



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MUNICIPAL YEAR 21/22**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
(CRIME AND DISORDER)**

**1<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER 2021**

**UPDATE OF EDUCATION'S PROGRESS TO DELIVER APPROPRIATE  
HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS INITIATIVES UP TO THE END OF THE ACADEMIC  
YEAR 2020-21**

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

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide members of the Crime and Disorder Committee with an overview of the progress Rhondda Cynon Taf local authority has made in relation to delivering appropriate healthy relationships initiatives up to the end of the academic year 2020-21.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Consider the overview provided to support schools to deliver a quality provision for healthy relationships during 2020-21.
- 2.2 Consider whether they wish the Director of Education and Inclusion Services to report on further information in any future meetings.

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To provide Members with an update on progress being made to address the educational reform taken by schools and the local authority's education service during 2020-21.

**4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Estyn - A review of healthy relationships education 2017:

‘Healthy relationships education is the term used to describe the range of learning experiences and support that schools provide for pupils to develop safe, respectful personal relationships. This includes taking responsibility for their behaviour in their personal relationships and how to recognise inappropriate behaviour.’

- 4.2 Until recently, schools had a statutory obligation to follow the ‘Personal and social education framework for 7 to 19 year olds in Wales’ which sets out:

‘Successful relationships demand competent interpersonal skills, a willingness to value others and respect difference. Good relationships are the result of care and support, communication and the willingness to accept responsibility. Learners need to be able to make and maintain friendships, deal with conflict, challenge stereotyping and prejudice, and cope with peer and other influence.’

## **5. UPDATE/CURRENT POSITION**

- 5.1 The Curriculum for Wales was finally published in January 2020. This new curriculum, for implementation in September 2022, is aimed at supporting schools to develop their own broad and balanced curriculum, enabling learners to develop towards four core purposes:

- Ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives;
- Enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work;
- Ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world;
- Healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

- 5.2 This curriculum is split into six areas of learning (AoLE) to support this aim and the Health and Wellbeing AoLE is linked to promoting healthy relationships across a school. This AoLE provides a holistic structure for understanding health and well-being and effective engagement will provide a whole-school approach that enables health and well-being to permeate all aspects of school life.

- 5.3 Clear ‘statements of what matters’ help learners to understand how decisions and actions impact on themselves, on others and on wider society, both now and in the future. It is also clear that schools have a responsibility to support learners to recognise when relationships are unhealthy and need to be aware of how to keep safe and seek support for themselves and others. The six progression steps will guide learners to understand that, throughout their lives, they will experience a range of relationships and will support the development to form, nurture and maintain relationships. Some examples of these are:

- **Progression step 1** – *I am beginning to recognise safe and unsafe behaviour in relationships.*
- **Progression step 3** – *I can respect the rights of others and I understand how these impact on myself and others.*

- **Progression step 5** – *I can make meaningful connections with others, valuing safe, healthy and equitable relationships in a range of contexts.*

5.4 Before its publication, the Framework was subject to broad and extensive consultation. Feedback received signalled what specific additional guidance schools and settings would require in order to successfully design and realise their own curriculum. Welsh Government has now published:

- Guidance for Religion, Values and Ethics;
- Guidance for relationship and sexuality education;
- Guidance on careers and work-related experiences;
- Guidance to support practitioners working with learners at the beginning of the learning curriculum;
- A curriculum and assessment framework for funded and non-maintained nursery settings to adopt;
- Guidance on developing a curriculum for those responsible for education other than at school;
- Guidance on British Sign Language.

Draft guidance has been consulted upon and redefined and will be available for schools to use as a tool for curriculum planning, design and implementation during the autumn term 2021.

#### 5.5 **Summary – Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE):**

This guidance sets out clearly the expectations of a school in line with the following:

- RSE will be a mandatory element of the new curriculum for Wales;
- It will be required to be taught to 3 to 16 year olds in a way that is developmentally appropriate;
- WG state that the purpose of RSE will be to educate and safeguard children and young people;
- Provision of RSE will be guided by a statutory code and there will be no parental right to withdraw;
- RSE will be taught across the whole curriculum;
- WG will provide a curriculum template to support schools.

5.6 It is recommended that all schools, PRUs and special schools have a RSE policy which should:-

- Outline the school's vision, values and rights framework;
- State aims and expected outcomes;
- Show how it is embedded into the whole school approach, linking to other areas of the curriculum;
- Set out each year group's content of the RSE programme;
- Describe how school's policies on confidentiality, safeguarding, child protection and Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence Act 2015 relate to RSE;

- Explain how a learner can seek advice;
- Explain how the views of learners will be sought;
- State how external agencies will support the delivery of the framework.

## 5.7 Rights Respecting Schools

This award is increasing being brought into our schools across RCT. It recognises a school's achievement in putting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, into practice within a school. There are three strands to the award:

- A** - Teaching and learning about rights;
- B** - Teaching and learning through rights – ethos and relationships;
- C** - Teaching and learning for rights – participation, empowerment and action.

## 5.8 Schools can achieve at three different levels:

- **Bronze** – rights committed;
- **Silver** - rights aware;
- **Gold** - rights respecting.

## 5.9 Recently the G7 summit asked RRS to create their own Girl's Education Declaration. Schools have been expected to set out:

1. The challenges that girls face in accessing education and why it is important;
2. What they will do in their school to support girls' education; and
3. Their calls for G7 leaders to take action on girls' education

These are to be shared with the UK Government in order to ensure that the officials working on global education policy will have heard from children.

Across RCT, approximately half of the schools engage in the Rights Respecting Schools Award, with two schools gaining the gold award; six gaining the silver award; 26 gaining the bronze award; five schools are currently working towards the gold award; 21 schools are currently working towards the silver award and ten towards the bronze award.

## 5.10 Spectrum Project

“The Spectrum Project is an all Wales programme funded by the Welsh Government and delivered by experienced teachers in primary and secondary schools. The free, bilingual, workshops are linked to the Health and well-being Area of Learning of the new draft curriculum for Wales 2022 and promote the importance of healthy relationships whilst raising the awareness of children, young people and adults about the issues of domestic abuse, sexual violence and violence against women. The engaging activities are designed to be thought provoking and promote peer discussion but are not intended to be so emotive as to cause distress.

The conclusion of every session provides information for young people on where they can access help and support both inside and outside of school. Spectrum also delivers training for school staff and governors about understanding the impact of domestic abuse on a child and raises awareness by looking at a whole school approach to tackling domestic abuse.”

- 5.11 Between March 2020 and April 2021, Spectrum offered online sessions for RCT schools at Foundation Stage, Key Stage 2 and 3 covering Healthy Relationships and Support. From April 2021 onward, school visits restarted which covered wider issues including Gender, Abuse and Safety Zone lessons.
- 5.12 Hafan Cymru, the body behind the Spectrum Project, were procured to deliver a series of online training sessions for school-based staff and central Education and Inclusion Service staff in April 2021. These sessions covered disclosures of abuse, identifying instances that may raise concern and how to review the tools available to use with children and young people.

Between September 2020 and June 2021, schools in RCT undertook a total of 58 sessions which involved 613 pupils and 69 staff. These figures are lower than those from the same period the year before; 106 sessions involving 1315 pupils and 98 staff.

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

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not currently required - the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 There is no requirement to undertake any consultation.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

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

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

- 9.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **10 LINKS TO THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/SIP**

- 10.1 This is an information report presenting the overview of progress made in relation to deliver appropriate healthy relationships initiatives up to the end of the academic year 2020-21. However, this report is clearly connected to two of the priorities in the Council's corporate plan 2020- 2024 that is:

- Ensuring **People:** *are independent, healthy and successful.*

Within this priority, one of the council's commitments is to ensure it has

*“Improving services for children and young people and ensuring the needs of children are considered in everything we do.”*

- Creating **Places**: *where people are proud to live, work and play;*

Within this priority one of the council’s commitments is to ensure it has

*“ensuring the County Borough is one of the safest places in Wales, with high levels of community cohesion and where residents feel safe” and “good schools so all children have access to a great education”*

## **11. CONCLUSION**

- 11.1 It is hoped that the Crime and Disorder Committee consider themselves to be well informed and have a clear understanding of the progress made in relation to deliver appropriate healthy relationships initiatives up to the end of the academic year 2020-21.

The local authority will continue to work in close partnership with the regional school improvement service and all its schools to ensure that strong progress is made towards delivering an impactful and sustainable curriculum.

## Appendix 1: Timeline of curriculum development

