

Divisional Delivery Plan 2023-2024

Access to Education



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Cyngor Sir Gâr
Carmarthenshire
County Council



INTRODUCTION

Purpose of this Plan

This Divisional Delivery Plan sets the strategic actions and measures that the services within this Division will take forward in order for the Council to make progress against its Well-being Objectives, thematic priorities, and service priorities. Action and measures for the delivery of the Cabinet Vision Statement Commitments are also included.

The plan also notes the support required by the divisional services from the Core Business Enablers in order to make progress against their own actions or actions and measures to be delivered by those Business Enabler services in their own right.

The actions and measures should set the direction of travel and translate into individual staff objectives targets. It provides an open and transparent way of showing staff, customers, elected members, and stakeholders what is to be achieved and how we plan to do this.

The actions and measures are also reflective of the departmental self-evaluation process, whereby areas to develop are incorporated here or via our Strategic Focus Groups. Where applicable, Estyn thematic report outcomes are also considered.

Cabinet Member

Councillor Glynog Davies, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education, Young People and the Welsh Language



Cabinet Member Portfolios relevant to Division:

School Admissions
School Catering Services
Carmarthenshire's Sustainable Communities for Learning

Director's Foreword



As we start a new business year, I would like to thank all staff for their continued commitment to ensuring that our children, young people and learners of all ages are happy, safe, and thriving, and fulfilling their personal, social and learning potential.

We continue to strive to make sure that every child and young person is valued and valued equally and to deliver our ambitious priorities.

As Director, I'm proud of what we've achieved as a service over the last year; we have worked as a team, focused on and listened to our children and young people, strived for excellence and acted with integrity- we put Carmarthenshire's core values into practice.

As one Education and Children's Services team we worked effectively to ensure that our children and young people were successfully supported to access their education and all the services they required. I've been impressed by the innovation, perseverance and enthusiasm shown by staff across all divisions and schools to work through challenges and problem-solve together to make sure key services were available to our children, young people and their families.

However, it is important to acknowledge that as a Department and County Council we are facing significant issues. The demands on our services are at the highest they've been for many years and the financial position is extremely challenging. However, we will continue to do our best, to provide high quality services to support our children and young people.

As an Education and Children's Services Department and learning organisation we are continually looking at how we can further develop, address issues and improve. Therefore, the main priorities of the Department for the immediate future are encapsulated in the following 8 high-level statements-

<i>INCLUSION AND ENGAGEMENT</i>	<i>•ensure a proactive, inclusive education system</i>
<i>TEACHING AND LEARNING</i>	<i>•ensure excellent progress for all learners.</i>
<i>SAFEGUARDING</i>	<i>•all children and young people are happy, safe and thrive.</i>
<i>WELLBEING</i>	<i>•ensure very good mental and physical health for all.</i>
<i>LEADERSHIP</i>	<i>•aspirational leadership leads to excellent progress for all learners.</i>
<i>SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES</i>	<i>•ensure high standards of education in increasingly modern and sustainable community focused environments.</i>
<i>Y GYMRAEG</i>	<i>•ensure successful bilingual and multilingual development for all</i>
<i>DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONS</i>	<i>•high quality delivery and impact across the Department.</i>

Each Division has their own detailed Business Plan and document the actions relevant to their respective sections.

Gareth Morgans

Gareth Morgans; Director of Education and Children's Services

Divisional Overview

Introduction by Head of Service



I am very proud of what we continue to achieve in very demanding and challenging times.

As a team we dedicate ourselves to what needs to be done to support the vital work of the Authority, the Department, schools, and other education settings.

Our fundamental purpose is to organise, facilitate and plan an efficient network of school assets, facilities and places for the county's children and young people of today and future generations, to enable progression in outcomes in education and wellbeing.

Expectations to deliver excellent services has never been greater and we are under a greater duty to constantly challenge the way we organise our assets and service delivery.

However, we are currently faced by significant challenges include:

- The financial challenges facing schools across an inefficient school estate network.*
- Developing Carmarthenshire's School Investment Programme - a revised education investment and school rationalisation programme that encompasses the needs of the Authority that can be set for several years.*
- Construction inflation as a result of Covid/Brexit with increased demand and rising costs for labour and materials having a knock-on effect on the delivery and budgeting for school regeneration projects.*
- Understanding of the implications of the Local Authority's capital programme and the grant requirements from Welsh Government*
- Understanding on the implications of Covid-19 on pupil trends, projections, demographic statistics of the county and its impact on short-, medium- and long-term demand for school places (admissions)*
- Understanding the condition and suitability of the whole school estate and associated maintenance and investment costs to develop a modern relevant future school design.*
- Understanding the impact of Welsh Government's Working Together to reach Net Zero and Carmarthenshire's Net-zero Carbon Strategy*
- Delivering the Welsh Government's Universal Primary Free School Meals (UPFSM) offer with continued staff shortages and recruitment issues being experienced by the service.*
- An increased pressure on local government funding to deliver key services*

Difficult decisions will need to be made to continue to invest in our future. This will mean changes to the way we deliver services, maintaining existing service levels with less resources, reorganising or stopping provision altogether. Where change is required, we are responsible for ensuring that the changes to infrastructure and the redesign of services is governed appropriately whilst engaging with citizens at the earliest opportunity.

I look forward to building on the successes of our one team response and working to improve and deliver efficient and valued services to the people of Carmarthenshire.

I am delighted to present the three-year Divisional Business Plan on behalf of the hard-working staff across the Access to Education Division.

Sign off:

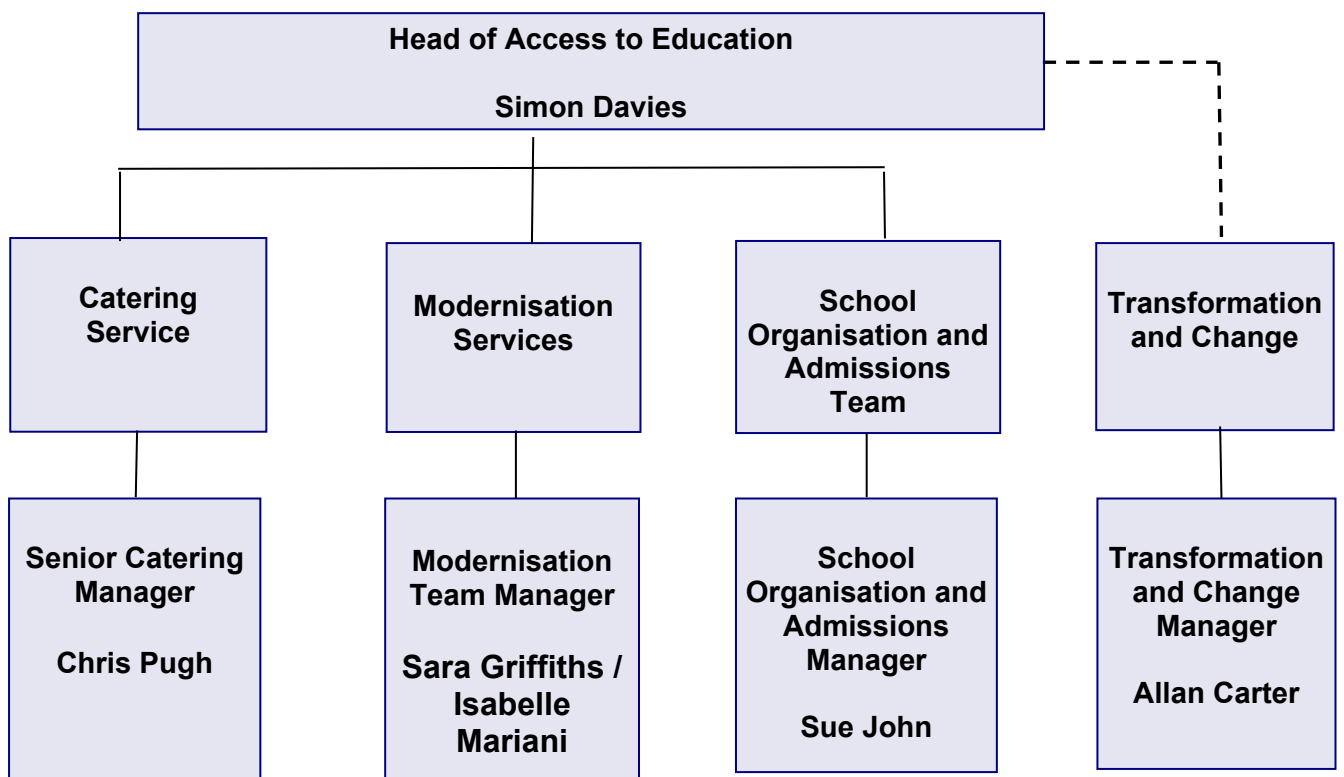
Signature:



Simon Davies; Head of Access to Education

Date: 15/03/2023

Divisional Structure



Divisional Profile of services by Service Area

Access to Education Division forms part of the Department for Education and Children. The division currently has 33 staff.

Budget to be confirmed following consultation process, awaiting final documentation.

Catering Service – Chris Pugh, Senior Catering Manager

The **Catering Service** is responsible for providing school meals in all Carmarthenshire primary schools and all 12 secondary schools including:

- Serving some 18,000 meals every day.
- Compliance with national standards including healthy eating, food hygiene and allergens.
- Free breakfast service in nearly all primary schools.
- Advisory service to the Communities Department for meals for older people in care homes and day centres as well as community meals / leisure sites.

Modernisation Services – Sara Griffiths (Isabelle Mariani), Modernisation Team Manager

Modernisation Services is responsible for the development, management and delivery of the School Investment Programme (SIP) for the Department for Education and Children. This includes:

- The strategic planning, governance, development and delivery of Carmarthenshire's School Investment Programme as part of the national Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme and its constituent projects.
- School Organisation Process including formal and informal consultation with a range of stakeholders associated with school organisation and/or improvement projects.
- Local Authority School Federations Strategy and implementation plan
- Capital investment programme including the Department's long-term and annual capital investment plans and budgets.
- Development of options appraisals and HM Treasury 5 Case Model business cases for school reorganisation and investment projects for submission to the national Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme and other external funding sources.
- Commissioning of new or improved school premises in liaison with head teachers, ensuring minimum disruption to the operation of schools.
- Decommissioning of premises following the completion of statutory procedures to close or amalgamate schools and provide support to schools ensuring that pupils are sensitively and effectively transferred to designated alternative establishments.

School Organisation and Admissions – Sue John, School Organisation and Admissions Manager

School Organisation and Admissions are responsible for Planning School Places and the Admission of pupils to schools including:

- School admissions and appeals process, in line with legislation (summarised in the Welsh Government School Admissions Code) and the Council's Admission Policy.
- Operational asset management responsibilities in relation to property and estate including legal capacity of schools, catchment areas, developer contributions (Section 106), , asset verification, governor property initiatives and responsibilities under disability access (DDA) legislation.
- Planning of School Places including the interpreting, reporting, forecasting of data and pupil numbers in all maintained schools in satisfaction of statutory requirements and in support of the Modernising Education Programme.
- Departmental responsibilities in relation to risk management and school transport.

Transformation and Change – Allan Carter, Transformation and Change Manager

Transformation and Change is responsible for managing a programme of transformation and change work aimed at supporting the Department for Education and Children, Headteachers and Governing Bodies in delivering projects, initiatives, and financial efficiencies across the schools network in a sustainable manner.

The work is undertaken closely with the Council's TIC team and are responsible for reporting progress on TIC related projects to the TIC Programme Board which oversees the delivery of the Council's overall change and efficiency programme.

National Drivers/expectations for service area (strategy & policy)

- [Healthy Eating in Maintained Schools](#)
- [Free Breakfast in Primary Schools Guidance](#)
- [Food Allergens Toolkit](#)
- [Modernising Education Programme \(Agenda Item 9\)](#)
- [Modernising Education Programme Strategic Outline Programme \(SOP\) - Band B Update \(Agenda item 11\)](#)
- [Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme](#)
- [School Organisation Code](#)
- [Federation of Maintained Schools \(Wales\)](#)
- [School Admission & Appeal Codes](#)

- [School Standards and Organisation \(Wales\)](#)
- [Information for Parents Booklet](#)
- [Measuring the Capacity of Schools in Wales \(MCSW\)](#)
- [Town and Country Planning](#)

Divisional Specific Strategies and Policies

Access to Education Division will contribute across the 6 Departmental Strategic Focus Groups.

Access to Education has a lead role with the Authority’s School Operations Group that considers and resolves operational challenges facing schools.

10 Year Departmental Strategy and our Purpose Pieces



[Departmental Strategy](#) / [Strategaeth Adrannol](#)

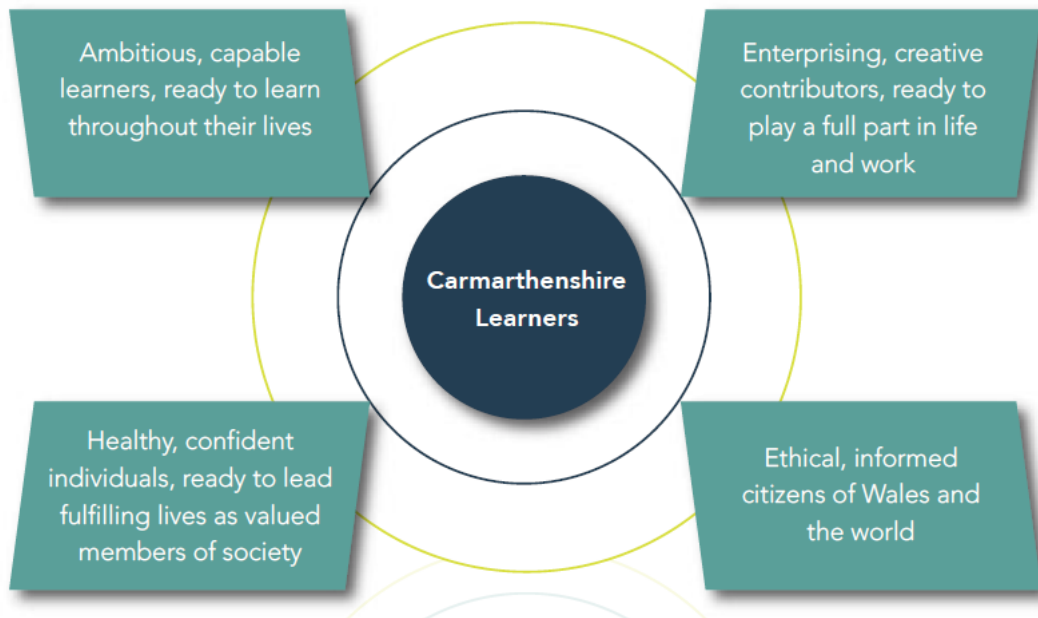
The Department has produced a draft 10 Year Strategy, **The future direction of Education Services in Carmarthenshire 2022 – 2032**, which includes our **Purpose Pieces** (High-Level Priorities). As a Department we have clear priorities focused around 4 key themes, tied into **Wales: Our National Mission**:



Vision to 2032

We will support all Carmarthenshire learners. We will ensure that they are happy, safe, are thriving, and are fulfilling their personal, social and learning potential. We will strive to become the best we can be and be highly regarded locally, whilst also earning national and international recognition.

We will achieve our desired outcomes by realising our Purpose Pieces and the ideals of the new Curriculum for Wales:



PURPOSE PIECES



Strategic Focus Groups

The Carmarthenshire County Council Education and Children’s Services Department’s Strategic Progress is to be operationally and strategically steered through a series of collaborative ‘Focus Groups’, aligning to the department’s business plan.

The aim and purpose of these Strategic Focus groups is to ensure that:

- Our vision to 2032 is promoted, *‘that children and young people are happy, safe and thriving, fulfilling their personal, social and learning potential’*.
- We fulfil our moral purpose, that:
 - *‘Every child and young person is valued and valued equally’*.
- We are responsive to the changing needs of our children and young people and to the professionals who provide their care, support and education.
- Our strategies are co-constructed, delivered and evaluated across the department, linking to the Corporate and Departmental aims and vision.
- Schools, settings and services are provided with good quality, effective support and professional development in line with their children and young person’s needs.
- We collegiately monitor and evaluate the impact of our service strategies, informing future focus areas.
- We improve the interface between services and schools, promote engagement and understand what schools want

There will be one focus group to encompass each of our eight Departmental priority areas (this Division has a lead role in highlighted groups):

Focus Group	Priority Area	Chair (HOS)
SFG 1. Inclusion and Engagement	Ensure a proactive, inclusive education system,	Aneirin Thomas
SFG 2. Teaching and Learning	Ensure excellent progress for all learners	Elin Forsyth
SFG 3. Safeguarding Children	Ensure all children and young people are happy, safe and thrive, overcoming poverty	Jan Coles
SFG 4. Wellbeing	Foster very good mental and physical health for all	Aeron Rees
SFG 5. Leadership	Ensure that aspirational Leadership leads to excellent progress for all learners	Elin Forsyth
SFG 6. Sustainable Communities	Deliver high standards of bilingual education in increasingly modern and sustainable community focussed environments	Simon Davies
SFG 7. Y Gymraeg	Ensure successful bilingual & multilingual development for all	Aeron Rees
SFG 8. Departmental Operations	Provide high quality support services that impact on the efficiency of the education system	Nia Thomas

Note: These groups to work independently or together depending on the nature of the research and developmental work to be undertaken.

There may be sub-groups that sit alongside this tier within different divisions e.g within Teaching and Learning there are sub-groups providing and evaluating support for Literacy, Numeracy and digital.

Ref #	Actions & Measures	By When?	By Whom? Responsible Officer	Source Ref
1	Well-being Objective 1 - Enabling our children and young people to have the best possible start in life (Start Well)			
a	Theme: Healthy Lives – prevention /early intervention			
	Actions			
1	In line with the vision of Welsh Government, provide high quality nutritious free school meals to all primary school pupils, over the lifetime of the administration.	April 2024	Chris Pugh	Cabinet Vision
2	Review current Cashless Catering provision by undertaking market sounding exercise to consider options for pre-order kiosks in support of 'Grab & Go' concept	April 2024	Chris Pugh	
3	We will ensure food safety regulations compliance through monitoring/audits and staff training.	April 2024	Chris Pugh	
b	Service Priority - Early years childcare, play & family support			
	Non applicable			
c	Service Priority - Education			
	Actions			
1	Continue investment in school buildings across the county and overhaul Carmarthenshire's School Investment Programme to meet the needs of the 21st century. Ensuring that all new schools meet the required standards of insulation and ventilation to cut energy bills and be more environmentally friendly.	April 2024	Sara Griffiths / Isabelle Mariani	Cabinet Vision
2	We will address the recommendations of the Estyn Thematic Report – Community schools; families and communities at the heart of school life.	April 2024	Sara Griffiths / Isabelle Mariani	Estyn
3	We will address the recommendations of the Estyn Thematic Report – All-age schools in Wales - A report on the challenges and successes of establishing all-age schools.	April 2024	Sara Griffiths / Isabelle Mariani	Estyn
4	Work with Welsh Government to consider the effectiveness of anti-covid ventilation devices in schools.	April 2024	Sara Griffiths / Isabelle Mariani	SFG6
5	We will review the Modernising Education Programme and initiate a new programme.	April 2024	Sara Griffiths / Isabelle Mariani	SFG6
6	We will ensure the Council fully responds and complies with the requirements of the Welsh Government School Organisation Code to support the attainment of better educational outcomes with specific reference to requirements for rural schools.	April 2024	Sara Griffiths / Isabelle Mariani	SFG6
7	We shall consider options to utilise the Welsh Government Mutual Investment Model (MIM) to further develop the education infrastructure through major investment	April 2024	Sara Griffiths / Isabelle Mariani	SFG6
8	We will reflect the impact of COVID on new school design e.g. access, materials used, creating flexible spaces, ventilation systems etc.	April 2024	Sara Griffiths / Isabelle Mariani	SFG6

Ref #	Actions & Measures	By When?	By Whom? Responsible Officer	Source Ref
9	We shall implement a Risk Management approach to prioritise urgent building improvements.	April 2024	Sue John	SFG6
10	We will undertake a comprehensive review of school capacity calculations in partnership with Schools.	April 2024	Sue John	SFG6
11	We will ensure all requests for Equality Act 2010 adaptations to schools are processed and actioned timely to support pupil's integration into mainstream schools.	April 2024	Sue John	SFG6
12	We will ensure all developer contributions (Section 106) are processed and actioned timely to support pupils in the designated catchment area schools.	April 2024	Sue John	SFG6
13	We will ensure all WG statutory returns for Planning School Places & Asset Verification are accurately and timely completed and feed into the MEP programme.	April 2024	Sue John	SFG6
14	We will contribute to all School Transport Appeals (both Officers and Members) to provide educational support and perspective.	April 2024	Sue John	SFG6
15	Update school suitability grade (defines how well premises meet the needs of pupils, teachers and other users and how they contribute towards raising standards of education)	April 2024	Allan Carter	SFG6
16	We shall review all school pupil admission dates and age-ranges across the County (rising 4's review).	April 2024	Allan Carter	SFG6
17	We will complete the Catchment Area Review linked as part of the MEP Review and implement any policy changes required.	April 2024	Allan Carter	SFG6
	Measures			
	4.3.1.8 - % of schools graded as "Good" or "Satisfactory" for school building condition.			
	4.3.1.7 - Surplus places removed as a result of Carmarthenshire's Sustainable Communities for Learning` (Formerly known as MEP - Modernising Education Programme)			
2	Well-being Objective 2 - Enabling our residents to live and age well (Live & Age Well)			
a	Theme: Tackling Poverty			
	Non applicable			
b	Service Priority – Housing			
	Non applicable			
c	Service Priority – Social Care			
	Non applicable			
3	Well-being Objective 3 - Enabling our communities and environment to be healthy, safe and prosperous (Prosperous Communities)			
a(i)	Theme: Economic Recovery & Growth			
	Actions			
1	Undertake required work in support of the decision made in relation to food contracting within Carmarthenshire; support pilot for outcomes identified as part of Foundational Economy project. Develop and implement strategy to focus on local procurement for School Meals and Breakfast Club services.	April 2024	Chris Pugh	

Ref #	Actions & Measures	By When?	By Whom? Responsible Officer	Source Ref
a(ii)	Theme: Decarbonisation/Climate & Nature Emergency			
	Actions			
1	Collate a new “schools for the future” development brief based on carbon neutral principles, lessons learnt from previous schemes, good practice and post-Covid evaluations.	April 2024	Sara Griffiths / Isabelle Mariani	SFG6
a(iii)	Theme: Welsh Language & Culture			
	Non applicable			
a(iv)	Theme: Community Safety and Cohesion and resilience			
	Actions			
1	Increase the utilisation of school facilities for community use outside of teaching hours.	April 2024	Sara Griffiths / Isabelle Mariani	Cabinet Vision
2	Work with Welsh Government to consider the effectiveness of anti-covid ventilation devices in schools.	April 2024	Sara Griffiths / Isabelle Mariani	Cabinet Vision
b	Service Priority – Leisure & Tourism			
	Non applicable			
c	Service Priority - Waste			
	Non applicable			
d	Service Priority – Highways & Transport			
	Non applicable			
4	Well-being Objective 4 - To further modernise and develop as a resilient and efficient Council (Our Council)			
a	Theme: Organisational Transformation			
	Non applicable			
5	Core Business Enablers: Actions & Measures	By When?	By Whom? Responsible Officer	Source Ref
a	ICT Services			
	Non applicable			
b	Marketing & Media including Customer Services			
	Non applicable			
c	Legal			
	Non applicable			
d	Planning			
	Non applicable			
e	Finance			
	Non applicable			
f	Procurement			
	Non applicable			
g	Internal Audit			
	Non applicable			
h	People Management (HR, L&D, Occ Health)			
1	Analyse the current workforce, and then extending that analysis to identify future workforce requirements, skills and competencies which will be needed to deliver new, different, or improved service	April 2024	All Managers	

Ref #	Actions & Measures	By When?	By Whom? Responsible Officer	Source Ref
i	Democratic Services			
	Non applicable			
j	Policy & Performance			
	Non applicable			
k	Business Support			
	Actions			
1	Consider better way of working with a view to reducing paper and support the use of electronic back-office processes within school kitchens (e.g. introduction of Kitchen Manager) with the support of TIC	April 2024	Chris Pugh	
l	Estates			
	Non applicable			
m	Elections and Civil Registration			
	Non applicable			

Risks

Risks are anything that can impede or enhance the achievement of strategic objectives (Our Well-being Objectives above). You must identify the following:

1. Any Risks that the service has on the **Corporate Risk Register**
2. **All Service Significant Risks** (scored 16+)
3. All **Service High Risk** (scored 10+)
4. Other risks and mitigation are on the Service Risk Register

Make sure you identify actions in the table above that address these actions and cross refer below ↓

Risk Ref or New?	Risk score after mitigation	Identified Risk	WBO Ref # above action
EC6 Part of CRR190018	6	Failure to manage the School Investment Programme as part of the national Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme and to invest in infrastructure and reduce the number of surplus places within the schools' system.	WBO1c Actions 1 - 17
New	tbc	Failure to deliver Universal Primary Free School Meals (UPFS) that will entitle all primary school pupils (In the first instance) to a free school meal.	