



**CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL  
RHONDDA CYNON TAF  
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**COMMITTEE SUMMONS**

C.Hanagan  
Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication  
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council  
The Pavilions  
Cambrian Park  
Clydach Vale CF40 2XX

Meeting Contact: Tracy Watson - Senior Democratic & Scrutiny Officer (07747 485567)

**YOU ARE SUMMONED** to a hybrid meeting of the **EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held on **WEDNESDAY, 19TH JULY, 2023** at **5.00 PM.**

Non Committee Members and Members of the public may request the facility to address the Committee at their meetings on the business listed although facilitation of this request is at the discretion of the Chair. It is kindly asked that such notification is made to Democratic Services by Monday, 17 July 2023 on the contact details listed above, including stipulating whether the address will be in Welsh or English.

**AGENDA**

**Page  
No's**

**SCRUTINY RESEARCH**

A scrutiny research facility is available within the Council Business Unit to support Members' scrutiny responsibilities and their roles as Elected Members. Such research strengthens Scrutiny Committee work programmes to ensure outcome-based topics are identified. For any scrutiny research requirements please contact [scrutiny@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@rctcbc.gov.uk)

**1. 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.

## **2. MINUTES**

To approve as an accurate record the minutes of the meeting of the Education and Inclusion Scrutiny Committee held on the 27<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and 20<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

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## **REPORTS OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND COMMUNICATIONS**

### **3. CONSULTATION LINKS**

Information is provided in respect of relevant [consultations](#) for consideration by the Committee.

### **4. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2023-24**

To consider and agree the Education and Inclusion Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2023-24.

**19 - 32**

### **5. REPORT ON A TASK AND FINISH GROUP IN RELATION TO THE REPORT ON SCHOOL MODERNISATION - UPDATE ON BAND B SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING PROGRAMME**

To update Members on the establishment of a task and finish group.

**33 - 36**

## **OFFICER'S REPORTS**

### **6. EDUCATION WORKFORCE DATA**

For Committee Members to scrutinise and challenge the report on the Education Workforce Data.

**37 - 64**

### **7. SCHOOL ADMISSIONS**

For Committee Members to scrutinise and challenge the annual school admissions process summary.

**65 - 76**

### **8. CHAIR'S REVIEW AND CLOSE**

To reflect on the meeting and actions to be taken forward.

## **9. URGENT BUSINESS**

To consider any items, which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, is of the opinion should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

### **Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication**

#### **Circulation:-**

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Education and Inclusion Scrutiny Committee (County Borough Councillor S Evans and County Borough Councillor K Webb respectively)

#### **County Borough Councillors:**

Councillor M Ashford, Councillor J Brencher, Councillor J Cook, Councillor J Elliott, Councillor S Emanuel, Councillor R Evans, Councillor S Hickman, Councillor C Lises, Councillor M Maohoub, Councillor C Preedy, Councillor J Smith and Councillor D Wood

#### **Co-Opted Members:-**

Mr P Booth, Voting Diocesan Authorities Representative  
Mr M Cleverley, Representing NASUWT and Teachers' Panel  
Ms A Jones, Representing UNITE  
Mr C Jones, Representing GMB  
Mrs R Lydon, Voting Elected Parent / Governor Representative  
Mr L Patterson, Voting Elected Parent / Governor Representative  
Mr D Price, Representing UNISON  
Mr M Thomas, Representing NEU  
Mr M Veale, Voting Elected Parent / Governor Representative

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg / This document is also available in Welsh

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**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Education and Inclusion Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday,  
27 April 2023 at 5.00 pm.

This meeting was recorded, details of which can be accessed [here](#)

**County Borough Councillors – The following Education and Inclusion Scrutiny Committee  
Councillors were present online:-**

Councillor S Evans (Chair)  
Councillor K Webb    Councillor M Ashford  
Councillor R Bevan    Councillor J Brencher  
Councillor J Cook    Councillor J Elliott  
Councillor S Hickman    Councillor C Lises  
Councillor M Maohoub    Councillor C Preedy  
Councillor J Smith    Councillor J Turner  
Councillor D Wood

**Co-Opted Members in attendance:-**

Mr P Booth, Voting Diocesan Authorities Representative  
Mr M Veale, Voting Elected Parent / Governor Representative

**Officers in attendance:-**

Ms G Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
Ms C Jones, Head of Access & Inclusion  
Ms S Corcoran, Head of Achievement and Wellbeing for secondary and through schools in RCT  
Mr M Silezin, 14-19 Strategy Officer  
Mr P Nicholls, Service Director, Legal Services  
Mrs T Watson, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

**Apologies for absence**

Mr M Cleverley    Mr M Thomas

**37    DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Agenda item 4 – School Based Counselling

- County Borough Councillor C Preedy - Personal - 'I was a student at Bryncelynnog and received Eye to Eye Counselling during a period mentioned in the report'

Agenda Item 5 – Overview of the Post-16 Curriculum offer across RCT Secondary Schools

- County Borough Councillor J Smith – Personal – 'In my day job, as a Trade Union official, I represent members within the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW), and I also sit on the Programme

Board for the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER)'

- County Borough Councillor S Evans – Personal – 'I am linked with the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) through my work at the University and there is a link with the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER), as well'
- County Borough Councillor S Evans – Personal – 'The school that my son attends is named in the report'
- County Borough Councillor J Brencher – Personal – 'A school mentioned in the report, was a school that I taught at'
- County Borough Councillor C Preedy - Personal – 'Last year I was in my final year as a student at Bryncelynog'
- County Borough Councillor S Evans – Personal – 'Dame Julie Lydon, is known to me'
- County Borough Councillor C Lises – Personal – 'I declare an interest in relation to Hawthorn and Pontypridd High in that I am the Chair of Our Children First Action Group'

Agenda Item 6 – Annual School Exclusion Performance Report for the Academic Year 2021/22

- County Borough Councillor S Evans – Personal – 'The school that my son attends is named in the report'

## 38 MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023 as an accurate reflection of the meeting subject to amendment to the minutes subject to the following amendment:-

Page 12, paragraph 2, line 16, reads 'referred to FPNs as a last result.....' but should read 'referred to FPNs as a last resort'.....'.

The Chair added that in that meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023, Members had discussed establishing a Task and Finish Group in relation to the report on School Modernisation and queried with the Senior Democratic & Scrutiny Officer, around the progress, timing, and scheduling of that. The Chair requested that the Senior Democratic & Scrutiny Officer come back to the Committee with a progress report, on that Task & Finish Group, before the next meeting.

## 39 CONSULTATION LINKS

Members were advised that the consultation links, were available through the 'RCT Scrutiny' website. Members were reminded that information was provided in respect of relevant consultations for consideration by the Committee and were circulated monthly and updated on a fortnightly basis.

The Head of Inclusion Services explained to Members that this was a twofold report, with the first section concentrating on the counselling services, and the second on the broader wellbeing initiatives within RCT. She then took Members through the background, at section 3, before advising that section 4 contained 2 main subsections, before summarising the main highlights of the activity and impact of the counselling services provided to children and young people, during the activity year 2021 and 2022, but advised Members it was important to note that due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, it was not possible to make direct data comparisons, between the last 3 academic years, so in many cases, she would make comparisons with data, over a 5 year period. The Head of Inclusion Services then took Members through the main highlights, before concluding that the report provided clear evidence of the effectiveness of the counselling service in RCT, in improving the wellbeing of children and young people as well as being central to the strategic planning of the education directorate and due to the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, upon the wellbeing of pupils, families and staff, would remain a core element of the ongoing work and strategies.

A Member referred to paragraph 4.20, in respect of waiting times for children in years 3-5 and the Step 4 provision, in terms of the wellbeing and behaviour of students, highlighted on pages 30 to 31, and asked, moving forward, if Officers could monitor those 2 aspects.

The Head of Inclusion Services explained in relation to the waiting times, it was noted by Eye to Eye that this was due to capacity issues in relation to those delays, noting that with children in years 3-5, it was not a statutory requirement to provide counselling, and therefore the criteria were very strict. In terms of the Step 4 provision, there was lots of evidence of the impact of this, and progress would continue to be monitored and an evaluation report was taken to Cabinet and was available on the website. Staff wellbeing was a high priority, noting the new staff wellbeing service which was well utilised and was awaiting an evaluation report. She noted that the whole school approaches grant, was evaluated, on an annual basis and reported back to Welsh Government (WG).

The Director of Education Inclusion Services then picked up on the Members points around staff wellbeing, acknowledging this was a significant priority and that services supported schools with a whole raft of research informed strategies.

The Head of Achievement and Wellbeing for secondary and through schools in RCT reassured the Member, highlighting the conference held last term, in terms of teaching and learning and behaviour strategies that could be implemented to support wellbeing. She also highlighted the work around restorative approaches as well as explaining about the Team Around the School (TAS) initiatives. In terms of wellbeing, there was a huge amount of work around the CARI platform so that the right areas were being targeted for staff, whilst continuing to monitor.

A Member sought clarification around the scale, in relation to 4.23, graph 8, and 4.24, graph 9.

The Head of Inclusion Services acknowledged that she would get back to the Member, in terms of the core assessment outcomes and range.

The Member referred to 4.72, in relation to the Virtual School for Children Looked After (CLA) and asked how this was organised whilst recognising that this was a new initiative.

The Head of Achievement and Wellbeing for secondary and through schools in RCT explained that there were 2 reports online. One was the new ALN legislation, and its impact and relevance to CLA, which referenced the virtual school and there had also been an evaluation report on Year 1, to date, of the pilot for the virtual school model and progress against year 1 implementation, but was happy to provide a further report at some future point if this was required

The Member referred to 4.82 and asked for clarification around the number of sessions mentioned and take up of CARI and highlighted that the area of staff wellbeing was so crucial and including that information in any report coming forward should describe the support that had been given since Covid-19, how many staff used the platform and how staff were being looked after and supported

The Head of Achievement and Wellbeing explained about the partnership with occupational health and schools to develop the CARI pilot, and to obtain termly feedback from those pilots, so this was an ongoing training opportunity for school. In terms of the actual figures relating to engagement she would need get back to the Member.

A Member acknowledged that that counselling was presented as a one off and asked if there was any understanding of how many students were accessing further support.

The Head of Inclusion Services said she did not have that data but would enquire with Eye to Eye.

The Member referred to the formal Strategic Plan for Wellbeing 2022-2025, and noted there were a number of approaches listed, and sought clarification if this was a holistic approach for adoption, across the county borough.

The Head of Inclusion Services explained there were a number of theoretical models, but PERMA was the overarching one. The Trauma Informed Schools approach was very much promoted, which took a whole school approach, but the other approaches were seen as a complimentary range of approaches that sat within that overarching PERMA approach.

The Member then referred to Page 67 and asked for clarification in terms of the Boxall Profile.

The Head of Inclusion Services advised that this was a diagnostic assessment so it could be carried out so that schools could identify where there was more of an identified need, in terms of wellbeing, social and emotional behavioural development, etc., and the child needed something very bespoke to their needs and then you could baseline the child, putting in intervention and then do a post intervention assessment to measure impact, whereas PERMA was used as a more universal approach.

The Member then referred more generally around the strategic priorities, and about having some more KPI's, so what were the hard stats, on performance, whilst recognising some of these were hard to measure e.g., through Estyn



inspection reports, a subjective thing, or attribute some evidence towards it.

The Head of Achievement and Wellbeing for secondary and through schools in RCT, explained that in conjunction with the CSC, the annual action plan for the wellbeing strategy, was currently being written, and would provide this when finalised.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services added that performance measures for the delivery plans, had been picked up in the Estyn inspection report. Historically, the service had been data rich prior to the suspension of performance measures. In light of these national changes, moving forward, its Estyn's view that new ways of measuring performance is now needed, and this is something that is going to be a priority for further development.

The Member then referred to Page 70, the last bullet point, under Strategic Priority 2, and asked how much confidence was there that those schools had the ability to be able to deliver the approaches, through the medium of Welsh, as well.

The Head of Achievement and Wellbeing for secondary and through schools in RCT acknowledged that the service worked very closely with CSC in terms of the new curriculum and the Health and Wellbeing AoLE, referred to, with everything through the medium of Welsh, whilst expecting the commissioned school improvement service to be delivering the training and professional learning in exactly the same way. In terms of all the other aspects of teaching and learning, and wellbeing, everything was available through the medium of Welsh at this point in time. The Head of Achievement and Wellbeing for secondary and through schools in RCT confirmed that she would ensure CSC asked for some feedback on the delivery, through the medium of Welsh, which would be put in the WESP.

The Member sought clarification around the number of schools using the PERMA Wellbeing tool, whether 95 or 99.

The Head of Inclusion Services to confirm.

The Member asked, in relation to Family Engagement Officers (FEO's), that with the pressures on funding now coming down the line to schools, was it a priority to ensure that provision remained.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services explained that to make the resources reach more schools, match funding arrangements, had been looked at. About £950k had been invested since the beginning of the pandemic in FEO's. The impression from WG was that this was a priority for them as well. The driver initially, was very much about improving attendance rates, but the role had become much broader than that. She hoped that schools would still see attendance as a priority for them given the ongoing challenges facing schools. It is a question of schools balancing priorities, with some difficult decisions for schools to make.

Following consideration, it was **RESOLVED** to note that Members had scrutinised and commented on the information contained within the report, having made several requests for further information, whilst considering the two reports, on virtual schools, which had already gone to the CPB, and for Members to consider whether this should feature as an item on the future FWP.

## **OVERVIEW OF THE POST-16 CURRICULUM OFFER ACROSS RCT SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

The 14-19 Strategy Officer presented Members with the report, advising that the report was in 2 distinct halves, the first half, provided Members with an overview of the Post-16 curriculum offer across RCT secondary and through schools which, he noted was very much shaped by the geography and 2009 Learning and Skills Measure, before continuing through the background of the report. The second half of the report noted the Hazelkorn review and recommendation that WG create an arms-length body to regulate and have authority over the whole PCET sector. This body would be the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER) and would replace the current Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW). The 14-19 Strategy Officer continued that CTER, was in the process of being created and since writing the report, both the Chair and Vice-Chair had been appointed, with 2 further appointments advertised, and appointed to. The Commission would be responsible for further and higher education, apprenticeships, work-based learning and sixth forms. It would also be responsible for WG funded research and innovation and would have responsibility for funding, monitoring quality, enhancing provision, and improving relationships with employers. He acknowledged that this brought into question the role Estyn would have in the future, which may have implications for local authorities, in terms of six forms.

A Member sought clarification around the ability to study, for example French or Geography, at Hawthorn and Pontypridd High, which had no provision.

The 14-19 Strategy Officer advised, that RCT uniquely still offered transport to the nearest provider of the young person's choice, of level 3 qualifications.

The Member asked, in terms of outcomes, whether closer analysis could be done, in terms of individual schools, noting the nine local area curricula operational in RCT.

The 14-19 Strategy Officer explained that the outputs were very important, and could be distinguished, between the schools, down to pupil level or value added based on their GCSE results, as a baseline. That information was available, subject to GDPR.

A Member raised concern around the learner numbers and the threshold numbers, noting that CTER, may consider, where numbers were low, to rationalise things further.

The 14-19 Strategy Officer acknowledged that the number of 250 was not enshrined in any law, and so it was possible to run a smaller sixth form with fewer than 250, especially when working in collaboration with others. The key going forward, was strong voices on CTER, who had a good knowledge of the sixth form environment, the funding, as well as the performance.

The Chair thanked the 14-19 Strategy Officer but felt that there were a few things missing from the report, which she detailed, but recognised this was a snapshot in time.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services acknowledged that this was a new report, which could be tweaked, and the information adjusted for future reports, to include the requested data and information.

The Chair concluded that she would be happy to receive a more detailed report, in the next municipal year. She felt that the committee needed to keep a watching brief on CTER, but also in relation to the approach to six form education and level 3 and the post compulsory education piece, which was important.

Following consideration, it was **RESOLVED** to acknowledge, that Members had scrutinised the contents of the report and wished to receive a more detailed report in the next municipal year.

## **42 ANNUAL SCHOOL EXCLUSION PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2021/22**

The Head of Inclusion Services explained to Members that she would pull out the main points of the report, continuing, that Section 3 provided contextual information regarding the processes and procedures, in relation to exclusions, in line with WG guidance, and also provided a brief overview of some of the alternatives, to exclusions, that could be considered by schools whilst recognising the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic upon the rates of exclusions, from March 2020 onwards, so there was an emphasis in the report, of comparisons over the last 3 years, but also with pre-Covid data sets. Section 4, then provided a summary of key indicators relating to both permanent and fixed term exclusions in 2021 and 2022, compared to 2020 and 2021 before moving on to national benchmarking data, in section 5. Sections 6 to 12, then provided Members with an analysis of local exclusion data, in relation to 2020, 2021 and 2022, and the Head of Inclusion Services, noted the key highlights. Section 13 then provided Members with an overview of how the local authority would address the rising exclusions in RCT, including the strategies. The Head of Inclusion Services concluded that the local authority, acknowledged there had been a concerning trend of increasing exclusions, during several years, prior to the first academic year, affected by the pandemic, and that there had been a sharp increase in both permanent and fixed term exclusions, again, over the past academic year and the local authority was implementing a range of strategies designed to work collaboratively with schools, and other agencies, to reduce exclusions.

A Member asked for an anonymised example of a school where there had been concerns, and where intervention had taken place, to bring things around, e.g., what were the issues, how were they addressed and what was the outcome.

The Head of Inclusion Services confirmed that there were certainly examples of that support and challenge in the summer term, at one school, and it was simply a matter of sitting down and initiating that discussion with the school about how they reframed, in terms of behaviour management and thresholds, for exclusions, and alternative to exclusions, within the school, with a fresh pair of eyes. There was another school, where that support and challenge took place, within the summer, who had drastically reduced their exclusions, over this academic year. There were also examples where Team Around the School (TAS) meetings had taken place, in the last term and it was hoped to see the impact of that, during this term. The Head of Inclusion Services advised that she might be able to provide a flavour of some of the actions, from the Team Around the School (TAS), meetings.

A Member asked, in relation to approaches to exclusions, how did the service achieve that consistency, noting that one school might be very lenient in its approach and adopt a different type of sanction to another school, acknowledging that this was more in respect of temporary exclusions.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services acknowledged that the key thing to consider was that behaviour occurred in context, and one size, didn't necessarily fit all. Schools need to be able to demonstrate robust self-evaluation and improvement planning to inform strategic approaches. Discussion had taken place around pressures on staff wellbeing, on families and on learners, so it was important to support schools to improve practice, particularly in this challenging period, and that included ensuring that professional learning was strong, and that approaches were not too punitive, because in her experience, exclusions didn't really change behaviour in the longer term. Sometimes these issues, in terms of self-regulation, happened because children hadn't learned those appropriate social, emotional, and behavioural skills to manage and regulate their own behaviour. The Director of Education and Inclusion Services noted there were some real success stories in schools, but the practice around sharing that good practice, needed to be strengthened.

Following consideration, it was **RESOLVED** to acknowledge, that Members had scrutinised and commented on the contents of the report and considered whether they wished to scrutinise in greater depth any matters contained in the report.

#### **43 CHAIR'S REVIEW AND CLOSE**

The Chair advised Members this was the last meeting of this municipal year, and she felt that the year appeared to have gone by in a flash. She thanked Members for being part of the committee and for their contributions and hoped they had a sense of satisfaction, in being able to digest and scrutinise the reports, in detail, acknowledging there had been some excellent questions asked. She advised Members she had thoroughly enjoyed being Chair, and thanked Members for their patience. The Chair concluded by thanking officers.

#### **44 URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

**This meeting closed at 6.40 pm**

**Cllr S Evans  
Chair**



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Education and Inclusion Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday,  
20 June 2023 at 5.00 pm.

This meeting was live streamed, details of which can be accessed [here](#)

**County Borough Councillors – The following Education and Inclusion Scrutiny Committee Councillors were present in the Council Chamber:-**

Councillor S Evans (Chair)  
Councillor M Maohoub    Councillor C Preedy  
Councillor J Smith

**The following Education and Inclusion Scrutiny Committee Councillors were present online:-**

Councillor K Webb    Councillor J Brencher  
Councillor J Elliott    Councillor S Emanuel  
Councillor C Lises    Councillor D Wood

**Co-Opted Members in attendance:-**

Mr P Booth, Voting Diocesan Authorities Representative  
Mr M Cleverley, Representing NASUWT and Teachers' Panel

**Officers in attendance:-**

Ms G Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
Ms C Edwards, Head of Service Transformation And Data Systems  
Ms A Richards, Service Director for 21st Century Schools and Transformation  
Mr T Britton, Head of Achievement RCT – primary sector  
Ms S Corcoran, Head of Achievement and Wellbeing for secondary and through schools in RCT  
Mr D Williams, Head of Attendance and Wellbeing Service

**Others in attendance:-**

Mr C Philips, Assistant Director, Estyn

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies of absence were received from County Borough Councillors Ashford, Cook and Hickman and Co-opted Members, Mr Patterson, Mr Thomas, and Mr Veale.

**2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, the following declarations were made pertaining to the agenda:

## Agenda Item 2 – Estyn’s Report on Education Services RCTCBC

- County Borough Councillor S Evans – Personal – ‘My children attend two schools in RCT, which would have been assessed as part of this report, and I am also a vice-chair of governors of one of the schools in RCT, which also would have been included as part of this inspection’
- County Borough Councillor C Lises – Personal – ‘I am chair of governors at a school in RCT and also chair of the Our Children First, action group’
- County Borough Councillor D Wood – Personal – ‘I am one of the governors for a local primary school’
- County Borough Councillor J Smith – Personal – ‘I am a governor at schools included in the report, but also in my full-time employment, I am a senior trade union official, that negotiates for Estyn’
- County Borough Councillor M Maohoub – Personal – ‘I am a governor of one of the schools mentioned in the report and, I am also a Member of the Governance and Audit Committee’
- County Borough Councillor C Preedy – Personal – ‘I am a governor at a primary school, and I was recently a student of one of the secondary schools inspected, so know students that still attend’
- County Borough Councillor S Emanuel – Personal – ‘Both of my children attend a school, mentioned in the report, and I’m a governor on two schools, also’
- County Borough Councillor J Brencher – Personal – ‘I am a governor of school that was mentioned in the report, that was associated with the special measures comment’
- County Borough Councillor J Elliott – Personal – ‘I am a governor Cwmbach Primary School’

### **3 ESTYN'S REPORT ON EDUCATION SERVICES IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services explained that the purpose of the report was to provide an overview of the inspection process and the outcomes of the Estyn inspection of the Education Services in Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC), which took place in January 2023. The detailed report could be found in Appendix A and in the main, the report provided a positive picture of Estyn’s view of Education Services in RCT. Section 4 provided some background information, with the Inspection process detailed in Section 5, noting the LGES Inspection Framework was underpinned by three inspection areas, which were detailed. Members were advised that Inspectors did not inspect or evaluate all education services during a core inspection. The

Inspection Report was clearly detailed, so the Director of Education and Inclusion Services would not go through that in full, but highlighted the high-level summary of Estyn's findings, which were detailed in Section 6.2, and the lengthy report in Appendix A. Estyn identified 3 key recommendations, which were detailed in Section 8, and clearly these recommendations would be the focus of improvement in 2023, and beyond and, and was already reflected in the delivery plans and improvement actions, for the forthcoming financial year. The Director of Education and Inclusion Services concluded that the report would be considered by the Council's Governance and Audit Committee and Cabinet, in future meetings. The overall inspection of Education Services in RCT was very positive and the feedback provided by stakeholders was also very positive as well with Estyn finding many areas of strength in the Directorate as well as some key areas for improvement. These areas for improvement had already been taken on board and were the focus of improvement planning and delivery.

The Chair thanked the Director of Education and Inclusion and acknowledged that the Committee felt it was a very robust report, and offered the Committees congratulations, noting there were several areas of good practice identified and the Directorate needed to be commended, for that and also the fact that Estyn had requested the 2 case studies, which was something to be proud of. The Chair felt that the recommendations Estyn had posed, were fair and very much actionable.

A Member referred to page 2, paragraph 4 of the Inspection report, in respect of 'Overall, the quality of support and the information provided by the CSC is too variable' and asked for clarification. The Member also asked if the same data was available to the Committee, as was presented to Estyn. The Member also referred to page 15, paragraph 3 of the inspection report, in relation to 'the impact of poverty' and asked if Estyn could have strengthened that statement.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services explained that in terms of the variability, the interpretation of that feedback, was in relation to some of the reporting. Estyn had taken a cross section of SIPL reports which detailed the work of Improvement Partners and Strategic Teams and felt there was a degree of inconsistency. The service was working closely with CSC around expectations, to ensure that the information that was recorded, was very much based on first hand evidence, with an evaluative nature to the observations/findings. This was considered to be essential in order to enable the local authority to make informed judgements about schools and to respond in a timely manner in respect of schools causing concern. Members were advised that the service had also tightened its own internal processes for identifying emerging concerns in schools, with heads of service and CSC colleagues meeting regularly to share that intelligence. Members were advised that CSC had been working on their quality assurance processes, as there should be no surprises when Estyn inspected a school. It was important that information and intelligence provided by CSC was accurate, and there had been improvement in this regard, with ongoing work and a partnership approach adopted.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services continued that in terms of data, what was nationally available could be shared but there had been significant changes in the system during the pandemic with a suspension in national performance measures. As a consequence, this had restricted what could be shared from a data perspective. Where internal data was available, that was

shared with the Committee. The Service is entitled to use some school datasets for its own self-evaluation purposes, with just some restrictions on publishing certain datasets.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services explained, with regard to the impact of poverty, that at the start of the inspection, Estyn had received a presentation to provide an understanding of the context and they were empathetic of those challenges, whilst also scrutinising the data in a very robust way.

A Member referred to page 1 of the Inspection report, in relation to the delegated school budget per pupil in 2022-23, noting it was the slightly lower than the Wales average, and asked for assurance going forward that the shortfall was no longer there. The Member also referred to page 6, paragraph 2, of the Inspection report, in relation to 'the rate of permanent exclusions was broadly in line with the national average' and asked if there should be more data to ensure scrutiny, in the future of how the service had improved, in line with the R3 recommendation.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services acknowledged she was happy to provide further detail on the shift in the Education budget information, because colleagues in finance had provided updates, noting in the School Budget Forum, that school budgets had been protected, possibly to the detriment of some central services. Sometimes direct comparisons were not made when looking at key statistical releases, because these datasets did not always capture other resources given to schools. For example, additional resources have been provided for family engagement officers, STEP 4 provisions, etc. It was recognised that it had been a particularly challenging period for schools, with difficult decisions having to be made.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services continued that with regard to permanent exclusions, she felt that Estyn were referring to the 2017-19, national data sets. Detailed attendance and exclusion reports had been presented to the Committee and was included in the work programme for next year, so this would give Members an additional opportunity to review the data. It was a strong focus for the service and a fair recommendation.

A Member referred to page 4 of the Inspection report, in relation to R1, and asked what steps would be taken to firmly embed a more self-reflective, listening, and co-ordinated work ethos across the Directorate. The Member also referred to page 11, paragraph 2 of the Inspection report, in relation to the ALN referrals process, and asked what steps would be taken to improve the process and improve the portal system.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services explained in relation to the self-evaluation, that there wasn't an issue with the quality, per se, and really in-depth self-evaluation was done, but part of the issue was around the need to streamline the documentation, with plans already in place to make it more succinct and ensure it was very evaluative. Estyn felt there was a clear thread from the Corporate to the Directorate 3-year strategic document, down to the annual Directorate delivery plan but they wanted to see greater alignment from the Directorate Plan down to Service Plans. This has been tackled, to ensure a consistent format of service plans was adopted. Estyn were also keen that the service incorporated new performance measures or perhaps greater clarity



around success criteria, which had now been assigned to all the actions in the current Directorate Delivery Plan for 2023-24. In terms of stakeholder feedback, it could be evidenced that the service had consulted with wide ranging partners. However, with learner voice, this area had already been identified as an area that required strengthening, so there was an engagement plan in the process of being developed.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services explained in terms of the Portal, this was in the Delivery Plan, and the service was well aware of the issue and acknowledged that some schools were frustrated with the clunkiness of the system so the uploading of digital information needed to be streamlined. This work had already been progressed, and new processes would be shared with schools in September. A lot of training was provided, and focus groups had taken place with schools and, feedback was being taken onboard.

A Member referred to page 16, paragraph 4 of the Inspection report in respect of the comment around the comparative financial data with other local authorities and asked if this was easily addressed through the action plan. The Member also referred to page 11, paragraph 4 of the Inspection report in respect of ALN complex needs class comment and asked the Director for her view on that. The Member also referred to page 2, paragraph 2 in respect of immersion opportunities and asked how much work was done with other local authorities. The Member concluded by asking why there was no mention of Step 4 in the Inspection report.

The Head of Service Transformation & Education explained that in terms of finance, vigorous benchmarking was completed, against other authorities, through the Association of Directors of Education in Wales (ADEW) finance group but stressed that there were some variances in terms of what was delegated to schools, and what was retained centrally but could provide some more information on what was included in the delegated sums.

The Head of Attendance and Wellbeing then provided Members with an update on what was being done around bullying in terms of the pupil voice work and explained a redesigned framework with a bullying focus, was being used to undertake a senior leadership team (SLT) survey, which would be coupled with children led focus groups. It was hoped to complete this work by the summer term, with a report formalised over the summer break, with this being phase 1 of pupil voice, around bullying. An action plan would be developed in the autumn term to look at next steps.

The Service Director for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools explained that some great strides had been made on Welsh language immersion, with the right staff now appointed and in place. Lots of networking had been done with external agencies as well as other local authorities and the first 3 learners started access to Welsh language immersion provision on the 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023. It was hoped that the numbers requesting Welsh language immersion would continue to grow. It was noted that although this was a key recommendation, it has been seen in a positive light and work is now well underway to progress developments.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services provided Members with an update on Welsh Language immersion in respect of Heol-Y-Celyn Primary. In terms of developments around the ALN provision, and language immersion, some of that would be covered off in the Annual WESP report, which would come to the Committee and the Language Immersion Teacher could come along

and give her own update as well.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services then explained, in respect of the comment around the ALN complex needs class in the report, that there was very clear criteria for all provisions, but the difficulty was sometimes children had multiple needs, and it was a question of deciding which was the primary need and about the best placement for the learner. It was recognised that it wasn't a precise science and all placements required informed and careful decision making. In terms of Step 4, this was picked up as part of the meetings with Estyn and discussions around that agenda. This was also the case around the poverty agenda and what was done to support young people facing challenges. Estyn were satisfied with what was done, and the service was able to demonstrate that quite robustly.

The Chair summarised by saying that it had been a really good discussion, and reiterated that overall, the Committee felt it was a really positive report, and congratulated the Director of Education and Inclusion Services and her team, as well as schools themselves.

Following consideration, it was **RESOLVED** to acknowledge, that Members had undertaken pre scrutiny of the reports (Attached at Appendix A & B) and had identified further items for inclusion in the Committees future work programme in respect of the work around bullying, the YEPS element and a report in 6 months' time of the how the Estyn recommendations had led to improvements and developments, across the county borough.

#### **4 CHAIR'S REVIEW AND CLOSE**

The Chair thanked Officers in attendance for their contributions and also to Members for their contributions and questions that had been posed. The Chair reminded Members about Scrutiny Training on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2023, at 4.30pm, which was a good opportunity to have some training and some of the elements that Members of the Committee, needed to be aware of. In addition, prior to the next meeting of the Committee on the 19<sup>th</sup> July 2023, at 5pm, there would be a Joint Committee with the Community Services Scrutiny Committee at 4pm, to examine the notice of motion in respect of Child Poverty. An alternative date would be sought, in respect of the 19<sup>th</sup> July, pre-meeting.

#### **5 URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

**This meeting closed at 6.09 pm**

**Cllr S Evans  
Chair**



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023/24**

**EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**19<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2023**

**EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE 2023/24 MUNICIPAL YEAR**

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES &  
COMMUNICATIONS**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek Member's comment and approval on the draft Work Programme of the Education and Inclusion Scrutiny Committee for the 2023/24 Municipal Year, attached as **Appendix A**.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members of the Education and Inclusion Scrutiny Committee:

- 2.1. Agree on issues for inclusion on the Education and Inclusion Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme for the 2023/24 Municipal Year (as set out in **Appendix A**) with appropriate amendments as necessary;
- 2.2. Request that the Service Director Democratic Services & Communications notifies the appropriate Cabinet Member and responsible Officer, of the matters identified for pre-scrutiny in advance of Cabinet consideration;
- 2.3. Agree that the Work Programme be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure the items identified for inclusion are relevant and that any additional referrals are incorporated; and

- 2.4. Consider, where appropriate, any items which could be presented to the Committee as Information Reports, to allow Members the flexibility to consider any urgent item or the opportunity for some unallocated items already identified by the Committee to be brought forward for Members consideration.
- 2.5. Consider and determine any other matter that Members may wish to scrutinise over this period.

### 3. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1. There is a requirement to devise and publish a Work Programme for each of the Council's Scrutiny Committees as set out in Part 4 of the Constitution (Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules). The Overview & Scrutiny Committee is responsible for ensuring that there is no duplication of work across the thematic scrutiny committees.
- 3.2. In consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Education and Inclusion Scrutiny Committee together with appropriate Council Officers, and the relevant Cabinet Members, through the one-to-one engagement session, an initial list of work topics for the Education and Inclusion Scrutiny Committee has been produced and is attached at **Appendix A**.

### 4. **BACKGROUND**

- 4.1. Members should be reminded that the Scrutiny Work Programmes will remain a flexible "working" document, which will allow for a more flexible approach to be adopted and to recognise the needs of emerging priorities and provides opportunity for Scrutiny Working Groups to be taken forward and training provision where requested.
- 4.2. The work programme should reflect the committee's aims and objectives as well as add value to the work of the Council. It is up to the Committee to agree the items for inclusion in its work programme, but ideas are brought together from a number of sources, to assist members in their choices. It is important that all Members have the opportunity to put forward items for consideration.
- 4.3. There are a number of areas which have been taken into account when developing the Draft Work Programme:
  - The work programme represents a mixed selection of topics;
  - It meets deadlines in relation to other Council meetings and those of external partners;

- Consideration as to whether the topic duplicates review activity which is taking place elsewhere; and
- Flexibility - to ensure that new topics can be factored in and changes accounted for.

## 5. **SCRUTINY AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION**

5.1. To support effective scrutiny, challenge and policy development members are advised to determine matters for consideration within the committees work programme from a range of perspectives. These should include:

- Pre scrutiny of the identified key decisions proposed for Cabinet consideration over the next municipal year
- The delivery of services against the proposed objectives of decisions
- Matters of strategic significance to the Council, partners and stakeholders
- The development of policy of recommendation for consideration by the Cabinet.

5.2. To promote public participation in scrutiny, members are advised to provide sufficient capacity within the work programme to accommodate matters identified for scrutiny by the public. A Public Participation Strategy, which will provide a mechanism for stronger participation by the public and residents, will shortly be presented for member consideration, in-line with the new requirements contained with the Local Government & Elections Act (Wales) (2021).

5.3. Members are also advised to focus their scrutiny activities in areas, where maximum value can be achieved and to ensure that sufficient capacity is made available to respond to business yet identified by Cabinet for consideration and the Council's response to national policy drivers.

5.4. Most importantly Members are advised to maintain focus, when planning their committee work programme, to enable the approach level of questioning and challenge to take place.

5.5. Members are also advised to consider what, if any, additional focused development and training requirements, they might have in order to assist in ensuring Scrutiny is providing good governance to the Council. Members are advised to contact the Chair to discuss.

## 6. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1. An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only and further analysis of the Work Programme will be needed if the recommendations are to be taken forward.

## 7. **CONSULTATION**

- 7.1. The draft Work Programme has been compiled in discussion with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Education and Inclusion Scrutiny Committee in consultation with Council Officers as well as the relevant Cabinet Member.
- 7.2. This Committee will act as consultees where matters are considered under the Welsh Government School Organisation Code. In addition, Members will also have the opportunity to pre-scrutinise Education items that are not within the remit of the School Organisation Code.

## 8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## 9. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 9.1. The report has been prepared in accordance with paragraph Part 4 of the Constitution (Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules).

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**19<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2023**

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES &  
COMMUNICATIONS**

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**APPENDIX A**

**EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME  
2023/24**

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# Education & Inclusion Scrutiny Committee

## Draft Work Programme 2023 - 24

Date/Time	Overarching Item	Officer	Cabinet Member	Invited/ In attendance	Scrutiny Focus/Challenge
<b>Tuesday 20 June 2023</b>	<b>ESTYN REPORT</b>	Gaynor Davies, Director for Education and Inclusion Services	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation and Welsh Language		Pre-Scrutiny - For Committee Members to scrutinise and make any recommendations to the report before presenting to Cabinet.
<b>Wednesday 19 July 2023</b>	<b>DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2023- 24</b>	Christian Hanagan, Service Director Democratic Services & Communications	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation and Welsh Language		For Committee Members to consider the work programme for the 2023/2024 Municipal year.
	<b>REPORT ON A TASK AND FINISH GROUP IN RELATION TO THE REPORT ON SCHOOL MODERNISATION – UPDATE ON BAND B SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING PROGRAMME</b>	Christian Hanagan, Service Director Democratic Services & Communications	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation and Welsh Language		For Committee Members to consider an update on the Task and Finish Group in relation to the report on School Modernisation – Update on Band B Sustainable Communities.

Date/Time	Overarching Item	Officer	Cabinet Member	Invited/ In attendance	Scrutiny Focus/Challenge
	<b>EDUCATION WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT</b>	Richard Evans, Director for HR  Gaynor Davies, Director for Education and Inclusion Services	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation and Welsh Language		For Committee Members to scrutinise and challenge the report on the education workforce in our schools, including staff turnover, staff vacancies, staff sickness and supply usage, and succession plans.
	<b>SCHOOL ADMISSIONS</b>	Catrin Edwards, Head of Service Transformation	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation and Welsh Language		For Committee Members to scrutinise and challenge the annual school admissions process summary.
<b>Thursday 14 Sept 2023</b>	<b>BI-ANNUAL CABINET MEMBER ENGAGEMENT</b>	Gaynor Davies, Director for Education and Inclusion Services	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation and Welsh Language		For Committee Members to scrutinise any arising matters with the portfolio holder responsible for and to ensure that the appropriate mechanisms are in place to effectively scrutinise the Executive.
	<b>PROPOSAL TO IMPROVE THE EDUCATION PROVISION FOR A NEW SPECIAL SCHOOL IN RCT</b>	Gaynor Davies, Director for Education and Inclusion Services	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation and Welsh Language		Pre-Scrutiny - For Committee Members to scrutinise and make any recommendations to the report before presenting to Cabinet.

Date/Time	Overarching Item	Officer	Cabinet Member	Invited/ In attendance	Scrutiny Focus/Challenge
	<b>CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSALS TO REALIGN ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS MAINSTREAM LEARNING SUPPORT CLASS PROVISION WITHIN RHONDDA CYNON TAF</b>	Ceri Jones, Head of Inclusion Services	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation and Welsh Language		Pre-Scrutiny - For Committee Members to scrutinise and make any recommendations to the report before presenting to Cabinet.
<b>Monday 16 October 2023</b>	<b>UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND EDUCATION TRIBUNAL ACT 2018 IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL</b>	Gaynor Davies, Director for Education and Inclusion Services	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation and Welsh Language		For Committee Members to scrutinise and challenge the report. Report to focus on positive Estyn report, and this is what is going on and these are the pressures facing the system. 2 Practitioners from Primary and Secondary to attend meeting, to talk about their experience of implementation and any challenges, plus positives.
	<b>COMMUNITY FOCUSED SCHOOLS</b>	Dan Williams, Head AWS Andrea Richard, Head of 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Transformation	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation & Welsh Language	Hayley Jacobs, Community Schools Officer	For Committee Members to scrutinise and challenge the report. Report to include a further update on the work of the Community Schools Officer and an update on the survey

Date/Time	Overarching Item	Officer	Cabinet Member	Invited/ In attendance	Scrutiny Focus/Challenge
					results, in order to see the good practice.
<b>Thursday 7 Dec 2023</b>	<b>ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION UPDATE</b>	Ceri Jones, Head of Inclusion Services	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation and Welsh Language		For Committee Members to scrutinise and challenge the report. Report to be mindful of the significant increase in the number of children being home educated over the past two years and provide an update, on figures, take up and transitioning in and out of the system.
	<b>CHILD POVERTY</b>	Daniel Williams, Head of AWS	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation and Welsh Language		For Committee Members to scrutinise and challenge the report.
<b>Monday 22 January 2024</b>	<b>WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN (WESP) – ANNUAL PLAN UPDATE</b>	Gaynor Davies, Education and Inclusion Services Director	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation and Welsh Language	Lisa Howell, 21st Century Schools Manager  Hannah Bebb, Graduate Officer	For Committee Members to scrutinise and challenge the Annual report.
	<b>SCHOOL BASED COUNSELLING</b>	Ceri Jones, Head of Inclusion Services	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation & Welsh Language	Sarah Corcoran, Head of Achievement and Wellbeing	For Committee Members to scrutinise and challenge the Annual report. Report to include monitoring of take up in light of covid and wellbeing plan.

Date/Time	Overarching Item	Officer	Cabinet Member	Invited/ In attendance	Scrutiny Focus/Challenge
	<b>THE WORK OF THE CENTRAL SOUTH CONSORTIUM IN THE REGION AND RHONDDA CYNON TAF LOCAL AUTHORITY 2021 - 2022</b>	Clara Seery, Managing Director for CSC	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation and Welsh Language	Stephen Williams Kate Williams, Principal Improvement Partners, CSC	<p>For Committee Members to scrutinise and challenge the Annual report. Report to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community focused schools to be reflected, moving forward as that work develops.</li> <li>• The Lead for Wellbeing and Vulnerable Groups to come along to a future scrutiny meeting to present some of that work, around supporting community schools.</li> <li>• Reports should have a harder metric on the uptake or frequency of SIGs, to understand in greater detail.</li> </ul>
<b>Wednesday 13 March 2024</b>	<b>BI-ANNUAL CABINET MEMBER ENGAGEMENT</b>	Gaynor Davies, Director for Education and Inclusion Services	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation and Welsh Language		For Committee Members to scrutinise any arising matters with the portfolio holder responsible for and to ensure that the appropriate mechanisms are in place to effectively scrutinise the Executive.

Date/Time	Overarching Item	Officer	Cabinet Member	Invited/ In attendance	Scrutiny Focus/Challenge
	<b>UNIVERSAL PRIMARY FREE SCHOOL MEALS</b>	Andrea Richards, Service Director for 21st Century Schools  Lisa Kidner, Head of Catering Services	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation and Welsh Language		For Committee Members to scrutinise and challenge the Annual report.
	<b>ANNUAL SCHOOL EXCLUSION PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2022/23</b>	Ceri Jones, Head of Inclusion Services	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation and Welsh Language		For Committee Members to scrutinise and challenge the Annual report.
	<b>SCHOOL ATTENDANCE DATA</b>	Daniel Williams, Head of Attendance and Wellbeing	Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation & Welsh Language	Sarah Corcoran, Head of Achievement and Wellbeing	For Committee Members to scrutinise and challenge the Annual report. Ensure Attendance data to form an appendix.

## Unallocated

- WG consultation on changing term-time holidays.
- Changes to statutory guidance on school uniform and appearance policies – WG Consultation closed 2 May 2023 – consider in light of Child Poverty Strategy, await outcomes.
- Overview of the Post-16 Curriculum Offer across RCT Secondary Schools - ask Members if they have received sufficient information on that.

- YEPS – provided as information report only.
- Child Poverty Strategy – Autumn Term?
- Recent consultation from WG, on uniforms - would be good to discuss in light of the child poverty strategy, and whatever the findings are.
- Safeguarding Report - looking at from a schools/Estyn's recommendation perspective.
- Learning Class Support ALN provision - Welsh Medium
- Curriculum for Wales – consider as part of Working Group around 21st century schools to include hearing from the learner voice, particular about transition from year 6 to 7.
- Education Delivery Plan
- YEPS – more in-depth scrutiny
- Bullying – report by Dan Williams
- Report on Estyn recommendations – 6 months

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## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023-24

### EDUCATION & INCLUSION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19<sup>th</sup> JULY 2023

#### REPORT ON A TASK AND FINISH GROUP IN RELATION TO THE REPORT ON SCHOOL MODERNISATION – UPDATE ON BAND B SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING PROGRAMME

#### REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND COMMUNICATION

### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to update Members on the establishment of a task and finish group following the Committees previous consideration of:
  - [The School Modernisation – Update on Band B Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme](#), presented to the Committee on 2nd February 2023, and
  - [Estyn’s Report on Education Services in Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council](#), presented to the Committee on 20th June 2023.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1. Acknowledge the content of the report & consider the suggested proposed way forward and next steps at 4.1; and
- 2.3. Subject to 2.1 above, request that the Service Director Democratic Services & Communication make the necessary arrangements.

### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. At their meeting on the [2nd February 2023](#), Members received a report on the School Modernisation – Update on Band B Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.
- 3.2. Following consideration, and having scrutinised the contents of that report, Members wished to establish a task and finish group as the most effective way to examine the matter in further detail.

- 3.3. At their meeting on the [20th June 2023](#), Members received a report on Estyn's Report on Education Services in Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.
- 3.4. It is acknowledged within the Estyn report that one of the local inspection questions was specifically on approaches to school reorganisation proposals and it is noted in the response from Estyn that '*Leaders in the local authority make their decisions carefully, based on how best to serve their different communities and to meet individual needs. For example, the council makes effective use of a wide range of data and information when considering school reorganisation and planning. This means that school organisation proposals take good account of the needs of the school's community and promote equity of provision for pupils*'. No recommendations were identified, specific to this area of concern.

#### **4. PROPOSED WAY FORWARD & NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1. That through the Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication, the necessary arrangements will be made for Members to visit appropriate schools, to receive first-hand evidence from stakeholders including Head Teachers, governing bodies and pupils, that have experienced the development and implementation of school modernisation investment, to secure a broader view and understand the challenges presented and opportunities for improvement.
- 4.2. It is suggested that these arrangements are taken forward during the new school term.
- 4.3. As part of any Task & Finish Group arrangement, Members may wish to consider arriving at a set of findings and recommendations to report to the Council's Cabinet for consideration.

#### **TASK & FINISH GROUP**

- 4.4. Task and finish groups are informal, usually small, time-limited groups established by the scrutiny committee to undertake a specific piece of work, and report back to that committee with their findings and recommendations.

#### **5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS/SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY**

- 5.1. Equality and diversity implications will be considered as part of the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations and any subsequent implementation arrangements.

#### **6. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. There are no Welsh language implications arising from this report.

#### **7. CONSULTATION/INVOLVEMENT**

- 7.1. The process of engagement with key partners and local Members will steer the scrutiny consideration and methodology going forward and enable it to formulate well balanced and objective recommendations.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. Financial and resource implications will be considered as part of the scrutiny's recommendations as will any subsequent implementation arrangements going forward.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 9.1. There are no legal implications arising, from this report.

## **10. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT**

- 10.1. The Well-being of Future Generations Act asks public bodies to work better with people, communities, and each other to meet the Sustainable Development principle. The Council's approach to the implementation of the Act agreed by Cabinet is to make sure that its requirements are embedded into the everyday business.
- 10.2. Engagement with Stakeholders at this stage of the Scrutiny review will support the Task & Finish Group apply the Sustainable Development principle of the Act through the five ways of working, namely, Integration, Collaboration, Long term thinking, Involvement and Prevention and maximise the contribution to the 7 national Well-being goals.
- 10.3. Not forgetting the 'Future Generations Framework for Scrutiny' which poses a set of questions that Scrutiny Members can use as a prompt. It can be used to see if the decisions they conclude have applied the Sustainable Development principle and to ensure that the work and recommendations of Scrutiny are progressed through the lens of the Act.

## **11. CONCLUSION**

- 11.1. It is for members of the Education & Inclusion Scrutiny Committee to decide whether they wish to consider the suggested proposed way forward and next steps and for them to request that the appropriate arrangements are duly arranged through the Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication.

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## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023/24

## EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2023

### EDUCATION WORKFORCE DATA

#### REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES AND THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

**Author(s):** Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
Richard Evans, Director of Human Resources

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update on education workforce data across our 115 schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf, and specific data relating to the Welsh medium workforce.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Review and scrutinise the content of this report.
- 2.2 Consider whether they wish to scrutinise any parts in greater depth and require further reports in future.

#### 3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To provide the Education and Inclusion Scrutiny Committee with an update on the current workforce data within our schools, at a time of significant staffing pressures across the system.

#### 4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 This report provides data from key data sources, including
  - iTrent, which is the Council's workforce database.
  - Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC), which is the annual census of maintained schools in Wales undertaken annually in January of each year.

- School Workforce Annual Census (SWAC), which provides detailed levels of intelligence and data about the staff who work in our schools.

4.2 PLASC is an electronic collection of pupil and school level data provided by all maintained primary, middle, secondary, nursery and special schools in January each year. This data gets submitted annually to Welsh Government.

4.3 The School Workforce Annual Census (SWAC) provides detailed levels of intelligence and data about the staff who work in our schools. This return is now a statutory requirement under The Education (Supply of Information about the School Workforce) (Wales) Regulations 2017. Information from the SWAC informs Welsh Government policy on issues relating to the school workforce, including pay and conditions, recruitment and retention.

The data is used in workforce planning, including potential training requirements, disciplines taught, use of supply cover and additional roles undertaken by staff. The Council's integrated HR and Payroll System also provides valuable information in respect of the school workforce. The workforce information provides intelligence on:

- the size of the workforce;
- staff demographics;
- staff recruitment and retention;
- the use of supply cover;
- absences;
- the capacity for Welsh-medium teaching and discipline-specific teaching;
- the cost of teachers' pay in Wales.

The data can also be used to monitor equality and diversity of the school workforce and the Welsh Government's ability to deliver on the Cymraeg 2050 Strategy through Welsh-medium teaching.

4.4 Recruitment pressures in Education are well documented and these have been compounded by the pandemic, workload pressures and reduced numbers of teachers entering the profession. Difficulties in accessing supply staff have also been experienced across the system, and this was very evident in Rhondda Cynon Taf during the pandemic.

The Council can provide an enhanced recruitment attraction service where pressures exist and this includes the advertisement of posts across social media channels. Human Resources has a new [job website](#) which has been developed in key service areas to attract potential employees to work for the Council. Supporting information includes details on employment benefits, the local area, careers, staff support, staff stories and job vacancies.

4.5 For high priority posts, which might include multiple vacancies, the Council can also run targeted recruitment campaigns using appropriate social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. The Council can also use paid advertising on Facebook for priority recruitment campaigns, which can be monitored from an engagement and success perspective. This work has not yet been extended and adapted to support schools but this is an area which could be developed further.

Some work has already commenced on this, in order to ensure that we deliver on our ambitious Welsh in Education Strategic Plan targets.

- 4.6 Dedicated recruitment platforms are used for school based vacancies, for example Eteach. When advertising positions on Eteach, marketing campaigns can be undertaken to elevate the profile of an advert to 'job of the week or month.' These approaches can be effective in attracting a wider audience for posts which can be difficult to fill.
- 4.7 Human Resources is working with the Education Workforce Council on a pilot programme to launch Educators Wales. This is a new Welsh Government recruitment platform, which specifically targets the world of education in Wales. It is hoped that in time this platform will offer other recruitment tools, such as a talent pool. Discussions with Educators Wales have also commenced with a view of adding dedicated content to the Educators Wales website to attract people to work in our schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

More traditional forms of recruitment advertising are still available in specialist publications and websites.

## 5. iTRENT DATA

- 5.1 Appendices 1 to 3 provides information extracted from HR's information management systems in respect of:
- the composition of staff;
  - recruitment and retention; and
  - sickness absence.

The information presented relates to teaching and support staff respectively, with Appendix 1 focusing on all teaching staff in all sectors; Appendix 2 on all teaching staff in the Welsh medium sector; and Appendix 3 relating to support staff.

- 5.2 The **teaching data** (all sectors) is detailed in **Appendix 1** and includes information from the iTrent system and other databases available for the period 01/06/2022–31/05/2023 for recruitment and retention and sickness absence, and May 2023 for teaching staff in all sectors.
- 5.3 There was a total of 2,131 permanent and temporary teaching staff working in our schools as at May 2023. The highest proportion of the workforce were teachers who had reached threshold (1,268 in total). The highest proportion of the workforce (34.3%) were in the 35-44 age range. The ratio of males to females was generally 1:3, but this was 1:2 when considering headteacher roles. Staff from minority groups or with disabilities are very poorly represented in the workforce.
- 5.4 The total number of teachers who have terminated their employment with the Council during the period 01/06/2022–31/05/2023, excluding internal transfers, equated to a turnover of 10.3% with the greatest percentage of leavers vacating main scale teaching posts with a turnover of 21.5%. A total of 46.8% of leavers left for voluntary reasons. The majority of leavers, 40%, were in the 25-34 age range. Generally

speaking, the highest proportion of leavers, 25.5%, had less than 1 year of service. There were 214 new starters, of which 149 were main scale teachers. New starters were in the 25-34 age range in the majority, 42.5% of cases.

- 5.5 Sickness absence during this period was at 4.36%, with most absences attributable to instructor/unqualified teaching staff, who were absent for 5.86% of the time. The main reason for absence was mental health in 32.27% of cases, with Covid related absence also being the second highest reason at 12.40%.
- 5.6 The teaching staff (Welsh medium) data in **Appendix 2** relates to data from the iTrent system from 01/06/2022–31/05/2023 for recruitment and retention and sickness absence, and May 2023 for the composition of staff in the **Welsh medium sector**.

There was a total of 381 permanent and temporary teaching staff working in our schools in May 2023. The highest proportion of the workforce were teachers who had reached threshold (213 in total). The highest proportion of the workforce (32.0%) were in the 25-34 age range. The ratio of males to females was generally 1:2.5, but this was 1:1.3 when considering headteacher roles. Staff from minority groups or with disabilities are very poorly represented in the workforce.

- 5.7 The total number of teachers who have terminated their employment with the Council during the period 01/06/2022-31/05/2023, excluding internal transfers, equated to a turnover of 11.8% with the greatest percentage of leavers vacating main scale teaching posts with a turnover of 23.0%. A total of 51.1% of leavers left for voluntary reasons. The majority of leavers, 51.1%, were in the 25-34 age range. Generally speaking, the highest proportion of leavers, 28.9%, had less than 1 year of service. There were 43 new starters, of which 32 were main scale teachers. New starters were in the 25-34 age range in the majority, 46.5% of cases.
- 5.8 Sickness absence during this period was at 3.05%, with most absences attributable to instructors/unqualified teachers, who were absent for 10.81% of the time. The main reason for absence was Mental Health related at 18.97%.
- 5.9 **Support staff** data is highlighted in **Appendix 3**. In May 2023, there were 2,152 and 722 permanent and temporary support staff respectively in all settings. The highest populated support staff role was a Level 3 teaching assistant post at 604. In terms of age profile, the highest percentage of staff (27.6%) were in the 45-54 age group, and the gender profile was very heavily weighted in favour of females.
- 5.10 In terms of leavers, the highest turnover related to teaching assistant (level 1), with a turnover of 25.0% during the period 01/06/2022-31/05/2023. Temporary special needs support assistants had the second highest turnover rates, at 24.6%, of the cohort. 65.9% attributed the reasons for leaving their post to voluntary reasons, with the most frequent leavers predominantly being in the 25-34 age range. The highest percentage of leavers had less than 1 year of service (21.9%). There were 316 new starters, with the majority lying in the 25-34 age range.
- 5.11 In terms of sickness absence, the highest sickness rates were associated with learning support assistants (level 3) at 9.12% and the second highest was attributable to teaching assistant (level 2) at 7.07%. The most common reason for absence was



mental health, which equated to 30.92% of the overall sickness levels. The second highest absence was associated with muscular skeletal conditions, at 14.43%.

## 6. **PLASC DATA**

- 6.1 PLASC data over the last 4 years has been analysed to provide some insight into staffing levels across our schools. The number of teachers across our schools has remained relatively stable since January 2020, with a growth of 68 teaching staff.

**Table 1: Teacher Numbers in RCT Schools from 2020-23 (January PLASC Returns)**

Year	Teachers Headcount	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time Equivalent
January 2023	2,105	1,825	280	2,000
January 2022	2,072	1,798	274	1,963
January 2021	2,078	1,790	288	1,961
January 2020	2,037	1,751	286	1,925

- 6.2 PLASC data from 2020-2023 suggests that there has been a reduction of 387 statutory school age pupils in our schools since January 2020 and a relatively very small improvement in pupil to teacher ratio. January 2023 PLASC returns highlight relatively stable pupil to teacher ratio over four data reporting periods.

**Table 2: Pupil Numbers and Pupil to Teacher Ratios in RCT Schools from 2020-23 (January PLASC Returns)**

Year	Pupils	Pupil : Teacher Ratio
January 2023	38,497	19.25
January 2022	38,846	19.80
January 2021	39,161	19.67
January 2020	38,884	20.20

- 6.3 Staffing vacancies reported by schools in the January 2023 PLASC return suggests that 176 teaching posts were advertised of which, 47 were for the primary sector. The 'other' category was very high at 36, but the third highest number of vacancies advertised appeared to relate to mathematics at 16, science at 12 and English at 15. This is perhaps to be expected given the high demand for teachers specialising in these subject areas and the challenges experienced in recruiting to these posts.

**Table 3: Number of vacancies advertised per subject (January 2022 and 2023 PLASC)**

Subject	No. of Vacancies Advertised per Subject	No. of Vacancies Advertised per Subject
	Jan 2022	Jan 2023
Primary	29	47
Art	1	2
Biology	2	0
Chemistry	2	2
Design and technology	3	6
English	10	15
Geography	2	1
History	3	4
IT	1	6
Mathematics	13	16
Modern Foreign Languages	2	3
Other	33	36
PE	7	11
Physics	2	2
Science	11	12
Welsh Language 1	1	0
RE		2
Welsh Language 2	6	7
SEN		1
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>176</b>

6.4 The number of subject specialist teaching staff leaving the profession is relatively low but demonstrates growth from 2022 to 2023 as evidence in Table 4.

**Table 4: Teachers leaving the profession by sector and subject (January PLASC 2022 and 2023)**

Subject or Sector	Number	Number
	PLASC January 2022	PLASC January 2023
Primary	10	20
Art	1	1
English	1	3
History	2	
Geography		2
Mathematics	3	2

Subject or Sector	Number PLASC January 2022	Number PLASC January 2023
Music		1
Other	4	1
PE	2	1
Physics	1	
Science	3	1
SEN	1	
Welsh 2		2
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>34</b>

## 7. WELSH LANGUAGE DATA

- 7.1 Outcome 7 of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for 2022-32 focuses on increasing the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teaching through the medium of Welsh.
- 7.2 The local authority's Welsh Language Unit outlines the total number and percentage of non-school staff who identified themselves as fluent or fairly fluent in the Welsh language and was correct as at May 2023. The data in Table 5 highlights that 9.6% of non-school based staff consider themselves to be fluent.

**Table 5: Total Number of Staff who Identified Themselves as Fluent or Fairly Fluent in Welsh**

Number of Staff with Welsh Language Skills		Fluent (Welsh Language Level Four and Five)		Fairly Fluent (Welsh Language Level Three)		Total (Welsh Language Level Three, Four and Five)	
Category	Total Number of Staff	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Non-School Based Staff*</b>	7,230	692	9.6%	153	2.1%	845	11.7%

\*Not a headcount, it includes multiple employment i.e. An employee will be counted for every post that they hold. Also include casual employees.

- 7.3 Data from the SWAC outlines the Welsh language ability of the local authority's school based workforce for the academic years 2020–2023. Table 6 provides an overview of the Welsh language ability of all teachers employed by the local authority.

**Table 6: Welsh Language Ability of All Teachers (Including Headteachers, School Teachers and School Learning Support Workers) Employed by the Local Authority (SWAC is the data source)**

Skill Level	Academic Year 2020–2021		Academic Year 2022–2023 (Nov 22 SWAC)	
	Number	%	Number	%
No Skills (NS)	450	21.2%	429	21.58%
Entry Level (EL)	499	23.4%	468	23.54%
Foundation Level (FL)	329	15.5%	345	17.35%
Intermediate Level (IL)	167	7.9%	147	7.39%
Advanced Level (AL)	137	6.4%	133	6.69%
Proficient Level (PL)	523	24.6%	446	22.43%
Information Not Obtained (INO)	21	1%	20	1.01%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,126</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1988</b>	<b>100%</b>

- 7.4 The data in the Table 7 is derived from SWAC and outlines the total number of school-based workforce (including headteachers, school teachers and school learning support workers) employed by the local authority, teaching/working through the medium of Welsh for the academic years 2020-2023.

A total of 20.57% currently teach through the medium of Welsh but a further 6.54% are able to teach through the medium of Welsh but currently do not do so.

**Table 7: Total Teachers Employed by the Local Authority Teaching/Working Through the Medium of Welsh**

Category	Academic Year 2020–2021		Academic Year 2022-2023 (Nov 22 SWAC)	
	Number	%	Number	%
Teaching/Working Through the Medium of Welsh in Current Post	462	21.7%	409	20.57%
Able to Teach/Work Through the Medium of Welsh but not doing so in Current Post	144	6.8%	130	6.54%
Unable to Teach/Work Through the Medium of Welsh	859	40.4%	832	41.85%
Teaching Welsh as a Subject Only	661	31.1%	617	31.04%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,126</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1988</b>	<b>100%</b>

7.5 The data in Table 8 is derived from PLASC and outlines the total percentage of teachers employed by the local authority who are able to teach through the medium of Welsh for the previous four academic years.

**Table 8: Total Percentage of Teachers who are able to Teach through the Medium of Welsh**

	Academic Year				
	2018–2019	2019–2020	2020–2021	2021–2022	2022-2023
<b>Qualified Teachers Teaching Welsh as a First Language</b>	10.9%	9.7%	8.8%	14.1%	10.9%
<b>Qualified Teachers Teaching Welsh as a Second Language (Only)</b>	38.6%	39.6%	36.3%	36.3%	36%
<b>Qualified Teachers Teaching Other Subjects Through the Medium of Welsh</b>	8.4%	9.7%	11.2%	5.5%	8.7%
<b>Qualified Teachers Able to Teach through the Medium of Welsh, but Not Doing So</b>	6.3%	3.8%	3.4%	2.9%	4.2%
<b>Not Qualified to Teach Through the Medium of Welsh</b>	35.9%	37.2%	40.3%	41.2%	40.2%

The data highlights that the percentage of teachers qualified to teach Welsh as a first language decreased during 2022-2023 in comparison to 2021-2022. An increase was evident in the percentage of qualified teachers able to teach through the medium of Welsh but were not doing so when 2022-23 data was compared with the previous year.

## **8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The Council has to satisfy its public sector duties under the Equalities Act 2010 (including specific Welsh public sector duties). Pursuant to these legal duties Councils must in making decisions, have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations on the basis of protected characteristics.

8.2 There are no Equality and Community Impact Assessments required as part of this report.

## **9. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The Council is required to consider Welsh language implications as part of any decision making process. As this is an information report, there is no requirement to prepare Welsh Language Impact Assessments as part of this report.

## **10. CONSULTATION**

10.1 There are no specific consultation requirements in relation to this report.

## **11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no financial implications associated with this information report.

## **12. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

12.1 Part 1 of the Education Act 1996 (“the 1996 Act”) imposes a number of general duties on all local authorities in Wales. The general duty in section 13 of the 1996 Act is to contribute (as far as the Council’s powers enable them to do so) towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by securing that efficient primary education and secondary education are available to meet the needs of the population of their area.

12.2 Section 13A (3) of the 1996 Act states that a local authority in Wales must ensure that their relevant education functions and their relevant training functions are exercised by the authority with a view to promoting high standards and promoting the fulfilment of learning potential by every person to whom the subsection applies, including those who are of compulsory school age or are below school age and are registered as pupils at schools maintained by the authority.

12.3 Section 14 of the 1996 Act then requires the Council to secure sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education in the Council’s area. Schools available for an area shall not be regarded as sufficient unless they are sufficient in number, character and equipment to provide for all pupils the opportunity for appropriate education.

12.4 Appropriate education means education which offers such variety of instruction and training as may be desirable in view of (a) the pupils’ different ages, abilities and aptitudes; and (b) the different periods for which they may be expected to remain at school, including practical instruction and training appropriate to their different needs.

12.5 Ensuring that there is sufficient education workforce available in our schools is integral to the local authority securing efficient education to meet the needs of the population in our area.

### **13. LINKS TO THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT**

- 13.1 There are links to RCTCBC's Corporate Plan for the period between 2020-2024, specifically the priority:
- Prosperity – Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative, entrepreneurial and fulfil their potential and prosper
    - Ensuring we have good schools so all children have access to a great education.
- 13.2 There are also clear links with the Education and Inclusion Services Strategic Plan for 2022-2025, which outlines a clear commitment to 'Developing a highly skilled educational workforce and excellent leadership at all levels' (Strategic Priority 1). This includes ensuring that there is a robust succession planning strategy in place, investment in leadership training for aspiring headteachers, ensuring that staffing pressures are identified and that there are effective approaches to attracting and retaining the highest quality school leaders and staff to RCT.

### **14. CONCLUSION**

- 14.1 Data suggests that there is a need to attract further staff into the education sector through extensive recruitment campaigns and to explore creative ways of attracting much needed staff into the Welsh medium sector. This is critical if we are to ensure that we meet our ambitious WESP targets as outlined in our plan for 2022 to 32, and address some of the recruitment challenges currently faced.
- 14.2 Outcome 7 of the WESP remains a key priority for the Education Directorate and sets key targets for improvement and detailed actions that the local authority will take, in collaboration with key partners, to promote an increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and through the medium of Welsh, includes.

The WESP action plan highlights key targets for improvement and a series of key actions for implementation. The targets include a focus on

- Undertaking regular analysis of all data sources to understand trends in the demand for Welsh medium teachers.
- Annually analysing the PLASC and SWAC to monitor linguistic competency and identify any professional learning needs of the school-based workforce
- Promoting the local, regional and national training programmes which are available to assist the childcare/early years and school-based workforce with language progression.
- Exploring how the Council and our partners can utilise different services to provide professional learning pathways and early years and school-based workforce opportunities.
- Supporting the development of alternative routes into childcare, teaching and other school-based workforce opportunities.
- Promoting teaching as a pathway in order to increase the number of school-aged learners choosing teaching and childcare opportunities as career pathways.

An annual report on the local authority's progress in implementing the actions outlined in the WESP Action Plan for 2022-23 will be presented to Welsh Government in July 2023, and to Scrutiny Committee in the autumn term 2023.

- 14.3 The local authority cannot address these workforce pressures in isolation. Welsh Government has ambitious plans to support workforce pressures experienced across Wales. The [Welsh in Education Workforce Plan](#) outlines the steps the Welsh Government, along with its partners, will take over the next 10 years to increase the number of teachers and support workers able to work through the medium of Welsh and teach Welsh. The plan also includes actions to support the development of the Welsh language skills and expertise of the existing workforce. It also includes actions to develop leadership capacity in the Welsh-medium sector and support for leaders to develop Welsh language and culture within their schools.
- 14.4 There is clearly a need to also address some of the recruitment and retention challenges in the education sector more broadly and these will be developed in partnership with colleagues in Human Resources as outlined in Section 4 of the report.



**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**19<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2023**

**EDUCATION WORKFORCE DATA**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES AND  
THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

## iTrent Workforce Profile – Teaching Staff (All Sectors)

This report includes a breakdown of the following:

- Composition of staff
- Recruitment and retention
- Sickness absence

The data includes information from the iTrent system and other databases available. The data in this report is for all Teaching staff and is for the period 01/06/2022 – 31/05/2023 for recruitment & retention and sickness absence and May 2023 for the composition of staff.

### Composition of Staff

#### **Staff Numbers May 2023**

Number of live pay numbers on the system counted against the employees' contract type. Staff with multiple employments will be counted for each post they hold as they will have a different post reference for each post.

Staff Numbers	Headcount	% Male	% Female	FTE
Permanent	1,861	25.2%	74.8%	1,763.0
Temporary	270	21.1%	78.9%	243.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,131</b>	<b>24.7%</b>	<b>75.3%</b>	<b>2,006.2</b>

Job Type	Headcount	Full Time	Part Time	FTE
Director of Learning	4	4		4.0
Headteacher	153	143	10	146.8
Assistant/Deputy Headteacher	196	184	12	186.5
Teacher Threshold	1,268	1,036	232	1,181.6
Teacher Main Scale	475	437	38	458.3
Instructor/Unqualified Teacher	35	23	12	29.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,131</b>	<b>1,827</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>2,006.2</b>

#### **Age Profile / Breakdown**

Age Profile / Breakdown	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Director of Learning	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Headteacher	0.0%	3.3%	25.5%	52.3%	19.0%	0.0%
Assistant/Deputy Headteacher	0.0%	7.1%	42.3%	44.9%	5.6%	0.0%

<b>Age Profile / Breakdown</b>	<b>16-24</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-54</b>	<b>55-64</b>	<b>65+</b>
Teacher Threshold	0.0%	17.1%	42.4%	32.6%	7.6%	0.3%
Teacher Main Scale	16.8%	66.3%	12.4%	3.8%	0.6%	0.0%
Instructor/Unqualified Teacher	2.9%	20.0%	34.3%	17.1%	25.7%	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>26.2%</b>	<b>34.3%</b>	<b>28.6%</b>	<b>6.9%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>

### **Job Type Breakdown by Gender**

<b>Job Type</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Director of Learning	1	3	4
Headteacher	51	102	153
Assistant/Deputy Headteacher	68	128	196
Teacher Threshold	277	991	1,268
Teacher Main Scale	122	353	475
Instructor/Unqualified Teacher	7	28	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>1,605</b>	<b>2,131</b>

### **Equalities Information May 2023**

This figure is based on information disclosed via the equalities monitoring forms. It is not a mandatory requirement for staff to disclose this information and therefore not all staff records are populated.

The figures have been calculated in two ways:

- firstly as a percentage of the Teaching Workforce as a whole and
- secondly as a percentage of those who have equalities information against their record

<b>Equalities Information</b>	<b>% of Teaching Workforce</b>	<b>% of returns</b>
Staff Minority Groups	0.58%	0.77%
Disabled Employees	0.75%	1.05%

### **Gender Pay Gap**

<b>Combined</b>	<b>Full Time</b>	<b>Part Time</b>
4.13%	3.88%	5.01%

### **Recruitment and Retention**

#### **Turnover**

**All Leavers** - Total number of Teachers who have terminated their employment with the Council during the period 01/06/2022 – 31/05/2023. *NB: This does not include internal transfers.*

<b>Leavers</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Turnover</b>
Director of Learning	0	0.0%
Headteacher	7	4.6%
Assistant/Deputy Headteacher	9	4.6%
Teacher - Threshold	96	7.6%
Teacher - Main Scale	102	21.5%
Instructor/Unqualified Teacher	6	17.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>10.3%</b>

<b>Leave Reasons</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Age Retirement	14	6.4%
Compulsory Redundancy And Pension Access	2	0.9%
Compulsory Redundancy No Pension Access	3	1.4%
Death in Service	1	0.5%
Early Retirement ARB Teachers	4	1.8%
End of Contract	49	22.3%
Mutual Agreement	19	8.6%
Transfer To Another Local Authority	25	11.4%
Voluntary	103	46.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	

<b>Age Profile / Breakdown</b>	<b>16 - 24</b>	<b>25 - 34</b>	<b>35 - 44</b>	<b>45 - 54</b>	<b>55 - 64</b>	<b>65+</b>
Number of Leavers	8	88	49	28	44	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>40.0%</b>	<b>22.3%</b>	<b>12.7%</b>	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>

<b>No of years service:</b>	<b>No of Leavers</b>	<b>%</b>
less than 1 year	56	25.5%
1-2 years	51	23.2%
3-5 years	26	11.8%
6-10years	23	10.5%
11-15 years	19	8.6%
16-20 years	18	8.2%
21-30 years	16	7.3%
31 years +	11	5.0%

## Starters

Starters	Total
Headteacher	1
Assistant/Deputy Headteacher	3
Teacher Threshold	55
Teacher Main Scale	149
Instructor/Unqualified Teacher	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>214</b>

Age Profile / Breakdown	21 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65+
Number of Starters	51	91	50	17	4	1
	<b>23.8%</b>	<b>42.5%</b>	<b>23.4%</b>	<b>7.9%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>

## Sickness Absence

	Total	Short Term	Long Term
Working days lost in the period	17,736	8,258	9,478
% sickness in the period	4.36%	2.03%	2.33%

Job Type	Employees	Sickness
Director of Learning	4	1.43%
Headteacher	145	2.78%
Assistant/Deputy Headteacher	192	3.64%
Teacher Threshold	1,262	4.90%
Teacher Main Scale	481	3.65%
Instructor/Unqualified Teacher	33	5.86%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,117</b>	<b>4.36%</b>

Absence Reason	Working Days Lost	% of Overall Sickness
Mental Health	5,724	32.27%
Infections - Covid	2,199	12.40%
Gastric System	1,982	11.18%
Infections	1,974	11.13%
Muscular Skeletal	1,422	8.02%
Neurological	929	5.24%

**iTrent Workforce Profile - Teaching Staff (Welsh Medium)**

This report includes a breakdown of the following:

- Composition of staff
- Recruitment and retention
- Sickness absence.

The data includes information from the iTrent system and other databases available. The data in this report is for teaching staff in Welsh medium schools only and is for the period 01/06/2022 – 31/05/2023 for recruitment & retention and sickness absence and May 2023 for the composition of staff.

**Composition of Staff****Staff Numbers May 2023**

Number of live pay numbers on the system counted against the employees contract type. Staff with multiple employments will be counted for each post they hold as they will have a different post reference for each post.

Staff Numbers	Headcount	% Male	% Female	FTE
Permanent	322	28.9%	71.1%	311.0
Temporary	59	25.4%	74.6%	54.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>28.3%</b>	<b>71.7%</b>	<b>365.1</b>

Job Type	Headcount	Full Time	Part Time	FTE
Headteacher	30	27	3	28.6
Assistant/Deputy Headteacher	34	33	1	33.6
Teacher Threshold	213	179	34	201.0
Teacher Main Scale	100	96	4	98.3
Instructor/Unqualified Teacher	4	3	1	3.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>365.1</b>

**Age Profile/Breakdown**

Age Profile/Breakdown	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Headteacher	0.0%	16.7%	26.7%	46.7%	10.0%	0.0%
Assistant/Deputy Headteacher	0.0%	5.9%	38.2%	50.0%	5.9%	0.0%
Teacher Threshold	0.0%	21.1%	39.0%	35.2%	4.7%	0.0%

<b>Age Profile/Breakdown</b>	<b>16-24</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-54</b>	<b>55-64</b>	<b>65+</b>
Teacher Main Scale	23.0%	68.0%	7.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Instructor/Unqualified Teacher	25.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>32.0%</b>	<b>29.1%</b>	<b>28.1%</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>

### **Job Type Breakdown by Gender**

<b>Job Type</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Headteacher	13	17	30
Assistant/Deputy Headteacher	12	22	34
Teacher Threshold	56	157	213
Teacher Main Scale	27	73	100
Instructor/Unqualified Teacher	0	4	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>381</b>

### **Equalities Information May 2023**

This figure is based on information disclosed via the equalities monitoring forms. It is not a mandatory requirement for staff to disclose this information and therefore not all staff records are populated.

The figures have been calculated in two ways:

- firstly as a percentage of the teaching workforce in Welsh medium schools as a whole, and
- secondly as a percentage of those who have equalities information against their record.

<b>Equalities Information</b>	<b>% of Teaching Workforce</b>	<b>% of returns</b>
Staff Minority Groups	0.26%	0.37%
Disabled Employees	1.05%	1.58%

### **Gender Pay Gap**

<b>Combined</b>	<b>Full Time</b>	<b>Part Time</b>
6.28%	6.01%	11.41%

### **Recruitment and Retention**

#### **Turnover**

**All Leavers** - Total number of Teachers who have terminated their employment with the Council during the period 01/06/2022 – 31/05/2023. *NB: This does not include internal transfers.*

<b>Leavers</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Turnover</b>
Headteacher	3	10.0%
Assistant/Deputy Headteacher	1	2.9%
Teacher - Threshold	18	8.5%
Teacher - Main Scale	23	23.0%
Instructor/Unqualified Teacher	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>11.8%</b>

<b>Leave Reasons</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Age Retirement	1	2.2%
Compulsory Redundancy And Pension Access	1	2.2%
Compulsory Redundancy No Pension Access	1	2.2%
Death in Service	1	2.2%
End of Contract	8	17.8%
Mutual Agreement	6	13.3%
Transfer To Another Local Authority	4	8.9%
Voluntary	23	51.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	

<b>Age Profile/Breakdown</b>	<b>16-24</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-54</b>	<b>55-64</b>	<b>65+</b>
Number of Leavers	2	23	7	4	9	0
	4.4%	51.1%	15.6%	8.9%	20.0%	0.0%

<b>No. of Years' Service</b>	<b>No. of Leavers</b>	<b>%</b>
Less Than 1 Year	13	28.9%
1-2 Years	9	20.0%
3-5 Years	5	11.1%
6-10 Years	6	13.3%
11-15 Years	2	4.4%
16-20 Years	3	6.7%



No. of Years' Service	No. of Leavers	%
21-30 Years	3	6.7%
31 Years +	4	8.9%

### Starters

Starters	Total
Headteacher	0
Assistant/Deputy Headteacher	0
Teacher Threshold	9
Teacher Main Scale	32
Instructor/Unqualified Teacher	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>

Age Profile/Breakdown	21-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Number of Starters	14	20	6	3	0	0
	32.6%	46.5%	14.0%	7.0%	0.0%	0.0%

### Sickness Absence

	Total	Short Term	Long Term
Working Days Lost in the Period	2,230	1,093	1,137
% Sickness in the Period	3.05%	1.49%	1.55%

Job Type	Employees	Sickness
Headteacher	30	1.65%
Assistant/Deputy Headteacher	34	3.02%
Teacher Threshold	213	3.30%
Teacher Main Scale	100	2.63%
Instructor/Unqualified Teacher	4	10.81%
<b>Total</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>3.05%</b>

<b>Absence Reason</b>	<b>Working Days Lost</b>	<b>% of Overall Sickness</b>
Mental Health	423	18.97%
Infections	344	15.43%
Infections - Covid	313	14.04%
Neurological	261	11.70%
Dermatology / Skin	218	9.78%
Gastric System	184	8.25%

## **iTrent Workforce Data - School Support Staff**

This report includes a breakdown of the following:

- Composition of staff
- Recruitment and retention
- Sickness absence.

The data includes information from the iTrent system and other databases available. The data in this report is for School Support staff only and is for the period 01/06/2022 – 31/05/2023 for recruitment and retention and sickness absence, and May 2023 for the composition of staff.

### **Composition of Staff**

#### **Staff Numbers May 2023**

Number of live pay numbers on the system counted against the employees contract type. Staff with multiple employments will be counted for each post they hold as they will have a different post reference for each post.

<b>Staff Numbers</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	<b>% Male</b>	<b>% Female</b>	<b>FTE</b>
Permanent	2,152	10.9%	89.1%	1386.7
Temporary	722	10.4%	89.6%	409.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,874</b>	<b>10.8%</b>	<b>89.2%</b>	<b>1796.2</b>

<b>Job Type (Highest Populated)</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	<b>Full Time</b>	<b>Part Time</b>	<b>FTE</b>
Teaching Assistant (Level 3)	604	3	601	415.6
Supervisory Assistant	530	2	528	78.1
Teaching Assistant (Level 2)	292	7	285	227.4
Teaching Assistant (Level 4)	265	10	255	170.2
Temporary Special Needs Support Asst	191	2	189	117.4
School Clerk	126	24	102	101.2
Learning Support Assistant (Level 3)	111	2	109	91.7
Teaching Assistant (Level 1)	88		88	55.0
Caretaker	85	51	34	73.7
Cleaner	45		45	15.2
Site Manager	36	32	4	34.8
Administrative Assistant	30	13	17	25.6

<b>Job Type (Highest Populated)</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	<b>Full Time</b>	<b>Part Time</b>	<b>FTE</b>
Teacher's Aide	16		16	8.8
Nursery Nurse	15		15	11.4
Family Engagement Officer	15	2	13	12.0

### Age Profile/Breakdown

<b>Age Profile/Breakdown</b>	<b>16-24</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-54</b>	<b>55-64</b>	<b>65+</b>
% age of staff who are	141	502	734	792	631	74
	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>17.5%</b>	<b>25.5%</b>	<b>27.6%</b>	<b>22.0%</b>	<b>2.6%</b>

### Job Type Breakdown by Gender

<b>Job Type (Highest Populated)</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Teaching Assistant (Level 3)	15	589	604
Supervisory Assistant	31	499	530
Teaching Assistant (Level 2)	18	274	292
Teaching Assistant (Level 4)	10	255	265
Temporary Special Needs Support Asst	11	180	191
School Clerk		126	126
Learning Support Assistant (Level 3)	7	104	111
Teaching Assistant (Level 1)	3	85	88
Caretaker	76	9	85
Cleaner	4	41	45
Site Manager	35	1	36
Administrative Assistant		30	30
Teacher's Aide	1	15	16
Nursery Nurse		15	15
Family Engagement Officer	1	14	15

## Equalities Information May 2023

This figure is based on information disclosed via the equalities monitoring forms. It is not a mandatory requirement for staff to disclose this information and therefore not all staff records are populated.

The figures have been calculated in two ways:

- firstly as a percentage of the School Support Workforce as a whole, and
- secondly as a percentage of those who have equalities information against their record.

Equalities Information	% of School Support Workforce	% of returns
Staff Minority Groups	0.22%	0.28%
Disabled Employees	1.36%	1.67%

### Gender Pay Gap

Combined	Full Time	Part Time
2.51%	-9.19%	0.04%

## Recruitment and Retention

### Turnover

**All Leavers** - Total number of School Support staff who have terminated their employment with the Council during the period 01/06/2023 – 31/05/2023.

*NB: This does not include internal transfers.*

Leavers (Most Leavers)	Total	Turnover
Supervisory Assistant	58	10.9%
Teaching Assistant (Level 3)	53	8.8%
Temporary Special Needs Support Asst	47	24.6%
Teaching Assistant (Level 2)	38	13.0%
Teaching Assistant (Level 1)	22	25.0%
Teaching Assistant (Level 4)	15	5.7%
School Clerk	12	9.5%
Learning Support Assistant (Level 3)	12	10.8%
Caretaker	10	11.8%
Other Posts	76	13.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>11.9%</b>

<b>Leave Reasons</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Age Retirement	29	8.5%
Compulsory Redundancy No Pension Access	1	0.3%
Death In Service	3	0.9%
End of Contract	43	12.5%
Ill Health	3	0.9%
Mutual Agreement	26	7.6%
Transfer To Another Local Authority	4	1.2%
Voluntary	226	65.9%
Voluntary Early Retirement	5	1.5%
Voluntary Early Retirement + Redundancy	1	0.3%
Voluntary Redundancy	2	0.6%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>343</b>	

<b>Age Profile/Breakdown</b>	<b>16-24</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-54</b>	<b>55-64</b>	<b>65+</b>
Number of Leavers	45	81	77	63	48	29
	13.1%	23.6%	22.4%	18.4%	14.0%	8.5%

<b>No. of Years' Service</b>	<b>No. of Leavers</b>	<b>%</b>
Less Than 1 Year	75	21.9%
1-2 Years	70	20.4%
3-5 Years	51	14.9%
6-10 Years	51	14.9%
11-15 Years	39	11.4%
16-20 Years	26	7.6%
21-30 Years	24	7.0%
31 Years +	7	2.0%

### Starters

<b>Starters</b>	<b>Total</b>
Teaching Assistant (Level 2)	59
Teaching Assistant (Level 3)	48

<b>Starters</b>	<b>Total</b>
Supervisory Assistant	47
Temporary Special Needs Support Asst	34
Teaching Assistant (Level 1)	23
Learning Support Assistant (Level 3)	15
Caretaker	14
Teaching Assistant (Level 4)	11
Cover Supervisor	7
School Clerk	6
Other Posts	52
<b>Total</b>	<b>316</b>

<b>Age Profile/Breakdown</b>	<b>18-24</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-54</b>	<b>55-64</b>	<b>65+</b>
Number of Starters	61	98	93	39	23	2
	19.3%	31.0%	29.4%	12.3%	7.3%	0.6%

### Sickness Absence

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Short Term</b>	<b>Long Term</b>
Working Days Lost in the Period	34,659	14,527	20,132
% sickness in the period	6.28%	2.63%	3.65%

<b>Job Type (Highest Sick Days)</b>	<b>Employees</b>	<b>Sickness</b>
Teaching Assistant (Level 3)	604	6.53%
Supervisory Assistant	530	6.47%
Teaching Assistant (Level 2)	292	7.07%
Teaching Assistant (Level 4)	265	5.69%
Temporary Special Needs Support Asst	191	6.93%
Learning Support Assistant (Level 3)	111	9.12%
Teaching Assistant (Level 1)	88	6.42%
Caretaker	85	5.85%
School Clerk	126	3.68%
Cleaner	45	6.41%
Site Manager	36	5.50%

Learning Support Assistant (Level 1)	13	13.82%
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<b>Absence Reason</b>	<b>Working Days Lost</b>	<b>% of Overall Sickness</b>
Mental Health	10,715	30.92%
Muscular Skeletal	5,001	14.43%
Infections - Covid	3,698	10.67%
Gastric System	3,494	10.08%
Infections	2,924	8.44%
Respiratory	1,684	4.86%





## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023-24

### EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2023

#### SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

#### REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES

**Author: Catrin Edwards,  
Head of Service Transformance, Admissions and Governance**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide the Education and Inclusion Scrutiny Committee with a summary of the annual school admissions process.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Acknowledge the contents of the report and consider whether they wish to scrutinise any parts in greater depth.

#### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 This report provides an update on developments within school admissions in the admissions year 2022/2023 and application dates for the forthcoming 2023/2024 admissions year.

#### **4. UPDATE / CURRENT POSITION**

##### **Admission Year 2022/23**

#### **4.1 Normal/Routine Admissions**

In September every year, individual letters are sent to the parent/carer(s) of every pupil registered in nursery, year 2 in an infant school and year 6. The letter details their User Identification Number and the application process that they need to undertake to apply for a school place for the following September.

Parents/carers have the right to express a preference when selecting a school for their child(ren). If the number of preferences received for a school is below the

school's admission number (AN), all applications for admission to the school will be granted.

If the number of preferences received for a school is above the school's AN, the published over subscription criteria will be applied in the priority order listed, to determine the allocation of available places.

Information is also provided to the Welsh medium (WM) primary schools in Merthyr Tydfil and two schools in the Vale of Glamorgan for children who plan to attend schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf (e.g., Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun and Y Pant Comprehensive School).

#### 4.2 Applications for the Academic Year 2022/23

For the academic year 2022/23, the LA processed 9016 applications; of which 7826 (i.e.,86.80%) were applied for on-line, which is an increase of 5.654 percentage points from 2021/2022. There was 1488 pre-nursery, 2355 nursery, 2439 reception, 69 junior and 2665 year 7 applications.

Within Rhondda Cynon Taf, there are 8 voluntary aided (church) schools. The admission arrangements for these schools have been formulated by the schools' governing bodies and requests for admission into these schools are the responsibility of the relevant governing bodies.

Decision letters were issued for applications for year 7 places for September 2022 on the 1st of March 2022. Parents had until the 18th of March 2022 to appeal the decision if their application was unsuccessful.

For nursery, reception and year 3 applications, decision letters were issued on the 19th of April 2022.

The table below provides a summary of the breakdown of the 9016 applications received.

	Pre-Nursery Jan 2023	Pre-Nursery April 2023	Nursery Sept 2022	Reception Sept 2022	Junior Sept 2022	Year 7 Sept 2022	Total
Online	954	396	1836	2176	63	2401	7826
Paper	93	45	519	263	3	264	1190
<b>Total</b>	<b>1047</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>2355</b>	<b>2439</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>2665</b>	<b>9016</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> preference	N/A	N/A	2162	2377	62	2528	7129
2 <sup>nd</sup> preference	N/A	N/A	99	18	0	37	154
3 <sup>rd</sup> preference			14	1	0	3	18
Age ineligible to apply	406	34	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
School place	421	176	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
REP	220	211	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Parent refused place/no longer required			80	43	7	97	
No place allocated		20					

Of the 7301 single applications made for nursery, reception, junior and year 7 children, 97.64% were offered their first preference and 2.11% their second and 0.25% their third.

For pre-nursery January 2023, 1,027 single applications were received. Of these 406 were not age eligible; 421 children were offered places in 67 schools; and 220 were offered places in 32 Registered Education Providers (REPs).

For pre-nursery April 2023, 441 applications were received, however 34 were ineligible due to age. Of the remaining 407; 176 were offered places in 48 schools, 211 were offered a place across 34 REPs and 20 did not receive an offer due to no suitable provision being available in their local area.

#### **4.3 Appeals Processes**

Parents/carers wishing to appeal against the outcome of their application for secondary admission had until the 18th of March 2022 to notify the LA and 29<sup>th</sup> April 2022 for Reception and year 3. It is the parents/carers' responsibility to prove that an appeal request has been sent and therefore parents are strongly advised that all appeal requests are sent via recorded delivery or a tracked e-mail for evidence purposes.

For the September 2022 admission round, the LA received 23 appeals; 20 were successful, 1 unsuccessful and 2 withdrew.

#### **4.4 Late Applications**

For September 2022 applications, a late application will only be accepted by the Admissions Authority when a good reason is given for the lateness of the application (e.g. house move into the area). Where a good reason is given, a late application will be accepted, provided it is received before offers of places are made at the preferred school(s).

#### **4.5 Parental Responsibility**

Only persons holding responsibility for the named child can make an application and they will be required to make a declaration to this effect as part of the application process. Ordinarily, it is expected that this person resides at the same address as the child and is referred to as the parent for admission purposes. Where parental responsibility is equally shared, the Council will ask the child's parents to determine which parent should submit the application. If parents cannot agree and neither has obtained a court order stating who should be making the application, the Council will accept an application from the parent in receipt of Child Benefit for the child. The Council is not able to intervene in disputes between parents over school applications and will request that these are resolved privately.

If an application is received from a stepparent, they will need to produce a parental responsibility order confirming that they have parental responsibility. Such documentation is required to proceed with processing the application.

#### 4.6 All Through Schools

The parents and carers of children already attending an all through school, do not need to apply for a secondary school place as they will automatically transfer from year 6 to year 7 in the same school, unless they wish to attend a different secondary school.

Children will still have to apply for a pre-nursery, nursery and reception place at the relevant time.

#### 4.7 Timetable 2023/2024

Each LA must publish an annual composite prospectus which sets out the determined admissions arrangements, including a timetable for the admissions process detailing the relevant dates for the receipt and determination of applications and for the receipt of appeals.

For the academic year 2023/24, the admission timetable is set out in the table below and is published in the Starting Schools booklet.

Admission Cohort	Age of Pupil	Applications Available From	Applications to be Returned By	Decision Notifications Issued
Secondary School - Year 7	12 <sup>th</sup> birthday falls between 01/09/2023 – 31/08/2024	01/09/2022	15/10/2022	01/03/2023
Primary School - Year 3 Transfer from Infant to Junior or Primary School	8 <sup>th</sup> birthday falls between 01/09/2023 – 31/08/2024	01/09/2022	11/11/2022	17/04/2023
Primary School Reception Class (i.e. age 4 before 01/09/2023)	5 <sup>th</sup> birthday falls between 01/09/2023– 31/08/2024	01/09/2022	11/11/2022	17/04/2023
Primary School Nursery Class (i.e. age 3 before 01/09/2023)	4 <sup>th</sup> birthday falls between 01/09/2023 – 31/08/2024	01/09/2022	11/11/2022	17/04/2023
Pre-Nursery Admission from January 2024 (Spring Term)	3 <sup>rd</sup> birthday falls between 01/09/2023 – 31/12/2023	01/09/2023	29/09/2023	10/11/2023
Pre-Nursery Admission from April 2024 (Summer Term)	3 <sup>rd</sup> birthday falls between 01/01/2024 – 31/03/2024	01/01/2024	09/02/2024	15/03/2024

#### 4.8 Waiting List

Following the allocation of places during the normal admission round, any pupil who is refused admission to an oversubscribed school will be placed on the waiting list. The list will be maintained until the 30<sup>th</sup> of September (in line with the School Admission Code). Thereafter, parents/carers must make a fresh application for admission (by completing the application form) and/or provide a written request to remain on the waiting list.

Admissions in respect of pupils on waiting lists are determined by application of the over-subscription criteria, not by the length of time a child has been on the waiting list.

#### 4.9 Admissions at Other Times

During any academic year, children transfer between schools due to several reasons ranging from house moves and those moving into the County Borough. We advise parents to first contact their present headteacher to alert them of the decision to change schools and then if parents wish to proceed, they should contact the school admissions team for advice in making the application to the new school.

For every transfer within the LA, parents must request an in-year transfer (IYT) form from their current headteacher, who must sign and date the form. On receipt of the signed form, the school admissions team will process the application.

Between 01/09/2021 and 31/08/2022, there were 1163 primary and 435 secondary IYT applications, of which 828 (51.81%) were due to a house move.

Of the total IYTs, 377 (32.42%) of primary and 150 (34.48%) secondary children were in receipt of free school meals (FSM) and 40 (3.44%) and 22 (5.06%) were children looked after (CLA).

#### Number of IYT Primary Applications

Primary	PN/N	Rec	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
2016/2017	159	134	156	132	128	109	124	68	1010
2017/2018	155	147	151	148	154	125	110	57	1047
2018/2019	133	150	150	174	151	159	131	58	1106
2019/2020	121	102	122	127	110	132	109	51	874
2020/2021	188	177	133	127	131	142	114	62	1074
<b>2021/2022</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>1163</b>
FSM Children	33	54	51	51	58	46	54	30	377
CLA Children	6	5	4	3	11	2	7	2	40
House moves 2021/22	87	83	88	84	62	84	68	69	625

#### Number of IYT Secondary Applications

Secondary	7	8	9	10	11	Total
2016/2017	77	87	71	46	18	299
2017/2018	56	66	69	33	4	228
2018/2019	79	75	87	49	8	296
2019/2020	48	65	65	27	8	213
2020/2021	77	84	64	47	20	292
<b>2021/2022</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>435</b>
FSM Children	50	32	37	26	5	150
CLA Children	6	3	8	3	2	22
House moves 2021/22	36	52	54	47	14	203

Parents have no legal requirement to provide a reason to transfer their child and the LA can only refuse an application if there are no places available in the selected school.

## 5. WELSH MEDIUM TRANSFERS

The table below summaries the pupil numbers attending English and Welsh medium schools in RCT on PLASC date 22 (18/02/22). The percentage of children attending WM schools has increased slightly from 7,178 to 7,233 and remains at 18.6% of the school population.

	English Medium	Welsh Medium	Total	% Welsh Medium
Primary age 2022	17,885	4,097	21,982	18.64%
Secondary age 2022	13,727	3,136	16,863	18.60%
<b>Total 2022</b>	<b>31,612</b>	<b>7,233</b>	<b>38,846</b>	<b>18.62%</b>
Primary age 2021	17,537	4,021	21,558	18.65%
Secondary age 2021	13,889	3,158	17,057	18.52%
<b>Total 2021</b>	<b>31,436</b>	<b>7,178</b>	<b>38,615</b>	<b>18.60%</b>

### 5.1 Primary Welsh Medium Transfers

During the academic year 2021/2022, the LA processed 1163 primary IYTs.

There was a total of 139 WM primary IYTs; 51 children transferred into a WM primary school and 88 left (i.e., a net reduction of 37, compared to a net reduction of 22 in 2020/21).

Of the 88 who left a WM primary school, 63 moved to an English Medium (EM) primary school in RCT.

	Primary	PN/N	Rec	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
2017/2018	Receiving	6	10	10	7	13	9	15	3	<b>73</b>
2017/2018	Leaving	8	12	14	11	15	17	12	9	<b>88</b>
2018/2019	Receiving	14	8	12	8	9	5	7	2	<b>65</b>
2018/2019	Leaving	6	16	13	10	7	10	17	2	<b>81</b>
2019/2020	Receiving	12	16	11	10	5	11	12	5	<b>82</b>
2019/2020	Leaving	7	8	9	12	10	15	9	6	<b>76</b>
2020/2021	Receiving	16	14	9	6	8	5	5	4	<b>67</b>
2020/2021	Leaving	9	12	13	15	12	14	11	3	<b>89</b>
2021/2022	Receiving	14	5	8	8	2	4	7	3	<b>51</b>
2021/2022	Leaving	14	6	8	18	8	10	17	7	<b>88</b>

### 5.2 Secondary Welsh Medium Transfers

During the academic year 2021/2022, the LA processed 435 secondary IYTs.

There was a total of 72 WM secondary IYTs; 42 children transferred into a WM secondary/all through school and 30 left (i.e., a net increase of 12 compared to a net reduction of 19, in 2020/21).

Of the 30 who left a WM secondary school; 26 moved to an EM secondary school in RCT.

	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>Total</b>
2017/2018	Receiving	4	1	6	3	0	<b>14</b>
2017/2018	Leaving	4	3	3	1	0	<b>11</b>
2018/2019	Receiving	7	2	4	3	0	<b>16</b>
2018/2019	Leaving	9	15	7	3	0	<b>34</b>
2019/2020	Receiving	1	3	1	0	1	<b>6</b>
2019/2020	Leaving	1	3	4	2	2	<b>12</b>
2020/2021	Receiving	2	2	4			<b>8</b>
2020/2021	Leaving	9	4	10	2	2	<b>27</b>
2021/2022	Receiving	10	12	14	5	4	<b>42</b>
2021/2022	Leaving	5	10	9	4	2	<b>30</b>

### 5.3 Year 7 Welsh Medium Applications September 2022

There continues to be a high level of WM retention between year 6 and year 7. For September 2022, 379 out of the 388 children in year 6 at a WM primary school or WM all-through school in RCT in July 2022, transferred into a WM secondary school or WM all-through school in the County Borough (i.e., 97.68 %) for September 2022, an increase of 2.18 percentage points from September 2021.

In the 2 dual language schools, there were 40 children in WM streams in year 6. Of these, 34 transferred into a WM secondary school or WM all-through school in Rhondda Cynon Taf (i.e., 85%), for September 2022, an increase of 0.26 percentage points from September 2021.

In September 2022, 96.5% of children in year 6 WM primary schools or WM dual language schools continued their education in WM secondary schools or WM all-through schools, an increase of 1.44 percentage points from September 2021.

## 6. ADMISSIONS FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

From the 1st of September 2021, section 48 of the 2018 Act requires the governing body of a maintained school in Wales to admit a child to the school if the school is named in the child's individual development plan. This duty applies despite the limits on infant class sizes and even if admitting the child would result in the school exceeding its admission number. The duty to admit applies at all times, including where a school is named in a plan outside the normal admission round.

Schools may only be named for the purpose of securing admission in certain circumstances, so not all individual development plans will name a school in this way. Where a school is named for that purpose, it is named in section 2D.1 of the individual development plan. Where a school is named in an individual development plan for the purpose of securing admission, the admissions provisions in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 do not generally apply [1].

If a child or the child's parent wishes to appeal against the school named in the child's individual development plan for the purpose securing admission, or the fact that no school is so named, the appeal is to the Education Tribunal for Wales.

It is the LA's policy that all children, as far as is possible within the terms of the Education Act 1996, should be educated in mainstream schools within their local communities. If parents/carers feel that their child may have special education needs they should, in the first instance, arrange to discuss their child's difficulties with the headteacher of the child's current school.

There is an expectation that schools adopt a graduated response to meeting a learner's needs in line with the SEN Code of Practice Wales (2002) requirements. For learners with significant or complex needs, referrals should be made to the Access and Inclusion Service, to inform further intervention from the Educational Psychology Service and/or the Learner Support Service. If appropriate, referrals can be made to the relevant LA SEN panel should a specialist placement be required. If the threshold criteria for a specialist placement is met, then placements are agreed and administered by the Access and Inclusion Service.

## **7. FAIR ACCESS PANEL**

In April 2018, a Fair Access Placement Panel (FAPP) was established. The forum consists of representatives from schools and the LA who discuss and agree to placements for children deemed to be hard to place for a range of reasons. This has resulted in some of the most vulnerable children being offered suitable school places promptly. For primary school learners requiring a school place, the functions of the FAPP are undertaken by the LA's School Admissions Service, in partnership with the Attendance and Wellbeing Service and the Access and Inclusion Service.

In the academic year 2021/22, 55 children were referred to FAPP and placements agreed and actioned. Of the 55 referrals; 40 were managed moves, 12 were parental IYT requests and 3 were withdrawn.

## **8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY**

- 8.1 There are no negative or adverse equality or diversity implications associated with this report.

## **9. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP) sets out the ten-year plan for the planning and improvement of provision of Welsh medium and Welsh language education. The seven main outcomes outlined with the WESP will only be met by ensuring the availability of Welsh medium education. This report demonstrates that there is availability of Welsh medium places in RCT.

## **10. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT**

- 10.1 There are no consultation implications aligned to this report.



## **11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no financial implications

## **12. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

12.1 The following legislation/regulations are aligned to this report:

- 1) School Admission Code 005/2013
- 2) Schools Admissions appeals Code 007/2003
- 3) School Organisation Code 010/2017.

## **13. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT**

13.1 The Schools Admissions process links to the Council's Corporate Plan for the period between 2020 to 2024, specifically the priority:

- Prosperity – Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative, entrepreneurial and fulfil their potential and prosper:
  - Ensuring we have good schools, so all children have access to a great education.

13.2 The delivery of the WESP will contribute to all seven wellbeing goals listed within the Future Generation (Wales) Act. In addition, due regard has been made to the Five Ways of Working.

## **14. CONCLUSION**

14.1 The LA processed 9016 applications for Sept 2022, of which 7826 (i.e., 86.80%) were applied for on-line, which is an increase of 5.654 percentage points from 2021/22.

14.2 Of the 7301 single applications made for nursery, reception, junior and year 7 children, 97.64% were offered their first preference, 2.11% their second and 0.25% their third.

14.3 For pre-nursery January 2023, 1,027 single applications were received. Of these 386, were not age eligible, 421 children were offered places in 67 schools and 220 were offered places in 32 Registered Education Providers (REPs).

For pre-nursery April 2023, 441 applications were received, however 34 were ineligible due to age. Of the remaining 407; 176 were offered places in 48 schools, 211 were offered a place across 34 REPs and 20 did not receive an offer due to no suitable provision being available in their local area.

14.4 For the September 2022 admission round, the LA received 23 appeals; 20 were successful, 1 unsuccessful and 2 withdrew.

14.5 In the academic year 2021/22 there were 1163 primary and 435 secondary in-year transfer (IYT) applications, of which 828 (51.81%) were due to a house move.

14.6 There was a total of 139 WM primary IYTs; 51 children transferred into a WM primary school and 88 left (i.e., a net reduction of 37, compared to a net reduction

of 22 in 2020/21). Of the 88 who left a WM primary school, 63 moved to an EM primary school in RCT.

- 14.7 There was a total of 72 WM secondary IYTs; 42 children transferred into a WM secondary/all through school and 30 left (i.e., a net increase of 12 compared to a net reduction of 19, in 2020/2021). Of the 30 who left a WM secondary school, 26 moved to an EM secondary school in RCT.
- 14.8 In September 2022, 96.5% of children in year 6 WM primary schools or WM dual language schools continued their education in WM secondary schools or WM all through schools. An increase of 1.44 percentage points from September 2021.
- 14.9 In the academic year 2021/2022, 55 children were referred to FAPP and placements agreed and actioned. Of the 55, 40 were managed moves, 12 were parental IYT requests and 3 were withdrawn.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**  
**AS AMENDED BY**  
**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**  
**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**EDUCATION & INCLUSION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**19<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2023**  
**SCHOOL ADMISSIONS**  
**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**  
**AND INCLUSION SERVICES**

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