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Stepping Forward…
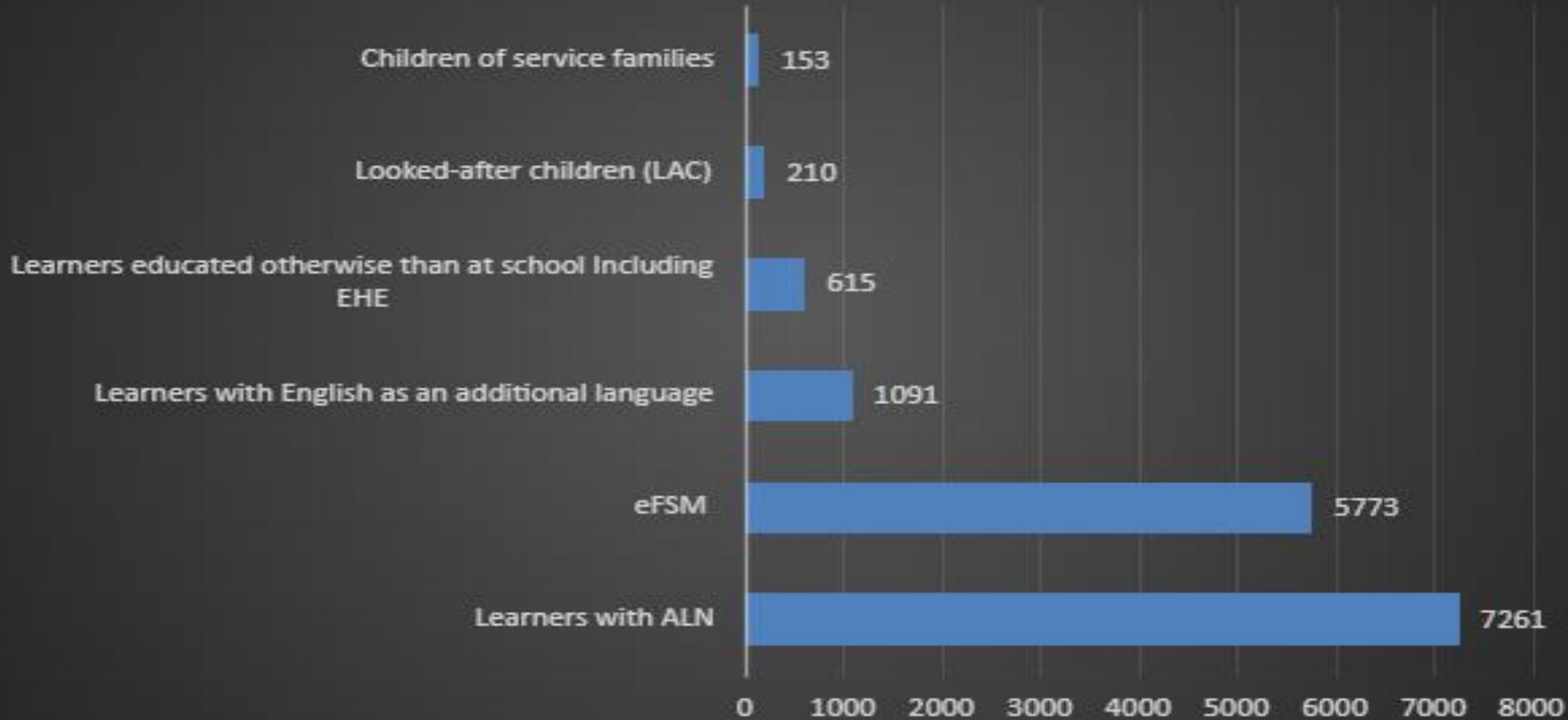
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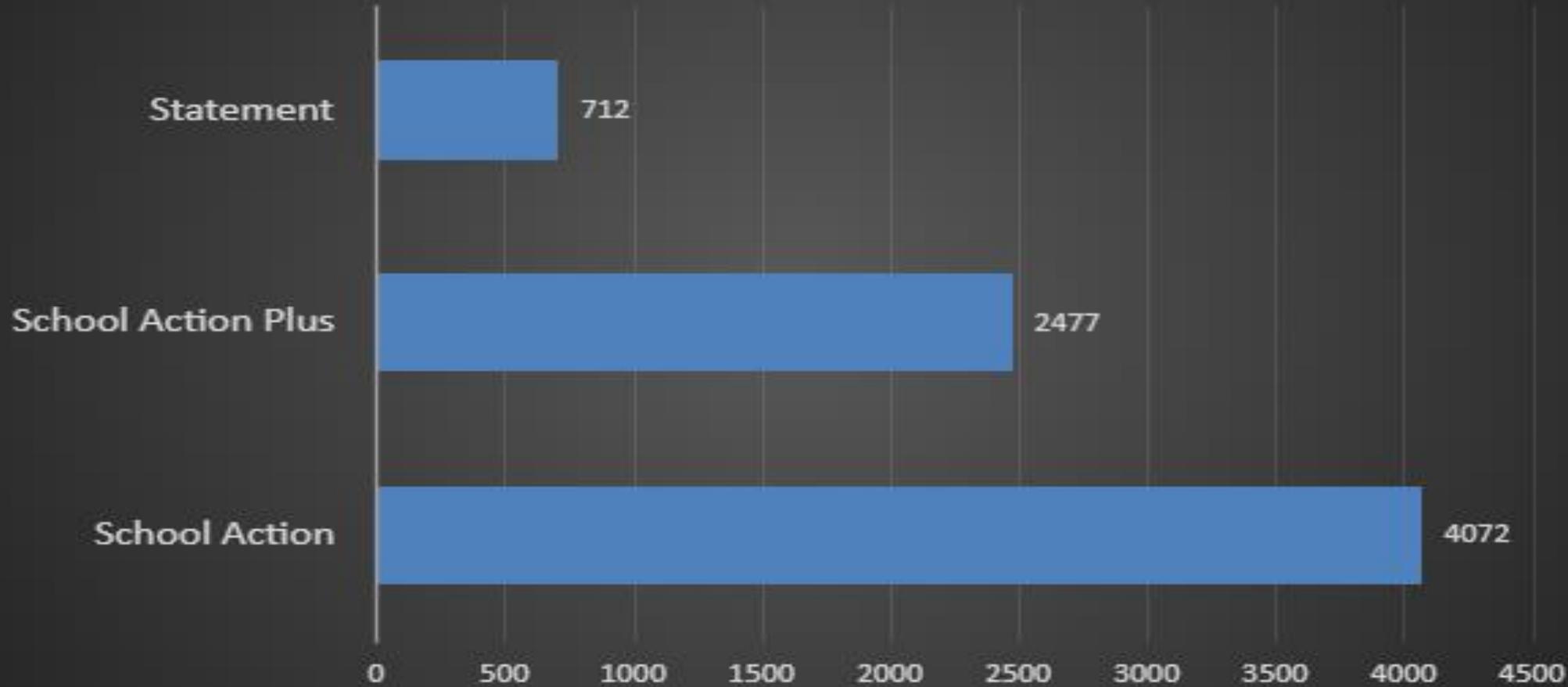
Vulnerable Groups

Group	Value
Children of service families	153
Looked-after children (LAC)	210
Learners educated otherwise than at school Including EHE	615
Learners with English as an additional language	1091
eFSM	5773
Learners with ALN	7261

Stepping Forward – Vulnerable Groups

Learners with ALN

Category	Value
Statement	712
School Action Plus	2477
School Action	4072

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Learners Educated Otherwise Than At School Including EHE

Wellbeing calls with heads

Dop-in sessions

Independent reviews

Drop in sessions

Estyn

Communication with school

ESA work

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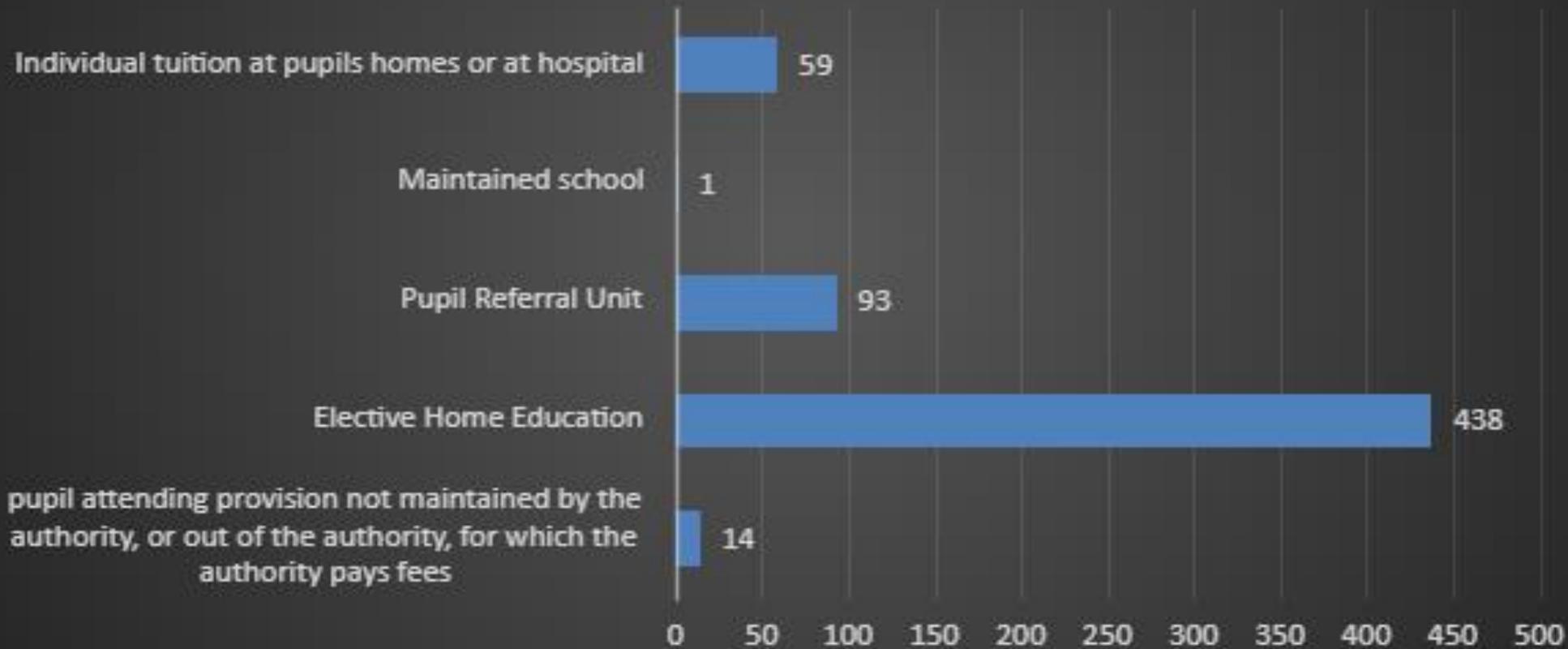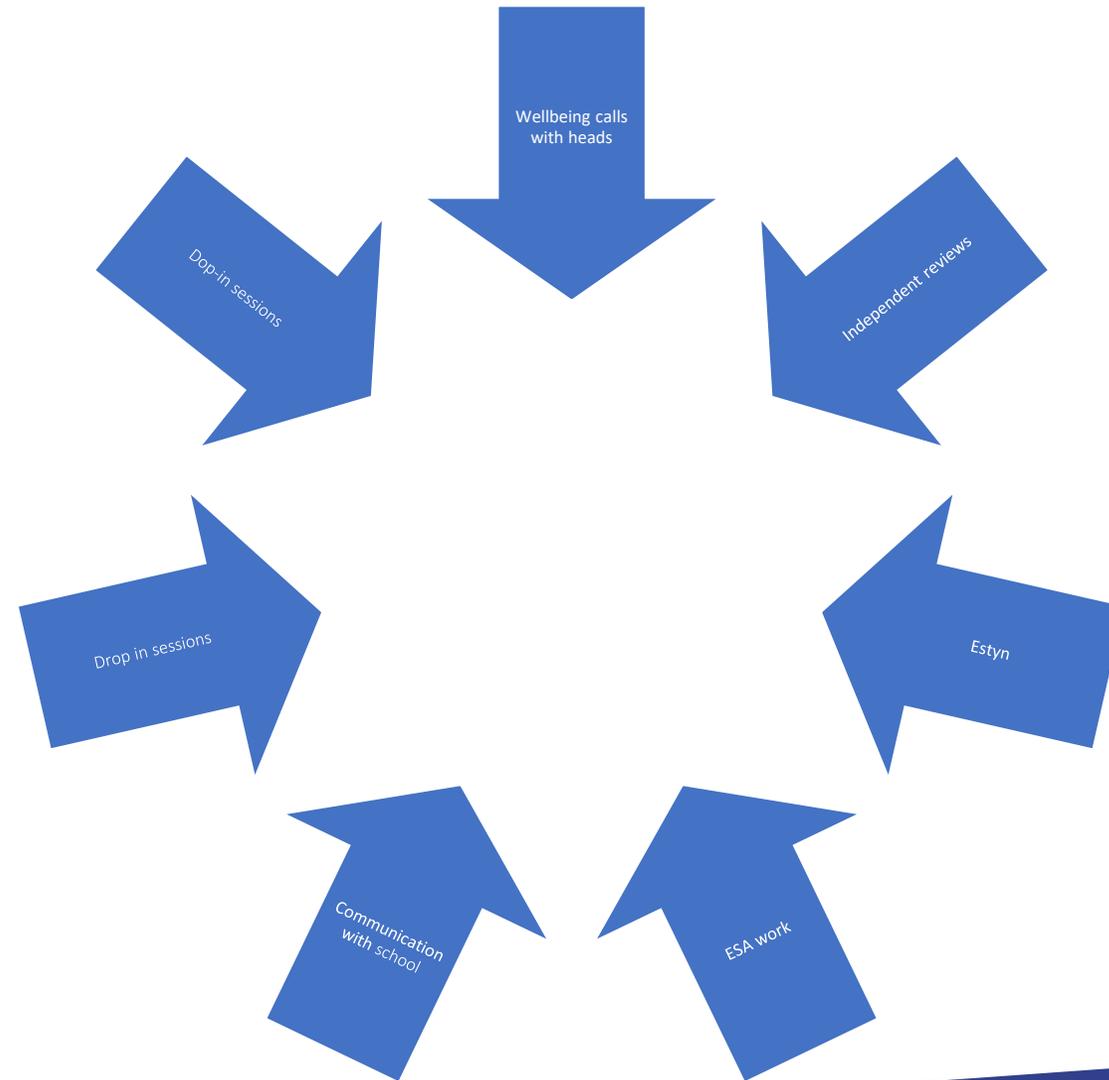
Stepping Forward – What do we know?

Independent Review

- Good coordination and effective communication of services through a period of significant uncertainty and anxiety.

- Accountabilities and structures are clear and decisions have been made in a timely way based on best information available.

- Data systems are robust and have been well used

- The work undertaken across the service has been characterised by a committed focus on the needs of learners and families

- The challenges facing vulnerable learners have been prioritised appropriately.

- The practical arrangements to set up, resource, service and support leaning hubs were delivered effectively with close support, problem solving and ' hands on ' management by your senior team.

- Levels of support and cohesion within and between teams is strong.

- The determination to sustain essential services is palpable, a credit to staff and corporate leaders.

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Stepping Forward –What do we know?

Estyn

- Carmarthenshire local authority has been pro-active and diligent in its efforts to provide schools and PRUs with the right support in a timely manner

- The effective collaboration across different departments in the local authority was a strong feature

- Local authority officers communicated extensively within and across departments, with schools, PRUs

- The local authority has used a range of social media successfully to engage pupils and ensure that parents receive a consistent and useful flow of

- The local authority has worked well to oversee its approaches to distance learning.

- The authority loaned ICT equipment to over 1600 pupils to support their digital learning during lockdown.

- Nearly all schools praised the local authority's support for health and safety.

- The local authority placed a clear focus on the wellbeing of pupils, school staff and its workforce, and this remained at the forefront of their approach during this period.

- The local authority responded quickly to mobilise its resources and expertise across different departments to support schools, PRUs, pupils and parents

- Staff across departments developed systems to prioritise support for vulnerable pupils and used a wide range of information to identify vulnerable learners

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- Cross-departmental working across the local authority, based firmly around the council's core value of working as 'One Team', has brought coherence to their work

- Departmental plans such as the 'Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Learners' plan set out clearly how the authority is working to support its schools and PRUs and learners

- The use of a risk rating system has enabled the service to target the families that need the most support.

- Where schools and PRUs are unable to maintain contact with families, they refer the pupils to the School Safeguarding and Attendance team

- This process has been successful in either re-engaging vulnerable families with the school, offering a more tailored response such as home welfare visits, or referring to child protection processes.

- Services such as the Gypsy Roma Traveller service have continued to support pupils and families

- The Additional Learning Needs department has continued to provide schools and PRUs with effective support around curriculum planning for pupils with ALN

- The local authority has worked well with schools and PRUs to ensure that they continue to safeguard learners during this time.

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Stepping Forward

Teaching and Learning Strategic Focus Group

What do we know?

- **Pupils' social skills especially in the Early Years** are under-developed, especially in schools where there are barriers to developing the language at home.
- **Regression in skills-** Numeracy, DCF, Literacy, Cymraeg
- **Assessment and feedback** - Re-establishing meaningful assessment to inform planning is a challenge - Leaders requesting support.
- **Implementation of the Curriculum for Wale**s - highly variable across our schools and specialist settings.
- **ALN Bill** - Schools' understanding is developing.
- **Vulnerable learners** - robust approaches needed to diagnose the levels of regression Greater accuracy is required in identifying vulnerable learners and planning effectively for their progress in line with their needs
- **Hardest to reach families** still a challenge to engage
- **'Outdoor' learning –** provision and impact is variable across our schools and settings.

How do we know?

- ESA evaluative discussions with schools-including evaluation of provision and support, as well as pastoral support.
- Case Management Meetings
- ALN fora and then follow up cluster meetings.
- ALN 'drop-in' sessions and engagement discussions with school leaders
- ED psych consultation meetings
- Secondary / PRU / Specialist setting TAPPAS Model
- Collegiate Support for School Effectiveness
- Informal SLOs-Curriculum over a Coffee

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Leadership Strategic Focus Group

What do we know? (What have we learnt from our conversations / activities

- **wellbeing** of staffing across our schools is variable
- Leaders have adapted well to the increasing number of demands.
- **Self-evaluation processes** (SEP) have been greatly adapted during the pandemic period. Activity has centred on pupils' wellbeing monitoring the quality of online planning, tasks and delivery approaches.
- Significant progress made with **blended learning approaches** due to effective leadership and the associated **professional learning** (PL)
- The culture of **collaboration** and sharing within and between schools has improved, especially in relation to blended approaches.
- **Governing bodies** have supported the headteachers well throughout the pandemic.
- School leaders are concerned about the volume of **systemic change**, especially with ALN and C4W.
- **Succession planning** needs to ensure leaders for the future
- Headteachers have reported improved **community relations** over lockdown periods. However, a few headteachers have articulated difficulties in managing parental expectations during the easing of national restrictions.

How do we know?

- Autumn and spring discussions with schools
- Evaluations from GB training.
- Intelligence from ESA/AESA discussions via line management and team meetings
- Information from the Strategic Focus Group for Leadership, HT Networks and the Collegiate Approach to School Effectiveness pilot

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Wellbeing Strategic Focus Group

What do we know?

Pupil Wellbeing:

- Pupils far more anxious e.g. about transitioning to next phase and examinations.
- 'Losses' evident - social behaviours, relationships, confidence, resilience.
- An increase in the number of pupils displaying de-regulated behaviours (e.g. pupils more irritable, less tolerant, lacking empathy)
- More pupils starting school with complex social needs
- Physical Health – increase in obesity, anorexia and eating disorder cases, lower levels of stamina and fitness and less concentration spans.
- Increase in suicide ideation with more suicide attempts with younger pupils and the LGBT+Q group
- There are good examples of effective use of PDG to support learners and use of TAF to encourage family engagement.
- Adult learning engagement is decreasing
- **Staff Wellbeing:**
- Increased need for staff training e.g. how to deal with self-harm, anxiety, suicide ideation and self-regulation strategies.
- Further clinical supervision, counselling and/or coaching to support staff
- Support for senior leaders to deal with staff
- School staff are currently overwhelmed and there's a need to reduce their workload

How do we know?

- ESA's regular discussions with schools
- Teaching and learning overview reports
- Information shared during Collegiate meetings (pilot schools)
- Information shared during TaPPaS meetings
- Shared data e.g. number of referrals to TAF and Area 43, attendance, Operation Encompass cases
- Information received from CAMHS
- WB SFG: all officers share relative information e.g. demands on the Healthy Schools team and youth service work
- Local and National surveys and research

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Digital Equity Focus Group

What do we know?

- ⑩ Digital connectivity is still poor or absent for some households e.g. rural areas with lack of broadband or 4G connectivity which impacts negatively on effective device usage
- ⑩ Schools have transitioned from distance to blended learning during the COVID pandemic and we support hybrid models of working in cases of learner isolation.
- ⑩ Online engagement is variable for some learners
- ⑩ Some groups of learners require additional support in working and meeting online e.g. EOTAS, Counselling.
- ⑩ There is a need to continue to support parental expectations and understanding of their children's online/offline working
- ⑩ An overall strength reported by many schools is greater pupil confidence and pupil independence in working digitally.
- ⑩ A few schools have also highlighted online confidence in terms of online safety awareness

How do we know?

- ⑩ Responses from schools CoL & Recovery curriculum offer of digital devices & connectivity; mapping of connectivity data to learner data
- ⑩ Feedback from schools to the WG Blended learning group
- ⑩ Feedback and analysis from school discussions with ESAs on provision of online learning
- ⑩ Home tutors way of working online has been changed from MS Teams to Google Classroom to facilitate recordings of 1-2-1 sessions
- ⑩ Managing parental expectations of learners online/offline working; developing guidance and exploring parental voice opportunities within Hwb

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Stepping Forward

Supporting Vulnerable Learners Group

What do we know?

EOTAS & Behaviour Support Services
The PRUs are full, requests for support across the services have increased. Majority of requests detail significant anxiety and deregulated emotions resulting in volatile and aggressive behaviour.

Cynydd
Emerging theme identified is the increasing levels of anxiety as a direct result of C-19.

School Based Youth Work
an increase in referrals around emotional health, including anxiety about returning to school, eating disorders, self- harm and suicidal Ideation. Difficulties with relationships within families and between young people and their peers have been evident and have contributed to the emotional health difficulties.

School Attendance and Safeguarding: there has been an increase in pupil anxiety, this has often included anxiety about attending school and there is an emerging trend of emotionally based school avoidance including a high increase on EHE register.

Young Carers Services
Observed increased anxiety amongst young people and parents during the pandemic and offer 1-1 support with this.

Education and Child Psychology Service – School Based Counselling Area 43
The pandemic has had a significant impact on CYPs mental health causing an increase in referrals to the service.

How Do We Know?

EOTAS and Behaviour Support Services
Multiple daily requests for support via individual school emails, via Inclusion Panel and via the ESA team.

Cynnydd - VAP data and meetings
Vulnerability Assessment Profile Meetings – identifying pupils in need.

SBYW – Increased referrals

School Attendance and Safeguarding there has been an increase of children becoming electively home educated children with 54.83% of our 434 EHE learners having been de-registered from school within the last 12 months.

Healthy Schools Scheme
- Research and surveys conducted by charities and organisations such as Feedback from Head-teachers and School Staff

Young Carers Service - direct work with young carers and families

School Based Counselling (Area 43)
- Results of the All Wales School Based Counselling Report
- Discussions with Area 43 Counsellors
- Information received at the Talk2ME2 group meetings

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Grwp Strategol y Gymraeg

What do we know?

- **Communication in Welsh** (Pupils' confidence and ability) are a concern in both Welsh medium and English medium schools. Vocabulary enrichment and use of correct language patterns and sentence structure are a key focus area for schools.

- Parents and headteachers are requesting Welsh language support

- There has been a positive uptake in Welsh Language training opportunities from staff across our schools.

- There is an increase in the number of 'late comers' to CCC schools who have required support to develop their Welsh language skills.

How Do We Know?

- Autumn and spring discussions with schools

- Evaluations from Literacy training sessions, project based work

- Discussions and feedback in Headteachers networks and focus groups

- Communication/ meetings with schools – mainly headteachers and Welsh language co-ordinators

- Language Audit of primary and secondary school staff

- Working with the ALN team

- Work with MEP team

- Meetings with the Admissions team

- Responding to comments on Facebook -parents and teachers

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Stepping Forward

How are we supporting our schools to address their priorities?

How are we addressing?

Strategic Focus groups – strategic development and monitoring; supporting DMT business planning.

Prof Learning Programme – HT networks, ALN for , increasing Welsh

Language learning for adults in the workplace

Leadership Development – Governors, New and acting HT programmes etc

SLO

Bespoke support provided – ALN, ESA

ERW

Departmental support for 'hard to reach' families

Wellbeing Charter

School based counselling – Area 43,

Healthy schools Scheme

Health and Wellbeing Champions for schools

Young Carers Service - TAF

Internet connectivity – improving infrastructure

Device access – securing access long term

How are we monitoring?

- Strategic Focus Groups
- ESA engagement with schools
- On-going meeting with schools
- School Improvement Pilot
- Wellbeing calls to all headteachers
- Surveys – pupils and parents
- Reviews
- Headteacher surveys
- Drop-in sessions for heads / ALNCos

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Spring term:

- Progress in relation to the school's developmental priorities and support required.

- School context

- Teaching and Learning, Progression and Assessment:

- Recruit, Recover, Raise standards: the accelerating learning programme

- Leadership:

- Curriculum for Wales

Summer term:

- Wellbeing

- Context

- School Priorities and support required

- Recruit, Recover, Raise standards: the accelerating learning programme

- Any further support needed e.g. in relation to C4W, ALN, Literacy , Numeracy, Physical skills etc

ESA support continues to reflect the changing needs of schools, the learners and their staff.

The focus remains on supporting schools in line with the wellbeing and learning needs of pupils; professional learning needs of staff and support for leadership at all levels.

Appropriate support is delivered by the ECS Department or by ERW.
Networks / Learning organisations are facilitated by officers supporting schools to develop as learning organisations.

In addition, support is provided in relation to finance, governance, HR and health and safety matters.

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Stepping Forward - School Improvement Pilot

Purpose

To ensure that schools can thrive in a supportive and collaborative environment that will raise standards and ensure every young person can fulfil their potential.

Practitioners included within this pilot:

➢ School Based staff

➢ School Improvement Team

➢ Additional Learning needs Team

➢ Educational and Child Psychologists

➢ Behaviour Support Service / TAPPAS

➢ School Safeguarding and Attendance Team

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School Improvement Pilot

Aims

- Providing schools **with a bespoke, responsive and collaborated range of support in line with the priority areas for individual schools and the current national context.**

- With schools' self-evaluations and development plans as the starting point, regional consortia and local authorities agree with the school the additional support it needs to improve and to build its own capacity.

- To further strengthen our **collegiate**, school and departmental approach to school effectiveness

- To ensure that every child and young person is valued and valued equally by our schools and by our department.

- We are **responsive** to the changing needs of our children and young people and also to the professionals who provide their care, support and education.

- Our strategies are co-constructed, delivered and evaluated across the department

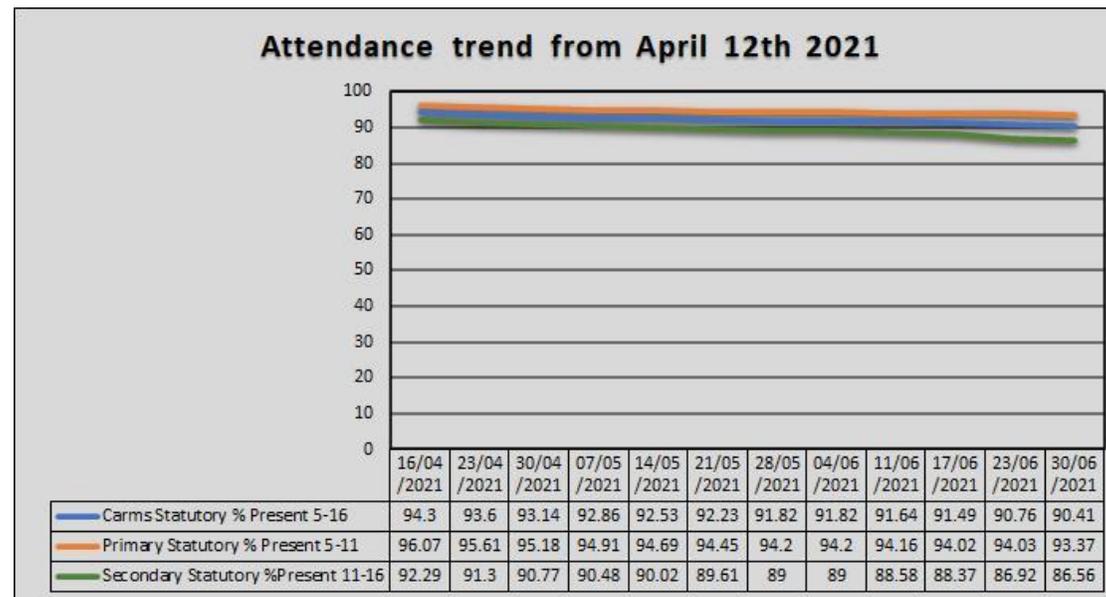- To support our schools in becoming a 'School as a Learning Organisation'

Initial Feedback

- Predominantly positive as will develop transparent and restorative ways of working together

- Working collaboratively is a good opportunity to share and develop good practise and robust systems.

- Hopefully be an effective method of working as a team to give overall, accurate picture of school.

- Useful for schools to meet everyone and ask questions in one place as well as allowing colleagues to ask specific questions.

- Some schools felt unsure initially, but it was a good way of pushing things forward and having everyone around the table together.

- Aspects dealt with quickly and appropriately during meeting, and actions agreed straight away.

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Attendance Update

Children and young people in Carmarthenshire not receiving a suitable education are at increased risk of a range of negative outcomes that could have long term damaging consequences for their life chances.

If a child or young person is receiving an education, not only do they have the opportunity to fulfil their potential, they are also in an environment which enables local teams to promote their wellbeing. The local authority has robust measures in place to quickly identify when a child or young person is missing education and to follow through with effective tracking and enquiry systems to relocate them. Once located, procedures are in place to ensure that the young person gains access to the most appropriate provision as quickly as possible

Attendance trend from April 12th 2021

	16/04 /2021	23/04 /2021	30/04 /2021	07/05 /2021	14/05 /2021	21/05 /2021	28/05 /2021	04/06 /2021	11/06 /2021	17/06 /2021	23/06 /2021	30/06 /2021
Carms Statutory % Present 5-16	94.3	93.6	93.14	92.86	92.53	92.23	91.82	91.82	91.64	91.49	90.76	90.41
Primary Statutory % Present 5-11	96.07	95.61	95.18	94.91	94.69	94.45	94.2	94.2	94.16	94.02	94.03	93.37
Secondary Statutory %Present 11-16	92.29	91.3	90.77	90.48	90.02	89.61	89	89	88.58	88.37	86.92	86.56

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Attendance Update

Following lockdown Welsh Government asked schools/settings and local authorities to:

- Identify learners who are reluctant or anxious about returning or who are at risk of disengagement and develop plans for re-engaging them. This may include meeting to discuss the barriers to returning. This should include disadvantaged and vulnerable learners and young people, especially those who were persistently absent prior to the pandemic or who have not engaged with school regularly during the pandemic.

- Schools, settings and Local Authorities should work closely with other professionals such as youth workers, mental health support as appropriate to support the return to school, including continuing to maintain regular contact with the child's social worker if they have one, informing of attendance patterns

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Attendance Update

Use of re-engagement plans during / post Covid 19

The Local Authority encourages schools to take a child-centred approach and consider whether a re-engagement plan would be appropriate on a case by case basis, considering the specific needs of the individual.

Where head teachers feel that, in line with the above guidance and existing PSP and PCP protocols, there are genuine issues around parental/ child physical and mental health (including anxiety about returning to the school or setting) then they can use their discretion to agree a time limited plan for individual pupils.

It is recognised that there is no requirement for schools to offer remote or blended learning as part of such a plan, but schools may wish to provide this. (this does not apply to pupils that have to isolate for whatever reason. Under these circumstances, remote or blended learning should be offered)

Schools are advised to consider such plans for a 2-3-week period only. This also allows for a regular review of the levels of engagement by the learner and the parents. Headteachers can see advice and guidance form the School Safeguarding and Attendance Team where needed.

In exceptional circumstances, where the needs of a pupil require it, (for reasons outlined above), it may be reasonable for schools to consider placing a pupil on a reduced re-engagement plan for a short period. As the pupil's ability to cope improves, unmet needs are addressed and the offer is adapted, the pupil would be re-integrated quickly into full-time education.

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Attendance - Attendance data is now shared with schools on a weekly basis and schools are reminded of the following every Friday.

The statutory aged Carmarthenshire attendance figure for the period 12.4.21 – 24.06.21 for all pupils is **90.76%.** For the same period, primary statutory is **94.03%** and secondary statutory **86.92%**

Analysis shows that a **few** schools continue to have incomplete registers. We ask all headteachers to ensure that data is analysed well in order to identify any barriers or problems in the system.

All staff involved with the registration process should be made aware that the law is specific regarding the keeping of registers. Marking and keeping the register is of the utmost importance.

Please ensure that all staff are using the correct coding as part of attendance keeping.

Requests for child registration statistics come to the authority on a weekly basis and it is essential that we can respond to those requests promptly and accurately.

For more information and support - https://sites.google.com/hwbcymru.net/porth-2/lead-and-manage/attendance

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