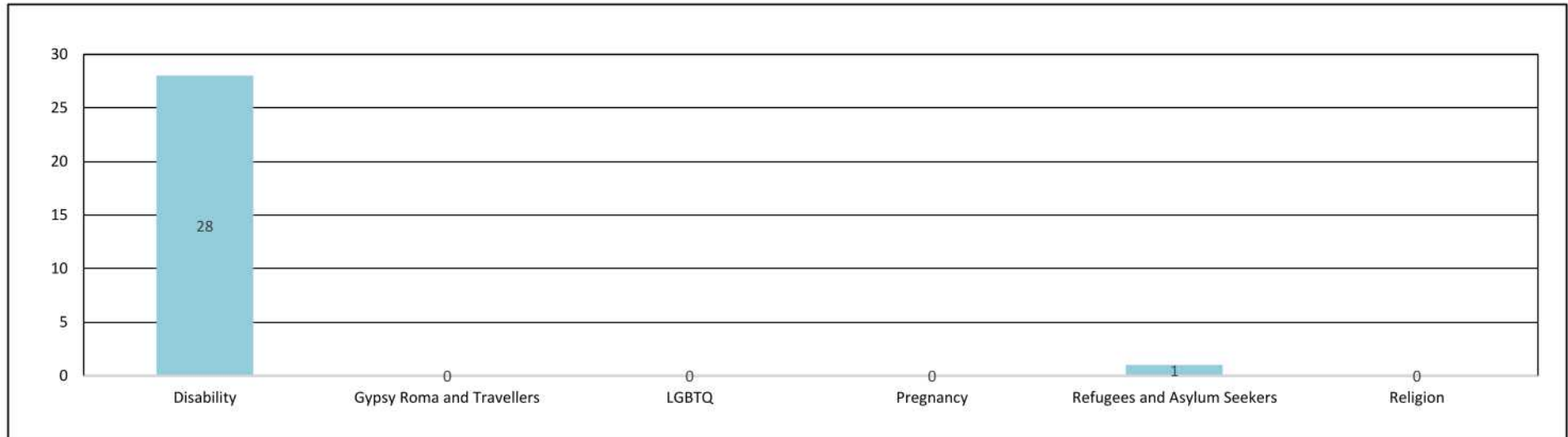
3e. Demographics: Age - Active Offer



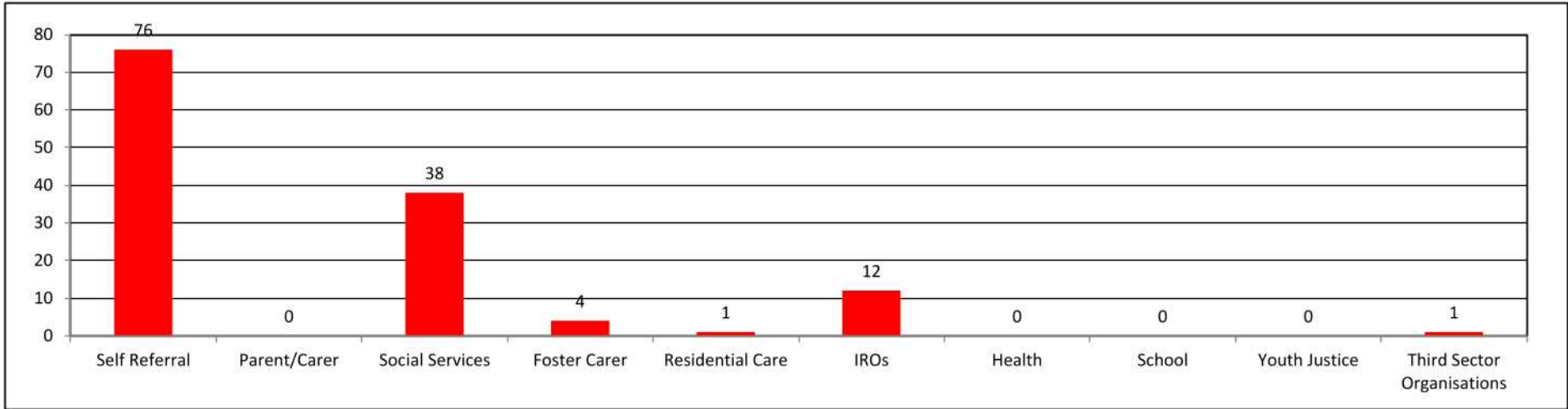
3f. Demographics: Age - Issue Based



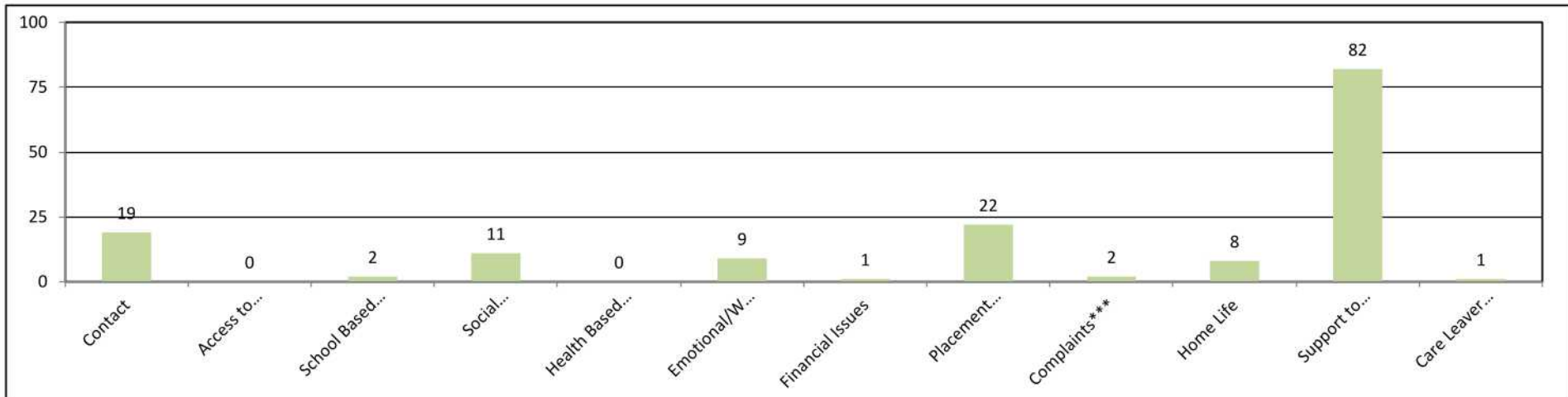
4. Protected Characteristics



5. Referral Source per young person - Issue Based only



6. Issues Presented

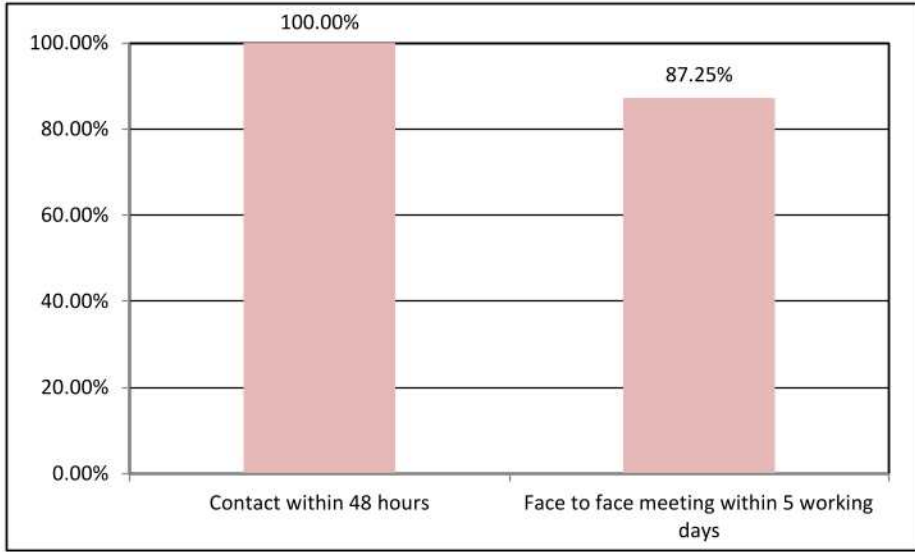


* School based issues including: SEN/ALN, exclusions, bullying, transport.

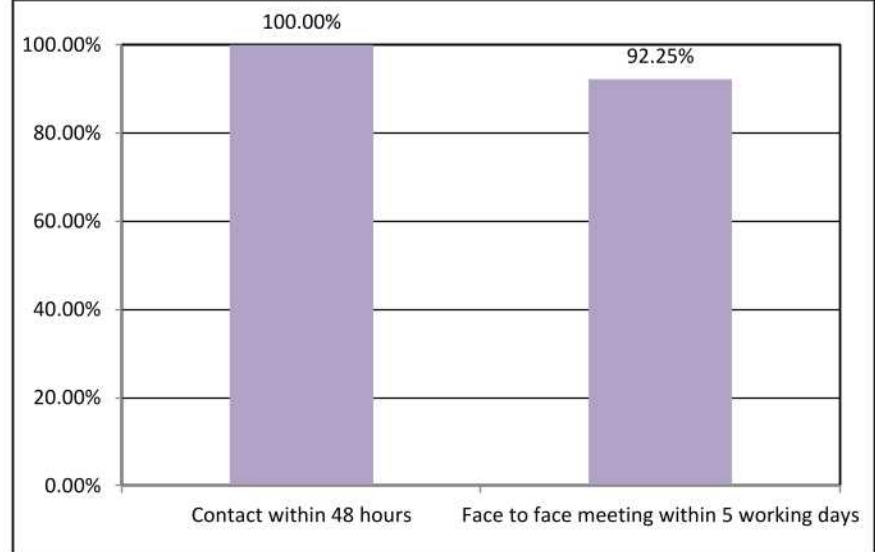
** Social Services based issues including: relationship with worker, care plan, service provided.

*** Complaints refer to any complaints made against statutory services, including Social Service, Police, Health, YJS

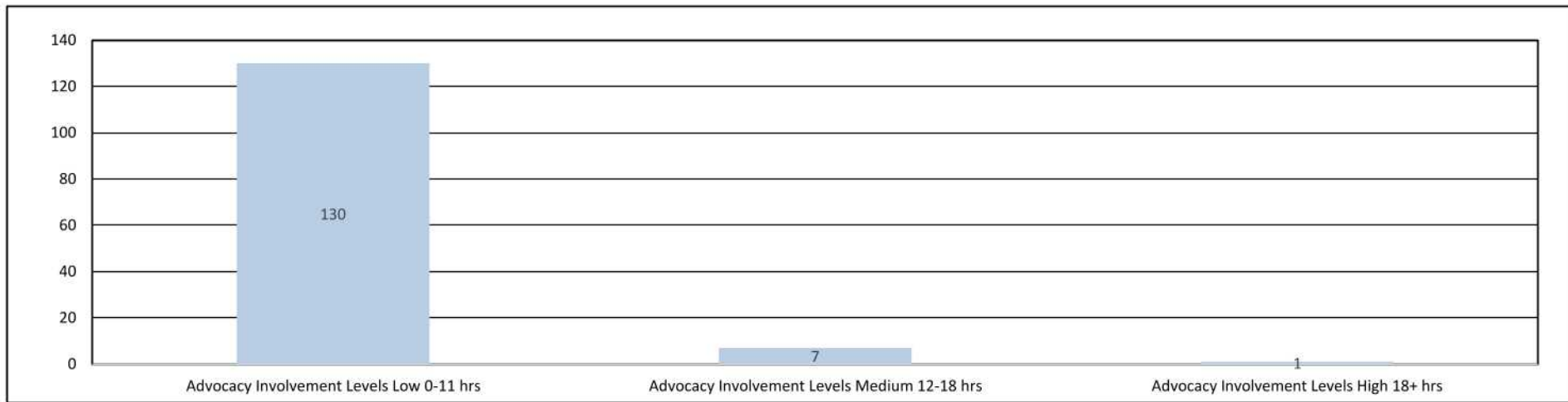
7. Service Performance - Active Offer



Service Performance - Issue Based



8. Level of Advocacy Intervention at point of Issue Closure



9.Outcomes: linked to The National Advocacy Standards & Outcomes Framework

		Comments
Outcome 1	Children and young people find good quality independent advocacy easily available and accessible.	<p>Performance across both Active Offer and issue based has remained at 100% across each quarter for contact within 48 hours. Although performance against the five day contact has reduced over the year, it remains high, with late visits mainly being the result of COVID restrictions and the need for face to face visits.</p> <p>The impact of COVID and changes to working practices have had an impact over the year to working practices.</p> <p>Advocates have remained flexible throughout the year adapting to the changing guidance linked with COVID as needed.</p>
Outcome 2	Children and young people have their privacy and confidences respected and their wellbeing safeguarded and protected.	<p>Confidentiality and safeguarding continue to be explained to all new children and young people accessing the service and throughout the advocacy intervention. Due to the change in the way of working to virtual meetings for much of the year, Advocates were mindful of the potential difficulties this caused. Meetings were postponed when it was felt that confidentiality was compromised and face to face visits requested as soon as possible where Advocates felt it was necessary.</p> <p>Advocates reported some challenges in explaining GDPR and confidentiality to younger children via virtual means, and at times younger children struggled to maintain attention, especially when there were distractions within the home environment. In order to overcome these challenges, Advocates conducted several short virtual visits and made them as fun as possible using puppets and games.</p>
Outcome 3	Children and young people are valued for their diversity, treated with respect and all forms of discrimination against them are challenged.	<p>We continue to advertise and offer the service in both Welsh and English, and have access to translation services for a variety of languages. This year we have only been required to provide one translator in Kurdish Sorani . All other support has been conducted through the medium of English.</p>

Outcome 4	Children and young people are empowered to take the lead in relation to advocacy services and their rights, wishes and feelings and championed.	<p>Advocates continue to champion self-advocacy and children and young people are always encouraged and supported to take the lead when able to.</p> <p>Advocates will endeavour to support all children and young people to provide feedback about the advocacy service at the end of the advocacy relationship. Collecting feedback has been additionally challenging this year as most meetings have taken place virtually. However feedback collected has mainly been positive and examples of this are noted in quarterly reports.</p>
Outcome 5	Children and young people participate in the design, planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of advocacy services.	<p>TGP Cymru successfully secured funding from WCVA for a six month long participation project towards the end of the year. All children and young people from across Bridgend who received a service this year were contacted and asked to participate. The outcomes of this project will be available in due course.</p> <p>We are currently recruiting for a Quality Assurance Officer who will lead on the monitoring, evaluation and feedback of TGP Cymru advocacy services across Wales. This is very exciting as it will bring about increased opportunities for children and young people to shape service design and delivery.</p>

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National Approach to Statutory Advocacy

Local Authority Report - (RCT) 2020 - 2021

Collated Quarterly Report

Quarter 4: Jan - March 2021

Headline Report

During quarter four, 46 children and young people accessed Issue Based Advocacy (IBA), presenting with 50 issues. This represents a significant increase on all previous quarters. However a slight decline in Active Offer referrals has been noted.

Active Offer

105 children and young people became eligible for the Active Offer of Advocacy in RCT during quarter four, which are made up from:

CLA:	12 x 5-9 year olds	7 x 10-15 year olds	4 x 16 plus
CP:	47 x 5-9 year olds	31 x 10-15 years olds	4 x 16 plus

Of these 105 children and young people, 13 Active Offer referrals were received, representing a slight decrease from quarter three. The majority of these related to the Child Protection arena, (11 referrals); nine were female and four male. Two young people did not want to talk to advocates therefore meetings did not take place leaving 11 Active Offer meetings taking place during the quarter, with ten young people accepting the offer of support and progressing to IBA. Nine Active Offer meetings were carried out within five working days. Two visits could not be carried out within the timescale. One was due to young person moving between parents and not having relevant contact details. The second was due to a young person being on holiday at time of referral and a subsequent request for a face to face visit at school.

Issue Based Advocacy

Of the 46 children and young people accessing the issue based service, 30 were first time users. This is a significant increase on the 35 referrals received last quarter. Both self-referral and referrals from Social Services were high this quarter with 21 referrals each. IRO's and foster carers also made two referrals each.

Of the 46 referred, 24 were CLA, 15 in the Child Protection arena, six were open to Care and Support and one was a Care Leaver. The gender split this quarter saw 20 males and 26 females while the age category with the highest referrals was the 6-11 group (22 referrals), closely followed by the 12-16 year category (18 referrals). Four referrals were received for the 0-5 age group and two for the 17-19 age group. A total of 11 young people lived out of area, residing in Ross on Wye, Abertillery, Cardiff, Swansea, Birmingham, Bridgend, Taunton, Neath and Presteigne.

During quarter four 50 issues were presented, and in keeping with previous quarters the largest reason for request was support to attend meetings, with 18 requests made up from:

Core Group x 2	LAC Review x 7	Initial CPC x 5
Review CPC x 3	Care and Support Review x 1	

Headline Report Cont'd

Placement issues was the second highest (12 referrals), with emotional and well being having six. Both contact and Social Service issues had five referrals each, with home life having three and complaints one. The complaint on this occasion related to a young person not feeling listened to regarding their placement.

Of the 46 children and young people who accessed the service, five were not met within the expected five working days. Four of these were unavailable to meet within the timescale, meeting on days six and seven. No contact information was received for the other young person, so advocates were unable to contact straightaway, with the meeting taking place on day eight.

Service Information

During quarter four Advocates took part in several training events including Housing Law Level 1 and 2, social media training and Non-Instructed Advocacy.

Visiting advocacy continues in four residential homes across RCT. Support continues to be virtual at present with weekly contact. During this quarter 48 telephone contacts were made across the four units.

During quarter four, 33 children and young people were closed to the service, of whom 18 completed feedback with their advocate. Of these 18 :

18 stated the advocate had done what they had agreed to do

18 stated they found the service helpful

15 felt the service made a difference to their situation

18 felt they now know more about their rights

18 felt more confident since receiving support

17 felt they were included in decisions

17 felt their views were considered

18 agreed they would use the service again.

Case Study - Dan aged 19

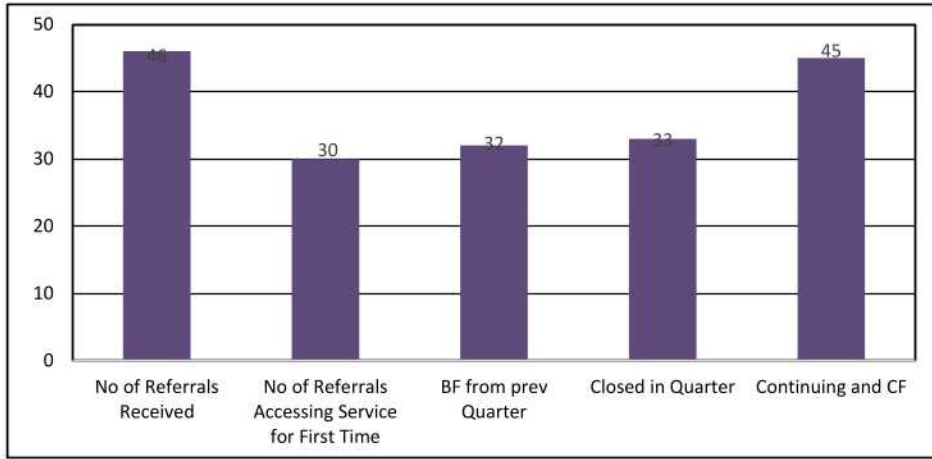
Please find below a case study of advocacy undertaken during the quarter within RCT. The name has been changed to protect the young person's identity.

Situation: Dan is going through the asylum appeals process. He is scared and uncertain about his future and unclear on the legal advice he has been given, what is happening next in his case, what his options are and the potential consequences of these options. He has raised concerns around his placement and he wishes to be moved elsewhere where he feels safe and has a support network. He feels that he is not being listened to and his wishes are not being taken seriously.

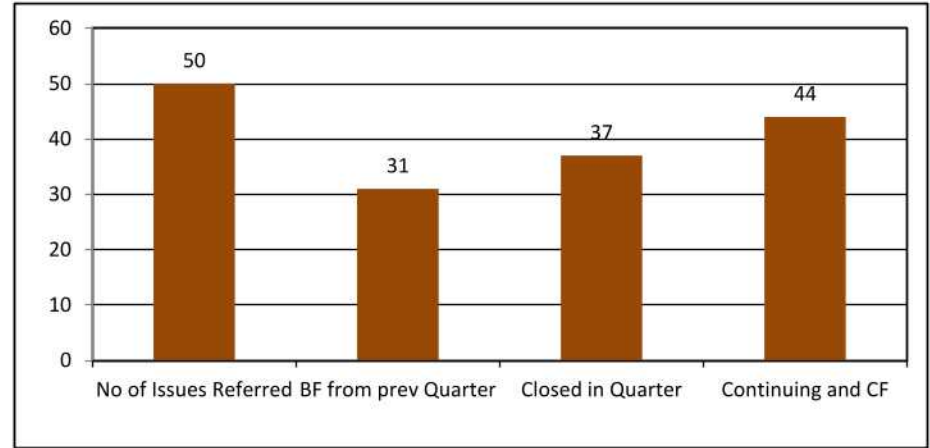
Action: Advocate made contact with Dan's solicitor on his behalf and was able to get a comprehensive update on his case which was shared with Dan, with the support of an interpreter. The information was broken down so that he was able to fully understand his position and what to expect next in his case. Dan was informed of his right to make a complaint and the process as explained to him. The Advocate later supported Dan to write and submit his complaint to the LA.

Outcome: Dan has a clear understanding of what is happening with his asylum claim and what the possible outcomes are. He is waiting for a resolution meeting during which he will have advocacy support.

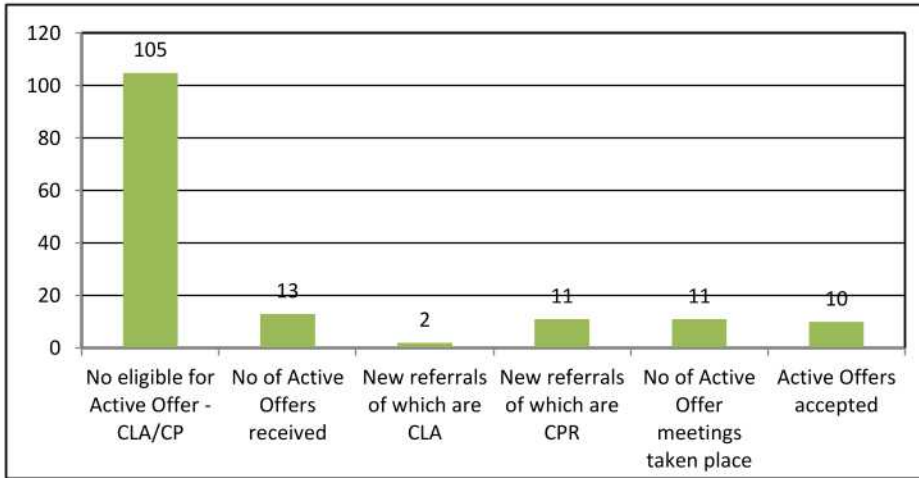
1a. Advocacy Cases - Young People - Issue Based Advocacy



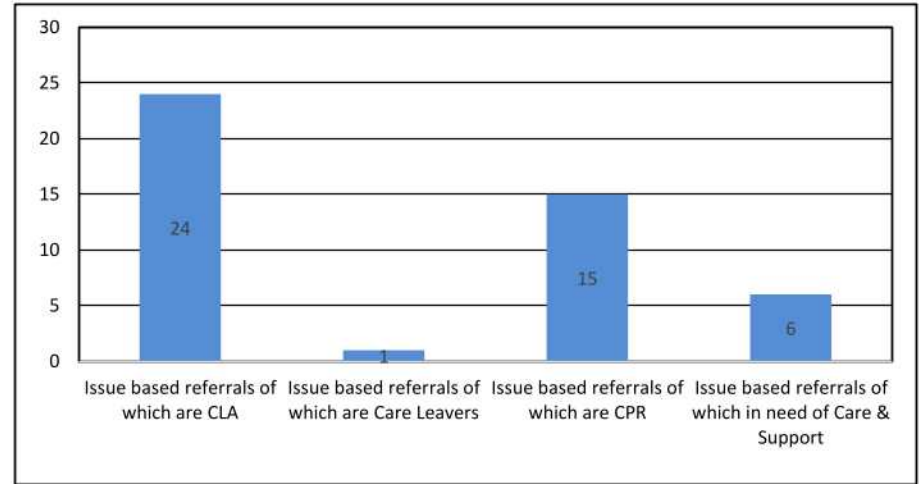
1b. Advocacy Cases - Interventions - Issue Based Advocacy



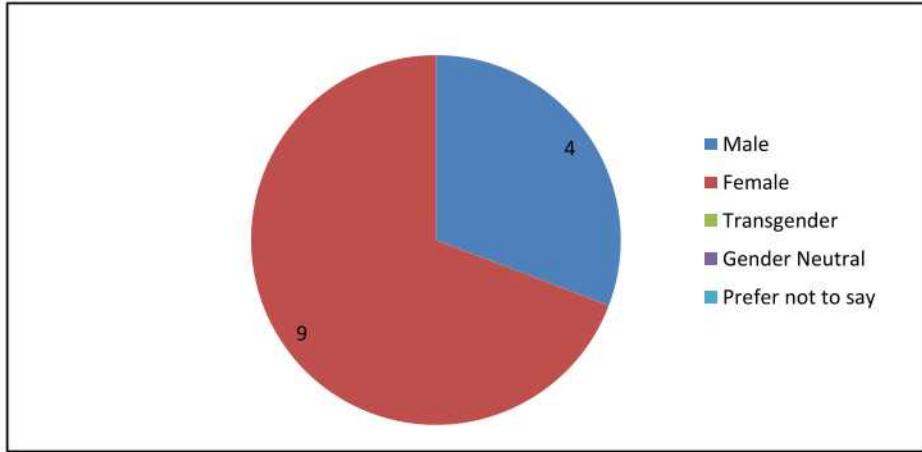
2a. Eligibility Criteria: Active Offer



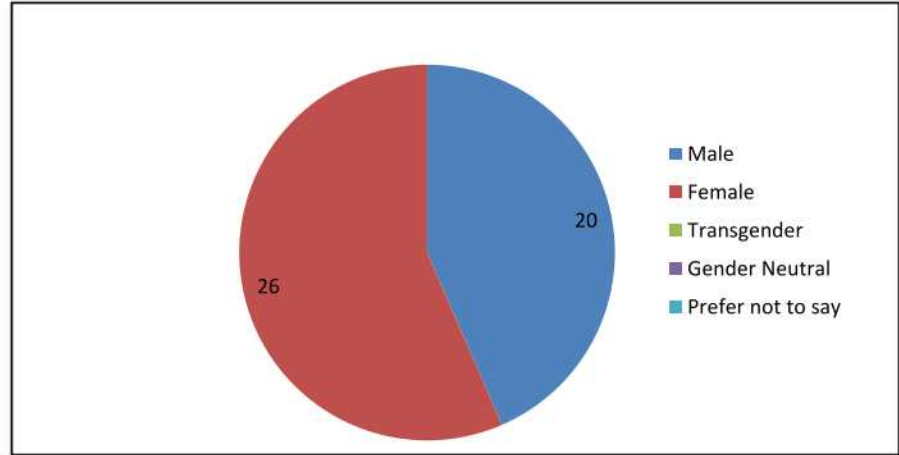
2b. Eligibility Criteria: Issue Based



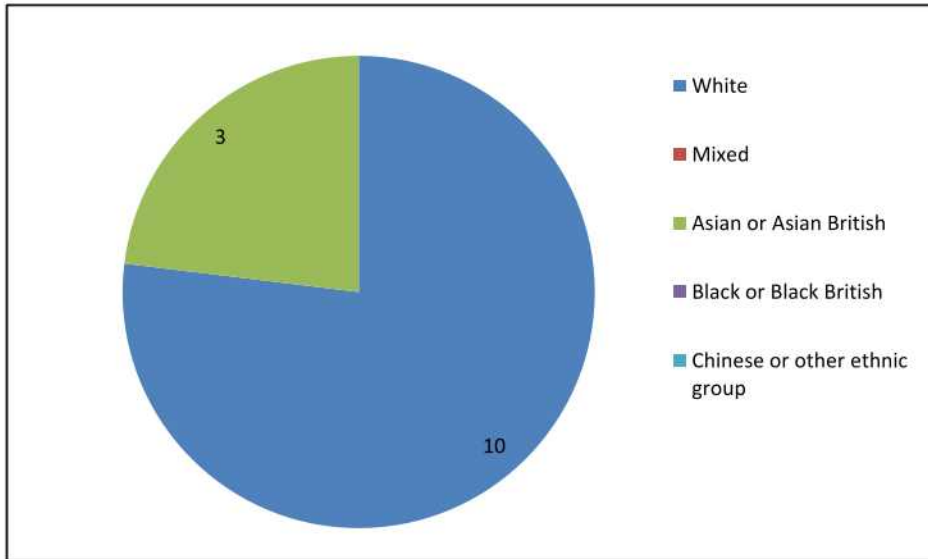
3a. Demographics: Gender - Active Offer



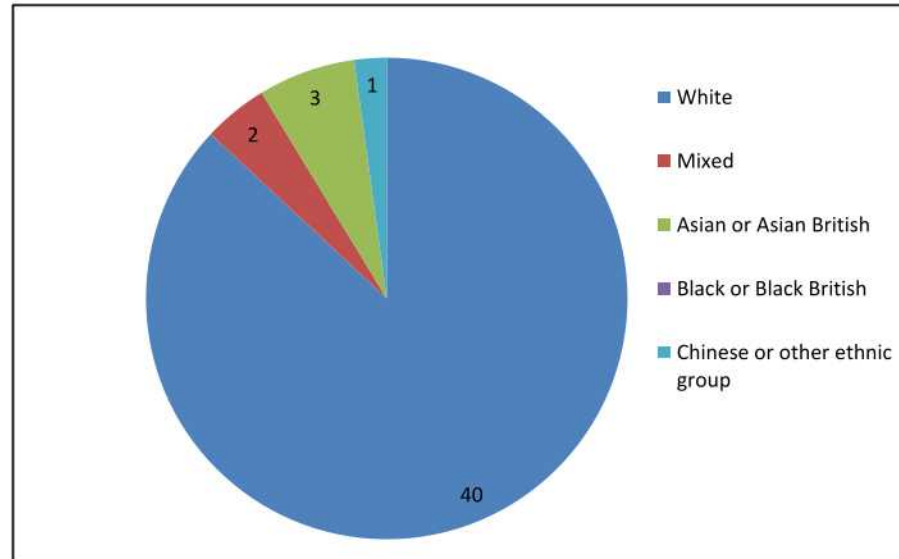
3b. Demographics: Gender - Issue Based



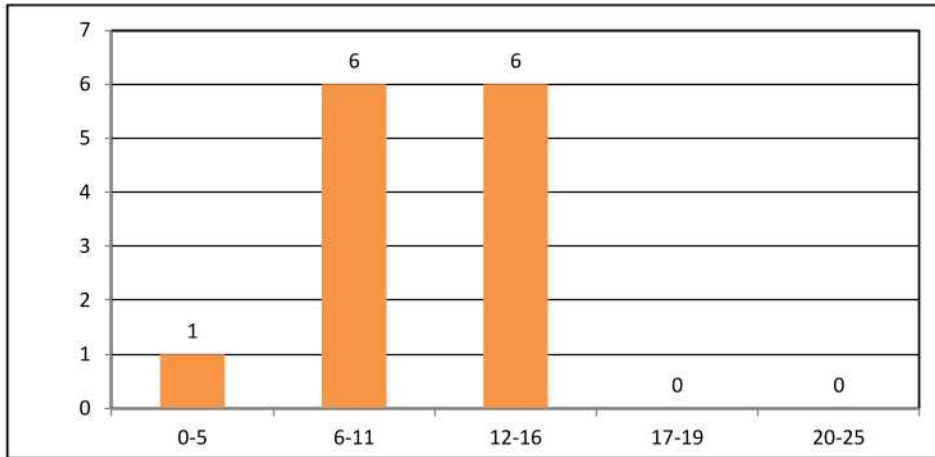
3c. Demographics: Ethnicity - Active Offer



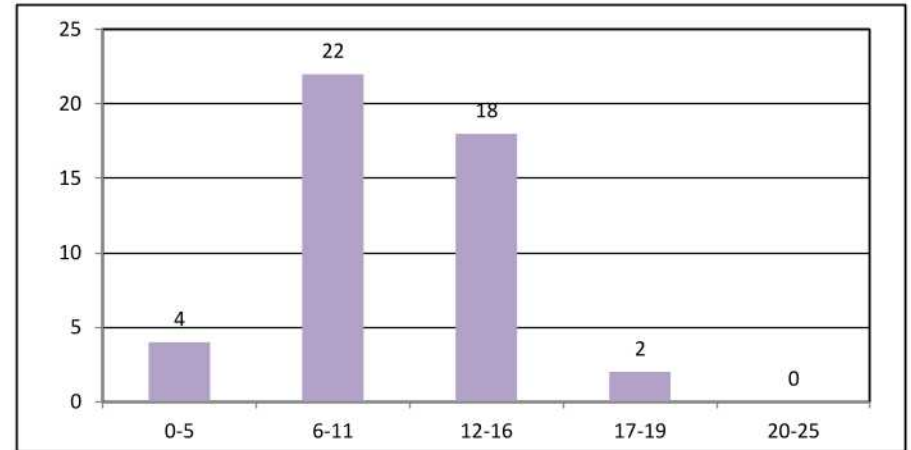
3d. Demographics: Ethnicity - Issue Based



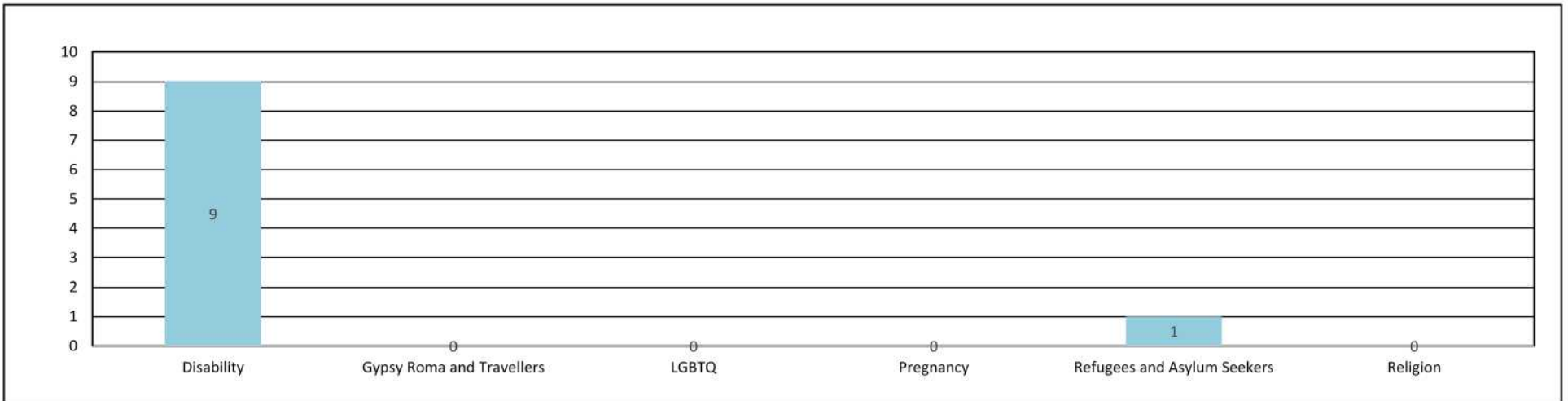
3e. Demographics: Age - Active Offer



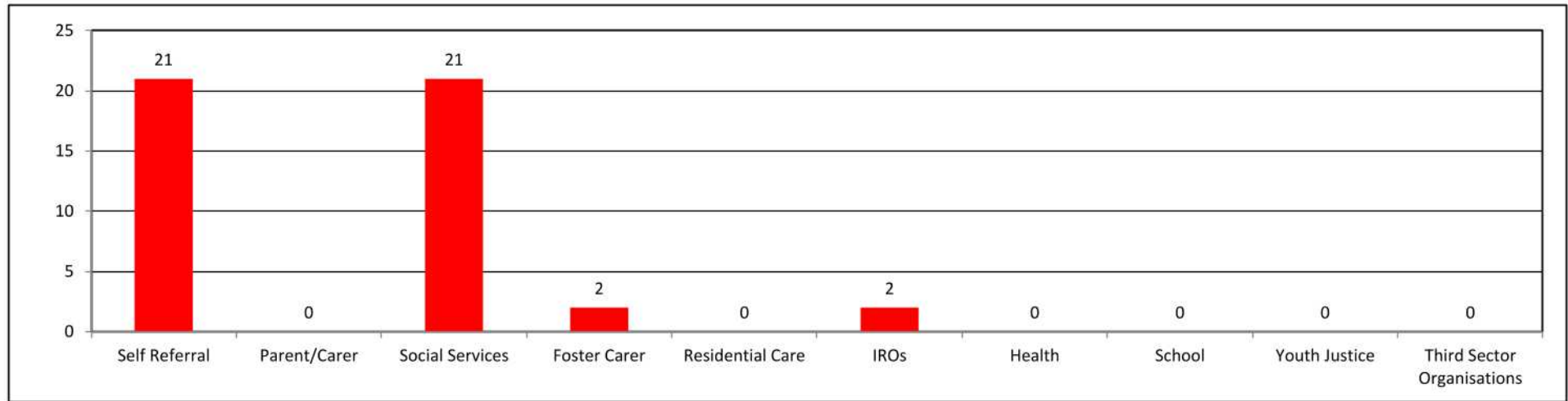
3f. Demographics: Age - Issue Based



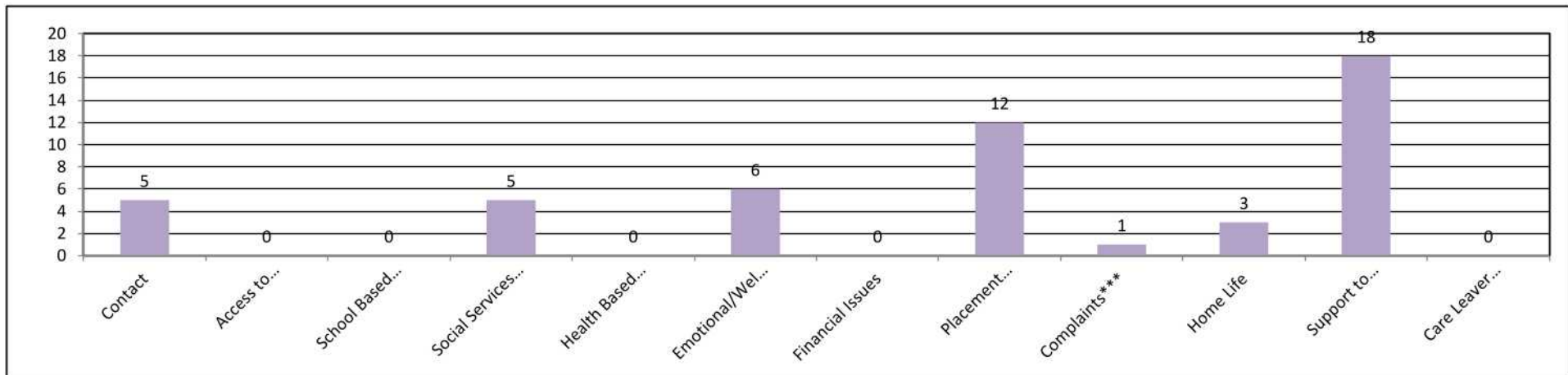
4. Protected Characteristics



5. Referral Source per young person - Issue Based only



6. Issues Presented

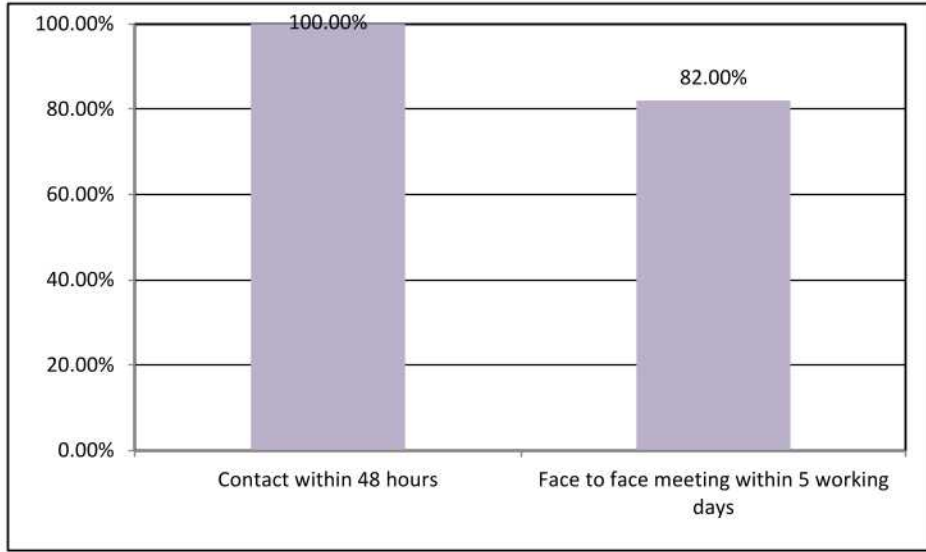


* School based issues including: SEN/ALN, exclusions, bullying, transport.

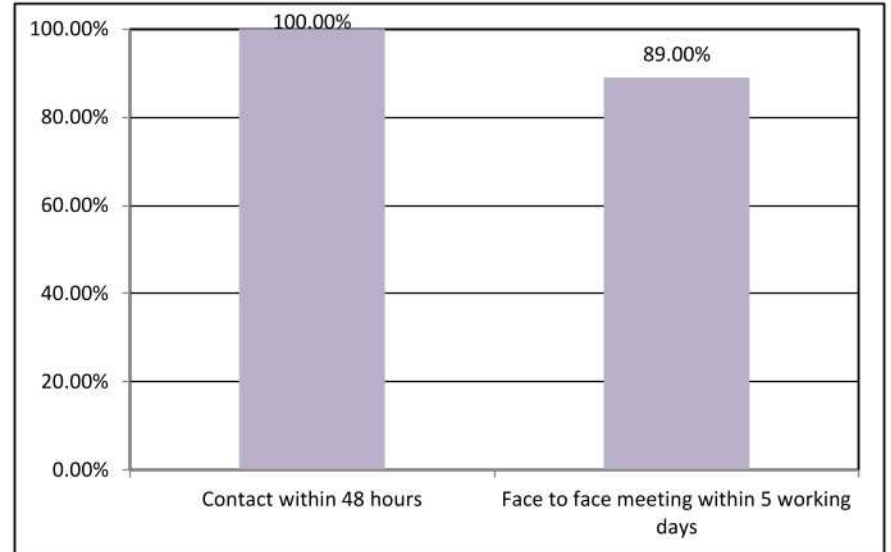
** Social Services based issues including: relationship with worker, care plan, service provided.

*** Complaints refer to any complaints made against statutory services, including Social Service, Police, Health, YJS

7. Service Performance - Active Offer



Service Performance - Issue Based



8. Level of Advocacy Intervention at point of Issue Closure



9.Outcomes: linked to The National Advocacy Standards & Outcomes Framework

		Comments
Outcome 1	Children and young people find good quality independent advocacy easily available and accessible.	<p>During this quarter, achievements against the service performance target for contact within 5 days for both Active Offer and IBA has remained the same.</p> <p>Adapting our service to the changing COVID regulations enabled some face to face visits to be undertaken. These were mainly requested by young people who did not want to access virtual meetings, or where it was felt that face to face contact would be better for the young person (privacy, ability to engage, age).</p> <p>Advocates have remained flexible throughout the quarter, which includes being available outside of usual working hours.</p>
Outcome 2	Children and young people have their privacy and confidences respected and their wellbeing safeguarded and protected.	<p>Confidentiality and safeguarding continue to be explained to all new children and young people accessing the service and throughout the advocacy intervention. During the quarter, face to face visits in schools have been requested and agreed where we feel a child/ young person's confidentiality cannot be guaranteed via virtual visits or where sharing their feelings may cause difficult or uncomfortable home situations. Both primary and comprehensive schools across RCT have been very accommodating.</p>
Outcome 3	Children and young people are valued for their diversity, treated with respect and all forms of discrimination against them are challenged.	<p>During this quarter, nine young people were described as having a disability. These include ASD, ADHD, mental health , Autism and learning difficulties.</p> <p>Of the 46 children and young people supported, three identified as Asian, two described their ethnicity as mixed and one as Kurdish.</p> <p>Advocates continue to offer the service through the medium of Welsh and English. Advocates also supported one asylum seeker who requested a Kurdish Sorani translator.</p>

Outcome 4	Children and young people are empowered to take the lead in relation to advocacy services and their rights, wishes and feelings and championed.	<p>During this quarter, two young people have successfully advocated for themselves in meetings, with one person deciding she was confident enough to advocate for herself in future meetings.</p> <p>Feedback from children and young people has again been positive this quarter, as evidenced from a selection of quotes highlighted below.</p> <p>"S did all the things we discussed and talked through all options with me."</p> <p>"My advocate T kept me up to date with what was going on"</p> <p>"It was good to have someone speak for me."</p>
Outcome 5	Children and young people participate in the design, planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of advocacy services.	<p>During this quarter all young people who have received TGP Cymru services this year were contacted and asked to take part in a participation project. A written report will be available shortly.</p> <p>All children and young people continue to be asked for feedback in order for TGP Cymru to monitor the services provided and make improvements where needed. Collecting feedback virtually continues to be a challenge, however plans are underway to improve the feedback process making it more independent and streamlined.</p>

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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